Form 1100-001
(R 9/07)

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Item No. 8.A.1

SUBJECT: Little Plover River Flow Management Update

FOR: SEPTEMBER **BOARD MEETING**

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Dan Baumann, WCR Water Leader
Todd Ambs, Water Division Administrator

SUMMARY:

The Little Plover River (LPR) is a class I brook trout stream located in Portage County, Village of Plover. In 2005, 2006 and 2007 a section of the LPR dried up as a result of lower than average precipitation and a large amount of groundwater withdrawal from several dozen high capactiy wells in this small watershed.

The Department appeared at the August 2006 NRB meeting to identify a strategy for restoring a healthy flow in the LPR.

As a result, the Department has partnered with local groundwater users, conservation groups, other governmental agencies and the public to identify local solutions to restore a healthy flow in the LPR. The working group has identified a range of possible actions that would decrease groundwater pumping, increase recycling and re-use of withdrawals, explored the feasibility of each option and developed actions to address the problem.

The working group developed a flow augmentation plan using existing agricultural wells, to keep the river from drying up. This plan was executed in July-August 2007. Flows have not had to be augmented in 2008.

To date, there has been very good cooperation among the user groups and several conservation groups. Our approach has been to guide the parties to find local solutions to this problem. We are in the process of using public rights stage criteria and data collection to identify a minimum healthy flow for the LPR. This minimum flow level would be recommended in the hope that the voluntary reuse, recycling and pumpage reduction will maintain this level. Mandatory reductions of pumping could be imposed by the department but the process is cumbersome and could spark litigation.

All members of the working group were asked to submit written comments for this report if they wished. A copy of those comments will be provided at the NRB meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

No ☒	Fiscal Estimate Required	Yes ☐	Attached
No ☒	Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required	Yes ☐	Attached
No ☒	Background Memo	Yes ☐	Attached

APPROVED:

Bureau Director, _____ Date 9/8/08

Administrator, _____ Date 9/8/08

Secretary, Matt Frank _____ Date

cc: Laurie J. Ross - AD/8