Update for the Straight River Groundwater Management Area Project

STRAIGHT RIVER KICK-OFF & STAKEHOLDER MEETING

On January 15 in Park Rapids, 53 community members attended a kick-off event held by the DNR for the proposed Straight River Groundwater Management Area.

The DNR is establishing a Straight River Groundwater Management Area to help improve DNR groundwater appropriation decisions and help groundwater users in this area better understand and plan for future development opportunities.

The meeting included presentations on the DNR's Draft Strategic Plan for Groundwater Management, along with focused information on the Straight River area.

Highlights from the meeting include:

- The number of high volume wells in the area has doubled in the last 20 years. This has primarily been for center pivot irrigation systems in crop fields;
- The total gallons of groundwater used over the past 25 years has increased by 84%;
- Nitrate concentrations are above the drinking water standard of 10 mg/l in some of the domestic and municipal wells in the area;
- The amount of groundwater being used may be having adverse impacts on streams, wetlands, and lakes in the area;

- DNR will hold monthly meetings with an advisory team to help create a plan for the Straight River Groundwater Management Area;
- The plan will guide DNR groundwater management actions over the next four years in the area;

- Members of the advisory team include local farmers, businessmen, city, township and county officials, along with state agency staff;
- The first advisory team is scheduled for February 21, 2014 from 9 am to noon in the Northwoods Bank Community Room in Park Rapids;
- The public is welcome to attend the advisory team meetings and provide input.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information on this project, please contact Tim Crocker – DNR Project Manager at 320-616-2450, ext. 232, tim.crocker@state.mn.us. You can also visit the DNR webpage by clicking on the following link: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/gwmp/area-sr.html