

**UMRR Annual Report**

**Activities Committee**

**FY20-21**

**Board of Directors**

* August 3 meeting / 13 attendees - Topic: Revenge of the Marshes and a Watershed Approach to Flooding
* October 5/10 attendees: David Osterberg on Iowa Water Issues
* December 7/11attendees
* February?
* April 5 / 10 attendees: Tollway Sustainability
* May 30/ 11 board, 19 other attendees: Annual meeting – Chicago Impact on the Mississippi River and ;pollution in the Mississippi River

**Interaction with other organizations**

* Monthly attendance at the Minnesota Environmental partnership Water Cluster meetings to support environmental, economic and racial justice issues ,
* Worked with the City of Coon Rapids, MN to encourage their regenerative energy (solar) and also met with a college, sports arena and two private companies to promote solar energy.
* Involvement in the new MN Environmental Protection TF to identify priorities re climate change
* Monthly attendance at Iowa Water Legislative Roundtable with a seminar developed on soil health presented to farmers.
* Hosted book Blowout by Rachel Madow and Paul Hawken’s Drawdown re a plan to reverse global warming and promoted a webinar Out of Sight, Out of Mind re groundwater
* UMRR letter to Wisconsin environmental agency supporting legislation to disallow PFAS pollution in waterways.
* In Dane County prepared two forums re storm water and with the Sierra Club supported the adoption of the Madison storm water ordinance which passed.
* Worked with city of LaCrosse:
  + to approve a multi-year plan for restoration of issues in the LaCrosse River marsh.
  + to update a 10-year farmland protection plan to limit encroachment of urban development.
  + To test private wells re PFAS used on airplane fires
  + Investigated whether fish and wildlife have been tested re contamination in municipal wells.
* In Illinois worked with the Karst database project re GIS map layer on their web portal.
  + Letter to Illinois Dept of Ag re nutrient reduction and gulf dead zone
  + Reviewed McHenry county re WRAP (Water Resources Action Plan)
  + Participated in Oil and Water Dont Mix meetings

**Governmental Action**

* Letter to the Biden administration in support of:
  + Vetoing the EPA’s veto waiver for the Yazoo Pumps Project in the Mississippi river
  + Immediate action supporting the Mississippi Restoration and Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) for the conservation program in the Farm bill 2023
  + Support ag policies that benefit the environmental, rural economies, public health and greenhouse gas mission reductions.
  + Long-term solutions for nature-based flood programs
* Letter with support from all UMRR states re the MRRRI program introduced by rep. McCollum on 6/28/21.
* In Minnesota:
  + Support significant police reform
  + A bonding package that meets needs of 300M for water infrastructure, community rebuilding, transit and natural lands and funding for the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund projects.
  + Support for MEP Environmental Omnibus bill
  + Support for $5.5M to support soil health initiatives – bill passed.
  + Support of the clean car bill – bill passed
  + Letter to MPCA sup
  + Letter to Gov Walz asking the PCA to consider treaty rights, harm to indigenous community and climate consequences in its assessment of the impacts of oil/petroleum Line 3.
  + Letter asking for full funding for the “U”s Forever Green program – bill passed
  + To Gov. Walz asking that more scientific data be considered before the state commits to including cover cops/no till as eligible practices in carbon market.
  + Letter to Sen. Klobuchar supporting a robust American Jobs Plan Act that includes our farm and food systems.
* In Wisconsin:
  + Letter to legis delegation disagreeing with their decision to dump low level nuclear waste into regular landfills
  + Support from multiple agencies to cease efforts to resurrect the Yazoo River Pumping Plant program
* In Iowa:
  + Letter sign-on for the Healing Our Water program re FY2022 appropriations for Great Lakes priorities.
  + Opposed efforts to change Iowa’s Forest Reserve Tax Credit and the conservation Tax Credit

**Education/Public Advocacy**

* Monthly newspaper columns written by soil and water districts plus other environmental groups
* Worked with LSP to mail NOLO (?)200 flyers

**Special PFAS project** **support:**

* Worked with city of French Island regarding PFAS contamination
* Gave PFAS presentations to Woodbury Cottage Grove area LWVs
* Wrote PFAS article for LaCrosse paper with intent of further distribution to state LWV leagues for their advocation.
* Letter to IEC for PFAS information in support of October PFAS program

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