

DNR Update for the Bonanza Valley GWMA Project

GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY

Minnesota's use of groundwater has increased over the last two decades. An increasing reliance on groundwater may not be a sustainable path for continued economic growth and development.

The DNR is establishing the Bonanza Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) to help improve groundwater appropriation decisions and help groundwater users better understand and plan for future development opportunities.

More information about the GWMA will be posted on DNR's website: <http://dnr.state.mn.us/gwmp/areas.html>.

DNR HOLDS BONANZA VALLEY STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION MEETING

198 people attended the January 29 stakeholder information meeting on the Bonanza Valley Groundwater Management Area. The large commons room at Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa High School in Belgrade was full.

The meeting included presentations and discussions on groundwater use around the state and in the Bonanza Valley. Conversations continued as attendees stayed after the meeting to ask additional questions of DNR staff.

Statewide trends indicate groundwater use is increasing – up 35 percent in the past 25 years. Bonanza Valley is one of the areas in the state where groundwater use has been increasing.

DNR's approach to addressing the increasing use of groundwater is to focus on sustainability, improve information on groundwater resources, engage groundwater stakeholders, and stimulate innovations that will substantially improve efficiency in groundwater use.

By law, DNR must ensure that groundwater use is sustainable and does not harm ecosystems, water quality or the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Bonanza Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) will use a year-long process to create a GWMA plan. The GWMA plan will describe what DNR will do to accomplish its objectives for sustainable groundwater use in the Bonanza Valley.

DNR will use a "Project Advisory Team" to provide advice on the GWMA plan. The Project Advisory Team will include farmers, well-drillers, other citizens, and members of local and state government agencies. The Project Advisory Team will meet monthly during the planning process, and these meetings are open to the public.

DNR will use the Project Advisory Team meetings, its website, email systems, other public meetings, and personal conversations to inform and listen to stakeholders. (Information on the first Project Advisory Team meeting is provided below.)

UPCOMING PROJECT MEETINGS

February 26, 2014 Project Advisory Team Meeting. The Bonanza Valley Groundwater Management Area Project Advisory Team will meet for the first time on February 26th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The meeting will be held at the Pope County Courthouse in Glenwood, MN in the Community Room. The public is welcome to attend.

This first meeting will focus on describing the GWMA planning process, the Project Advisory Team's role, and the proposed working boundaries of the Bonanza Valley Groundwater Management Area.

Individuals do not need to be on the Advisory Team to attend. The Advisory Team meetings are open for interested parties to observe and time is available at the end of the formal meeting to provide comments and ideas.

March 26, 2014 Project Advisory Team Meeting. The Bonanza Valley Groundwater Management Area Project Advisory Team is scheduled to meet on March 26th, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. This meeting and its location will be confirmed after the February 26th meeting of the PAT.

GWMA PROJECT WORK

DNR staff are identifying a proposed working boundary for the Bonanza Valley based on several criteria, including current groundwater use patterns, hydrogeology, and groundwater dependent features. The proposed working boundary will be discussed at the February 26th Project Advisory Team meeting.

For more information on all GWMA's, go to the DNR's [GWMA webpage](#).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO ENGAGE IN BONANZA VALLEY

- February 26, 2014 - Project Advisory Team Meeting. Pope County Courthouse, Glenwood, MN. Community room, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Come, observe, and offer your thoughts.
- March 26, 2014 - Project Advisory Team Meeting. Location of the meeting is to be determined. Come, observe, and offer your thoughts.
- Web based Survey – Read the [Draft Groundwater Strategic Plan](#), complete the [survey](#)

- Project Updates Available - For information about the project, [updates](#) have been posted on the [project webpage](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this project, please contact Mark Hauck (DNR project manager at 320-223-7846; mark.hauck@state.mn.us) or visit the DNR's [GWMA webpage](#).