Communication Subgroup
Minutes

Conference Call January 24, 2018 10:00 – 11:00 am

CONCLUSIONS

Charge

- Educate elected officials, government/professional staff/contractors, business community members and residents throughout Illinois with a clear, coherent message on the Illinois NLRS and opportunities to participate.

Letter

- The subgroup tweaked the letter's language and decided to include the NRLS website URL.

PowerPoint Potential Audience

- Hal Sprague and Cindy Skrukrud reached out to these groups and reported the following:
    - Illinois Assoc. of County Board Members – They haven't set the date for their conference yet. Hal Sprague to follow up with them.
    - Illinois Assoc. of County Officials – This group focuses on treasurers and therefore isn't a good fit for NLRS.
    - Illinois Municipal League (Mayors, Managers, Department Staff) – Hal Sprague contacted Edith Makra. He will follow up with her.
    - Illinois Environmental Council – Amy Walkenbach will be speaking about NLRS at World Water Day on March 22. Cindy Skrukrud will also be speaking and will mention NLRS efforts.
    - Illinois Water Environment Association – Cindy Skrudrud plans to speak to the IWEA MS4 committee. They haven't had a call yet. Albert Cox had distributed the NLRS Tracking Sheet to IWEA.

NEXT STEPS

- Illinois EPA will adjust the letter and send it to subgroup members to review. **COMMENTS DUE to Amy Walkenbach by Friday, January 26 COB.**
- Subgroup members should review the draft PowerPoint. **COMMENTS DUE to Amy Walkenbach by Wednesday, January 31 COB.**

Next meeting: February 13, 2018 10:00 – 11:00 am

- Roll Call
    - Mike Chandler, Albert Cox, Alec Davis, Lauren Lurkins, Jean Payne, Cindy Skrukrud, Hal Sprague, Amy Walkenbach, Trevor Sample
- Review the Charge
    - Thoughts?
        - Do we have to have hypoxia issues since the group itself is charged with hypoxia zone and Illinois water quality? We might want to keep them focused on Illinois
        - Lauren – I agree.
        - Albert – I agree also.
        - I agree, I think it's important that we focus on what the strategy's charges are.
        - Albert – We want to consider that stressing local water quality might be a better approach with respect to reaching out to other groups because people might be more passionate about what's happening locally than what's happening downstream.
        - Hal – Throwing out for consideration the idea that the US EPA has set up this framework for the 12 states to do this and each state has its own plan, of course, but if there's a sense of a legal requirement that we do this that it's important to let the legislators know that.
        - Maybe we could not say "on the hypoxic zone issue" but "nutrient issues in IL water and downstream" instead.
        - Lauren – Talking about the NLRS encompasses all of that so if they google that term they will find all the information they need to know. I think the part of this communications subgroup is to tell the whole story, not just throw the problem out without saying what's happening.
        - Eliana – What I'm hearing from some is that it could say "educate these people on the IL NLRS and what it encompasses" and Hal it does include the background info on the federal requirement.
        - Albert – I like Lauren's point of bringing attention to the strategy.
        - Eliana – Any other discussion on the rest of the charge?
            - Alec – The sentence about tailoring the presentation, are we talking about the presentation serving as a basis for content that members can use? I guess I would like to know more about what that sentence means.
            - Eliana – My understanding is that sentence is to cover that the urban stormwater working group is expected to take the base presentation and tailor it further toward stormwater audiences.
            - Albert – For any of these groups that we have identified to present to, the intention is to take this base presentation and just tailor it towards these groups.
            - Hal – I agree with what Eliana has said. We want the message to be consistent and it just changes how you approach the different audiences, not the content.

- Lauren – I think the presentation has been done already, not sure that we're adding anything new here that warrants being part of the charge.
- Eliana – So Lauren, do you suggest taking out everything after the number 1?
- Lauren – I know that's a little bit drastic here, but we have been doing this for a number of years and I feel like from number 2 on, we're already doing that as a whole state and have been doing that. Having that presentation is fine, but I'm not sure that it needs to be a charge that we take credit for under this subgroup.
- Hal – Speaking from the stormwater subgroup, we haven't been doing that. We've been frustrated by not getting in front of people and having the audience. If you're talking about groups like the legislature, the education never stops because of turnover and you have to repeat information to most people multiple times before they really get it.
- Cindy – Lauren, recently I've made use of Amy's PowerPoint on the biennial report. Are you suggesting that we might want to all look at Marcia's earlier slides too?
- Lauren – I think those are outdated now, it just seems like the subgroup is a little behind.
- Hal – I don't think we're suggesting we have to go back and do anything again, like you already have, I've just been in a group that's been working on it but we haven't gotten the audience.
- Lauren – I worry that having it included makes it seem like we're missing some major action that's already occurred.
- Albert – I agree with Lauren's point.
- Maybe we just want to say that at this point, I agree that I don't think that detail needs to be in the charge, that where we are right now is that we're going to look at Amy's biennial report update and say it's a good framework for people to use in presentations going forward.
- Eliana – If we want to take out the specificity of the letter and the presentation, I'm hearing that the important part is the clear message. We could say "educate elected officials and everyone else throughout IL with a clear and cohesive message on the IL NLRS and a message to participate".
- Amy – The other things are action items anyway, not really charges.
- Eliana – So everyone agrees on that?
- Lauren, Albert – Yeah.

- Proposed Letter
    - Eliana – Amy, would you like to talk about the letter?
    - Amy – Basically, it's just coming from the direction of the two agency directors, giving legislators the opportunity to look at the strategy and giving people the added opportunity to reach out to us for more information.

- Cindy – So you're saying that last paragraph would just be added in the cover letter going to these committees?
- Amy – For those who are members of these committees, they would have that additional paragraph, calling out their responsibility to be more informed than the rest of the general assembly.
- Cindy – Second paragraph is too wordy.
- Jean – Maybe say "we're working together to reduce nutrient losses".
- Hal – I thought it was a great letter, in a big picture kind of way we're giving them some information and saying how things are going, but we don't have a request. That worries me because people might throw out the letter if there's no request/ask.
- Amy – My problem with that is that this letter is coming from the directors. We do ask that they contact the directors and let us know how we can assist them. I realize that's not much of an ask.
- Lauren – I think it provides a lot of information with the biennial report and strategy attached and it's nice to have an open invitation to ask the directors because people might have questions.
- Alec – I agree with that. If we go past anything besides communication, we have to go back to the committee.
- Cindy – And will the 8-page biennial report summary be sent out with this?
- Eliana – Yes, along with the full biennial report.
- Hal – Question for the group, if we did have an ask/opportunity to participate, what would that be?
- Albert – We could ask them to share the NLRS information whenever they're interacting with their community. Because people are going to listen to their community leaders.
- Amy – Does anyone have a problem with me adding that in?
- Hal, Lauren – Think that's a good idea.
- Cindy – Will you have contact information on here besides the director's name?
- Amy – No, but what if I put a link to our website on here?
- Hal – How would you feel about cc-ing the director of DNR?
    - Amy – I think that's a director decision.
    - Mike – It would be nice, but I agree with Amy that it's a director's call on that.
- Cindy – Amy, I think a web link is fine. But I'm looking at the landing page now and you really have to know how everything is set up to find the PWG member list.
- Amy – The list is in the biennial report. Does that suffice?
- Yes.
- Eliana – Any other thoughts on the letter or are we ready to move on?
- Lauren – I'm ready to move on
- Eliana – Not hearing anything from other people, so we're going to move on.

- PowerPoint Audience report
    - Hal – County board members haven't decided when/where their meeting will be.
    - Hal – County officials group is not a good fit. I talked to them and they are mostly treasurers who have nothing to do with NLRS. She gave four other groups and they weren't much of a fit either. The only other group I made contact with was the

Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (275 mayors in Chicago metro area), haven't heard back yet but will follow up.
    - Eliana – Cindy?
    - Cindy – So on the IL Environmental Council, the council already has plans for an event on World Water Day on March 22nd and they have someone to talk about nutrients. I'm ending the program on how people can get involved.
    - Amy – I'll be there talking about the strategy.
    - Lauren – I got an email that says there will be presentations from IEPA, NREC, IL Sierra Club and others.
    - Hal – There's also a green caucus meeting in Springfield on Feb. 7th. It's a smaller group, so there might be an opportunity to hand out materials but maybe not a presentation
    - Cindy – Hopefully we'll have this letter out to the legislators before then, or what are you thinking, Amy?
    - Amy – I'm going to push for getting it out as soon as possible, it might get caught up in the director's office. The actual mail-out may take a while since we're individualizing them. I would like to be able to, in the next week or two, get it moving and mailing.
    - Eliana – Any other groups we should talk about? We have 11 minutes left in the call.
    - Albert – I wanted to let you all know that IAWA has made the point source performance tracking spreadsheet available to IWEA.
    - Eliana – Thank you, Albert!
- Hal – next steps?
    - Eliana – Did people get to look at the notes from our last call? I wanted to finalize those. They're on the attachment.
    - Hal – Looks fine to me.
    - Eliana – Do we want to have another call in a couple of weeks? This will give people a chance to look at the PowerPoint and get suggestions to Amy. Is that doable?
    - Hal, Amy – Sure.
    - Eliana – Feb. 7th is the Wednesday two weeks from today. Does that work for people?
        - Lauren, Jean – Cannot do the 7th.
        - Amy – Could we look at the 13th?
    - **Next Call: 10 am on Wednesday, Feb 13th**
    - Amy – I'll update the letter based on the changes discussed today. I'd like to have any other changes back by Friday.
    - Hal – Could we have more time on giving comments for the PowerPoint, Amy?
    - Amy – Close of business on Jan 31st.
    - Eliana – I will send out a reminder to everyone. Thank you, everybody, for your time today.
      Adjourn