

# The St. Croix County Ground & Surface Water Quality Study Group

## Scope of Study Group<sup>1</sup>

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**Overarching Goal of the Special Study Group:** To provide the St Croix County Board with general guidance and sound science-based information to effectively protect the ground and surface water quality of St. Croix County's water resources.

### **Background**

The St. Croix County Ground & Surface Water Quality Study Group was established by resolution of the St. Croix County Board in December, 2016.

The purpose of the group is to examine the level and sources of nutrient pollution in the study area (rural St. Croix County--see map of Study Area) and determine if changes are in order to existing county plans, policies, programs or regulations to adequately protect groundwater and surface water quality for the health, welfare, and safety of our residents.

The Study Group will be supported by a facilitator and a team of technical subject matter experts. The Study Group will also have access to other support resources to assist with research, education, and documentation. The technical subject matter experts will include public-sector and private-sector professionals who may be called upon to lend their understanding to water quality, hydrology, agronomy, health, agricultural practices, permitting, legal matters, and other issues as raised by the study group.

### **Draft Scope**

The scope of the study is:

1. Provide record of science-based analyses and monitoring of nutrient pollution<sup>2</sup> levels and trends in St. Croix County, ***from agricultural livestock waste practices, crop practices, erosion and storm water runoff, and home & other fertilizer uses.***
  - Status of St. Croix County's Surface and Ground Water Resources. (HHS & CDD staff, DNR)
2. Summary description of the State and Federal Governments' areas of jurisdiction over water quality, table summary
3. Education/Discussion of County regulations and activities affecting water quality, table summary. (Who governs what?) Potential topics and presenters include:
  - Groundwater 101 (Kevin Masarik – January 30)
  - Private septic systems and wells, application of municipal waste, DNR, CDD (Ryan Yarrington)
  - Surface Water 101 (Aleisha Miller)
  - St. Croix County Agriculture Practices 101 (Ryan Sterry)

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted 1/17/2017.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this study, the term "nutrient pollution" include nitrates, phosphorous, bacteria, and heavy metals.

- Review and Approval Process & Standards for CAFOS (Steve Olson)
  - Regulation of livestock siting, manure application, fertilizers, etc.
  - Sediment run-off, erosion, stormwater management, residential development and fertilizer application, CDD (Tammy Wittmer, Aleisha Miller)
  - Other topics as decided by the study group.
4. Education/Discussion of County plans, policies, programs, capabilities, and regulations that protect water quality. Statutory and legal authority, regulatory status and capacity, financial capacity, and enforcement capacity. Education and discussion with CDD, HHS, UWEX, Corp. Counsel, ?? table summary. Potential topics include:
- Data collection, monitoring, analysis, modeling, and mapping capabilities
  - Regulatory implementation and enforcement
  - TMDLs 101: legal basis, setting, monitoring, and enforcement
  - Other topics as decided by the Study Group
5. Inventory/review of alternative Wisconsin regulations and approaches to protect water quality for lessons learned and best practices. Potential topics and presenters include:
- DATCP regulatory changes to laws and administrative code, recent and proposed
  - Discovery Farms Emerging Practices (Amber Radatz)
  - Volunteer and citizen based water quality monitoring programs
  - Other topics as decided by the study group.
6. A Report of Key Findings that identifies the effectiveness of existing St. Croix County activities, plans, policies, programs and regulations in protecting ground and surface water quality relative to established standards. (What’s working? What’s not working?)
7. Develop recommendations for the County Board regarding options to protect groundwater and surface water quality from pollution for the health, welfare, and safety of our residents, businesses, and environment.