

Dear Ms Lipenga,

I attach some information that I believe is relevant to concerns expressed in your letter of May 13, 2011 to the Minnesota Agency directors. We have completed a study, funded in part by MPCA, in which we developed a sediment budget for the Le Sueur watershed. I attach a copy of the final report. Regarding your concern about appropriate application of scientific findings, we have worked hard to move carefully, reaching conclusions that are well supported by the evidence.

Addressing another concern expressed in your letter, a number of us are working with the St Anthony Falls Laboratory to develop a project that explicitly includes collaboration among scientists, the farming community, and state agencies. We will establish a collaborative whose goal is a consensus strategy for reducing sediment loading from the Greater Blue Earth watershed. It is a big project, including extrapolation of our sediment budget to the Greater Blue Earth, a simulation model consistent with the best scientific information, a decision support framework, and the various necessary meetings and applied research needed to support the collaborative. It is also an administratively complex project because we believe it is important that all stakeholders who can contribute, should. We have received preliminary approval for 319 funding and the work plan has been forwarded to the EPA. Importantly, we also have a commitment of \$150,000 from the Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Coalition and representatives of the farming community will be key members in the process. The remaining funding will be requested from Clean Water Legacy funds through MDA and MPCA. The MDA request will be submitted shortly in response to their RFP process. We are now talking to MPCA about requesting a contribution from them.

Our initial 319 request is attached - it provides a good summary of the work and explains how we propose that funding for the project be allocated. We think the time is right to develop a credible model and work collaboratively toward consensus regarding an effective path forward on turbidity and sediment reductions. We are encouraged that we have secured both 319 and MAWRC funding and we hope that MPCA and MDA can make good use of Clean Water Legacy funds to complete the package and move this process forward.

I'd be happy to forward additional information - we have published two papers and have a couple more in press. We will also be presenting papers on the subject at the MN Water Resources Conference this October. I share your concerns about the potential for blending advocacy and science. I thought you would be interested in knowing about the progress we are making.

All the best,  
Peter Wilcock

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