COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: March 26, 2018
AGENDA NUMBER: 18
ITEM: Legislative Update

AGENDA: Information

ACTION REQUESTED

BACKGROUND
The District is tracking several pieces of legislation.

ISSUES/CONCERNS
Chloride Legislation: The chloride legislation continues to move forward in House and Senate committees.

Tuesday the House version passed the House Civil Law and Data Practices Committee. Next stop is Ways & Means. Funding for the training is a major issue and needs to be worked out.

Yesterday the Senate heard the bill in committee for the first time in the Environment Committee. StopOverSalting testified in favor along with Connie Fortin of Fortin Consulting, MPCA and coalition leaders Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association and one of their applicators. Questions about the liability part of the bill are being addressed again at the next Senate hearing which is in the Judiciary Committee.

If you have not already contacted your legislator, it’s not too late to send an email or letter telling them why you think this bill is important. News from Vanessa Demuth that the City Council of Rosemount has passed a resolution in favor and from Claire Bleser at Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed adding their logo to the coalition statement. Thank you Rosemount and Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek! The current coalition statement is attached below. Please let me know if your organization would like to add their logo. I also attached below the MAWD resolution and background information, in case that’s helpful.

The bills have had several amendments. Check progress here:
Link to House file: http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/bills/billnum.asp?Billnumber=HF3577&ls_year=90&sessionvar=20180
Link to Senate file: http://www.senate.mn/bills/billinf.php?billnum=SF3199&ls=90&special_session=20180
Drainage Work Group Recommendations

Drainage Work Group Members and Others,

As you may know, SF-3410 (Sen. Bill Weber, Chief Author) and HF-3836 (Rep. Paul Torkelson, Chief Author) were introduced recently to carry the five 2018 DWG statute and policy recommendations for Accelerating Drainage System Acquisition of Buffer Strips. Please thank them for serving as chief authors, if you have the opportunity. SF-3410 was heard in the Senate Agriculture, Rural Development and Housing Policy Committee today. An author’s amendment (A-1) was introduced and passed to incorporate some additional revisions of Sec. 17.117 Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program that were identified as needed by MDA since the first version of recommended language to address DWG Recommendation P4 about streamlining use of the AgBMP Loan Program by drainage authorities to help finance ditch buffer strips and alternative practices.

The DWG RSDO Subgroup met last week and I subsequently built on that discussion to provide the subgroup 4 options for language for Sec. 103E.728, Subd. 1a, para. (i). Yesterday and into this morning it was determined that the subgroup members could live with / not oppose the language for para. (i) that is contained in the attached final version of the DWG recommendations for Chapter 103E revisions to enable the Runoff and Sediment Delivery Option for repair cost apportionment. Due to the very tight policy introduction deadline this legislative session, the Sen. Ag, Rural Dev. and Housing Policy Cmte. hearing today was the only chance for this committee to hear the RSDO recommendations. Therefore, Greg Knopff and other Senate staff rapidly prepared Amendment A-2 to SF-3410, to include the DWG RSDO revisions of Chapter 103E. Sen. Weber introduced the A-2 Amendment to SF-3410 today, which was passed by the Ag, RDHP Cmte. and referred to the Sen. Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance Cmte.

I testified on behalf of the DWG recommendations today. Jennifer Berquam testified about the support of AMC for these DWG recommendations, and Ray Bohn testified about MAWD support.

Some major work of the DWG is moving forward. Thanks to all who helped discuss / debate and develop these DWG recommendations!

SF-3181 (Sen. Torrey Westrom, Chief Author) was also heard in the Sen. Ag, RDHP Cmte. today. The companion bill is HF-2876 (Rep. Jeff Backer, Chief Author). I testified about the DWG review and conclusions regarding these bills, which I had outlined in the letter I sent to the Bois de Sioux Watershed District and shared with DWG members last week. SF-3181 was modified by amendment today and referred to the Sen. ENRPLF Cmte. Rather than try to accurately explain the modifications, I’ll suggest that you check the bill hyperlink at the beginning of this paragraph after the modified version is posted.

RECOMMENDATION
None