



Caring People [™] *Quality Programs* [™] *Exceptional Service*

MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Tracy Peterson, P.E., Municipal Engineer
Neil Weiss, P.E., Assistant Director of Water & Pollution Control

Date: March 4, 2021

Subject: Story County Water Monitoring & Interpretation Plan, 2021-2030

In 2020, 24 members of a planning team began meeting by Zoom to take a comprehensive look at stream and lake monitoring in Story County. After state support for volunteer water quality monitoring ended, Story County had proposed creating a local program, while the City of Ames continued to provide laboratory services for watershed projects. However, it became apparent we needed an inventory of the data that had already been collected by various agencies and guidelines for how the data could best be used before we could make plans for additional monitoring. **Prairie Rivers of Iowa (PRI) convened the group of stakeholders to grapple with this challenge and create a plan.** Those who served on the planning team include:

- Story County Conservation (Mike Cox, Jerry Keys and Margaret Jaynes)
- City of Ames (Tracy Peterson, Liz Calhoun, Neil Weiss, Dustin Albrecht, Maryann Ryan and Ashley Geesman)
- City of Nevada (Jordan Cook and Jeremy Rydl)
- City of Gilbert (Sonia Arellano-Sundberg)
- City of Huxley (Rita Connor and Mark Kahler)
- Iowa State University Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture (Mark Rasmussen)
- Izaak Walton League (Zack Moss and Paul Readhead)
- Story County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner (Kayla Bergman)
- Story County Community Foundation (Jennifer Dieter)
- Prairie Rivers of Iowa (Penny Brown Huber and Dan Haug).

The Story County Water Monitoring & Interpretation Plan, 2021-2030 has now been completed. The outline of the plan mirrors how the planning team walked through and understand the information and also ensure that all members were all on the same page. Chapters in the plan reflect those learning curves: (1) Why do we want data? (2) Where do we want data? (3) What data is already available? (4) How do we interpret the data once we have it? (5) How can we collect new data? (6) Goals for future monitoring.

This plan is the first of its kind in Iowa where a county-wide plan has been developed. It provides a working document for meeting goals and strategies as the planning team continues to meet and support effective, practical stream and lake water quality monitoring efforts.

City staff and PRI would like to offer City Council an option to have a PowerPoint presentation to help synthesize the information and to answer questions. **The entire planning committee has targeted the end of March for a public press release and launch of the monitoring plan across Story County and the state. The report will be distributed, including to City Council and other member agencies, at that point.**

Meetings with other member agencies have been scheduled for a 15-20 minute PRI PowerPoint plan presentation by PRI, as follows:

- 2/17 at 9:30 a.m. Story County Watershed Assessment team
- 3/8 at 5:30 p.m. Story County Conservation Board and
- 3/8 at 6:30 p.m. Nevada City Council
- 3/9 at 10:00 a.m. Story County Supervisors
- 3/15 at 6:30 p.m. Gilbert City Council
- 3/17 at 9:00 a.m. Story County Soil & Water Commission
- 3/17 at 3:30 p.m. Story County Community Foundation Board

If Ames City Council prefers to hear this presentation, a motion can be made to include this on the March 23rd Ames City Council meeting agenda.