



Minnesota Environmental Quality Board

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June 9, 1986

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD WORK PROGRAM F.Y. 1987

INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) F.Y. 1987 work program, as was its predecessor, is based in large part upon the Ten Priority Environmental Issues identified and adopted by the Board in 1985.

- o The first major division of the work program describes the activities the Board will undertake in response to the Ten Priority Issues. The first three priority issues have been combined in the 1987 work program under the heading of State and Local Water Management. The issue areas dealing with Acid Rain, Landfills/Siting/Alternatives and Peat and Mineral Development are grouped together at the end of the first section of the work program. In each case, other state agencies bear the major responsibility for addressing these issues and the Board will limit its participation to maintaining a monitoring role.
- o The second section of the work program describes the Board's statutorily mandated program responsibilities. These programs include Power Plant Siting, Environmental Review, Southern Minnesota Rivers Basin Council, Critical Areas and administrative services to the Board.

The F.Y. 87 work program shows an increase in activity in the power plant siting area in anticipation of receipt of an application for a major new high voltage transmission line.

Other items in the "EQB Operations" portion of the work program receiving increased attention are Legislation and Legislative Liaison, Environmental Review (new rules) and Environmental Education. A new program activity entitled "Local Government Assistance and Program Coordination" has been included in the F.Y. 1987 work program. This activity will result in the development of a plan for a coordinated technical assistance program for local units of government.

- o The third section of the work program includes those programs and resources which the Environmental Division of the State Planning Agency is responsible for administering but which fall outside the specific statutory authority of the Board. Included in this group of programs are the High Level Radioactive Waste, Environmental Resource Development, Review of Local Planning Authority, Agricultural Land Preservation and Outdoor Recreation activities.

I. ANALYSIS OF THE BOARD'S PRIORITY ISSUES

The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board's 10 priority environmental issues for statewide attention are:

- o State and Local Water Planning and Management.
- o Soil Conservation and Water Quality.
- o Surface and Ground Water Protection (including Non-Point Source Pollution).
- o Toxic Contamination (includes Hazardous Waste and Pesticides).
- o Nuclear Power Plant Decommissioning/Radioactive Waste Disposal.
- o Acid Rain.
- o Landfills/Siting/Alternatives.
- o Indoor Air Pollution.
- o Peat and Mineral Development.
- o Environmental Monitoring/Data.

The Environmental Quality Board work program for dealing with each of these issues is defined in the following paragraphs.

A. STATE AND LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT

In 1983, the Legislature transferred the water planning responsibilities of the former Water Planning Board to the Environmental Quality Board. The Governor's Task Force to Review the EQB concluded that statewide water planning responsibilities are appropriately focused in the EQB and that carrying out these functions is a critical function of the Board. The identification of water-related issues as the top three priority issues which the Board believes must be addressed further emphasizes the importance of water planning initiatives.

In February 1983, the Minnesota Water Planning Board summarized its work in a statement of a strategy for meeting state responsibilities in water planning and management. (See Attachment 2.) This strategy continues to guide the water planning and management activities of state agencies. It is the basis for EQB staff work program and is reflected in the activities of member agencies, as shown in Attachment 1.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

Lead Responsibility: Environmental Division/SPA. (The Water Resources Board, a member of the EQB Water Resources Committee, shares the lead responsibility in this area.)

Supporting Agencies: DNR, MPCA, Health, Agriculture, MnDOT.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

The EQB staff objectives for F.Y. 1987 are to: (1) complete development of a revised statewide strategy and further the implementation of elements of the strategy and (2) assure the implementation of the "Comprehensive Local Water Management Act of 1985."

The EQB staff will coordinate the activities of supporting agencies with the development and implementation of a statewide strategy for water and related land resources.

The Water Resources Board is responsible for the implementation of the "Comprehensive Local Water Management Act," but has requested the assistance of Environmental Division/SPA in this process. Consistent with its statewide planning role, staff to the EQB will be responsible for assisting in the implementation of the "Comprehensive Local Water Management Act."

Objective 1. State and Interstate Water Planning and Management.

Task: Staff the Water Resources Committee of the EQB. A major component of staffing the WRC involves chairing the Inter-Agency Issue Team on Water Resources, a technical arm of the committee.

Product: Reports to the Board, as appropriate, on tasks as completed.

Task: Complete revisions of the 1983 strategy for meeting state water and related land resources planning and management responsibilities; complete preparation of a "1987-88 Priorities Report" to guide actions in the implementation of the statewide strategy; monitor and evaluate the development of interagency agreements to assure that they are consistent with the statewide strategy; develop a comprehensive water resources funding plan for the governor that identifies funding gaps and recommends means for stabilized support of key ongoing efforts; and develop and implement procedures for review of water-related budget requests and legislative initiatives.

Products: Revised statement of strategy for meeting state water and related land resources responsibilities; "1987-88 Priorities Report."; reports to the Board, as appropriate, on interagency agreements monitored by the Water Resources Committee;

comprehensive water resources funding plan for submission to the governor; procedures for review of water-related budget requests and legislative initiatives; and assessments/recommendations regarding 1987-88 budget requests and legislative initiatives.

Task: Develop a model service contract for privatized wastewater and water supply facilities.

Product: Model service contract(s) for distribution by the MPCA and MDH to interested local governments.

Task: Complete the development of a Minnesota wetland evaluation methodology and associated materials, including chairing the state-federal task force which is responsible for development of this strategy.

Product: Minnesota wetland evaluation methodology, associated training materials, and application data base.

Task: Participate in regional (interstate) activities which may impact on the water planning and management activities of the State of Minnesota, including the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association, Council of Great Lakes Governors (water-related activities), Great Lakes Commission, Missouri Basin States Association, Red River Water Resources Council, Minnesota/Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission, and Sea Grant Advisory Committee.

Product: Reports to the Board, as appropriate, on significant interstate issues.

Task: Develop priorities for the use of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 22 planning assistance program funds, and oversee the implementation of approved projects, in coordination with interested agencies. Priority projects are to be directed toward furthering development and implementation of the framework water plan.

Products: Recommended priorities for the use of Section 22 planning assistance funds; and reports on approved projects as completed.

Objective 2. Implementation of the "Comprehensive Local Water Management Act"

Task: Complete development of final recommendations on local water management rules and an information and education program to assist in implementation of the local water management act. This work involves administrative duties associated with the Water Resources Board Local Advisory Committee management together with available experts in the area. This work will continue to involve administrative duties associated with the Water Resources Board Local Advisory Committee.

Products: Recommended local water management rules for adoption by the Water Resources Board; recommended information and education program for implementation through the Water Resources Board; and reports to the Board, as appropriate, on issues identified through workshops and other coordination activities.

Task: Complete a "Local Water and Related Land Resources Planning Assistance Handbook" to guide local units of government in water and related land resources planning, including an annotated bibliography of data and studies available from state and federal governments and the identification of potential state resources to assist in local planning.

Product: "Local Water and Related Land Resources Planning Assistance Handbook."

Objective 3. Soil Conservation and Water Quality; Surface and Ground Water Protection.

Task: Assist the U.S. Soil Conservation Service in development of a pilot program for the organization of soil erosion data on a small watershed basis in order to facilitate assessment of off-site damages of erosion, to aid in local water planning activities, and to facilitate the integration of local, state, and federal sources of natural resources information.

Product: Design and implementation of a pilot program.

Task: Work with the University of Minnesota, including such units as the College of Agriculture and the Water Resources Research Center, to assure an understanding of research in respect to agricultural chemicals and their impact on water quality.

Product: Reports to the Board, as appropriate.

Task: Participate on the interagency ground water group serving as a continuing forum for discussion and resolution of emerging groundwater issues.

Product: Reports to the Board, as appropriate, on emerging ground water issues and coordination needs.

Task: Assist the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in final development of the interagency non-point source pollution control strategy by continued participation on the non-point issue team chaired by the MPCA and by review of the team's recommendations by the Water Resources Committee.

Product: Reports of the Non-Point Source Issue Team and Water Resources Committee (i.e., the 1987-88 Priorities Report element relating to non-point).

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 3.40

B. TOXIC CONTAMINATION (INCLUDES HAZARDOUS WASTE AND PESTICIDES)

The significance of hazardous materials management and the awareness of the need for action to safeguard the public is well recognized and is reflected in several Environmental Quality Board (EQB) priority issues, including "Toxic Contamination" and "Surface and Ground Water Quality". Hazardous materials management concerns the transport, storage, use and disposal of materials, including wastes, that are corrosive, toxic, ignitable, oxidative or reactive. Problems can occur due to such things as leaks, spills, improper disposal, and improper usage.

Numerous agencies are involved in the management of hazardous materials, and agencies are also users of hazardous materials. There is a need to keep lines of communication open among these management agencies to allow for comprehensive and consistent hazardous materials management. The EQB, because of its responsibility to serve as a forum for the discussion and coordination of environmental issues, is in a unique position to facilitate this agency interaction.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

Lead Agency: PCA, MDA, MDH.

EQB Supporting Agencies: DNR, MnDOT, DEED, SPA.

Other Agencies: WMB, DOER, Public Safety, MC, local units.

EQB STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

The EQB staff objectives for FY 87 are to facilitate the coordination of hazardous materials management, to monitor solid waste and hazardous materials management activities, to facilitate the identification of issues related to pesticides.

Objective 1. Coordinate Hazardous Materials Management - Assist the state's hazardous materials planning and regulatory agencies in providing a coordinated and complementary approach to management in the state.

Task : Provide a forum where agencies involved in hazardous material management can exchange information regarding their activities.

Products: (1) A meeting of interested and affected agencies for the exchange of information on current activities and responsibilities. (2) Subsequent semi-annual meetings for the exchange of information and the identification of issues and needs.

Task : Prepare reports delineating hazardous materials management activities, responsibilities, issues and needs.

Products: (1) A report on current activities and responsibilities based on the initial meeting described above

(2) A report following each biannual meeting delineating issues and needs.

Task : Keep the EQB appraised of significant hazardous materials management issues and developments, including identifying areas where the Board may provide coordinating assistance.

Products: Reports to the Board on status and possible future work plan elements.

Objective 2. Monitor Solid Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Activities.

Task : Monitor the activities of those state and local agencies charged with the management of solid waste and hazardous materials.

Product: Briefings and reports to the Board, as appropriate, on state and local agency activities, emerging issues, and possible future work plan elements.

Task : Monitor the activities of the Legislature relating to the management of solid waste and hazardous materials.

Product: Briefings and reports to the Board, as appropriate, on Legislative activities.

Objective 3. Facilitate the Identification of Issues Related to Pesticides

Task : In consultation with the appropriate agencies, identify the institutional, environmental and public health and safety issues related to the use of pesticides.

Product: Report to the Board delineating the issues facing the state and outlining appropriate tasks for the Board to pursue in FY '88.

Objective 4. Monitor Great Lakes Water Toxic Issues

Task: Monitor Great Lakes water toxics activities of the International Joint Commission and Council of Great Lakes Governors.

Product: Reports to the Board, as appropriate, on Great Lakes toxics activities, emerging issues, implications to Minnesota and possible future work plan elements.

STAFF REQUIREMENT: 1.00

C. NUCLEAR POWER PLANT DECOMMISSIONING/RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL.

1. DECOMMISSIONING OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

There are three nuclear power plants in Minnesota; all are owned and operated by Northern States Power Company (NSP). The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission operating licenses issued to NSP will expire on January 1, 2002 for Monticello, on January 1, 2004 for Prairie Island 1, and on January 1, 2005 for Prairie Island 2. Although there is uncertainty concerning the actual life of a nuclear plant it is certain that decommissioning will be a significant environmental issue in the future. Minnesota should continue to address the state's interests, concerns, and involvement in decommissioning of nuclear units in order to develop adequate information for future state policies and decisions. In addition the state should present its concerns to the federal agencies with regulatory authority such as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency. (The Board has been designated by the Governor to coordinate the state response to the NRC rules relating to decommissioning.) Advance planning at the state level is essential for coordination of state activities involving the EQB, PCA, HEALTH, PUC, DPS, DOT, and possibly others.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

Lead Agency: SPA/Environmental Division (EQB)

EQB Supporting Agencies: PCA, DOH, DOT.

Other Agencies: Public Utilities Commission and Dept. of Public Service

EQB STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

The EQB staff objectives for FY 87 are to follow the major issues of decommissioning, maintain a limited library of information and sources of information, coordinate (when necessary) the development of a state response to the actions or inaction of federal agencies regarding decommissioning, maintain a liason with NSP and with citizen groups interested in decommissioning, and to report to the Board on issues as they arise or as they are requested.

Objective 1. Maintain a limited library of decommissioning information

Task: review the literature, obtain copies of pertinent information, and update the bibliography regarding decommissioning issues.

Product: Updated on-the-shelf bibliography

Objective 2. Provide the Board with reports on the progress of the major issues.

Task: Review NSP's 1986 five-year reestimation of current decommissioning costs.

Product: Report

Objective 3. Coordinate state agency response.

Task: Chair the interagency Nuclear Decommissioning Study Group to coordinate state positions on decommissioning matters.

Product: Reports as necessary

Other objectives may result from the recommendations contained in the F.Y. 86 report to the Board which is in preparation and will be presented at the June meeting.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: .17

D. INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

Indoor air pollution represents an emerging environmental issue in the State of Minnesota. The "sick" building syndrome and the associated concerns over agents such as formaldehyde, asbestos and radon have brought the indoor air pollution issue to the attention of state agencies and the Legislature.

The EQB has been active in coordinating a state agency response to the problems associated with indoor air pollution. In particular, the EQB has chaired and staffed the indoor air quality interagency task force and work group, developed a legislative funding proposal and participated in the development of a indoor air pollution complaint referral system.

The Department of Health has emerged as the key state agency in regard to indoor air pollution in Minnesota. The Health Department is responsible for administering the complaint referral system and has been given the responsibility for undertaking a legislatively funded research effort designed to monitor public buildings and private homes for a range of potential indoor air pollutants.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

Lead Responsibility: Department of Health, Department of Energy and Economic Development

Supporting Agencies: The Environmental Division/SPA, Pollution Control Agency

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

The EQB staff objectives for F.Y. 86 are to (1) continue to staff and chair the interagency task force and work group, and (2) to provide a focal point for coordinating state agency response to the indoor air pollution issue.

Objective 1. Provide staff support to the interagency task force and work group.

Task: Chair the interagency task force and participate as a member of the interagency work group.

Product: Report to EQB on activities of the interagency task force and provide status reports to the EQB..

Objective 2. Coordinate state agency activities in response to the indoor air pollution issue.

Task: Coordinate state agency legislative initiatives to acquire funding to respond to indoor air quality issues.

Product: Provide the EQB with a proposed indoor air quality legislative proposal for Board review and action.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 25

E. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING/DATA.

Gathering and analyzing reliable data about Minnesota's water, air, and land resources are keys to efficient and effective policy development and resource management. Inventorying available data sources, developing programs to relate the available data, interpreting these data to make them useful to policy-makers, and making its availability known to program managers and the public are major needs. Environmental monitoring and trends analysis are important not only to identify problems in their early stages, but also to measure progress of environmental programs and to target and prioritize future efforts.

The Environmental Division/SPA recommended a trend analysis approach to environmental issue analysis and planning in 1984. In addition, a "Governor's Issue Team" identified the need for a coordinated, interdepartmental approach to trends analyses in a 1984 report.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

Lead Responsibility: Environmental Division/SPA.

Supporting Agencies: DNR, MPCA, Health, Agriculture, Transportation, DEED.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

The EQB staff objectives for F.Y. 1986 are to (1) develop an ongoing water data organization and analysis program relying on data generated for existing programs and (2) prepare analyses of existing water data for trends. The cooperation of other agencies in this effort is essential to meeting the staff objectives.

Objective 1. Maintain an ongoing Data Organization Program.

Task: Identify ongoing water-related data collection and planning programs that may provide information for an effective trends analysis program through (a) review of existing data sources with Planning Information Center staff; (2) a survey of agency programs, building on work by the Legislative Reference Library and the System for Water Information Management User's Committee; and (3) communication with university and private sector analysts.

Product: Inventory of water-related data collection and planning programs.

Task: Work through the SWIM Users Committee to assess water-related data collected, including (a) evaluation of the potential of existing data bases for long-term trend identification of interest to state and local levels of government, (b) recommending indicators, and (c) proposing ways of filling gaps in data collection activities to assist in long-term trend analyses.

Product: Reports to the EQB, as necessary, based on the evaluation of existing data bases for long-term trend identification potential.

Task: Establish a format for the publication of a series of water-related trend summaries for distribution to the Governor, legislators, libraries, press, and the general public.

Product: Model trend summary report.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: .33

F. MONITORING OF PRIORITY ISSUES

The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board will expend a minimum amount of resources to monitor three of the 10 priority environmental issues. This decision is based upon a combination of factors including a limited amount of resources, the major role of other state agencies in the three issue areas and a desire to avoid duplication of effort. The issues which fall into this activity area are Peat and Mineral Development, Landfills/Siting/Alternatives, Acid Rain and Low-Level Radioactive Waste.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

LEAD RESPONSIBILITY:

Acid Rain - PCA

Landfills/Siting/Alternatives - PCA

Peat and Mineral Development - DNR
Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal-Low-Level Radioactive
Waste Compact

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

The EQB staff objective for F.Y. 1987 is to keep the Board informed of developments in regard to acid rain, landfills/siting/alternatives and peat and mineral development and low-level radioactive waste disposal.

Objective 1: Keep the Board informed of state agency activities regarding acid rain, landfills/siting/alternatives and peat and mineral development and low-level radioactive waste disposal.

Task: Monitor program activities in these four issue areas.

Product: Status reports to EQB.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: .10

II. EQB OPERATIONS

A. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD ADMINISTRATION

This activity provides staff support for EQB meetings, oversees EQB program development and implementation, coordinates the intergovernmental functions of the EQB, and manages the staff support necessary for EQB meetings and programs. The major components and the staff resources necessary for this activity are:

Objective 1. Staff Support of EQB Meetings.

Task: Implement the rules of procedure for the EQB, particularly notice requirements.

Product: Reports to EQB as necessary.

Task: Provide background information to facilitate EQB decision making as well as sample resolutions and orders.

Product: Sample resolutions and orders.

Task: Provide staff support for the technical representatives, subcommittees and task forces ordered by the EQB.

Product: Committee and technical representatives provided necessary support.

Objective 2. EQB Work Program Development

Task: Work with the EQB Long Range Planning Subcommittee to develop work plan recommendations consistent with the EQB's 10 priority environmental issues.

Product: Work plan recommendations.

Task: Prepare a proposed work program for submission to the EQB and the Director of the State Planning Agency.

Product: Draft work plan available for EQB review 6/87.

Objective 3. EQB Work Plan Management.

Task: Prepare quarterly work program status reports.

Product: Quarterly work programs status reports 10-86, 1-87, 4-87, 7-87.

Task: Prepare a report to the Governor describing the State of Minnesota's environment.

Product: Report to the Governor.

Task: Schedule issue update reports to the Board and identify work program modifications requiring EQB review and approval.

Product: Issue update reports presented to the Board as necessary.

Objective 4. Monitor the EQB Priority Issues and other emerging environmental issues as the basis for developing a revised EQB priority issues list.

Task: Solicit comments on the validity of the existing priority issues and suggestions for additions or deletions to the existing priorities list.

Product: Report which compiles the responses received.

Task: Prepare a revised priority issues list for adoption by the EQB.

Product: Adopted Revised EQB Priority Issues List

Task: Utilize the revised EQB Priorities List in the development of the FY87-88 biennial budget.

Product: FY87-88 biennial budget which reflects the revised issues list.

Task: Schedule an EQB briefing on each priority issue during the year.

Product: Oral briefings of EQB and distribution of current information on priority issues.

Objective 5. Information and Public Communication.

Task: Provide for public input to EQB decision-making and increase public awareness of the EQB through the preparation of resource material, public speaking, issuing of press releases and providing written and telephone responses to requests for information.

Product: Periodic status reports as necessary.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 1.00

B. LEGISLATIVE/BUDGET REVIEW

The EQB's enabling statute (116C.04) requires the Board to review all legislation of major significance which relates to the environment. This activity utilizes the resources of EQB staff in coordination with its member agencies and the legislative review program of the State Planning Agency to: review environmental legislative proposals; and provide staff coverage

of legislative committee hearings to ensure that the environmental legislative priorities of the EQB is a critical factor in ensuring that the environmental priorities established by the EQB, EQB member agencies and the State Planning Agency are developed and presented in a coordinated and effective manner.

Objective 1. Legislative Review Process.

Task: Work with the Director of the State Planning Agency/Chairman of the EQB to assess the process for reviewing environmental legislative and budget issues in coordination with the responsibilities of the State Planning Agency.

Product: Outline of legislative review process to be used during the 1987 legislative session 12/86.

Objective 2. Oversight of Legislative Session.

Task: Monitor legislative hearings on environmental legislative proposals and provide the EQB with monthly legislative status reports during the legislative session.

Product: Monthly legislative status reports.

Objective 3. Legislative Analysis.

Task: Provide analysis of environmental legislative initiatives for the EQB and coordinate with similar efforts being undertaken by the State Planning Agency.

Product: As necessary, provide EQB members with written analysis of major legislative initiatives.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 2.00

C . ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROGRAM

Objective 1. Environmental Review Program Administration.

Task: Publish the Monitor.

Product: Monitor on a bi-weekly basis.

Task: Correspond with RGUs concerning processing of documents.

Product: reports to Board on status of efforts.

Task: Maintain manual and computerized data files on projects subject to environmental review.

Product: reports to Board on status of efforts.

Objective 2. Staff Support to EQB for Environmental Review Activities.

Task: Research the background of pending decisions and prepare briefing materials and sample finding or resolutions.

Product: reports, briefing memos, sample resolutions, sample findings, conclusions and orders.

Objective 3. Environmental Review Assistance.

Task: Provide written and verbal assistance and information to governmental units, developers, consultants, and the public about the environmental review process. Prepare and distribute briefing information about amended rules, once promulgated. Revise the booklet "EAW Guidelines," time permitting.

Product: briefing materials about amended rules and revised EAW Guidelines booklet. Log of assistance provided.

Objective 4. Rule Revision.

Task: Complete rule amendment process for sections of the rules approved for revision by EQB in April, 1986.

Product: amended rules.

Task: Research and develop appropriate changes to rule sections not amended through the above task, in particular, the mandatory EAW and EIS categories. Discuss possible changes with affected parties and groups as appropriate. Begin rule amendment process if warranted.

Product: proposed amendments to rules; possibly, amended rules.

Task: Research and develop possible changes in environmental review program enabling statute. Topics may include: EIS cost charge-back, EQB authority to enforce environmental review program requirements, the purpose of an EAW and overlap between the EAW process and permitting processes.

Product: staff report recommending possible statutory changes.

Task: Assess the use of the generic EIS process as a tool for the study of priority issues and determine if changes are needed in the generic EIS concept to make it more useful for the study of priority issues. Develop prioritized list of generic EIS topics.

Product: report on any needed generic EIS rule changes (may be part of product of task above on possible rule changes).

Prioritized list of proposed generic EIS topics.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 1.67

D. POWER PLANT SITING

This activity provides for the administration of the state's Power Plant Siting Act. The principle components of the F.Y. 1987 work program include: studies of anticipated technical, regulatory, and policy issues relating to the routing of high voltage transmission lines; maintaining a permit compliance program; preparation for participation in Certificate of Need proceedings for a major transmission line; review of exemption and permit alteration applications; and legislatively mandated activities. Based on utility forecasts and other information, an application for the Upper Mississippi Power Group's proposed Manitoba to central Minnesota transmission line is expected in mid 1987. No applications for power plants are expected for a number of years.

Objective 1. Analysis of technical, regulatory and policy issues relating to the routing of high voltage transmission lines.

Task: Develop and maintain a technical data base on transmission technology; and track research on biological effects resulting from exposure to the electrical environment of high voltage ac and dc transmission lines.

Product: Reports and recommendations to the Board as necessary.

Task: Continue to support the ad hoc Regional Regulatory Coordinating Committee through regular meetings to review regional forecasts, to develop a mechanism for regulatory coordination of interstate transmission lines, and to share environmental and technical information. (The Committee consists of representatives of regulatory agencies from Minnesota and surrounding states).

Product: Report /Recommendations of the Regional Regulatory Coordinating Committee.

Task: Continue to work with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission and the Minnesota/Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission on the Planning of specific interstate transmission projects. Emphasis will be on a proposed 345 kV transmission line crossing of the St. Croix River.

Product: Status reports to the Board.

Task: Review the Power Plant Siting Act and Rules to address the question of regulatory review required for increasing the capacity of existing transmission lines and

power plants that were not permitted by the Board. Prepare recommendations for possible statutory or rule changes to clarify regulatory authority.

Product: Report and recommendations regarding the need for changes in the Power Plant Siting Act or Rules.

Objective 2. Permit compliance.

Task: Respond to public complaints regarding the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of transmission lines permitted by the Board.

Product: Status reports and recommendations to the Board.

Objective 3. Mandated Activities.

Task: Prepare a biennial report and hold an annual hearing on the general activities of the Power Plant Siting program.

Product: Biennial Report and summary of the annual hearing.

Task: Receive the fifteen year advance forecast from the Minnesota Wisconsin Power suppliers Group. Provide an analysis of the validity of the forecast and implications of the forecast in terms of new facilities. (The legislatively approved budget for F.Y. 87 includes funds for DEED to provide analytical consultant services)

Product: An analysis of the fifteen year advance forecast.

Task: Administer the quarterly utility assessment process.

Product: Summary of electric utility retail sales. Funding for the general activities of the program.

Objective 4. Transmission line construction permits.

Task: Administer the regulatory process leading to the issuance of a construction permit for high voltage transmission lines.

An application for the Upper Mississippi Power Group's proposed Manitoba line is expected in late F.Y. 87 or early F.Y. 88. The project as now planned will provide Minnesota and Iowa utilities with hydropower from facilities on the Nelson River in northern Manitoba by the mid-90's. While final decisions have not been made on line size and possible routes, a 500 kV ac or dc line to the Twin Cities area is likely. A smaller line, possibly 345 kV, may continue on to southern Minnesota. Negotiations for the power purchase are expected to be completed by late summer.

Product: Status reports to the Board as necessary during F.Y. 87. (Reports, EIS, proposed findings and recommendations and other documentation to support Board decisions 88 would be required in F.Y. 88)

Task: Participate in the Certificate of Need hearing for the proposed Upper Mississippi Power Group line. Prepare testimony on environmental effects relating to size, type and location of the facility and on related issues.

Provide assistance to the Department of Public Service, as requested by the Department, in reviewing the environmental information contained in the Certificate of Need application and in preparing the Environmental Report. (The PUC may order the Department to prepare the report)

Product: Hearing testimony. Proposed findings on environmental issues. Review of Certificate of Need Application. Environmental Report.

Task: Prepare a report on the health and safety implications of high voltage ac transmission lines through a scientific advisory group.

Product: Report on public health and safety issues relating to high voltage ac lines.

Task: Complete a preliminary assessment of possible transmission line corridors with emphasis on environmental, land use and reliability issues.

Product: Report and recommendations to the Board.

Objective 5. Environmental assessment worksheets.

Task: Prepare environmental assessment worksheets for transmission lines below the size threshold of the Power Plant Siting Act. Possibly two EAW's will be prepared in F.Y. 87. (Funded by EQB)

Product: EAW's as required.

Objective 6. Exemption applications/permit alterations.

Task: Process applications for exemption from the Power Plant Siting Act received from utilities who wish to construct facilities that would be covered by the act but which are local in nature and have little environmental effect.

Product: Reports, proposed findings of fact and other documents necessary to support the Board's decision.

Task: Process applications for minor alterations in construction permits or in certificates of site compatibility to allow for situations not anticipated at the time the permit was issued and which would not result in significant additional environmental impact.

Product: Report and proposed findings of fact to support the Board's decisions.

Objective 7. Bioindicator project.

Task: Provide staff support for the biomonitoring program.

Funds for continuing the contract with the University of Minnesota to maintain and operate the monitoring plots and to analyze and interpret the data will be provided from the EQB account. Proposed work for the coming year includes continued collection and analysis of vegetation, soil and moss samples from the ten established plots and statistical analysis of the sample data to identify trends attributable to changes in air quality. Economic effects will be considered in the analysis.

An external review of the project will be completed during F.Y. 87.

Product: Annual report to the Board summarizing project results.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 4.00

E. SOUTHERN MINNESOTA RIVERS BASIN COUNCIL

The Southern Minnesota River Basin Council (SMRBC) advises the EQB regarding the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan for the watersheds of the Minnesota River basin and the tributaries to the Mississippi River south of the Twin Cities. To do this, the Council initiates and coordinates various activities and programs identified by local governments as necessary to protect the region's soil and water resources. The Council will be working closely with the water planning staff of the EQB to assist in the implementation of the Comprehensive Local Water Management Act.

Objective 1. SMRBC Staff Support.

Task: Provide administrative staff support for SMRBC meetings including preparation of agendas and background materials and monitoring environmental legislation supported by the Council.

Product: Status reports to the EQB. Meeting agendas to EQB.

Task: Assist the Council in developing proposals for continuation of key SMRBC functions in the event that the Council sunsets on June 30, 1987, as currently scheduled.

Product: Recommendations and options for submission to the Board regarding continuation of key Council functions.

Objective 2. State/Local Coordination.

Task: Provide staff support to county level task forces in southeast Minnesota, the Blue Earth River Basin, and other locations in the SMRBC area, that are exploring local water planning and ground water protection initiatives.

Product: Status reports to EQB.

Task: Coordinate efforts to that assure state and local concerns are known to the Army Corps and the S.C.S., as they conduct the P.L. 87-639 study in southwestern Minnesota, by convening meetings of the advisory committee and the public involvement work group.

Product: Status reports to EQB.

Task: Assist the MPCA in its efforts to develop a non-point source pollution control program for the Minnesota River by leading necessary intergovernmental coordination activities.

Product: Status reports to EQB.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: .50

F. CRITICAL AREAS PROGRAM

The EQB's critical areas activity provides for the administration of the state's Critical Areas Planning Act. The critical areas program has three main components: designation of new critical areas, identification and evaluation of potential new critical areas, and review and approval of local and state government plans to ensure consistency with approved critical area plans. Each of these components is directed at providing special protection for the state's unique natural resources.

Objective 1. Administer the critical areas planning process in areas where a critical area designation has been made.

Task: Provide staff assistance to local units of government who are engaged in the preparation and update of local plans and regulations required by the critical areas designation order.

Product: Maintain a log of assistance provided to local units of government and status reports to EQB.

Task: Review amendments to approved local critical area plans.

Product: Maintain a log of assistance provided to local units of government and provide status reports to EQB.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: .10

G. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

When the EQB identified the priority environmental issues in the state, the environmental education component for each issue was stated to be assumed and of great importance. In November, 1985 the EQB formed a subcommittee to lead the work program effort on environmental education. Accomplishments during 1986 include: Adopting a Resolution commending the State Board of Education for requiring environmental education in the elementary schools; co-sponsoring a seminar to implement the elementary rule; producing and distributing a catalogue of curriculum resources for elementary teachers; issuing a 1986 Environmental Directory; surveying 400 groups and organizations concerning environmental education efforts; meeting with information personnel in EQB agencies; attending meetings and initiating contacts with environmental education providers and users. The following objectives and tasks continue the effort started in the 1986 Work Program.

Objective 1. Issue Analysis.

Task: Computerize the data obtained from the survey of over 400 groups and organizations and tabulate results.

Product: Report summarizing results of survey.

Task: Analyze education and information dissemination efforts of state and regional agencies, determine needs and opportunities for intergovernmental coordination and cooperation and propose actions.

Product: Report on findings and proposals for EQB actions.

Task: Analyze report of Waste Education Roundtable, determine applicability to general environmental education efforts, and identify gaps in information.

Product: Summary of Waste Education Roundtable's report and its' applicability to environmental education on other issues.

Task: Determine the need for and structure and charge of an environmental education task force or committees and submit proposal to EQB.

Product: Membership and charge submitted to EQB for approval.

Objective 2. Coordination

Task: Prepare an environmental education coordination program plan for the 87-88 biennium.

Product: Plan for Environmental Education coordination system by 3/87.

Task: Attend meetings of the Waste Education Roundtable as well as meetings and functions of other governmental and private groups addressing environmental education and information dissemination.

Product: Summaries to program manager, as appropriate.

Task: Develop and maintain contacts with governmental and private providers of environmental education and implement cooperative efforts to work together.

Product: Coordinated efforts to disseminate materials at State Fair and other functions.

Objective 3. Environmental Congress.

Task: Sponsor and provide staff support for an environmental congress in November, 1986.

Product: Environmental Congress committee established in June, 1986 and proposal for EQB approval at August, 1986 meeting.

Objective 4: EQB Publications.

Task: Develop brochures and other informational materials for EQB programs.

Product: Updated brochures and informational materials.

Task: Develop and implement distribution plan for EQB publication.

Product: Distribution plan for EQB publications; log of publications distributed by publication, location and audience.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: 1.00

H. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAM COORDINATION

Information is available in a variety of places but its often difficult to know exactly where to go and who to contact for a specific piece of information.

More and more smaller units of government, like townships and small cities, are called upon to carry an increasing number of environmentally-oriented programs.

Providing adequate opportunity for local participation in the development and implementation of state programs has frequently been inadequate. This has resulted in frustration for officials from both state and local government. In some cases this has meant a less than enthusiastic local response to state programs that must be locally implemented. In other cases it has meant the complete demise of the program.

Objective 1: Develop a proposal for an integrated local government information and assistance program which can be applied to all EQB and State Planning Agency Environmental Division activity areas.

Task: Review the programs of the Environmental Division of the State Planning Agency to determine what types of technical assistance is currently being provided to local units of government.

Product: Listing of all technical assistance efforts of the division.

Task: Prepare a proposal for a coordinated local government technical assistance and information program.

Product: Technical assistance program proposal for adoption in conjunction with the development of the F.Y. 1988 EQB work program.

Objective 2: To provide a one-stop place where local officials and general public can obtain information or assistance in answering questions concerning a wide variety of environmental issues.

Task: Respond to requests for information and assistance.

Product: File/log of information requests received.

Task: Develop and maintain equipment and inventory of technical assistance materials including slide shows, publications and training aids.

Product: Slide shows, brochures, training aids, maintain resource information file.

Objective 3: To improve the involvement of local government and local government associations in state program development and implementation.

Task: Review current practices for involving local government in state program development and implementation activities and prepare recommendations listing ways to improve the current situation.

Product: Proposed process for improving communication and interaction with local government submitted for EQB adoption in conjunction with the development of the F.Y. 1988 EQB work program.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF: .50

III. OTHER STATE PLANNING AGENCY
ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION ACTIVITIES

A. HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE PROGRAM:

Objectives for F.Y. 87 are to (1) phase-out the High-Level Radioactive Waste Program and the Minnesota Governor's Nuclear Waste Council, and (2) establish responsibility within the State Planning Agency for continued monitoring of federal technical studies.

Objective 1. Phase-out of High-Level Radioactive Waste Program and Minnesota Governor's Nuclear Waste Council.

Task: Reassign staff to other functions.

Product: All staff reassigned by September 1.

Task: Terminate all agency and consultant contracts and work program.

Product: Final program shutdown by September 1.

Task: Review all files, library and program documentation.

Product: Essential files and other documentation retained in storage and accessible in the event that crystalline rock is again considered by the federal government.

Objective 2. Establish monitoring capability within State Planning Agency.

Task: Assign responsibility for continued monitoring of the federal nuclear waste program, particularly technical studies of crystalline rock.

Product: Periodic progress reports and formal state comments submitted to federal government.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Objective 1. Recycling and/or Reuse Projects

To promote the recycling or reuse of waste products on a statewide basis. This includes:

Task: Coordinate the state waste tire program with the Pollution Control Agency and the Department of Energy & Economic Development and the Waste Management Board.

Task: Monitor the salvage yard program in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Task: Continue the work of the railroad tie task force.

Task: Encourage various types of recycling programs and technologies such as used motor oil and composting peat with sewage sludge.

Product: Semi-annual progress reports and presentations to the Environmental Quality Board.

Objective 2: Beautification Program

Landscaping, litter pick up, tree and flower planting, and general community betterment projects are necessary to maintain and improve Minnesota's quality of life.

Task: Continue the growth of the Minnesota Community Improvement Program (MCIP) through statewide workshops and improved community counseling.

Task: Increase the visibility of the Governor's Design Team project.

Task: Expand the clearinghouse capabilities of the Minnesota Beautiful project.

Task: Develop landscape presentations for large and small business, and continue work on the International Airport beautification project.

Task: Monitor progress of state facility beautification projects.

Task: Determine suitable sites for planting native grasses and flowers on MN/DOT projects.

Task: Work with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Corrections to refine and accelerate the alternative sentencing program.

Product: Maintain a log of communities, businesses and agencies participating in the various beautification programs and, as appropriate, prepare progress reports and presentations for the Environmental Quality Board.

Objective 3: Environmental Education

Virtually every aspect of the Environmental Resource Development activity that we have been involved with relies upon public education as a key to its success. (The following tasks will be coordinated with the Environmental Education component of the Environmental Quality Board work program.)

Task: Develop recycling educational material for elementary, secondary and post-secondary learning.

Task: Continue the promotion of CLIMB Theatre's presentation of "TRASH!" to elementary schools throughout the state.

Task: Produce additional public service announcements that promotes recycling and other environmental education efforts.

Product: Review existing recycling audio-visual programs for effectiveness and revise as necessary or appropriate; prepare log of recycling audio-visual presentations.

Objective 4: Minnesota Main Street Project

This program will continue as an addendum to the MCIP (similar to the Governor's Design Team). This program may be developed to include smaller communities.

Task: Increase the number of Main Street workshops in conjunction with the MCIP activities.

Task: Continue to staff the Main Street Interagency Task Force meetings.

Task: Use the Main Street staff expertise in conjunction with Governor's Design Team project.

Task: Explore the use of Minnesota Beautiful activities in the Main Street project.

Task: Provide staff assistance to the rural issues conference.

Product: Progress reports as needed; summarize recommendations of the rural issues conference.

C. REVIEW OF LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

It is widely recognized that unmanaged growth contributes to land speculation, rising energy consumption and higher public services costs. Further, physical growth, i.e., buildings, roads, sewers, etc., directly affects the productivity and use of the state's finite resources such as farmland, shoreland, forest lands, wetlands and mineral resources.

The planning enabling legislation is that body of state laws which delegates planning and regulatory responsibilities to cities and townships and forms the essential foundation of a growth management program. Yet these laws have serious shortcomings. They are complex, provide for overlapping authority and frequently are unclear in establishing limits of power among local levels of government. If local units of

government are to develop sound growth management controls and improve their coordination, they must be provided with laws that are current, clear and free of contradictions.

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER AGENCIES:

Lead Responsibility: Advisory Council on State Relations (ACSLR)/State Planning Agency

Supporting Agencies: DNR, Association of Counties, Association of Townships, League of Cities, Association of County Planning and Zoning Administration, Minnesota Planning Association and American Planning Association.

Objective 1: To clarify the planning legislation for counties, cities and townships and to establish clear limits of power among local levels of government.

Tasks: Identify current land use planning authority and responsibilities.

Discuss and identify problems associated with current authority and the enabling legislation.

Identify solutions.

Review solutions with interested parties at various locations throughout the state.

Draft legislation.

Proposed planning legislation for review by ACSLR.

D. AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

In 1984, the Minnesota Legislature passed the State Agricultural Land Preservation Policy and the Soil Loss Limits laws. These laws provide for an agricultural land preservation and conservation awareness program, a financial and technical assistance program, and a pilot county program to voluntarily involve seven counties in the development of plans and ordinances for farm land protection. The Department of Agriculture is charged with implementing this law and the Planning Agency is required to provide assistance to the Department.

RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:

Lead Responsibility: Department of Agriculture
Supporting Agencies: SPA, SCS, DNR, U of M, PCA, DEED, SMRBC

Objective 1: To assist the Department of Agriculture in implementing the Agland Preservation Act.

Tasks: Assist the Department in the preparation of technical assistance materials including technical, financial and other services available through state agencies and other organizations.

Provide membership on the Agland Preservation Task Force and the Technical Assistance Advisory Committee./

Provide minor technical assistance to counties as they prepare their plans and controls.

Product: This activity will result in the preparation of plans and controls aimed at protecting agricultural land in addition to providing for wide distribution of other land uses. Status will be provided as requested by EQB.

E. OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Outdoor Recreation Act of 1975 (Minn. Stat. 86A.01 to 86A.11) establishes an outdoor recreation syustem which will (1) preserve an accurate representation of Minnesota's natural and historical heritage for public understanding and enjoyment, and (2) provide an adequate supply of scenic, accessible and usable lands and waters to accommodate the outdoor recreational needs of Minnesota's citizens.

Objective 1: Review individual units management plans for consistency and compliance to the policies of DNR and the criteria of the Outdoor Recreation Act.

Task: To review and revise plans for consistency.

Product: Outdoor recreation plans that meet the criteria specified in the Outdoor Recreation Act.
