



BOARD ORDER

Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

PURPOSE

In the Matter of the review of the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for Redwood River, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.101, Subdivision 14 and 103B.801.

RECITALS /FINDINGS OF FACT

Whereas, the Policy Committee of the **Redwood River** submitted a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan) to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) on December 19, 2025 pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.101, Subdivision 14 and 103B.801 and Board Decision(s) #21-08 and #19-41

Whereas, the Board has completed its review of the Plan;

Now Therefore, the Board hereby makes the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions, and Order:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. **Partnership Establishment.** The partnership was established in 2024 through adoption of a Memorandum of Agreement for the purposes of developing a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The membership of the partnership includes: The Counties of Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone and Redwood and The Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone and Redwood Soil and Water Conservation Districts, The Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects and Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area Join Powers Organizations, and the City of Ghent, Marshall, and Redwood Falls.
2. **Authority to Plan.** Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.101, Subdivision 14 allows the Board to adopt resolutions, policies or orders that allow a comprehensive plan, local water management plan, or watershed management plan, developed or amended, approved and adopted, according to Chapter 103B, 103C, or 103D to serve as substitutes for one another or be replaced with a comprehensive watershed management plan. Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.801 established the Comprehensive Watershed Management Planning Program; also known as One Watershed, One Plan. Board Resolution #16-17 adopted the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures and Plan Content Requirements policies; Board Decisions #18-14, #19-41, #21-08, #23-50 adopted subsequent versions of the program policies.
3. **Nature of the Watershed.** The Redwood River Watershed (RRW) begins near the town of Ruthton across six counties in southwestern Minnesota and covers 563,471 acres of land that drains into the Minnesota River. For planning purposes, the RRW planning area in this CWMP includes additional areas on the eastern side that have not yet been covered in other watershed planning efforts. This includes all or part of small subwatersheds from the Yellow Medicine Watershed (Echo Creek—Minnesota River, Rice Creek, Middle Creek—Minnesota River, and Smith Creek—Minnesota River) and from the Minnesota-River—Mankato

Watershed (Crow Creek, Wabasha Creek, County Ditch Number 64, County Ditch Number 109, and City of Morton—Minnesota River) that drain directly into the Minnesota River.

4. **Plan Development.** Three public kickoff events were held in 2024 to inform watershed residents about the Comprehensive Watershed Management Planning process and solicit feedback on perception of issues that should be included in the plan. The nearly 60 attendees identified pollutants like sediment, nutrients, and bacteria, drinking water protection, bank erosion, and flood damage. Public opinion, state priority letters, existing reports, and committee expertise were utilized to develop a list of high, medium, and low priority issues.

5. **Plan Review.** On December 18, 2025, the Board received the Plan, a record of the public hearing, and copies of all written comments pertaining to the Plan for final State review pursuant to Board decisions #21-08 and #19-41. State agency representatives attended and provided input at advisory committee meetings during development of the Plan. The following state review comments were received during the comment period.
 - A. Minnesota Department of Agriculture: Received the Plan for Final Review December 19, 2025,, and No comment .
 - B. Minnesota Department of Health: Received the Plan for Final Review December 19, 2025,, and recommended approval of the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan on January 15, 2026.
 - C. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources : Received the Plan for Final Review December 19, 2025,, and recommended approval of the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan on January 9, 2026.
 - D. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: Received the Plan for Final Review December 19, 2025,, and recommended approval of the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan on January 20, 2026.
 - E. Minnesota Environmental Quality Board: Received the Plan for Final Review December 19, 2025,, and conformation of receipt with no comments.
 - F. Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources regional staff: Received the Plan for Final Review December 19, 2025, and recommended approval of the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan on February 6, 2026.
 - G. Local Review:
 - a. No comments from County, SWCD, City, or public.

6. **Plan Summary and Highlights.** The highlights of the plan include:
 - Watershed wide goals
 - High priorities**
 - i) Soil Health and working Lands
 - Implement 22,500 acres of soil health practices.
 - ii) Nutrients and Bacteria
 - Total Phosphorus: 7%, or 13,800 lbs/yr
 - Nitorgen Loading: 7% of 251,700 lbs/yr
 - iii) Protection and Restoration
 - Implement 18,000 acres of land in temporary or permanent easements
 - iv) Contamination
 - Protect drinking water by sealing 150 wells

- v) Water storage/ flooding
 - Add 4,000 acre-ft of storage.

Medium Priorities

- vi) Bank erosion
 - Stabilize 2000 ft of streambank and ravines
- vii) Riparian and shoreline management
 - Improve vegetation on 3,000 ft of riparian streambanks or shoreline
- viii) Barriers to Fish Passage
 - Address 4 barriers
- ix) Stormwater
 - Implement stormwater BMP's to treat 25 acres of rural or urban developed land.

7. **Southern Regional Committee.** On February 19, 2026, the Southern Regional Committee met to review and discuss the Plan. Those in attendance from the Board's Committee were _____ Board staff in attendance were Ed Lenz, Southern Regional Manager; Board regional staff provided its recommendation of Plan approval to the Committee. After discussion, the Committee's decision was to present a recommendation of approval of the Plan to the full Board.
8. This Plan will be in effect for a ten-year period until April 1, 2036.

CONCLUSIONS

1. All relevant substantive and procedural requirements of law have been fulfilled.
2. The Board has proper jurisdiction in the matter of approving a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the Redwood River pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.101, Subd. 14 and 103B.801 and Board Decisions #21-08 and #19-41.
3. The Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan attached to this Order states water and water-related problems within the planning area; priority resource issues and possible solutions thereto; goals, objectives, and actions of the Partnership; and an implementation program.
4. The attached Plan is in conformance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.101, Subd. 14 and 103B.801 and Board Decisions #21-08 and #19-41.
5. The attached plan when adopted through local resolution (contingent on BWSR approval [Minnesota Statutes 103B.801 and Board Resolution #21-08 and #19-41]) by the members of the Partnership will serve as a replacement for each partners' comprehensive plan, local water management plan, or watershed management plan, developed or amended, approved and adopted, according to Chapter 103B, 103C, or 103D, but only to the geographic area of the Plan and consistent with the One Watershed, One Plan Suggested Boundary Map.

ORDER

The Board hereby:

1. The Board hereby approves the attached Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan of the Redwood River, dated _____.

Dated at St. Paul, Minnesota, this _____.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Date: _____

_____, Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources