

Drainage Work Group Fact Sheet

Purpose

The stakeholder Drainage Work Group (DWG) has been meeting since 2006 for the following purposes:

- Foster science-based mutual understanding about drainage topics and issues;
- Develop consensus recommendations for drainage system management and related water management, including recommendations for updating Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103E Drainage and related provisions.

Stakeholders

Drainage Authorities	AMC – Association of Minnesota Counties
	MAWD – Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts
Farm Groups	MFB – Minnesota Farm Bureau
	MFU – Minnesota Farmers Union
	Other Ag and Producer Groups (MAWRC, MCGA, MSGA,)
Environmental Groups	MCEA – Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
	FWLA – Fish and Wildlife Legislative Alliance
	MCF – Minnesota Conservation Federation
Other Associations	MASWCD – MN Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
	MVA – Minnesota Viewers Association
	MACATFO – MN Assn of County Auditors, Treasurers and Finance Officers
	MADI – Minnesota Association of Drainage Inspectors
	RRWMB – Red River Watershed Management Board
	MNLICA – Minnesota Land Improvement Contractors Association
	MAT – Minnesota Association of Townships
	MRCC – Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus
University	UMN – University of Minnesota
State Agencies	BWSR, DNR, MDA, MPCA
Legislature	House and Senate staff

Facilitation and Process

- The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) facilitates the DWG in accordance with drainage stakeholder coordination authority provided in Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.101, Subd. 13.
- Since its beginning in 2006, the DWG has agreed to operate on a consensus basis.

Consensus Recommendations to Date

The Drainage Work Group has developed five sets of consensus recommendations to date. Following is a brief summary of key components of Chapter 103E drainage law and related provisions involved, and other consensus recommendations. The Legislature and Governor have adopted all of the DWG consensus recommendations to date for updating of Chapter 103E and related provisions.

Chapter 103E revisions and other recommendations adopted in 2007:

- Revise Chapter 103E provisions regarding buffer strips, side inlet controls and other conservation practices along public drainage ditches;
- Revise Chapter 103E regarding ditch inspection frequency, including for buffer strip violations;
- Support for drainage records modernization, including guidelines and state cost-share;
- Support for updating of the Minnesota Public Drainage Manual; and
- Support for establishment of an interagency drainage management team.

Chapter 103E revisions and other recommendations adopted in 2010:

- Update Chapter 103E to better enable wetland restorations (impoundments) involving public drainage systems, including rerouting, partial abandonment and public-private funding partnerships;
- Require all Chapter 103E drainage authorities to have a drainage inspector;
- Update various dollar limits and thresholds in Chapter 103E, primarily for inflation; and
- Provide authority in Section 103B.101 for drainage stakeholder coordination by BWSR.

Chapter 103E revisions adopted in 2013:

- Update several key definitions;
- Enable reestablishment of drainage system records that are lost, destroyed or incomplete;
- Enable official copies of drainage system records for transfer of part of a drainage system between a county and watershed district;
- Clarify authority for wetland and water quality improvement components of projects; and
- Enable a 2-stage ditch cross-section for petitioned repairs.

Chapter 103E revisions adopted in 2014:

- Update environmental, land use and multipurpose water management considerations for drainage projects; and
- Require investigation of external sources of funding for public-private partnering on drainage projects and petitioned repairs for multipurpose water management.

Chapter 103E and Section 103F.48 revisions adopted in 2016:

- Revise the state buffer law (Section 103F.48) and Chapter 103E drainage law to better enable retroactive acquisition and maintenance of public drainage ditch buffer strips by Chapter 103E drainage systems.