

ITEM #: 15
DATE: 08-26-25
DEPT: W&PC

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

BACKGROUND:

The *Code of Iowa* Section 466B.22, Sub-Chapter II allows political subdivisions located within the same United States Geological Survey Hydrologic Unit Code 8 watershed to create a Watershed Management Authority (WMA) by entering into a 28E agreement. The purpose of such authorities is to enable cooperation in supporting watershed planning and improvements for the mutual advantage of the political subdivisions involved. The City of Ames has entered into two separate 28E agreements as a part of the Headwaters of the South Skunk River WMA and the loway Creek WMA.

Each of these two WMAs hold joint meetings on a quarterly basis. Dustin Albrecht, Environmental Specialist with the Water & Pollution Control Department, has interacted with the WMAs and their constituent members for several years, forming partnerships that continue to benefit the City's non-point source nutrient reduction efforts. He was appointed by City Council to be the City's representative for the Headwaters of the South Skunk River WMA on October 8, 2024.

On July 18, 2023, Council voted to appoint Tracy Peterson, who was the Municipal Engineer at the time, to become the City's designated representative for the loway Creek WMA. With Ms. Peterson's departure from the City, a new designee is needed. **It is proposed that Dustin Albrecht be appointed as the City of Ames representative for the loway Creek WMA due to the shared meetings and similar goals to the Headwaters of the South Skunk River WMA.**

In addition, both WMAs require each political subdivision to name an alternate representative. Noel Steckelberg, Civil Engineer I with the Public Works Department, has responsibilities that align with goals of both WMAs and has expressed interest in becoming involved with the groups. **Therefore, it is proposed that Noel Steckelberg be appointed as the City of Ames' alternate representative for both WMAs.**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can:
 - a. Approve the appointment of Dustin Albrecht, Environmental Specialist, as the representative to the loway Creek Watershed Management Authority.
 - b. Approve the appointment of Noel Steckelberg, Civil Engineer I, as the alternate representative to the loway Creek Watershed Management Authority.
 - c. Approve the appointment of Noel Steckelberg, Civil Engineer I, as the alternate representative to the Headwaters of the South Skunk River Watershed Management Authority.

2. Name a different appointee to the loway Creek WMA and different alternate representative to both WMAs.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Appointing representatives and alternates to the WMAs with which the City is involved is important to ensure adequate coordination with watershed partners. Dustin Albrecht has been involved in the technical aspects of the WMA's watershed efforts for several years and Noel Steckelberg's interest and work responsibilities align well with the goals of both WMAs. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.