




DATE: April 14, 2026

TO: Board of Water and Soil Resources' Members, Advisors, and Staff

FROM: John Jaschke, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: BWSR Board Meeting Notice – April 22, 2026

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) will meet on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, beginning at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in the lower level Board Room, at 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul and by Microsoft Teams. Individuals interested in attending the meeting through Teams should do so by either 1) logging into Teams through the provided [meeting link](#) or 2) join by audio only conference call by calling telephone number: 651-395-7448 and entering the conference ID: 204 685 425#.

The following information pertains to agenda items:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Grants Program and Policy Committee

1. **Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape FY27 program authorization** – The Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape program has evolved from the Cooperative Weed Management program, which has been implemented for a decade, to better align the program with the goals of the Living Landscape Initiative which supports at-risk wildlife species, establishes corridors, builds landscape resiliency while strengthening collaboration with conservation partners. Through this alignment process, advisory committee and BWSR staff recommended updates to the program to include expanding eligibility to additional applicants and increase maximum grant award to take a broader, more strategic approach to terrestrial invasive species management and native plant community restoration. Ranking Criteria has been developed by staff and recommended by the Grants Program and Policy Committee. **DECISION ITEM**

Central Region Committee

1. **Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan** – The Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Organization (VLAWMO) has identified seven priority resource issue categories: surface water quality management; groundwater management; data collection; outreach, education, and community engagement; flooding and water quality; policy and facilitation; and community and ecosystem health and resiliency. Each resource issue category has one to three priority issues, and the Plan sets several measurable goals to address these areas of concern. The VLAWMO watershed encompasses 24.2 square miles in Northern Ramsey County and a small portion of Anoka County in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. VLAWMO will use this Plan over the next 10 years to protect and improve the water resources within their boundaries. **DECISION ITEM**

Bemidji Brainerd Detroit Lakes Duluth Mankato Marshall Rochester St. Cloud St. Paul

St. Paul HQ 520 Lafayette Road North St. Paul, MN 55155 Phone: (651) 296-3767

www.bwsr.state.mn.us TTY: (800) 627-3529 An equal opportunity employer

2. **Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan** – The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) has identified six priority issues to focus on over next ten years: water quality, stormwater management, groundwater sustainability, climate resilience, natural environments, and community relationships. The Plan sets 12 goals to address these areas of concern and prioritized strategies and actions to help reach these goals. The VRWJPO, which covers 335 square miles in central Dakota County and eastern Scott County in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, will use this Plan over the next 10 years to protect the water resources within its boundaries. **DECISION ITEM**
3. **Eagan-Inver Grove Watershed Management Plan** – The Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization’s Board has identified three priority issue categories: nutrient pollution in surface water resources; chloride contamination of both surface and groundwater resources; and groundwater use and sustainability. Each resource issue category has at least one primary measurable goal and several supporting goals. The Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of a robust education and outreach program and collaborative project implementation with member cities and local partners. The watershed encompasses approximately 30 square miles in northwest Dakota County. E-IGHWMO will use this Plan over the next 10 years to protect and improve the water resources within its boundaries. **DECISION ITEM**

Southern Region Committee

1. **Minnesota River Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan** – The Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed Partnership (Partnership) was selected by BWSR for the One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) Planning grant which was executed on May 1, 2024. The 1W1P Operating Procedures 3.0 and 1W1P Plan Content Requirements 3.0 were followed during development. To obtain public input, two kick-off meetings were held. One on July 23 in Nicollet, with the second held on July 30 in Saint Peter. Participant surveys regarding the watershed’s resource concerns were conducted at the in-person kick-off events as well as online. The Partnership’s policy, advisory, and steering committee members attended regularly scheduled meetings and review periods to develop the Plan. The required public hearing was held on December 15, 2025. The Partnership submitted the Plan to BWSR on January 27, 2026, for review and approval. The Southern Regional Committee (Committee) met on April 1, 2026, to review the content of the Plan, state agency comments on the Plan, and to make a recommendation for approval. The Committee recommends approval by the full Board. **DECISION ITEM**
2. **Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Extension** – The Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan was approved by the BWSR Board as a pilot plan December 14, 2016, and will expire December 31, 2026. The partnership, through individual participating board resolutions, intends to extend the plan expiration date to December 31, 2028. To align the watershed planning cycle with new data, specifically MPCA’s WRAPS cycle 2 report/data, the extension is being proposed. MPCA offered a timeline for report/data to be available by June 2026. New data will inform the partnership as a plan renewal amendment is considered. **DECISION ITEM**

NEW BUSINESS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **BWSR and MOSH Soil Health Updates** – The purpose of this board agenda item is to provide a comprehensive update on soil health initiatives through the combined efforts of BWSR and the Minnesota Office for Soil Health (MOSH). We intend to brief the Board on the status of our current soil health programs while highlighting the critical research and training initiatives currently underway through our partnership agreement with MOSH. **INFORMATION ITEM**

If you have any questions regarding the agenda, please feel free to contact me at 651-539-2587. We look forward to seeing you on April 22nd.

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH
ST. PAUL, MN 55155
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2026**

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

9:00 AM CALL MEETING TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2026 BOARD MEETING

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM (10-minute agenda time, two-minute limit/person)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

A conflict of interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived, occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests, and these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially. At this time, members are requested to declare conflicts of interest they may have regarding today's business. Any member who declares an actual conflict of interest must not vote on that agenda item. All actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest will be announced to the board by members or staff before any vote.

REPORTS

- Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee – Todd Holman
- Executive Director – John Jaschke
- Audit & Oversight Committee – Joe Collins
- Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report – Travis Germundson/Kevin Wilson
- Grants Program & Policy Committee – Mark Zabel
- RIM Reserve Committee – Jayne Hager Dee
- Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee – Joe Collins
- Wetland Conservation Committee – Jill Crafton
- Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee – LeRoy Ose
- Drainage Work Group – Neil Peterson/Tom Gile

AGENCY REPORTS

- Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Thom Petersen
- Minnesota Department of Health – Steve Robertson
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Sarah Strommen
- Minnesota Extension – Joel Larson
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Katrina Kessler

ADVISORY COMMENTS

- Association of Minnesota Counties – Brian Martinson
- Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees – Mike Schultz
- Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts – LeAnn Buck
- Minnesota Association of Townships – Eunice Biel
- Minnesota Watersheds – Jan Voit
- Natural Resources Conservation Service – Troy Daniell

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Grants Program and Policy Committee

1. Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape FY27 program authorization – Erin Loeffler – ***DECISION ITEM***

Central Region Committee

1. Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan – Anne Sawyer – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan – Anne Sawyer – ***DECISION ITEM***
3. Eagan-Inver Grove Watershed Management Plan – Anne Sawyer – ***DECISION ITEM***

Southern Region Committee

1. Minnesota River Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan – Shane Bugeja – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Extension – Luke Olson – ***DECISION ITEM***

NEW BUSINESS

1. BWSR and MOSH Soil Health Updates – Jared House and Marcelle Lewandowski (U of M) – ***INFORMATION ITEM***

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Dispute Resolution Committee Hearing is scheduled for April 23rd at 10:00 a.m. in St. Paul.
- Dispute Resolution Committee Hearing is scheduled for May 8th at 10:00 a.m. in St. Paul.
- BWSR Board meeting is scheduled for May 27, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in St. Paul and by MS Teams.

ADJOURN

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH
LOWER-LEVEL BOARD ROOM
ST. PAUL, MN 55155
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Eunice Biel, Jayne Hager Dee, Jill Crafton, Joe Collins, Kevin Wilson, LeRoy Ose, Mark Zabel, Mike Runk, Neil Peterson, Rich Sve, Ron Staples, Ted Winter, Todd Holman, Tom Schulz, Sarah Strommen, DNR; Joel Larson, University of Minnesota Extension; Melissa Lewis, MPCA; Steve Robertson, MDH; Brad Jordahl Redlin, MDA

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Lori Cox

STAFF PRESENT:

John Jaschke, Rachel Mueller, Marcey Westrick, Jill Sackett Eberhart, Erin Loeffler, Dan Shaw, Megan Reich, Suzanne Rhees, Craig Enwall, Ed Lenz, John Shea, Dave Weirens; Denise Lauerman, Suzanne Rhees, Sharon Doucette, Dusty VanThuyne, Jeremy Maul, Julie Westerlund

OTHERS PRESENT:

Megan Reich, Metro Blooms; Faith Krogstad, MPCA; Dave Jones, NRCS; Jesse Walters, Martin SWCD; Ashley Brenke, Martin SWCD; Kevin Paap, Blue Earth County; Laura Jester, BCWMC; Nathan Carr, Faribault County; Kerry Netzke, RCRC

Chair Todd Holman called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**
26-11 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Moved by Jill Crafton, seconded by Ron Staples, to adopt the agenda as presented. *Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

**
26-12 **MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2026 BOARD MEETING – Moved by Rich Sve, seconded by Mike Runk, to approve the minutes of January 28, 2026, as amended. *Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM

No members of the public provided comments to the board.

REPORTS

Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee – Chair Todd Holman reported they will be conducting the Executive Director’s annual review. Stated he attended the Environmental Review Implementation Subcommittee for EQB.

Executive Director’s Report – John Jaschke reported on the legislative session and gave an update. There were several Days at the Capitol, SWCD had theirs last week, and MN Watersheds had theirs the first week in March. Minnesota Chippewa Tribes also held a legislative event that John attended. There is a Conservation Day for States to meet with their representatives in Washington DC. NRCS will be having their State Technical Advisory Committee meeting next week. John attended the National Association Conservation Districts event in February that took place in San Antonio, Texas and gave a presentation on SWCD roles in the 1W1P program with Julie Westerlund, BWSR, Nicole Bernd, West Polk SWCD and Ashley Gallagher, Dakota SWCD.

John reviewed the Day of Packet that included Snapshot articles.

Jill Crafton asked if we’re a little more unique with money coming in from the Clean Water Legacy amendment and money out of our general fund that supports our SWCDs. John stated Minnesota has SWCDs, Watershed Districts, and Counties that have more capacity and responsibility than most states.

Audit and Oversight Committee – Joe Collins reported they have not met.

Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report – Rich Sve reported on March 17th DRC members attended a training session in preparation for the upcoming hearings. There are two hearings scheduled, one for April 23rd and one on May 8th. There are four new appeals since the last time we met and have a total of 12 appeals.

John Jaschke stated now that updates to the buffer procedures are complete, updates to the model ordinance and rules used by counties and watershed districts are close to being ready for external review.

Grants Program & Policy Committee – Mark Zabel reported they met in March but didn’t have someone attend the meeting in-person so will repeat the meeting in April and have an item on the next agenda.

RIM Reserve Committee – Jayne Hager Dee reported they met and have an item on the agenda for today.

Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee – Joe Collins reported they have not met.

Wetland Conservation Committee – Jill Crafton reported they will be meeting on April 1st.

Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee – LeRoy Ose reported they have not met.

Drainage Work Group (DWG) – Neil Peterson reported they have not met.

AGENCY REPORTS

Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Brad Jordahl Redlin reported the comment period for the Groundwater Protection Rules closed last week. The Soil Health Financial Assistance Program is in the middle of the grant awarding period. They are currently taking applications for a discount program for agriculture retailers that sell nitrate inhibitors with their nitrogen fertilizer.

LeRoy Ose asked what nitrogen fertilizer inhibitors are. Brad stated it's a product that inhibits nitrogen from reaching and moving to nitrate forms. Mark Zabel stated it encapsulates the molecule, so it releases later more slowly.

Minnesota Department of Health – Steve Robertson reported the Groundwater Restoration Protection Strategy Accelerated Implementation Grants are open and available to local governmental units, the application period is open until April 3rd. Source Water Protection Grants open the 2nd week in April. Stated the Lincoln Pipestone Rural Water Snapshot article is a great example of a project with multiple benefits.

John Jaschke stated the national Pheasant Fest event was held in Minneapolis last month.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Sarah Strommen reported DNR is engaged in the rulemaking related to gas production along with EQB. DNR will focus on the regulatory framework and draft rules, it will be out for public comment later this spring. DNR is also working on a continuous improvement project related to some of their water permitting. There were some concerns about the length of the permitting process for some of the complex projects. DNR recently released their moose survey results and are seeing some declines in the moose population. Stated it's the 75th anniversary of their wildlife management area systems and it will be featured on their spring Wednesday noon webinars that start today.

Minnesota Extension – Joel Larson reported the Well Aware Program featured in Snapshots had a clinic for sample pickup and drop off in late February and a workshop in early March where they reviewed the results. Joel stated they have a new program, the Minnesota Drainage Program, that is holding workshops with local governments, landowners, and drainage managers. The MOSH Forum is on April 8th at the St. Paul Campus Student Center. Their Annual Cover Crop Academy is a yearlong event led by Dr. Anna Cates and is a hybrid/in-person cohort to learn more about cover crop management .

Jayne Hager Dee stated when reading through the comprehensive watershed management plans in the southern region she didn't realize there were so many private wells still open with potential problems.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Melissa Lewis reported on the legislative session and gave an update. They released the Climate Adaptation Cost Study last week, which clarifies the significant cost of climate change.

ADVISORY COMMENTS

Association of Minnesota Counties – No report was provided.

Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees – No report was provided.

Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts – No report was provided.

Minnesota Association of Townships – Eunice Biel reported March 10th was the annual meeting of townships. They have been holding short courses throughout the state. March 2nd was township days at the Capitol.

Minnesota Watersheds – John Jaschke reported Jan Voit was unable to attend the meeting today and provided a report on her behalf. Jan thanked BWSR for their Day at the Capitol. She also thanked AMC, RRWMB, LOTW County, and Minnesota Watersheds for their partnerships in developing language to address ag exemptions in WCA and for the weekly legislative meetings. The Summer Tour Planning Group met on March 24th and are looking forward to this event, which will be held August 24 – 27 in Detroit Lakes.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – No report was provided.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RIM Reserve Committee

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) – Shift Clean Water Fund (CWF) Wellhead Funds to Allow Expanded Conservation Practice Acquisition – Sharon Doucette presented the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) – Shift Clean Water Fund (CWF) Wellhead Funds to Allow Expanded Conservation Practice Acquisition

ML 2021 First Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 6(g) appropriated funds for permanent conservation easements on wellhead protection areas or for grants to local units of government for fee title acquisition to permanently protect groundwater supply sources. Section 6(k) of the same chapter and article appropriated funds to purchase and restore permanent conservation easements under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Appropriation law also allows for the shift of easement funds to leverage federal funds and address high-priority needs.

CREP includes four conservation practices: CP2 – Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses (inside and outside Wellhead Protection Areas), CP21 – Filter Strips, CP23 – Wetland Restoration, Floodplain, and CP23A – Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain.

Shifting of the funds from wellhead easements to CREP easements will allow for leveraging of federal funds as well as meeting high-priority needs and will still allow the funds to be used for wellhead protection under CREP as well as the other approved practices and is consistent with authority in appropriation law.

Jill Crafton asked if a permanent easement is tied to a record of deed. Sharon stated it's recorded at the County Recorder's Office.

Mark Zabel asked if the funding under the \$5 million satisfies all the wellhead protection applications. Sharon stated there is newer funding that they have been using with more flexible appropriations.

Moved by Jayne Hager Dee, seconded by Joe Collins, to approve the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) – Shift Clean Water Fund (CWF) Wellhead Funds to Allow Expanded Conservation Practice Acquisition. **Motion passed on a roll call vote.**

Central Region Committee

Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission Watershed Management Plan – Marcey Westrick presented the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission Watershed Management Plan.

Background

The Bassett Creek Flood Control Commission was formed in 1968 primarily to study flooding issues in the watershed and adopted a watershed management plan in 1972. In 1984, the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (BCWMC) was created after revising the Flood Control Commission’s Joint Powers Agreement. The Commission prepared its first-generation watershed management plan that the Board approved in July 1989. The BCWMC is located in Hennepin County in the northwest portion of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. It is bound by the Elm Creek and Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commissions to the north, on the south and west by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and on the east by the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. The watershed covers approximately 40 square miles and all or part of nine communities: Crystal, Golden Valley, Medicine Lake, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, New Hope, Plymouth, Robbinsdale, and St. Louis Park. There are 10 priority lakes and four priority streams in the Bassett Creek watershed. The watershed drains to Bassett Creek and ultimately enters the Mississippi River through the Bassett Creek tunnel that runs under downtown Minneapolis. The watershed is influenced by urban and suburban land uses, and the population is anticipated to continue increasing.

Plan Process and Highlights

On April 14, 2022, the BCWMC sent notification of initiation of the planning process for the 2026-2035 Watershed Management Plan (Plan) to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410, and solicited each agency’s priority issues, summaries of relevant water management goals, and water resource information. An initial planning meeting was hosted by the Board of Commissioners on February 28, 2023. Regular meetings were held with the Plan Steering Committee between May 2024 and November 2025. The BCWMC also conducted Commission workshops and periodically invited additional participants to the plan steering committee meetings, as needed. The BCWMC also created a press kit for stakeholder engagement which included a watershed equity workshop, online survey, and meetings with underrepresented community groups, among other engagement actions.

The BCWMC grouped issues into four categories: waterbody and watershed quality, flooding and climate resilience, education and engagement, and organizational effectiveness. The Plan sets six high priority issues with associated goals to help reach Plan objectives. There are additional medium and low priority issues also with associated goals. The updated Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of many current programs and activities and introduction of new activities such requiring winter maintenance plans, targeting future work through surveys and assessments, and using indigenous land and water care practices where appropriate. Other programs include building connections with diverse communities, training for commissioners and local officials, and potential public-private partnerships.

Jill Crafton stated it was great to see a definition from DNR and that it provides more clarity. She was also excited about the tribal relations relationship developing.

Laura Jester from BCWMC appreciates the comments.

Jayne Hager Dee stated flood control is one of the big issues and thought historically they were dealing with some of the same issues.

**

26-14

Moved by Joe Collins, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission Watershed Management Plan. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

Southern Region Committee

Blue Earth River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan – Ted Winter and Jill Sackett Eberhart presented the Blue Earth River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

The Minnesota portion of the Blue Earth River watershed encompasses a total of 777,243 acres in portions of Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Faribault, Freeborn, Jackson, Martin, and Watonwan counties. The Blue Earth River itself begins in Iowa and flows approximately 146 miles north with both the Watonwan and Le Sueur Rivers flowing into it before it outlets to the Minnesota River in Mankato. The predominant land use is agriculture (~86%). There is a total of 21 municipalities within the watershed; two of which pull drinking water from surface sources (Fairmont and Mankato).

The Blue Earth River Planning Partnership (Partnership) was established on September 26, 2023, through adoption of a Memorandum of Agreement for the purposes of developing a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The membership of the Partnership includes Blue Earth County, Blue Earth County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Faribault County, Faribault County SWCD, Freeborn County, Freeborn SWCD, Jackson County, Jackson SWCD, Martin County, Martin SWCD, and the City of Fairmont. Per the BWSR Operating Procedures, if less than 10% of the jurisdictional land area of the local government is within the watershed planning boundary, participation by that local government is optional. Cottonwood County, Cottonwood SWCD, Watonwan County, and Watonwan SWCD opted out of the planning process.

On December 23, 2025, the Board received the Plan, a record of the public hearing, and copies of all written comments and responses pertaining to the Plan for final State review pursuant to Board #23 50. Letters were received from MDA, MDH, DNR, and MPCA. The State agencies each recommended Plan approval.

BWSR staff completed their review and subsequently found the Plan meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes and BWSR Policy. BWSR staff recommended Plan approval.

On February 19, 2026, the Southern Regional Committee (Committee) met to review and discuss the Plan. The Committee's decision was to recommend approval of the Blue Earth River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to the full Board per the attached draft Order.

Jill Crafton stated she was excited to see soil health in the plan and asked if the recharge helps with the health of the lakes. Jill Sackett Eberhart stated perennial cover helps keep nitrogen in place instead of allowing it to move with the water and cover crops are similar. Jill Crafton asked about contamination and pollution coming up the river and if it causes any problems. Jill Sackett Eberhart stated we don't know for sure what is coming from the south from Iowa.

Joe Collins stated that improving Blue Earth River has an impact on the Minnesota River and the Mississippi River and are important things that happen.

Steve Robertson appreciates the emphasis in this plan on drinking water resources. Stated this plan is a good example of how plans are increasingly working to identify and engage drinking water protection activities.

**

26-15 Moved by Ted Winter, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the Blue Earth River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

Chair Holman called a recess at 10:30 a.m. and called the meeting back to order at 10:38 a.m.

Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan – Ted Winter and John Shea presented the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

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.

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 Joint Powers Organizations, and the City of Ghent, Marshall, and Redwood Falls.

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. Letters were received from MDH, DNR, and MPCA. The State agencies recommended plan approval.

On February 19, 2026, the Southern Regional Committee (Committee) met to review and discuss the Plan. The Committee's decision was to recommend approval of the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to the full Board.

Joe Collins stated he appreciates the plan and seeing the goals and what the focus was.

Jill Crafton asked about the farm practices that are on the ground right now and if the farmers or people had input in the plan. John stated farmers along the Minnesota River in Redwood County have done a good job of getting those practices on the ground and have been a huge part of the input for what has been working and what may continue to work.

Kerry Netzke thanked John and Mark Hiles for their leadership.

**

26-16 Moved by Ted Winter, seconded by Mike Runk, to approve the Redwood River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

Sarah Strommen left the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

BWSR Pollinator and Biodiversity Support – Dan Shaw, Erin Loeffler, Jason Beckler, and Megan Reich presented the BWSR Pollinator and Biodiversity Support.

The decline of pollinator populations has led to a movement for action across Minnesota. Local partners, legislators and the public have looked to BWSR to provide guidance and resources to address pollinator declines and executive orders from Governor's Dayton and Walz directed BWSR to incorporate pollinator habitat across programs. Due to the importance of healthy biological systems in supporting water and soil resources, and rapid declines in plant and wildlife populations BWSR's efforts have expanded to a "Living Landscape Initiative." This initiative is focused on pollinator conservation, but also supporting overall biodiversity and building the resiliency of landscapes. Several BWSR programs are used to address needs across a wide range of landscape types in collaboration with local partners. This presentation focuses on five priorities identified in BWSR's updated Pollinator Plan, and discuss next steps for supporting pollinators, biodiversity, and landscape resiliency.

Kevin Wilson left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Brad Jordahl Redline left the meeting at 11:22 a.m.

Mike Runk asked how big the projects are. Dan stated it's a variety with the majority being smaller.

Melissa Lewis asked about deer management. Megan stated they educate and have conversations with people on how they can protect their native planting with physical barriers and some plants that are a natural repellent.

Mark Zabel asked about pesticides. Dan stated they do quite a bit of communication about that with the program. Making sure there won't be any chemicals used near these plantings and that neonicotinoids are not in any of the plants that are being planted. Mark asked about bees and colony collapse mostly due to mites and asked if there is a crossover between domestic colonies and the wild populations. Dan stated there is concern of disease transmission from honeybees to native bees and there's research being done on it. They're trying to get as much habitat out there and then that disperses the bees as well.

Jill Crafton asked about maintenance. Megan stated that individual support grant program participants agree to maintain their project for at least three years and it's part of the education they provide.

Leroy Ose asked if they encouraged people not to spray dandelions in their yard. Dan stated dandelions can provide some important pollinator benefits.

Climate Action Framework 2.0 Overview – Suzanne Rhees and Faith Krogstad presented BWSR Pollinator and Biodiversity Support.

Minnesota's Climate Action Framework is the state's plan to reduce climate pollution, also known as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and prepare communities for climate change in ways that benefit all Minnesotans. The framework builds on Minnesota's longstanding leadership in addressing climate change and aligns the state around the path forward. This framework comes out of the contributions of hundreds of Minnesotans. It invites all of us to contribute to creating the climate future in which everyone is healthy and safe in the face of climate change. The urgency of climate action is underscored by Minnesota's 2025 GHG inventory. Minnesota's emissions decreased 18% from 2005 to 2022, but

emissions increased 5.1% between 2020 and 2022, as activity rebounded following the COVID-19 pandemic. While the overall emissions trend is downward, Minnesotans are also feeling the impacts of climate change more acutely, with more unhealthy air quality, more extreme rains, and more costs associated with these events. The Climate Change Subcabinet has released the 2026 Climate Action Framework to reflect new opportunities, the progress Minnesota has made, and the need for accelerated action. The updated framework includes new GHG forecasting, a stronger focus on collaboration with local governments, and health and economic benefits for our communities.

Ted Winter asked about emerald ash borer and how to deal with the dead trees. Suzanne stated there are some efforts underway to try to increase the use of biochar through this pyrolysis process. Dan Shaw stated they are holding some biochar and conservation meetings. There have been efforts to try to do more logging and use that lumber if possible.

Ron Staples asked what climate pollution is. Faith stated its another way of saying greenhouse gases.

Tom Holman appreciates the work they've done.

Mark Zabel stated in 2024 MASWCD membership approved a resolution to direct the board to develop principles around climate change. There is currently a draft set of guidance principles for climate change that will be before the MASWCD Board in the next couple of months for their adoption.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Wetland Conservation Committee meeting is scheduled for April 1st at 9:00 a.m. in St. Paul and by MS Teams.
- Southern Region Committee is scheduled for April 1st at 12:00 p.m. in Windom and by MS Teams
- BWSR Board meeting is scheduled for April 22nd at 9:00 a.m. in St. Paul and by MS Teams.
- Dispute Resolution Committee Hearing is scheduled for April 23rd at 10:00 a.m. in St. Paul.
- Dispute Resolution Committee Hearing is scheduled for May 8th at 10:00 a.m. in St. Paul.

Chair Holman adjourned the meeting at 12:17 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Holman
Chair

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Dispute Resolution/Compliance Report

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category:

- Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type:

- Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Wetland Conservation Act Appeals/Buffer Compliance

Section/Region: Resource Conservation/Central

Contact: Travis Germundson

Prepared by: Travis Germundson

Reviewed by:

Presented by: Travis Germundson

Time requested: 5 minutes

Attachments:

- Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- None Capital Budget
 Amended Policy Request Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget
 New Policy Request Clean Water Fund Budget
 General Fund Budget Other:

ACTION REQUESTED

None

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See attached report

SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

The report provides a monthly update on the number of appeals filed with the Board of Water and Soil Resources and summary on buffer compliance/enforcement actions statewide.

Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report

April 7, 2026

By: Travis Germundson

Two new appeals have been filed since the previous report, bringing the total number of pending appeals to 14 .

Format note: ~~New appeals that have been filed since last report to the Board. Appeals that have been decided since last report to the Board.~~

~~File 26-7 (March 26, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Wright County. The Restoration Order regards the unauthorized impacts to 0.54 acres of wetland. The petition asserts that the county highway department's past alternations caused the area to become wetland. Status: No decision has been made on the appeal.~~

~~File 26-6 (March 26, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property in Wright County. The Restoration Order regards the unauthorized impacts of 1.43 acres or wetland association with the installation of agricultural drain tile. The petition asserts that the area was not identified as wetland prior to the installation of drain tile. Status: No decision has been made on the appeal.~~

File 26-5 (February 6, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Replacement Order for a property located in Mille Lacs County. The Replacement Order regards the unauthorized impact of 36,390 sq. ft. of wetland impact. The petition contends that the area is not wetland, and any such activity is exempt. The petition indicates that an application for a no-loss has been submitted to the local unit of government (LGU) concurrently with the appeal. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending LGU's decision on an after-the-fact no-loss application.*

~~File 26-4 (February 6, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Notice of Decision for a property in Otter Tail County. The appeal challenges the county's denial of an after-the-fact no-loss decision. The petition contends that the alleged wetland fill material currently located on the property existed prior to the purchase of the property by the appellant. This involves the same property and wetland area associated with a pending appeal of a Restoration Order (Appeal File 25-12). Status: The appeal was denied on March 4, 2026 and now that decision has been appealed to the Court of Appeals.~~

~~File 26-3 (February 6, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Notice of Decision for a property in Otter Tail County. The appeal challenges the county's denial of an after-the-fact no-loss decision. The petition contends that the alleged wetland fill material currently located on the property existed prior to the purchase of the property by the appellant. This involves the same property and wetland area associated with a pending appeal of a Restoration Order (Appeal File 25-11). Status: The appeal was denied on March 4, 2026 and now that decision has been appealed to the Court of Appeals.~~

~~File 26-2 (February 6, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Notice of Decision for a property in Otter Tail County. The appeal challenges the county's partial approval of an after-the-fact no-loss decision. The county granted the approval of a 5-foot wide path and required the removal of all remaining fill material placed outside that footprint. The petition contends that the alleged wetland fill material currently located on the property existed prior to the purchase of the property by the appellant. This involves the same property and wetland area associated with a pending appeal of a Restoration Order (Appeal File 25-13). Status: The appeal was denied on March 4, 2026 and now that decision has been appealed to the Court of Appeals.~~

File 26-1 (January 8, 2026) This is an appeal of a WCA Replacement Order in Otter Tail County. The Replacement Order regards the unauthorized impact of 0.8 acres of wetland impact. The petition contends

that the area is not wetland and if any impact occurred in wetland, such activity is exempt. The petition indicates that an application for a no-loss has been submitted to the local unit of government (LGU) concurrently with the appeal. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending submission of a complete after-the-fact application and for the LGU to issue a final decision on the after-the-fact application.*

File 25-18 (December 12, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA No-loss decision in Pine County. The appeal challenges the County's denial of a no-loss decision, asserting that the wetland areas in question are incidental. This involves the same property and wetland area associated with a pending appeal of a WCA Restoration Order (Appeal File 25-8) *Status: The appeal was remanded back to the local unit of government to develop an adequate record that considers a written Technical Evaluation Panel report.*

File 25-17 (December 11, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order in Sherburne County. The Restoration Order regards the unauthorized impact of approximately 3.5 acres of wetland. The petition contends that the area is not wetland, and any excavation/drainage in or around the area qualifies for a no-loss. The petition also indicates that an application for a no-loss has been submitted to the local unit of government concurrently with the appeal. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance for the local unit of government to issue a final decision on the after-the-fact application.*

File 25-16 (November 21, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Replacement Plan decision for a property in Crow Wing County. The appeal challenges the denial of a replacement plan application for the development of a residential lot. According to the county the lot is subject to existing development restrictions. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending the local unit of government's (LGU) decision on a local building permit appeal. The LGU denied the building permit appeal and now that decision is being challenged in District Court.*

File 25-13 (October 23, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Otter Tail County. The Restoration Order regards the placement of 2,000 sq. ft. of fill in a wetland adjacent to Long Lake. The petition contends that the current landowners are not responsible for the alleged violation. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending the local unit of government's (LGU) decision on the after-the-fact exemption and no-loss application submitted concurrently with the appeal. The LGU approved in part the no-loss application. That decision was appealed and affirmed on March 4, 2026 (see appeal File 26-2). BWSR's decision has now been appealed to the Court of Appeals.*

File 25-12 (October 22, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Otter Tail County. The Restoration Order regards the placement of 3,400 sq. ft. of fill in a wetland associated with two areas adjacent to Long Lake. The petition contends that the current landowners are not responsible for the alleged violation. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending the local unit of government's (LGU) decision on the after-the-fact exemption and no-loss application submitted concurrently with the appeal. The LGU denied the no-loss application. That decision was appealed and affirmed on March 4, 2026 (see appeal File 26-4). BWSR's decision has now been appealed to the Court of Appeals*

File 25-11 (September 25, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Otter Tail County. The Restoration Order regards the placement of 4,000 sq. ft. of fill in wetland adjacent to Long Lake. The petition contends that the current landowners are not responsible for the alleged violation. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending the local unit of government's (LGU) decision on the after-the-fact exemption and no-loss application submitted concurrently with the appeal. The LGU denied the no-loss application. That decision was appealed and affirmed on March 4, 2026 (see appeal File 26-3). BWSR's decision has now been appealed to the Court of Appeals.*

File 25-10 (August 29, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Notice of Decision for a property located in Brown County. The appeal challenges the denial of an after-the-fact exemption and no-loss determination. The appeal contends that the local administrative process is flawed and disputes the conclusion that the property does not qualify for the agricultural activities' exemption. This appeal involves the same property

and wetland area associated with a pending appeal of a WCA Restoration Order (File 25-7). *Status: A decision to grant and hear the appeal was made on September 22, 2025. A hearing before the Dispute Resolution Committee is scheduled to take place on May 8, 2026 to hear the appeal.*

File 25-9 (August 25, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA no-loss decision for a property located in Morrison County. The appeal challenges the approval of a no loss decision that was made under remand (File 24-9) for a township cartway. The petition contends that the incidental wetland determination is being applied in error. *Status: A decision to grant and hear the appeal was made on September 17, 2025. A hearing before the Dispute Resolution Committee is scheduled to take place on April 23, 2023 to hear the appeal.*

File 25-8 (July 24, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for property located in Pine County. The Restoration Order regards the placement of 62,640 sq. ft. of fill in wetland associated with a housing development. *Status: The appeal has been placed in abeyance and the Restoration Order stayed for the submittal of a complete application and final decision by the local unit of government (LGU). An application for an after-the-fact no-loss determination was denied by the LGU on November 18, 2025 and that decision was appealed and remanded back to the LGU (File 25-18).*

File 25-7 (June 6, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Brown County. The Restoration Order regards the unauthorized placement of fill material in a wetland associated with the expansion of a Campground/RV Park. The petition contends that the applicant still operates a farming operation that qualifies for an agricultural activities’ exemption. An application for exemption, and no-loss have been submitted to the local unit of government (LGU) concurrently with the appeal. *Status: The appeal was placed in abeyance pending LGU’s final decision on the after-the-fact exemption and no-loss application. The LGU denied the application. That decision was appealed and then granted to be heard by the Dispute Resolution Committee (File 25-10).*

Summary Table for Appeals

Type of Decision	Total for Calendar Year 2025	Total for Calendar Year 2026
Order in favor of appellant	1	
Order not in favor of appellant	4	3
Order Modified	1	
Order Remanded	1	
Order Place Appeal in Abeyance	4	2
Negotiated Settlement		
Withdrawn/Dismissed	1	

Buffer Compliance Status Update: BWSR has received Notifications of Noncompliance (NONs) on 98 parcels from the 13 counties BWSR is responsible for enforcement. Currently there are 13 Corrective Action Notices (CAN), and eight Administrative Penalty Orders (APO) issued by BWSR that are still active. Of the actions being tracked over 71 of those have been resolved.

Statewide 43 counties are fully compliant, and 44 counties have enforcement cases in progress. Of those counties (with enforcement cases in progress) there are currently 374 NONs, 287 CANs, and 30 APOs actively in place. Of the actions being tracked over 3,249 of those have been resolved.

**Disclaimer: These numbers are generated monthly from BWSR’s Access database. The information is obtained through notifications from LGUs on actions taken to bring about compliance and may not reflect the current status of compliance numbers.*

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Grants Program and Policy Committee

1. Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape FY27 program authorization – Erin Loeffler –
DECISION ITEM

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape FY27 program authorization

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Managing Invasives, Resilient, Landscape, RFP

Section/Region: Resource Conservation

Contact: Erin Loeffler

Prepared by: Erin Loeffler

Reviewed by: Grants Program & Policy Committee

Presented by: Erin Loeffler

Time requested: 15 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of FY27 Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape FY 27, including Ranking Criteria and Board Order.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

The Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape program has evolved from the Cooperative Weed Management program which has been implemented for a decade, to better align the program with the goals of the Living Landscape Initiative which supports at-risk wildlife species, establishes corridors, builds landscape resiliency while strengthening collaboration with conservation partners. Through this alignment process, advisory committee and BWSR staff recommended updates to the program to include expanding eligibility to additional applicants and increase maximum grant award to take a broader, more strategic approach to terrestrial invasive species management and native plant community restoration. Ranking Criteria has been developed by staff and recommended by the Grants Program and Policy Committee.

BOARD ORDER

**Fiscal Year 2027 Managing Invasives for a
Resilient Landscape Grants Program**

PURPOSE

Authorize the fiscal year 2027 Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape Grants Program and adopt request for proposals ranking criteria.

FINDINGS OF FACT / RECITALS

- A. The Laws of Minnesota 2025, 1st Spec. Session Chapter 1, Article 1, Section 4(b)(2) appropriated \$200,000 for invasive species and weed management programs and to restore native plants at selected invasive species management sites.
- B. The Board has authorities under Minnesota Statute §103B.101 to award grants and contracts to accomplish water and related land resources management.
- C. The Managing Invasives for Resilient Landscapes grants program supports activities for the removal of invasive plants and establishing native plant communities.
- D. The request for proposals (RFP) criteria are needed to provide expectations for applicants and subsequent implementation activities conducted with these funds.
- E. On March 16, 2026, and April 13, 2026, the Grants Program and Policy Committee reviewed the proposed Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape Grants Program board order and ranking criteria and recommended approval to the Board.

ORDER

The Board hereby:

- 1. Authorizes local government units and Tribal Entities as eligible applicants for the fiscal year 2027 Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape Grants Program.
- 2. Authorizes the fiscal year 2027 Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape Grants Program ranking criteria to be included in the RFP (Table 1).
- 3. Authorizes staff to finalize program requirements and issue a Request for Proposals based on the amount available (current estimate is \$180,000) and awards that amount from \$15,000 to \$30,000.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Todd Holman, Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: _____

Attachments: Table 1: FY 2027 Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape Request for Proposals Ranking Criteria

Table 1: Managing Invasives for a Resilient Landscape Ranking Criteria	Maximum Points Possible
Project Abstract: The project abstract succinctly describes what results the applicant is trying to achieve and how they attend to achieve those results.	5
Plan Alignment: The proposed project is based on priority restoration actions identified in a local, state, and/or federal resource management plan, or comparable Tribal plan or strategy, that target terrestrial invasive species, strengthens partnership and collaborative implementation.	15
Organizational Readiness: The application demonstrates organizational readiness to begin implementation soon after award. Includes information on organizational expertise and previous restoration experience with terrestrial invasive species management.	5
Proposed Outcomes: The proposed project has articulated specific and relevant metrics tied directly to the project's outcomes. Provides a realistic plan for sustaining proposal benefits after the grant funding period ends.	10
Target Species Selection and Native Plant Community Benefits: Proposal targets terrestrial invasive species that are high priority and locally relevant. Proposed methods and practices are appropriate, targeted, and will benefit native plant communities.	30
Environmental Justice: Explains whether the project is located in or benefits an MPCA Environmental Justice Area.	5
Collaboration and Partnerships: Existing collaboration enhances project outcomes or builds capacity.	20
Project Impact: Activities will accelerate implementation of terrestrial invasive plant management practices and restoration of native plant communities. Activities will initiate or build upon efforts that benefit local communities	10
Total	100

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Central Region Committee

1. Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan – Anne Sawyer – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan – Anne Sawyer – ***DECISION ITEM***
3. Eagan-Inver Grove Watershed Management Plan – Anne Sawyer – ***DECISION ITEM***

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan

Section/Region: Regional Operations/Central

Contact: Anne Sawyer

Prepared by: Anne Sawyer

Reviewed by: Central Region Committee

Presented by: Anne Sawyer

Time requested: 5 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan as recommended by the Central Regional Committee.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Plan:

https://www.vlawmo.org/application/files/3017/7038/8996/VI. A. 1a VLAWMO WMP Public Hearing Draft 02042026-medium_compressed.pdf

Appendix:

https://www.vlawmo.org/application/files/8117/7040/8269/VI. A. 1b VLAWMO WMP Appendix Public Hearing Draft 02042026-compressed-higher_resolution.pdf

SUMMARY (Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)

Background

The Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Organization was established by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) in 1983 between the Cities of Gem Lake, Lino Lakes, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, and White Bear Lake and the Township of White Bear. The first-generation Watershed Management Plan was approved by the Board in 1985. The VLAWMO watershed encompasses 24.2 square miles in Northern Ramsey County and a small portion of Anoka County. The watershed is bordered by the Rice Creek Watershed District on the north and the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District on the south. VLAWMO is an urban watershed, but contains abundant

surface water resources, including fifteen public water lakes, 47 public water wetlands, Lambert Creek, and several minor streams, ditches, and channels. There are also numerous parks and natural spaces, providing ecological and recreational benefits. Importantly, the watershed is home to East Vadnais Lake, which is the drinking water source for over 450,000 people – including the City of St. Paul. Further, nearly the entire watershed overlaps with one or more groundwater Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs), most of which have moderate vulnerability to contamination.

Plan Process and Highlights

On December 14, 2023, VLAWMO sent notification of planning process initiation for the 2027-2035 Watershed Management Plan to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410.0045. The notification solicited each agency's priority issues and opportunities, water management goals, and water resource data, reports, and other relevant information. The Board of Directors hosted an initial planning meeting on April 4, 2024. Three workshops were held with state, regional, and local partners in collaboration with VLAWMO's Technical Commission between November 2024 and April 2025. Additional input was gathered through several virtual and in-person community meetings as well as via online and in-person surveys.

VLAWMO has identified seven priority resource issue categories: surface water quality management; groundwater management; data collection; outreach, education, and community engagement; flooding and water quality; policy and facilitation; and community and ecosystem health and resiliency. Each resource issue category has one to three priority issues, and the Plan sets several measurable goals to address these areas of concern. The Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of current activities, such as the Section 319 Program for small priority watersheds, cost-share programs, and education/outreach activities, and the introduction of new activities, such as those that address climate change and resiliency.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

In the Matter of the review of the Watershed Management Plan for the Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Organization, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subdivision 9.

**ORDER
APPROVING
A WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Whereas, the Board of Directors of the Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Organization (VLAWMO) submitted a Watershed Management Plan (Plan) on February 26, 2026, to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subd. 9, and;

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. Watershed Management Organization Establishment.** The Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Organization was established by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) in 1983 between the Cities of Gem Lake, Lino Lakes, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, and White Bear Lake and the Township of White Bear. The first-generation Watershed Management Plan was approved by the Board in 1985.
- 2. Authority of Plan.** The Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act requires the preparation of a watershed management plan for the subject watershed area which meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251. The current VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan was approved by Board Order on September 28, 2016. Three minor amendments were completed between 2019 and 2022.
- 3. Nature of the Watershed.** The VLAWMO watershed encompasses 24.2 square miles in Northern Ramsey County and a small portion of Anoka County. The watershed is bordered by the Rice Creek Watershed District on the north and the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District on the south. VLAWMO is an urban watershed, but contains abundant surface water resources, including fifteen public water lakes, 47 public water wetlands, Lambert Creek, and several minor streams, ditches, and channels. There are also numerous parks and natural spaces, providing ecological and recreational benefits. Importantly, the watershed is home to East Vadnais Lake, which is the drinking water source for over 450,000 people – including the City of St. Paul. Further, nearly the entire watershed overlaps with one or more groundwater Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs), most of which have moderate vulnerability to contamination.
- 4. Plan Development and Review.** On December 14, 2023, VLAWMO sent notification of planning process initiation for the 2027-2035 Watershed Management Plan to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410.0045. The notification solicited each agency's priority issues and opportunities, water management goals, and water resource data, reports, and other relevant information. The Board of Directors hosted an initial planning meeting on April 4, 2024. Three workshops were held with state, regional, and local partners in collaboration with VLAWMO's Technical Commission between November 2024 and April 2025. Additional input was gathered through several virtual and in-person community meetings as well as via online and in-person surveys.

The draft Plan was submitted to the Board, review agencies, and local governments for 60-day review on June 6, 2025, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231 Subd. 7. VLAWMO prepared a written response to comments, which was sent to reviewers on December 11, 2025. A public hearing on the 60-day draft plan was held on February 25, 2026; no comments were received. The final draft Plan, including revisions based on 60-day comments, was released for agency review and submitted to the Board for approval on February 26, 2026.

5. **Local Review.** VLAWMO distributed copies of the draft Plan to local units of government for their review pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231 Subd. 7. The City of White Bear Lake expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in workshops during Plan development and provided a list of minor clarifications, typos, and errors. Rice Creek Watershed District provided comments on shared priorities and suggestions for photo credits and map clarifications. VLAWMO provided responses to all comments and incorporated changes as they deemed appropriate.
6. **Metropolitan Council (Council) Review.** During the 60-day review, the Council offered suggestions for the narrative with respect to local water plans and comprehensive planning as well as environmental justice. They also requested clarification around stormwater reuse practices and targeting. VLAWMO provided a response to comments and made changes to the narrative as they deemed appropriate. The Council stated they had no further comments during the 90-day review.
7. **Department of Agriculture (MDA) Review.** The MDA did not provide formal comment.
8. **Department of Health (MDH) Review.** During the 60-day review, MDH commended VLAWMO for thorough consideration of drinking water protection throughout the plan. They provided suggestions for the narrative regarding fish consumption guidelines, groundwater withdrawal decreases, AIS chemical management, and chlorides as a contaminant of concern in groundwater. Comments were also provided regarding typos, inactive links, references, and other minor errors. MDH pointed to projects and opportunities for collaboration and/or where they can provide more information regarding resources. VLAWMO replied to all comments and made changes to the narrative where they deemed appropriate. During the 90-day review period, MDH stated that their comments had been adequately addressed and thanked VLAWMO for their consideration of and collaboration on addressing MDH's concerns.
9. **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Review.** The DNR provided comments regarding Threatened and Endangered species, Rare Natural Communities, and utilizing native plants in shoreline and streambank restorations. They also provided several resources for native plant information and encouraged early coordination on projects. VLAWMO replied to all comments and incorporated all suggested changes to the narrative.
10. **Pollution Control Agency (PCA) Review.** During the 60-day review, the PCA provided positive feedback on the inclusion of the WLA (Waste Load Allocation) and MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) responsibilities in the Plan, particularly with respect to tracking outcomes. They also suggested adding language that describes progress to date with respect to pollution reductions. VLAWMO provided a response to comments and made changes to the narrative. During the 90-day review, the PCA noted that they had no further comments.
11. **Department of Transportation (DOT) Review.** The DOT did not provide formal comment.
12. **Board Review.** During the 60-day review, Board staff provided positive feedback on the engagement and issue prioritization process in collaboration with state, regional, and local partners; the inclusion of climate change, resiliency, environmental justice, and chloride pollution; and for creating a well-organized and well-written Plan. Board staff provided comments related to measurable goals and evaluation of progress towards goals, water quality trends, wetland prioritization, flood levels, and a few other items to help bring the plan into conformance with Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251 and Minnesota Rules 8410. Suggestions were also made with respect to water resource prioritization and clarifying incentive program information. Staff sent a list of unofficial typographical, grammatical, and formatting comments. VLAWMO

provided responses for all comments and BWSR staff feel that the changes made to the Plan are sufficient to meet plan content requirements.

- 13. Plan Summary.** VLAWMO has identified seven priority resource issue categories: surface water quality management; groundwater management; data collection; outreach, education, and community engagement; flooding and water quality; policy and facilitation; and community and ecosystem health and resiliency. Each resource issue category has one to three priority issues, and the Plan sets several measurable goals to address these areas of concern. The Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of current activities, such as the Section 319 Program for small priority watersheds, cost-share programs, education/outreach activities, and the introduction of new activities, such as those that address climate change and resiliency.
- 14. Central Region Committee Meeting.** On April 6, 2026, the Board’s Central Region Committee and staff met in St. Paul and online to review and discuss the final Plan. Those in attendance from the Board’s committee were Joe Collins (in person), Jill Crafton (in person), Jayne Hager Dee (in person), Mark Zabel (in person), Mike Runk (in person), Lori Cox (online), Steve Robertson (online), Grant Wilson (online) and Heather Peterson (online). Board staff in attendance were Marcey Westrick (Central Regional Manager, in person) and Anne Sawyer (Board Conservationist, in person). Others in attendance included Andrea West (VLAWMO Board Director, in person), Dawn Tanner and Phil Belfiori (VLAWMO staff, in person), and Rachel Olm (consultant, online) who provided highlights of the Plan and planning process. After presentation and discussion, the committee recommended approval of the Plan to the full Board.

CONCLUSIONS

1. All relevant substantive and procedural requirements of law and rule have been fulfilled.
2. The Board has proper jurisdiction in the matter of approving the Watershed Management Plan for the VLAWMO pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subd. 9.
3. The VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan, attached to this Order, defines the water and water-related problems within the VLAWMO’s boundaries, possible solutions thereto, and an implementation program through 2036.
4. The attached Plan is in conformance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251.

ORDER

The Board hereby approves the attached Vadnais Lake Area Watershed Management Plan submitted on February 2, 2026.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 22nd day of April, 2026.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

BY: Todd Holman, Chair

April 22, 2026

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
c/o Phil Belfiori, Administrator
800 East Co. Rd. E
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

Dear Chair and Board Members:

I am pleased to inform you that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) has approved the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) Watershed Management Plan (Plan) at its regular meeting held on April 22, 2026. For your records I have enclosed a copy of the signed Board Order that documents approval of the Plan. Please be advised that the VLAWMO must adopt and implement the Plan within 120 days of the date of the Order, in accordance with MN Statutes 103B.231, Subd. 10.

The board, plan steering committee members, consultants, and all others involved in the planning process are to be commended for their work on developing the Plan. With continued implementation of your Plan, the protection and management of the water resources within the watershed will be greatly enhanced to the benefit of the residents. The Board looks forward to working with you as you implement this Plan and document its outcomes.

Please contact Board Conservationist, Anne Sawyer at 651-392-5064, anne.sawyer@state.mn.us, or at the central office address for further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

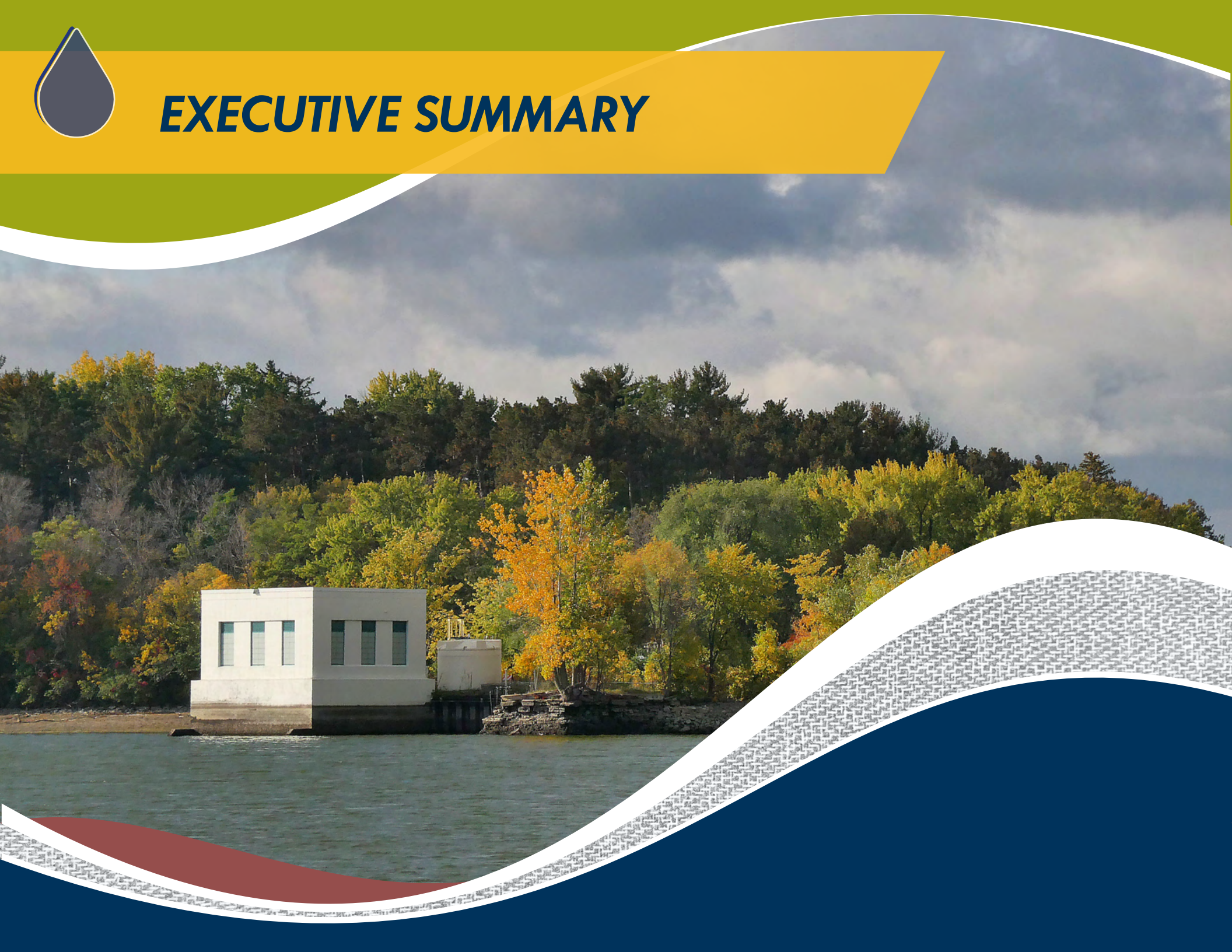
Todd Holman
Chair

Enclosure

CC: Reid Christianson, MDA (via email)
Abby Shea, MDH (via email)
Megan Moore, DNR (via email)
Katie Kowalczyk, DOT (via email)
Maureen Hoffman, Met Council (via email)
Melinda Neville, MPCA (via email)
Marcey Westrick, BWSR (via email)
Anne Sawyer, BWSR (via email)
File Copy



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



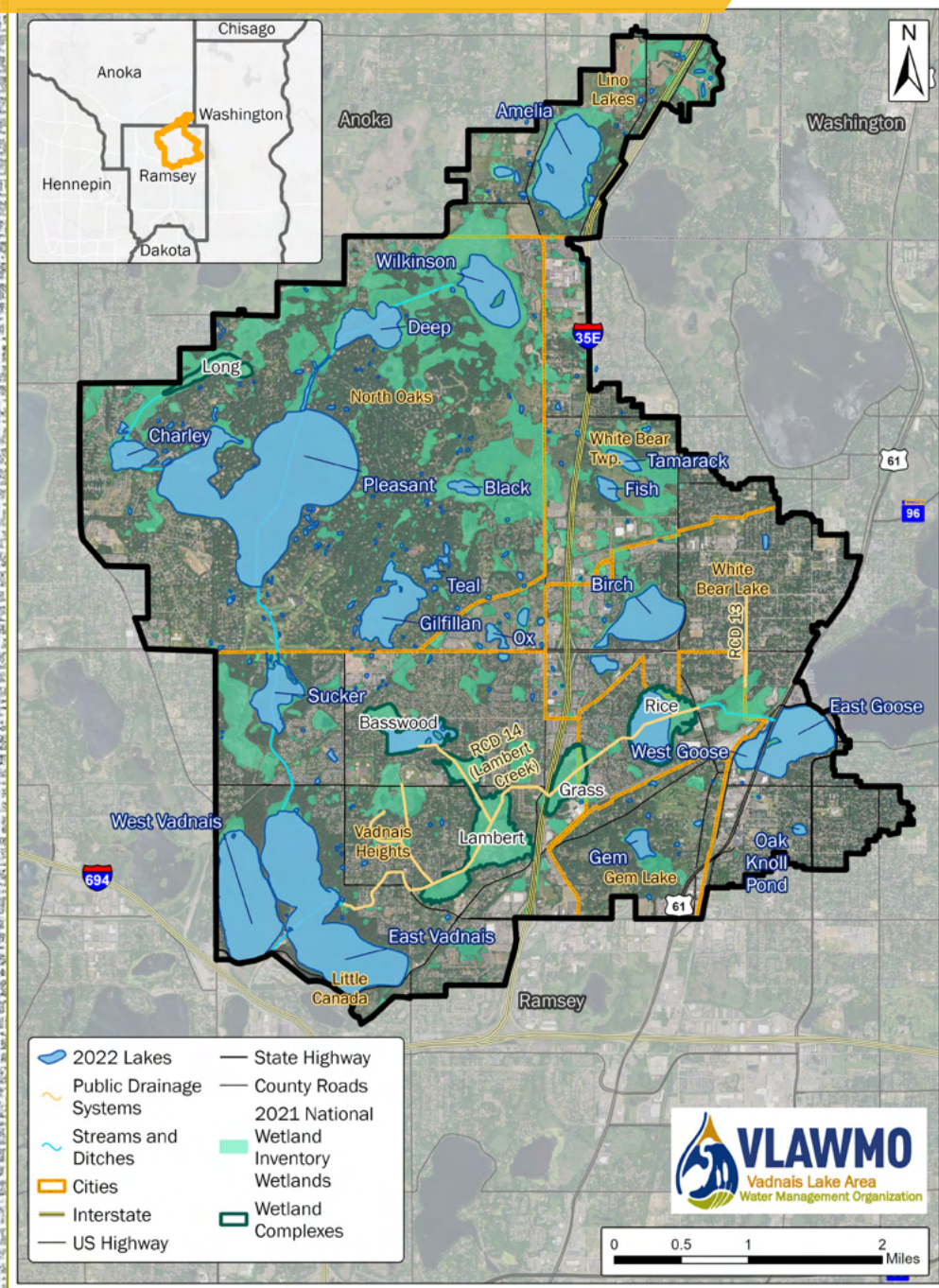
INTRODUCTION

The Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) covers 24.2 square miles of northern Ramsey County and a small portion of Anoka County in the Twin Cities metropolitan area in Minnesota. VLAWMO encompasses North Oaks and portions of Gem Lake, Lino Lakes, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township (Figure ES-1). VLAWMO was formed in 1983.

THE MISSION OF VLAWMO IS TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE WATERSHED THROUGH WATER QUALITY MONITORING, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROJECTS, WETLAND PROTECTION, AND WATER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS.

To achieve its mission of protecting and enhancing water resources in the watershed, VLAWMO has developed this Watershed Management Plan (Plan). This is the fifth Plan which builds on the foundation of goals and achievements of the previous plans, while evolving to meet the issues and goals of the next decade. This Plan was created to be useful for VLAWMO, its agency and local government partners, and its residents to provide a guiding vision for management of water and natural resources in the watershed from 2027-2036.

Figure ES-1. VLAWMO general location.



LAND AND WATER RESOURCES



The VLAWMO watershed is a subsection of the larger Mississippi River – Twin Cities Watershed which covers the entire Twin Cities metropolitan area. This larger watershed is further split into smaller watershed units for management purposes. There are 15 watershed

districts and management organizations with jurisdiction in the Mississippi River – Twin Cities Watershed, including VLAWMO.

VLAWMO is an urban watershed with abundant parks and natural spaces, providing ecological, recreational, and cultural benefits to its residents and visitors. VLAWMO is especially known for its surface water features. Fifteen public water lakes cover over 14% of the watershed. The watershed also includes 47 public water wetlands, Lambert Creek and its associated tributaries, and a series of minor streams, ditches, and channels. Section 2- Land and Water Resources aims to summarize these valuable resources and their current conditions, so that upcoming efforts can be focused on effectively managing the watershed’s resources into the future.

The water quality of VLAWMO lakes is especially important as surface water is used as a drinking water source. VLAWMO has a unique chain of lakes downstream from the Mississippi River that drains into a drinking water reservoir for multiple communities. VLAWMO works closely with the Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) to monitor surface water quality of East Vadnais Lake as well as the lakes that feed into it, as East Vadnais Lake is the drinking water source for over 450,000 people in 14 cities, including the City of St. Paul.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FOLLOWING CAN BE FOUND IN SECTION 2-LAND AND WATER RESOURCES:

- History
- Land Use
- Geology and Soils
- Lakes
- Streams, Ditches, and Channels
- Wetlands
- Groundwater and Drinking Water
- Stormwater and Wastewater
- Habitat and Species
- Climate
- Flooding and Climate Resiliency
- Demographics

PRIORITY ISSUES AND GOALS








In an urban watershed, there is a diverse range of issues that impact resource management. Issues were inventoried after review and considered the following:

- The current VLAWMO Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan
- Existing data; completed feasibility studies, SLMP/Lake Reviews, and internal/partner reports; and agency data and reports
- Responses from the 60-day Plan notification
- Responses from the public, TEC, and Board surveys
- Feedback from the initial planning meeting, held April 24, 2024.

A total of 20 unique issues were identified. Each of the 20 issues was placed into 1 of 7 “resource categories.” All 20 inventoried issues are important and merit being addressed. However, due to staff time and financial constraints, not all issues can realistically be addressed in a 10-year timeframe. The inventoried issues were prioritized to better focus VLAWMO’s future implementation efforts (Table ES-1).

Each priority issue was then assigned a measurable goal. The “goal” for each priority issue is intended to describe a vision or accomplishment for each priority issue. The “measure” is the feature, attribute, characteristic, or quantity by which progress toward a goal is evaluated. In many cases, a goal’s measure is grounded in the projects that VLAWMO intends to implement during the lifespan of the Plan.

Table ES-1. VLAWMO priority issues.

Resource Category	Priority Issues	
	Surface Water Quality Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Water and Drinking Water Quality • Erosion of Shorelines and Streambanks
	Groundwater Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater and Drinking Water Quality • Groundwater Supplies and Conservation
	Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Monitoring • Chloride and Emerging Contaminants
	Outreach, Education, and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach and Communication
	Flooding and Water Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Drainage Systems • Infrastructure Partnership Projects • VLAWMO Facilities
	Policy and Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetland Conservation Act • Stormwater Management Standards
	Community and Ecosystem Health and Resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Resiliency • Natural Features and Habitat

Examples of goals for priority issues are summarized below. These were selected to highlight the diverse nature of issues and goals. For a full list of all VLAWMO's goals, see Section 3- Priority Issues and Goals.

Figure ES-2. Section 3 goal examples.



ISSUE: SURFACE WATER AND DRINKING WATER QUALITY

- ✦ **Issue Statement:** Surface waterbodies need protection and restoration to preserve surface drinking water sources and promote aquatic life and recreational opportunities.
 - ✦ **Surface Water Quality Goal:** Protect and improve water quality through implementation of capital improvement projects, associated technical work, and VLAWMO programs.
- Partnership/Grant Dependent Measure:** Pursue partnership project implementation of up to 12 projects or associated technical work that improve surface water and drinking water quality, including at least three funded by 319 Small, Priority Watershed Program.
- Partnership/Grant Dependent Measure:** Continue annual implementation of VLAWMO programs to protect and improve water quality.



ISSUE: EROSION OF SHORELINES AND STREAMBANKS

- ✦ **Issue Statement:** Development along shorelines and streambanks, reduction of riparian buffers, and increased streamflow accelerate erosion and nutrient loading to surface waters.
 - ✦ **Erosion of Shorelines and Streams Goal:** Reduce and/or prevent shoreline or streambank erosion through implementation of stabilization and restoration capital improvement projects, associated technical work, and VLAWMO programs.
- Partnership/Grant Dependent Measure:** Pursue partnership project implementation of 4 projects or associated technical work focused on shoreline or streambanks to reduce sediment and nutrient delivery to surface waters in the implementation table.
- Partnership/Grant Dependent Measure:** Host 10 (or on average, one per year) watershed tours in which one past participant highlights lessons learned and benefits from past successful erosion projects.

Figure ES-2. Section 3 goal examples.



ISSUE: OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

- ✦ **Issue Statement:** An engaged and educated watershed community is critical for increasing understanding of and engagement in VLAWMO efforts and policies, leading to improvements in watershed resources.
- ✦ **Outreach and Communication Goal:** Enhance public understanding of water-related issues and improve watershed conditions through effective communication and outreach. Specific measurable goals are shaped by conversations with partners and community members, then shared with key stakeholders in biennial Work Plans.

Partnership/Grant Dependent Measure: Continuously monitor and maintain current website; annually complete at least 2 articles or press releases for local press, plus 1 annual newsletter; coordinate at least 2 community events or workshops each year.



ISSUE: CLIMATE RESILIENCY

- ✦ **Issue Statement:** Climatic changes can potentially overwhelm the capacity of existing stormwater management systems, impact water quality, and make drought more likely which threatens groundwater supplies.
- ✦ **Climate Resiliency Goal:** Pursue implementation of partnership projects that result from completed resiliency studies to build resiliency to changing rainfall and runoff events. Future studies would utilize Atlas 15 as available to model target areas for projects to build resiliency to future storm events, and VLAWMO will review local water management plans to determine that member communities will use Atlas 15 as available for future studies.

Partnership/Grant Dependent Measure: Pursue technical work and partnership project implementation of 4 projects to improve climate resiliency.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation actions address issues and goals listed in Section 3- Priority Issues and Goals. Actions that VLAWMO will focus on during the next 10 years are summarized in an Implementation Table, with estimated annual costs for each.

VLAWMO implementation actions operate within one of four core activities:



ADMINISTRATION:

Administration includes activities associated with running the organization, including managing the budget.



VLAWMO IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS: This core activity is the most expansive, as it is inclusive of the following programs: Aquatic Invasive Species Management; Outreach, Education, and Community Engagement; Monitoring; Capital Improvements - Early Coordination; Operations and Maintenance; Regulatory and Policy; General Analysis and Technical Work; and VLAWMO Grants and Partnerships.



PROJECT TECHNICAL WORK: Technical work includes feasibility studies, stormwater retrofit analyses, modeling, etc., to inform project scope.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS: A capital improvement project is a physical improvement or structure built to last at least 25 years (with continued maintenance) and a total cost typically over \$50,000.

Descriptions of each core activity and associated programs are detailed throughout Section 4- Implementation Plan.

Resource Prioritization

Prioritizing resources provides direction on where to target efforts. For purposes of this Plan, participation in the 319 Small, Priority Watershed Program elevates resources to the highest priority. This applies to Wilkinson, Tamarack, and Birch Lakes, which will be elevated priority resources for this 10-year Plan.

After the 319 Program, VLAWMO identified three criteria that are used to further identify priority resources:

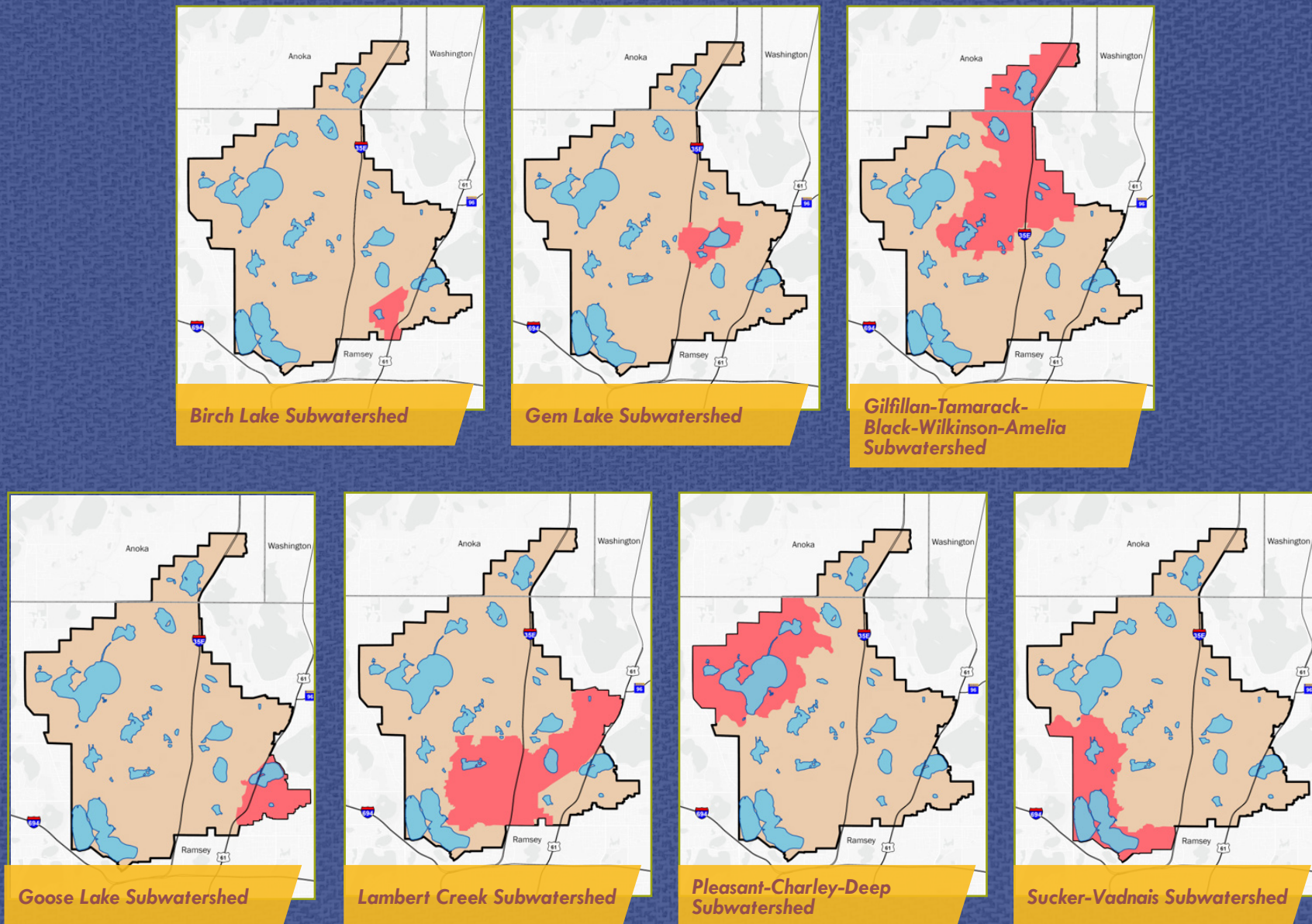
1. If the resource is in the chain of lakes used for drinking water
2. If a resource is in the Grant Program priority zones
3. If a resource is impaired, nearly impaired, barely impaired, or a lake of high biological significance

No criterion will outrank another; VLAWMO staff will review all when determining and prioritizing projects. The list of resources and priority criteria will be used when pursuing and funding projects.

Implementation Table

For planning purposes, VLAWMO is organized into seven smaller subwatersheds, which allows detailed focus and targeting of specific areas and issues. Section 4-Implementation Plan contains summaries for each subwatershed that include a description of the subwatershed, quick facts, a map, and past project highlights. Technical work and capital improvement projects are also summarized for each subwatershed, and are further detailed in the Implementation Table.

Figure ES-3. VLAWMO subwatersheds.



The Implementation Table includes the programs, technical work, and projects for VLAWMO from 2027-2036. Projects within each subwatershed align with those described in the subwatershed pages. The Implementation Table includes:

- ✦ A description of the activity
- ✦ Goals that it addresses
- ✦ Priority level
- ✦ Partners for implementation
- ✦ Estimated cost by year

Costs in the Implementation Table are high-level estimates for the portion of the estimated cost VLAWMO will be responsible for, adjusted annually for inflation. In many cases, estimated project costs are much higher and anticipate local partner funding and/or outside grant funding. All projects listed are partnership and/or grant dependent. These are a best estimate and may change or fluctuate leading up to or during project implementation.

Projects were identified in coordination and collaboration with member communities and partner organizations with knowledge at the time of plan writing. Planned projects and funding may shift from what is listed based on changing resource conditions, funding availability, ability for partnership, or staff capacity.

Programs, technical work, and projects in the Implementation Table are visually and directly connected back to the goals they address. If an activity is listed as part of a goal measure, the goal toggle icon is switched to 'on'. If a program, technical work, or project indirectly benefits a goal, the toggle is switched 'off'. The applicable goals that are addressed are listed next to the toggle.



*Indicates program, technical work, or project **directly** relates to a measurable goal*



*Indicates a program, technical work, or project **indirectly** benefits a measurable goal, but is not used to measure it*

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

VLAWMO operates under a Joint Powers Agreement, which allows for a variety of funding mechanisms. Funding for projects will primarily be driven by Storm Sewer Utility (SSU) fees, but many projects VLAWMO implements are funded fully or in part through grants, including grants awarded directly to VLAWMO or received by partnering organizations.

As a joint powers watershed management organization (WMO), VLAWMO has specific responsibilities that are mandatory or discretionary. Examples of mandatory roles include preparing an annual report, appointing an advisory committee, and reviewing and approving local water management plans. VLAWMO does not exercise land use or permitting authority. A member community must adopt the standards identified in the VLAWMO Water Management Policy into its official controls. VLAWMO may provide “advisory” comments upon request from a member community.

Section 5 – Plan Administration outlines additional roles and responsibilities of VLAWMO, including:

- ✦ Local water management plans and member community responsibilities
- ✦ MS4 responsibilities
- ✦ Enforcement and regulation responsibilities

The programs, technical work, and projects summarized in the Plan will likely evolve over time as information, priorities, and funding sources shift. To stay current with these potential changes, annual work planning, annual reporting, and biennial progress assessments will be used and will guide changes as needed. If a change is needed, the amendment process will be used to update the Plan.

Table 4-5: VLAWMO Implementation Table

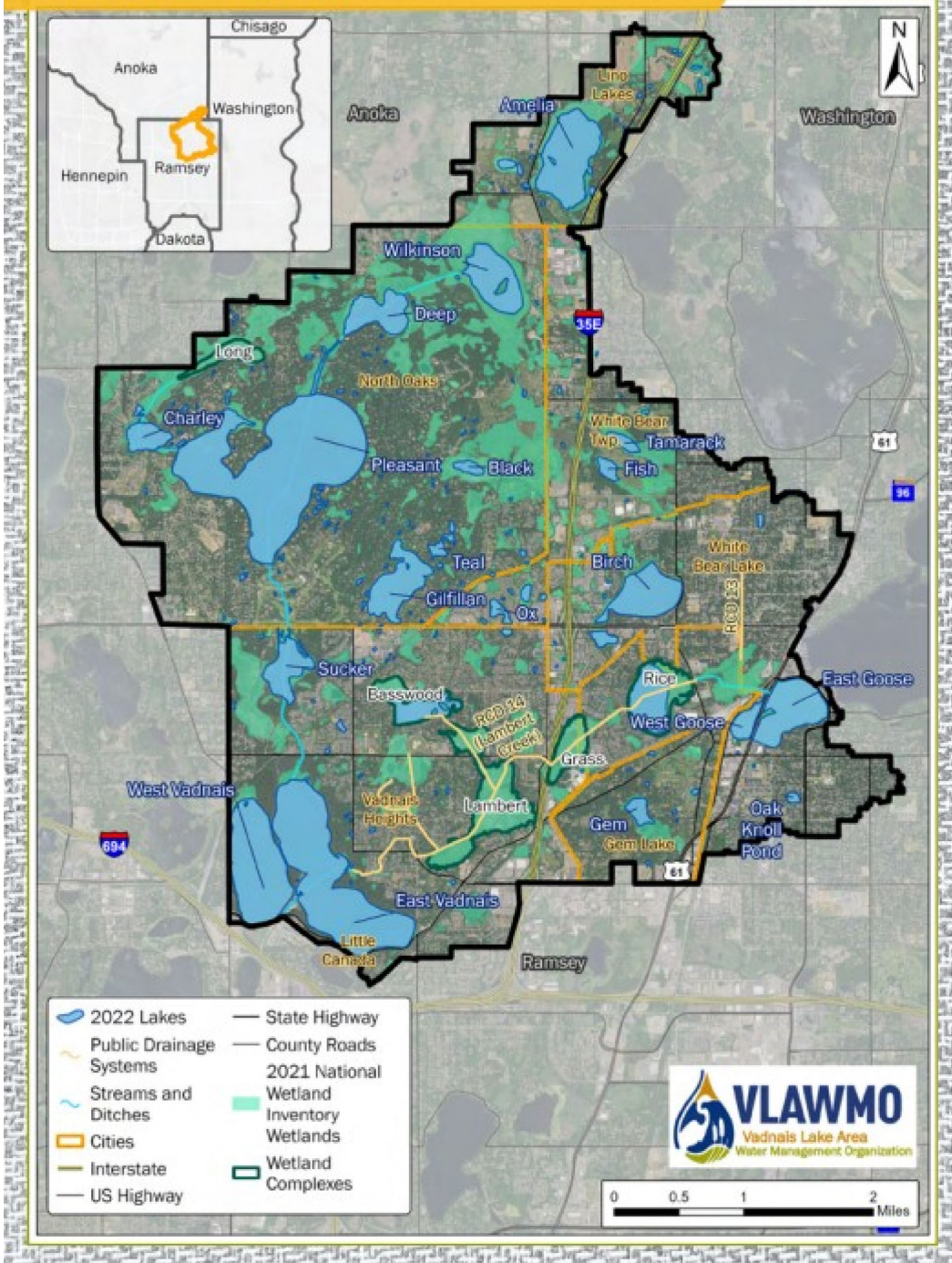
ID	Action Description	Progress Toward Goals (Lists up to four)				Priority	Partners	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	
Administration - 100																		
Administration																		
100	General Administration					C	N/A											
100	Office Space, Supplies, and Support					C	N/A											
100	Staff Training					C	N/A											
100	Equipment					C	N/A											
100	Office Operations					C	N/A											
VLAWMO Implementation Programs - 200																		
VLAWMO Implementation Programs																		
								\$756,000	\$779,000	\$804,000	\$829,000	\$854,000	\$879,000	\$904,000	\$930,000	\$957,000	\$985,000	
200A	Aquatic Invasive Species Management Program		SWQ	OC			C	Counties, Member Communities, NOHOA, SPRWS	\$64,000	\$66,000	\$68,000	\$70,000	\$72,000	\$74,000	\$76,000	\$78,000	\$80,000	\$82,000
200B	Outreach, Education, and Community Engagement Program		GW	SWQ	OC	ESS	C	Member Communities, Counties	\$83,000	\$85,000	\$88,000	\$91,000	\$94,000	\$97,000	\$100,000	\$103,000	\$106,000	\$109,000
200C	Monitoring Program		WM	CEC	SWQ	GW	C	MPCA, SPRWS, County	\$89,000	\$92,000	\$95,000	\$98,000	\$101,000	\$104,000	\$107,000	\$110,000	\$113,000	\$116,000
200D	Capital Improvements - Early Coordination Program		SWQ	ESS	IPP	CR	C	Counties, Member Communities, NOHOA, SPRWS	\$30,000	\$31,000	\$32,000	\$33,000	\$34,000	\$35,000	\$36,000	\$37,000	\$38,000	\$39,000
200E	Regulatory and Policy Program		SWQ	SMS	WCA	IPP	C	Member Communities, Counties, MnDOT	\$90,000	\$93,000	\$96,000	\$99,000	\$102,000	\$105,000	\$108,000	\$111,000	\$114,000	\$117,000
200F	General Analysis and Technical Work Program		SWQ	ESS	CR	SMS	C	Member Communities, Counties	\$100,000	\$103,000	\$106,000	\$109,000	\$112,000	\$115,000	\$118,000	\$122,000	\$126,000	\$130,000
200G	VLAWMO Grants and Partnerships Program		NFH	ESS	GW	SWQ	C	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities	\$149,000	\$153,000	\$158,000	\$163,000	\$168,000	\$173,000	\$178,000	\$183,000	\$188,000	\$194,000
200H	Operations and Maintenance Program		VF	PDS	SWQ		C	Member Communities, Counties	\$151,000	\$156,000	\$161,000	\$166,000	\$171,000	\$176,000	\$181,000	\$186,000	\$192,000	\$198,000
Project Technical Work (300) & Capital Improvement Projects (400)																		
Birch Lake (301/401)																		
								\$205,000	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$70,000	\$80,000	\$25,000	
301A	Pretreatment BMP Technical Work		SWQ	SMS			I	Member Communities, Counties	\$5,000									
301B	Birch Lake Outlet Channel Technical Work		ESS	SWQ			B	Member Communities							\$25,000	\$15,000		
301C	Shoreline, Wetland, or Water Quality Partnership Technical Work		ESS	SWQ	NFH		I	Member Communities, BLID			\$20,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$20,000		
301D	Subwatershed Neighborhood Technical Work		SMS	SWQ			I	Member Communities, Private Entities	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
301E	AIS Management		SWQ				C	Member Communities, BLID	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
301F	Sports Center Shoreline Technical Work and Project		ESS	SWQ	NFH		I	Member Communities		\$15,000		\$15,000						
301H	Future Subwatershed Technical Work		SWQ	SMS	GW		I	Member Communities, County, Private Entities					\$25,000					
401A	Pretreatment BMP (Upstream of Iron Enhanced Sand Filter)		SWQ	SMS	IPP		C	Member Communities, County	\$150,000		\$20,000		\$5,000	\$25,000				
401G	Rotary Park Restoration		NFH	SWQ	WCA		C	Member Communities	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
401H	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects		SWQ	SMS	GW	IPP	I	Member Communities, Counties						\$75,000				
Gem Lake (302/402)																		
								\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$160,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$35,000	\$145,000	\$45,000	
302A	Commercial Area Retrofit Technical Work		SMS	SWQ			B	Member Communities, County				\$25,000						\$25,000
302B	Smart Irrigation and Groundwater Conservation		GW				B	Private Entities			\$20,000							
302C	Regional, Subwatershed, or Neighborhood BMPs		SWQ	SMS	NFH	CR	I	Member Communities, Private Entities	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
302D	Future Subwatershed Technical Work		SWQ	SMS	GW		I	Member Communities, Counties							\$25,000			
402A	Commercial Area Retrofit Project		SMS	IPP			I	Member Communities, Counties				\$150,000		\$10,000		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
402D	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects		SWQ	SMS	GW		B	Member Communities, Counties									\$125,000	
Giiffilan-Tamarack-Black-Wilkinson-Amelia (303/403)																		
								\$308,000	\$280,000	\$580,000	\$278,000	\$323,000	\$270,000	\$230,000	\$618,000	\$298,000	\$280,000	
303B	Small Watershed Technical Work (3rd 319 Small Watershed Grant)		SWQ				C	Member Communities, NOC, SPRWS, MPCA			\$50,000							
303C	Small Watershed Technical Work (4th 319 Small Watershed Grant)		SWQ				C	Member Communities, NOC, SPRWS, MPCA					\$20,000	\$50,000				
303D	Amelia Drainage Technical Work		SWQ	ESS			I	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities				\$25,000						
303E	Wilkinson Lake Wetland Project Maintenance		NFH	WCA	SWQ		C	NOC	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
303F	Local Partnership- Tamarack Nature Center		SWQ	NFH	WCA		I	County					\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
303G	Township /City BMP Retrofits		SMS	IPP			I	Member Communities Township			\$25,000		\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
303H	Cities/Township/NOHOA /NOC Partnership Water Quality /Groundwater Conservation Projects		GW	SWQ	ESS		I	Member Communities NOHOA, NOC	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$20,000
303L	Future Subwatershed Technical Work		SWQ	SMS	GW		I	Member Communities, County, Private Entities					\$25,000	\$25,000				
403A	Small Watershed Projects (2nd 319 Small Watershed Grant Project)		SWQ				C	Member Communities, NOC, SPRWS, MPCA	\$113,000	\$50,000	\$20,000				\$20,000			
403B	Small Watershed Projects (3rd 319 Small Watershed Grant Project)		SWQ	ESS			C	Member Communities, NOC, SPRWS, MPCA				\$113,000	\$113,000	\$10,000		\$20,000		\$20,000
403C	Small Watershed Projects (4th 319 Small Watershed Grant Project)		SWQ				C	Member Communities, NOC, SPRWS, MPCA								\$113,000	\$113,000	\$60,000
403D	Amelia Drainage Project		SWQ	ESS			I	Member Communities, County, Private Entities					\$150,000	\$25,000		\$75,000	\$25,000	
403H	Cities/Township/NOHOA /NOC Partnership Water Quality /Groundwater Conservation Projects		GW	SWQ	ESS		I	Member Communities, NOHOA, NOC	\$50,000	\$50,000		\$100,000						
403I	Internal Loading /Alum Treatment (Wilkinson)		SWQ				I	NOC, MPCA			\$425,000	\$35,000				\$200,000		
403J	Internal Loading /Alum Treatment (Tamarack)		SWQ				C	Member Communities, MPCA				\$125,000						\$50,000
403K	Water Reuse Project		GW				C	Township	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$25,000							
403L	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects		SWQ	SMS	GW		I	Member Communities, County, Private Entities								\$175,000		
Goose Lake (304/404)																		
								\$135,000	\$80,000	\$125,000	\$150,000	\$25,000	\$70,000	\$25,000	\$75,000	\$175,000	\$0	

Table 4-5: VLAWMO Implementation Table

ID	Action Description	Progress Toward Goals (Lists up to four)				Priority	Partners	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
		SWQ	SMS	CEC	GW												
304A	Highway 61 Channel Restoration Technical Work	🟢	ESS	SWQ		I	Member Communities, Counties, MnDOT, Private Entity	\$20,000									
304B	Goose Lakes Regional BMP Partnership Technical Work	🟡	SWQ	SMS	NFH	I	Member Communities, Counties			\$15,000							
304C	Regional, Subwatershed, or Neighborhood BMPs	🟡	SWQ	SMS	NFH	CR	I	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000	
304D	City Street Partnership Projects	🟡	SMS	CEC		I	Member Communities, Private Entities	\$10,000			\$30,000	\$20,000					
304E	Future Subwatershed Technical Work	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, Counties							\$25,000			
404A	Highway 61 Channel Restoration Project	🟡	ESS	SWQ		C	Member Communities, Counties, MnDOT, Private Entity	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$60,000						
404B	Goose Lakes Regional BMP Partnership	🟡	SWQ	SMS		I	Member Communities	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000		\$50,000			
404E	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, County, Private Entities									\$150,000	
Lambert Creek (305/405)								\$510,000	\$495,000	\$300,000	\$455,000	\$540,000	\$525,000	\$360,000	\$115,000	\$220,000	\$380,000
305C	Water Quality / Wetland Project Technical Work	🟡	PDS	WCA	SWQ	I	Member Communities										
305D	Water Reuse Technical Work	🟡	GW			I	Member Communities, Counties					\$25,000					
305E	Green Streets Technical Work	🟢	SWQ	SMS		C	Member Communities, Counties	\$25,000							\$50,000	\$25,000	
305F	Commercial Property Technical Work	🟡	SMS	SWQ		B	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities				\$25,000						
305G	Resiliency Planning or Projects Technical Work	🟢	CR			C	Member Communities, Counties, SPRWS	\$30,000				\$80,000					
305H	Lambert Creek Drainage Partnership Technical Work	🟢	PDS	SWQ		I	Member Communities, Counties		\$25,000	\$25,000							
305I	Lambert Creek Operation and Maintenance	🟢	PDS	ESS	SWQ	C	Member Communities, Counties	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	
305J	Municipality / City Street Project Partnership	🟡	SMS	SWQ	CEC	I	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities	\$60,000	\$30,000		\$15,000	\$20,000	\$60,000	\$10,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	
305K	Municipal Water Quality in Parks / Public Spaces	🟡	SWQ	NFH		I	Member Communities, Counties	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	
305L	Groundwater Conservation Partnerships	🟡	GW			I	Member Communities, Counties	\$10,000	\$50,000		\$50,000						
305M	Future Subwatershed Technical Work	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, Counties				\$25,000				\$25,000		
405A	Whitaker Wetland Retrofit Project	🟡	WCA	SWQ	NFH	I	Member Communities, Counties, Township	\$100,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$125,000						
405B	Lambert Sheet Pile Debt Services	🟡	PDS			C	Member Communities, Counties, SPRWS	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000				
405C	Water Quality / Wetland Project	🟡	PDS	WCA	SWQ	I	Member Communities	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	
405D	Water Reuse Project	🟡	GW			I	Member Communities, Counties					\$30,000	\$110,000		\$30,000	\$110,000	
405E	Green Streets Project	🟢	SWQ	SMS		C	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities	\$100,000	\$150,000				\$150,000				
405F	Commercial Property Project	🟡	SMS	SWQ	IPP	B	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities					\$175,000					
405G	Resiliency Plan or Projects	🟢	CR			I	Member Communities, Counties, SPRWS, Private Entities	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$250,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
405H	Lambert Creek Drainage Partnership Projects	🟡	PDS	SWQ		I	Member Communities			\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000					
405M	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, County, Private Entities					\$125,000				\$150,000	
Pleasant-Charley-Deep Lakes (306/406)								\$120,000	\$105,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$150,000	\$120,000	\$105,000	\$110,000	\$210,000	\$95,000
306A	Nutrient Management Partnership Project Technical Work	🟡	SWQ			I	Member Communities, Counties, SPRWS	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
306B	Carp Management	🟢	SWQ			C	SPRWS, NOHOA	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	
306C	Lake Shoreline Management	🟢	ESS	NFH	SWQ	I	SPRWS, NOHOA	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	
306D	Regional, Subwatersheds, or Neighborhood BMPs	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	CR	I	NOHOA, Member Communities SPRWS, Private Entities	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
306E	Infrastructure or Local Planning Technical Work	🟡	SMS	IPP		I	NOHOA, Member Communities SPRWS	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	
306F	Oxygenation System Partnership and Technical Work	🟢	SWQ			B	SPRWS	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	
306G	Future Subwatershed Technical Work	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, Counties							\$25,000			
406G	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities									\$125,000	
Sucker-East & West Vadnais Lakes (307/407)								\$240,000	\$210,000	\$90,000	\$70,000	\$345,000	\$120,000	\$160,000	\$40,000	\$125,000	\$205,000
307A	Resiliency Project Technical Work	🟢	CR			I	Member Communities Counties, SPRWS	\$25,000			\$25,000						
307B	Trail Restoration Technical Work	🟢	SWQ	NFH		I	Member Communities, Counties	\$20,000									
307C	Park Restoration Technical Work	🟡	NFH			I	Member Communities, Counties, SPRWS, Non-Profits	\$5,000							\$10,000	\$10,000	
307D	City Street Project Partnership	🟡	SMS	SWQ	CEC	GW	B	Member Communities		\$50,000		\$50,000		\$50,000		\$50,000	
307E	City Environment Initiatives	🟡	GW	OC	NFH	B	Member Communities	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	
307F	WMO Boundary Work	🟡				I	Member Communities, Counties, Watershed Districts	\$20,000									
307G	Future Subwatershed Technical Work	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, Counties								\$25,000		
407A	Resiliency Projects	🟢	CR	SWQ		C	Member Communities, Counties, SPRWS, Private Entities	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$250,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	
407B	Trail Restoration Project	🟡	NFH	SWQ		I	Member Communities, Counties		\$50,000			\$25,000	\$50,000				
407G	Future Subwatershed Capital Improvement Projects	🟡	SWQ	SMS	GW	I	Member Communities, Counties, Private Entities									\$150,000	
								\$2,464,000	\$2,189,000	\$2,275,000	\$2,139,000	\$2,650,000	\$2,303,000	\$2,119,000	\$2,214,000	\$2,418,000	\$2,230,000

Priority Level: C=Critical, I=Important, B=Beneficial
 Progress Toward Goals: Surface Water Quality (SWQ); Erosion of Shorelines and Streams (ESS); Water Monitoring (WM); Chloride and Emerging Contaminants (CEC); Groundwater and Drinking Water Quality & Groundwater Supplies and Conservation (GW); Outreach and Communication (OC); Public Drainage Systems (PDS); Infrastructure Partnership Projects (IPP); VLAWMO Facilities (VF); Climate Resiliency (CR); Wetland Conservation Act (WCA); Natural Features and Habitat (NFH); Stormwater Management Standards (SMS)

Figure ES-1. VLAWMO general location.



BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Vermillion Watershed Management Plan

Section/Region: Regional Operations/Central

Contact: Anne Sawyer

Prepared by: Anne Sawyer

Reviewed by: Central Region Committee

Presented by: Anne Sawyer

Time requested: 5 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- None
- Amended Policy Request
- New Policy Request
- General Fund Budget
- Capital Budget
- Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget
- Clean Water Fund Budget
- Other:

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan as recommended by the Central Regional Committee.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

https://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/1_12_2026-Draft-2026-2035-Watershed-Plan.pdf

SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

Background

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization was established by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between Scott and Dakota Counties in 2002 following the dissolution of the previous JPA-WMO in 2000. The VRWJPO watershed encompasses approximately 335 square miles in Dakota and Scott Counties, with the majority in central Dakota County. The watershed is bordered by the Mississippi River on the northeast, the Cannon River Watershed on the east, the North Cannon River WMO on the south, the Scott County WMO on the west, and the Black Dog, Eagan-Inver Grove, and Lower Mississippi River WMOs on the northwest and north, respectively. The Vermillion River Watershed contains more than 50 miles of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)-designated trout streams. The watershed also has several urban lakes and backwater lakes within the Mississippi River Valley. The watershed contains many areas with significant surface-groundwater interaction, including the Hastings Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA), which covers more than

one-quarter of the watershed's area. Approximately 75% of the land within the watershed is agricultural, undeveloped, or preserved. While rapid growth over the next 20 years is projected to expand urban and industrial land use to nearly 40% of the watershed area, the dominant land use is anticipated to remain agricultural in nature.

Plan Process and Highlights

On April 3, 2023, the VRWJPO sent notification of planning process initiation for the 2026-2035 Watershed Management Plan to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410.0045. Staff implemented a robust public engagement plan and convened a Technical Advisory Group that met several times between February 2024 and July 2025. The Community Advisory Committee and the Board met several times to prioritize issues identified during the public outreach phase, develop goals, and create an implementation strategy for the Plan.

The VRWJPO has identified six priority issue categories, including water quality, stormwater management, groundwater sustainability, climate resilience, natural environments, and community relationships. Each issue category has one or two issue statements, and the Plan sets 12 measurable goals to address these areas of concern along with prioritized objectives and project types (Topics of Importance) to help reach these goals.

The VRWJPO's work will build on accomplishments from the previous Plan, including targeted implementation activities identified in subwatershed assessments; continued partnerships with municipalities for stormwater retrofits and opportunities in new areas of development; working with the County and Dakota Soil & Water Conservation District on projects that benefit both surface and groundwater resources; and continuing their excellent monitoring and community engagement programs. New areas of focus in this plan are chloride reduction and climate resiliency, including the creation of a Climate Resiliency Plan which will identify, prioritize, and target projects that help mitigate the effects of climate change. Overall, this Plan continues to position the VRWJPO well for protecting and improving water resources through its staff and partners for the next ten years.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

In the Matter of the review of the Watershed Management Plan for the **Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization**, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subdivision 9.

**ORDER
APPROVING
A WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Whereas, the Board of Commissioners of the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) submitted a Watershed Management Plan (Plan) on February 2, 2026, to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subd. 9, and;

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. Watershed Management Organization Establishment.** The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization was established by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between Scott and Dakota Counties in 2002 following the dissolution of the previous JPA-WMO in 2000. The first-generation Watershed Management Plan was approved by the Board in 2005.
- 2. Authority of Plan.** The Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act requires the preparation of a watershed management plan for the subject watershed area which meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251. The current VRWJPO Watershed Management Plan was approved by Board Order on May 25, 2016. Three minor amendments were completed between 2019 and 2022.
- 3. Nature of the Watershed.** The VRWJPO watershed encompasses approximately 335 square miles in Dakota and Scott Counties, with the majority in central Dakota County. The watershed is bordered by the Mississippi River on the northeast, the Cannon River Watershed on the east, the North Cannon River WMO on the south, the Scott County WMO on the west, and the Black Dog, Egan-Inver Grove, and Lower Mississippi River WMOs on the northwest and north, respectively. The Vermillion River Watershed is unique to a large metropolitan area, boasting more than 50 miles of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)-designated trout streams. The watershed also has several urban lakes, the largest of which is Lake Marion, a 530-acre lake in the City of Lakeville, as well as backwater lakes within the Mississippi River Valley. The watershed also has many areas with significant surface-groundwater interactions, including the Hastings Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA), which covers more than one-quarter of the watershed's area. Approximately 75% of the land within the watershed is agricultural, undeveloped, or preserved. While rapid growth over the next 20 years is projected to expand urban and industrial land use to nearly 40% of the watershed area, the dominant land use is anticipated to remain agricultural in nature.
- 4. Plan Development and Review.** On April 3, 2023, the VRWJPO sent notification of planning process initiation for the 2026-2035 Watershed Management Plan to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410.0045. The notification solicited each agency's priority issues and opportunities, water

management goals, and water resource data, reports, and other relevant information. The VRWJPO hosted an initial planning meeting and open house on October 12, 2023. Staff implemented a robust public engagement plan, including meetings with townships and municipalities, surveys, virtual and in-person opportunities, pop-up events, and displays at places like libraries and parks. The VRWJPO convened a Technical Advisory Group which met several times between February 2024 and July 2025. The VRWJPO also engaged in a series of meetings with the Community Advisory Committee and the VRWJPO Board to prioritize issues identified during the public outreach phase, develop goals, and create an implementation strategy for the Plan.

The draft Plan was submitted to the Board, review agencies, and local governments for 60-day review on August 28, 2025, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231 Subd. 7. The VRWJPO prepared a written response to comments, which was sent to reviewers on December 4, 2025. A public hearing on the 60-day draft plan was held on January 22, 2026; no comments were received. The final draft Plan, including revisions based on 60-day comments, was released for agency review and submitted to the Board for approval on February 2, 2026.

5. **Local Review.** The VRWJPO distributed copies of the draft Plan to local units of government for their review pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231 Subd. 7. The City of Apple Valley provided clarifications to the narrative and comments regarding continued partnership opportunities for items of interest to the City. The City of Rosemount provided comments regarding localized flooding, intercommunity discharge, collaboration, financial assistance, and local planning. They also submitted a list of typos and clarifications. Dakota County Environmental Services provided comments about soil health priorities/actions, groundwater quality and quantity, the timing of the VRWJPO's Climate Resiliency Plan, and narrative clarifications. Dakota County Transportation Department affirmed Plan alignment with the County's 2040 Transportation Plan. Scott County provided comments regarding prioritization and projects that address bacteria (*E. coli*). Comments were also provided by the Friends of the Mississippi River, focused on the prioritization of upland habitat and soil health practices. The VRWJPO provided responses to all comments and incorporated changes as they deemed appropriate.
6. **Metropolitan Council (Council) Review.** During the 60-day review, the Council commended the VRWJPO for thoughtful overview of the watershed as well as a comprehensive list of issues, goals, and strategies. The Council offered suggestions for the narrative, including groundwater quantity and quality impacts on baseflow and ecosystem function, irrigation water use, and climate adaptation actions. The Council also requested inclusion of criteria to measure implementation success. The VRWJPO responded to all comments and made changes as they deemed appropriate. During the 90-day review, the Council stated that their comments had been addressed and found the Plan to be consistent with Council policies and the Council's *Water Policy Plan*.
7. **Department of Agriculture (MDA) Review.** The MDA did not provide formal comment during the 60-day review. During the 90-day review, they commented that the Plan recognizes the need for continued adoption of agricultural best management practices and that it references groundwater protection work in the Hastings Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA). MDA also provided several reports and references to assist the VRWJPO with Plan implementation.
8. **Department of Health (MDH) Review.** During the 60-day review, MDH commended the VRWJPO for including chlorides in groundwater and private wells. They recommended stronger references to groundwater nitrate contamination and clarity around targeting and actions the VRWJPO would take to mitigate nitrate contamination, particularly in DWSMAs and with respect to soil health activities. They suggested a subwatershed map be added to the narrative as well as ensuring that goals were measurable and tied to implementation activities. They recommended clarifications to the narrative with respect to risk management from infiltration projects, drinking water sources across the watershed, bedrock aquifers, multiple benefits of implementation activities. MDH also provided several instances where they are willing

to collaborate on projects and/or provide more information regarding resources. The VRWJPO replied to all comments and made several changes to the narrative. During the 90-day review, MDH stated that many, but not all, of their comments were addressed. In particular, the narrative still lacked clarification with respect to the definition and background on DWSMAs, potential drinking water impacts from stormwater management practices and floodplain alterations, and multiple benefits of implementation activities.

9. **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Review.** The DNR stated that the Plan was consistent with DNR goals and policies. They also emphasized that when projects or educational opportunities allowed, the VRWJPO should consider all aspects of watershed health such as upland vegetation and habitat, in conjunction with water quality and hydrology. The VRWJPO provided a response to comments. At the 90-day review, the DNR stated that they had no additional comments.
10. **Pollution Control Agency (PCA) Review.** During the 60-day review, the PCA commended the VRWJPO for including estimated pollution reductions for work completed over the past ten years and including some numeric reductions in the measurable outcomes table. They also suggested that additional quantifiable outcomes, where feasible, would better link to the activities in the implementation table, and provided suggestions to better connect the implementation actions, measurable outcomes, and priority areas in the Plan. The VRWJPO provided a response to comments. During the 90-day review, the PCA noted that they had no additional comments.
11. **Department of Transportation (DOT) Review.** The DOT did not provide formal comment.
12. **Board Review.** During the 60-day review, Board staff provided positive feedback on the engagement and issue prioritization process, the inclusion of climate change, resiliency and chloride pollution issues, providing some quantifiable pollution reductions in the implementation section, and for creating a well-organized and well-written Plan that utilized plain language. Board staff provided comments related to measurable goals and evaluation, local plan requirements, wetland management, and floodplain management to help bring the plan into conformance with Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251 and Minnesota Rules 8410. Suggestions were made with respect to prioritizing water resources, differentiating between prioritized objectives and “topics of importance”, subwatershed and major water resource maps, and clarifying measurable outcomes in relation to implementation actions. Staff also sent unofficial typographical, grammatical, and formatting comments. The VRWJPO provided responses for all comments and BWSR staff feel that the changes made to the Plan are sufficient to meet plan content requirements.
13. **Plan Summary.** The VRWJPO has identified six priority issue categories, including water quality, stormwater management, groundwater sustainability, climate resilience, natural environments, and community relationships. Each issue category has one or two issue statements, and the Plan sets 12 measurable goals to address these areas of concern along with prioritized objectives and project types (Topics of Importance) to help reach these goals. The Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of several activities and introduction of new activities, particularly those related to climate change and resiliency.
14. **Central Region Committee Meeting.** On April 6, 2026, the Board’s Central Region Committee and staff met in St. Paul and online to review and discuss the final Plan. Those in attendance from the Board’s committee were Joe Collins (in person), Jill Crafton (in person), Jayne Hager Dee (in person), Mark Zabel (in person), Mike Runk (in person), Lori Cox (online), Steve Robertson (online), Grant Wilson (online) and Heather Peterson (online). Board staff in attendance were Marcey Westrick (Central Regional Manager, in person) and Anne Sawyer (Board Conservationist, in person). Others in attendance included Kelly Perrine and Travis Theil (VRWJPO staff, in-person) who provided highlights of the Plan and process. After presentation and discussion, the committee recommended approval of the Plan to the full Board.

CONCLUSIONS

1. All relevant substantive and procedural requirements of law and rule have been fulfilled.
2. The Board has proper jurisdiction in the matter of approving the Watershed Management Plan for the VRWJPO pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subd. 9.
3. The VRWJPO Watershed Management Plan, attached to this Order, defines the water and water-related problems within the VRWJPO's boundaries, possible solutions thereto, and an implementation program through 2036.
4. The attached Plan is in conformance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251.

ORDER

The Board hereby approves the attached Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Watershed Management Plan submitted on February 2, 2026.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 22nd day of April, 2026.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

BY: Todd Holman, Chair

April 22, 2026

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
c/o Travis Thiel, Administrator
4100 220th St W Suite 103
Farmington, MN 55024

Dear Chair and Board Members:

I am pleased to inform you that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) has approved the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Watershed Management Plan (Plan) at its regular meeting held on April 22, 2026. For your records I have enclosed a copy of the signed Board Order that documents approval of the Plan. Please be advised that the VRWJPO must adopt and implement the Plan within 120 days of the date of the Order, in accordance with MN Statutes 103B.231, Subd. 10.

The board, plan steering committee members, consultants, and all others involved in the planning process are to be commended for their work on developing the Plan. With continued implementation of your Plan, the protection and management of the water resources within the watershed will be greatly enhanced to the benefit of the residents. The Board looks forward to working with you as you implement this Plan and document its outcomes.

Please contact Board Conservationist, Anne Sawyer at 651-392-5064, anne.sawyer@state.mn.us, or at the central office address for further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Todd Holman
Chair

Enclosure

CC: Reid Christianson, MDA (via email)
Abby Shea, MDH (via email)
Megan Moore, DNR (via email)
Katie Kowalczyk, DOT (via email)
Maureen Hoffman, Met Council (via email)
Melinda Neville, MPCA (via email)
Marcey Westrick, BWSR (via email)
Anne Sawyer, BWSR (via email)
File Copy

Executive Summary

Introduction

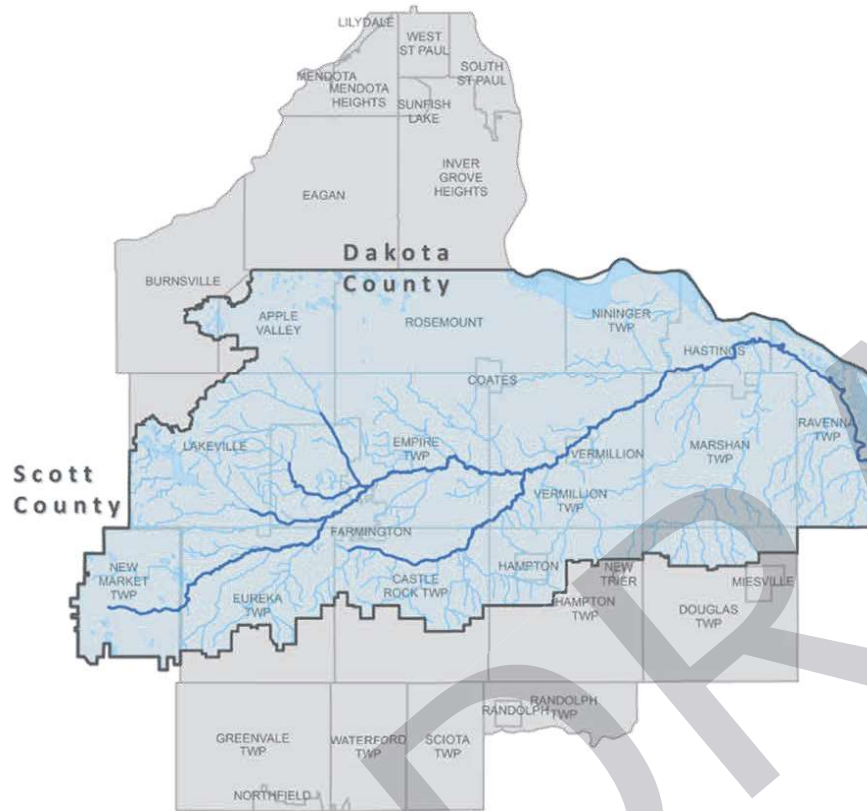


Figure E-1: Map of VRWJPO Political Boundaries

The Vermillion River Watershed drains 335 square miles in Dakota and Scott counties, with the majority in central Dakota County, to the Vermillion River and tributary waterbodies. It is the largest geographic watershed in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and part of one of the state’s 81 “major” watersheds, denoted by an 8-

digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC-07040001), meaning an area of the landscape that drains to a portion of a stream network. It is unique to a large metropolitan area for its 51.6 miles of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)-designated trout streams. [An interactive map of the watershed can be seen here.](#)

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) formed in 2002 when Dakota and Scott counties signed a [joint powers agreement](#) (JPA) to manage the Vermillion River Watershed per [Minnesota Statutes 103B](#) and [Minnesota Rules 8410](#). The VRWJPO is governed by a three-member Joint Powers Board (JPB) consisting of two Dakota County Commissioners and one Scott County Commissioner. The VRWJPO’s mission is to:

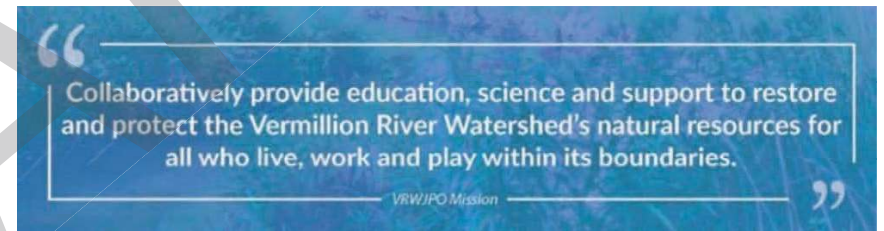


Figure E-2: VRWJPO Mission Statement

To achieve this mission, VRWJPO staff support and implement a range of programs, activities, and projects designed to protect, improve, and manage resources in its jurisdiction.

This third-generation 2026-2035 Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan (Plan) includes the input of many stakeholders who care about the resources in the watershed where they live, work, or play. It contains details relating to topography, soils, geology, groundwater resources, surface water resources, stormwater systems, climate and precipitation, natural communities, endangered and invasive species, fish and wildlife

habitat, water-based recreation areas, and land uses. This information helps illustrate the ecological diversity within the VRWJPO, as well as the role the human-built environment imparts on the natural environment. In addition, it presents the condition of resources within its boundaries, helping to inform issues and actions to address said issues. *A full analysis of the VRWJPO's natural resources can be found in [Appendix B](#).*

Stakeholder Engagement

At the start of this Plan update process, the VRWJPO created a Public Engagement Plan (PEP) to give stakeholders ways to provide input on priority issues, per [Minnesota Rule 8410.0045](#). Engaged stakeholders included:

- Residents
- Business and industries in the watershed
- Nonprofit, advocacy, and special interest groups
- Cities, counties, and townships in the VRWJPO
- State and regional agencies

Outreach efforts included:

- Three in-person stakeholder events
- Two in-person pop-up events
- Six virtual stakeholder meetings
- Online and in-person surveys
- Display boards at four public libraries and two Dakota County parks

Themes of Stakeholder Response

Below are the themes that arose from the stakeholder engagement process. These form the foundation of the Plan and

encompass focus areas for its 10-year span. *Details of the full engagement process can be found in [Appendix C](#).*

Surface Water Quality

The Vermillion River Watershed is rich with surface water resources, including streams and recreational lakes. Stakeholders feel a strong connection to these resources, and the VRWJPO seeks to foster that relationship. Surface water quality efforts are interwoven throughout many aspects of the VRWJPO's work.



Figure E-3: South Creek, a major tributary to the Vermillion River



Figure E-4: Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) Monitoring Staff

Emerging contaminants, winter operations, and pollutants from agricultural activities threaten groundwater quality. While other agencies take the lead in groundwater planning and protection, the VRWJPO can foster partnerships that protect groundwater quality.

Groundwater Quality

Everyone deserves access to clean drinking water. Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for VRWJPO residents, through either municipal or private wells (the only exception is the City of Burnsville, which sources its drinking water from the Kramer Quarry).



Figure E-5: Stormwater improvements on the North Creek tributary of the Vermillion River

The VRWJPO is home to several communities that are experiencing significant residential, commercial, and industrial development. With development comes additional impervious surface and stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff collects pollutants as it runs over the landscape and contributes the runoff and pollutants to waterbodies. The VRWJPO will foster implementation of practices to ease stormwater impacts over the life of the Plan.

Natural Environments

The VRWJPO contains diverse natural environments unique to a major metropolitan area. However, these environments are threatened by competing land uses and invasive species. This Plan prioritizes protection, enhancement, and restoration of natural ecosystems.

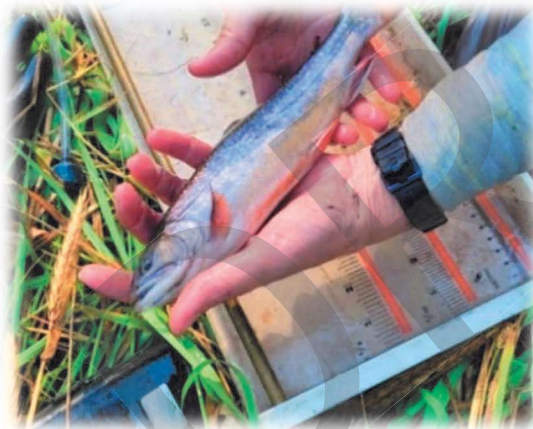


Figure E-6: Brook trout in South Creek

Stormwater Management

The VRWJPO is home to several communities that are experiencing significant residential, commercial, and industrial development. With development comes additional impervious surface and stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff collects pollutants as it

Climate Resilience

Weather patterns have become more erratic, favoring intense storm events that produce excessive runoff and decrease natural infiltration, as well as extreme drought and temperature fluctuations. These negatively affect the VRWJPO's natural and built environments. While the VRWJPO does not have a direct role in addressing greenhouse gases, this Plan defines the VRWJPO's role in climate resilience relating to water resources.



Figure E-7: Stormwater improvements on a tributary to South Creek

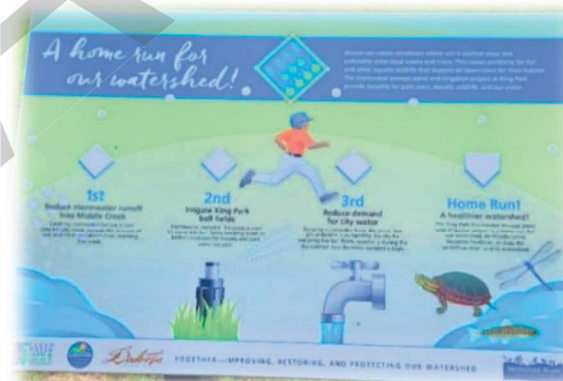


Figure E-8: Educational signage at a stormwater reuse system implemented by the VRWJPO and the City of Lakeville

Groundwater Sustainability

The same groundwater used for drinking is also used for agriculture, industrial processes, and other residential needs. Groundwater also supports surface baseflows in the Vermillion River and its tributaries, as well as ecosystem function. At the start of the Plan

update process, the region experienced a three-year historic drought, highlighting the need to balance groundwater supply with demand.

Community Relationships

Stakeholders in the VRWJPO can implement practices in their daily lives that improve local water resources. However, there is room for growth in community engagement. Engaging the public on stewardship opportunities, environmental issues, and the work of the VRWJPO are focuses of this Plan.



Figure E-9: VRWJPO Staff Showcase an Adopt-a-Drain Display

Plan Structure

After the initial public engagement process, VRWJPO staff sought direction from the organization's Community Advisory Committee (CAC), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and JPB to assess priority issues for the Plan based on stakeholder input. Staff married their direction with other local plans, pertinent studies, monitoring and assessment data, and the VRWJPO's role in water governance to formulate Issue Categories, Issue Statements, and Goals. *A list of studies and references used in constructing this Plan can be found in [Appendix A](#).*

Issues and Goals

This Plan is organized by the six Issue Categories described below, each with a unique color and icon and Issue Statements and Goals. The framework of the Plan provides the greatest level of measurability at the Action level. Each Action has connected Measurable Outcomes listed in *Table 3-16* on page 65.

Progress toward Issue Category Goals is based on measures that reflect a challenging yet achievable success rate of Measurable Outcomes. A success rate percentage was defined for each Goal, while accounting for unknown circumstances such as: available budget (i.e. grant success rate, partner funds); landowner willingness; property acquisition and access; project and partner support; and other factors to align with the requirements of [Minnesota Rule 8410.0080](#).

1. Water Quality



Water Quality Issue Statements

- Surface water quality is threatened or impaired.
- Groundwater quality is threatened or impaired.

Water Quality Goals

- Protect and improve surface water quality by reducing 234.5 lbs/yr Total Phosphorus (TP) and 823.9 tons/yr Total Suspended Solids (TSS).
- Protect and improve groundwater quality by reducing 1,323 lbs/yr Nitrate (NO₃).

2. Stormwater Management



Stormwater Management Issue Statements

- Land alterations and lack of adequate stormwater management in the VRWJPO have increased the rate and volume of stormwater runoff, impacted water quality, degraded habitat, and increased flood risk.
- Watershed regulations are challenging for some local government units to enforce.

Stormwater Management Goals

- Reduce runoff rate and volume by 110 acre-ft/yr.
- Develop and implement practicable and protective VRWJPO Rules and Standards through the revision process with stakeholder involvement three times.

3. Groundwater Sustainability



Groundwater Sustainability Issue Statements

- Groundwater aquifer supply is threatened due to increased and competing uses.
- Groundwater recharge rates are decreasing due to landscape alterations and climatic fluctuations.

Groundwater Sustainability Goal

- Protect and improve groundwater aquifer supply through partnerships with other organizations to implement 2 groundwater conservation assessments and 8 groundwater conservation projects.

4. Climate Resilience



Climate Resilience Issue Statements

- Climate patterns are negatively impacting the VRWJPO's natural and built environments.
- Historic stormwater infrastructure is not adequate to manage climate patterns.

Climate Resilience Goals

- Improve the resilience of the VRWJPO's natural and built environments through implementation of 5 projects.
- Adapt stormwater infrastructure to changing precipitation patterns through implementation of 2 projects.

5. Natural Environments



Natural Environments Issue Statement

- Human-caused ecosystem disruptions decrease biological diversity, promote the proliferation of invasive species, and have wide-reaching impacts to the VRWJPO's natural environment.

Natural Environments Goals

- Mitigate impacts from human-caused ecosystem disruptions.*
- Protect and enhance natural environments.*

* Measure of combined goals' success based on percentage of measurable outcomes presented in *Table 3-16*, including: 29 projects, 40 acres of wetland restored, 1,334 lbs/yr TP removed, 351 tons/yr TSS removed, 8,607 lbs/yr NO₃ removed.

6. Community Relationships



Community Relationships Issue Statements

- Public awareness and understanding of the VRWJPO are limited.
- Community members in the watershed lack awareness of opportunities to engage in the VRWJPO's work.

Community Relationships Goals

- Improve the awareness and understanding of the VRWJPO through 1,740 social media posts, 24 newsletters, 117,000 website views and posting 9 project signs.
- Increase community connection to the watershed's natural resources through awarding 6 Stewardship Grants, implementation of 96 LCW projects, 12 Lawns Reimagined projects, participation in 72 public events, and offering 3 watershed tours.
- Increase community understanding of environmental issues through 1,740 social media posts, 24 newsletters, 117,000 website views, 12 community organization presentations, 6 classroom presentations, and posting 9 project signs.

Implementation Plan

Implementation Actions are detailed in Section Three. Estimated costs, year(s) of implementation, priority level, and relationship to Plan Objectives are associated with each Action within the Implementation Plan (*Tables 3-14 and 3-15*). The Implementation Plan was developed to encompass critical ongoing Actions, as well as Actions to address emerging issues and changing priorities. Notable actions of highest priority include those listed in *Table E-1*:

Table E-1: Priority Actions in the Implementation Plan

Category	Item ID	Action Description
Water Quality	WQ-1	Annually administer the Vermillion River Monitoring Network (VRMN) including physical, chemical, and biological monitoring.
	WQ-2	Fund additional subwatershed, geomorphic and other assessments to identify water quality improvement projects and practices.
	WQ-3	Implement projects such as infiltration, filtration, ponding, reuse, hydrodynamic separators, and Manufactured Treatment Devices (MTDs) identified within the City of Lakeville North Creek and East Lake Subwatershed Assessment.
	WQ-4	Implement projects such as infiltration, diversion, reuse, and alum identified within the City of Apple Valley East Lake Subwatershed Assessment.
	WQ-5	Implement projects such as filter strips, grassed waterways, Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCOBs), wetland restorations, and native grasses identified within the Vermillion River Headwaters Subwatershed Assessment.
	WQ-6	Implement projects such as filter strips, grassed waterways, WASCOBs, streambank and shoreline stabilizations identified within the Upper Mainstem Subwatershed Assessment.
	WQ-7	Implement projects such as grassed waterways, WASCOBs, critical area plantings, filter strip, grade stabilization, streambank stabilizations, and wetland restorations identified within the South Branch Vermillion River Subwatershed Assessment.

Table E-1 Continued: Priority Actions within the Implementation Plan

Category	Item ID	Action Description
Water Quality	WQ-8	Implement projects such as WASCOBs and grassed waterways identified within the Vermillion River Lower Mainstem South Subwatershed Assessment.
	WQ-9	Implement projects and practices to address East Lake's Waste Load Allocation (WLA) defined within the Vermillion River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).
Stormwater Management	SW-1	Implement projects such as infiltration, filtration and hydrodynamic separators identified within the Hastings Direct Drainage Subwatershed Assessment.
	SW-2	Implement projects such as infiltration, filtration, pervious paver, boulevard tree trench, cistern, wetland and stream restoration, and MTDs identified within the South Creek Subwatershed Assessment.
	SW-3	Implement projects such as treatment train, underground vault/pipe gallery and biofiltration projects identified within the City of Farmington Subwatershed Assessment.
	SW-4	Implement projects such as bioretention basin, retention pond, impervious reduction, and stormwater reuse identified within the City of Farmington Stormwater Retrofit Assessment for Independent School District 192.
	SW-5	Implement innovative Stormwater Management projects and practices such as green infrastructure, stormwater reuse, and Low Impact Development (LID) Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Category	Item ID	Action Description
Groundwater Sustainability	GS-1	Collaborate with partners for local, regional and state groundwater conservation assessments.
	GS-2	Implement projects, programs and practices identified within the Dakota County Groundwater Plan such as a VRWJPO-wide water supply/conservation initiative, cost-sharing for water conservation projects, working with the DNR to ensure large groundwater appropriation requests are sustainable, and more.
Climate Resiliency	CR-1	Partner in the development of a Climate Resiliency Plan to include, but not be limited to an inventory of inadequate stormwater infrastructure, feasibility of stormwater pond smart technology, flood risk assessments, and natural resource susceptibilities to drought.
	CR-2	Provide incentives for projects identified within the Climate Resiliency Plan.
	CR-3	Implement restoration and enhancement projects that connect water resources to the historic floodplain.

Table E-1 Continued: Priority Actions within the Implementation Plan

Category	Item ID	Action Description
Natural Environments	NE-1	Implement projects such as: natural channel restoration/relocation, grade control, floodplain management, riparian management, bank stabilization, and culvert crossing projects identified within the South Creek Geomorphic Assessment.
	NE-2	Implement projects such as: natural channel restoration/relocation, grade control, floodplain management, riparian management, bank stabilization, and culvert crossing projects identified within the Etter Creek and Ravenna Coulees Geomorphic Assessment.
	NE-3	Implement projects such as: bank stabilization, floodplain management, grade control, natural channel restoration, and riparian management projects identified within the Middle and North Creek Geomorphic Assessment.
	NE-4	Implement projects such as: bank stabilization, culvert crossing, natural channel restoration, infrastructure, and riparian management projects identified within the Empire Drainages Geomorphic Assessment.
	NE-5	Implement projects such as: bank stabilization, riparian management, and infrastructure improvement projects identified within the Lower Mainstem Vermillion River Geomorphic Assessment.
	NE-6	Restore priority wetlands and administer the VRWJPO Wetland Banking Program to achieve no net loss of wetlands within the watershed.
	NE-7	Restore areas identified within Priority Wetland Restoration studies, not just for the purpose of the creation of a wetland bank.
	NE-8	Implement projects and practices to address East Lake's Load Allocation (LA) defined within the Vermillion River Watershed TMDL.

Category	Item ID	Action Description
Community Relationships	CMR-1	Provide Stewardship Grants to individuals and groups in the watershed who are looking to install BMPs with direct water resource benefits.
	CMR-2	Host display tables at community events where attendees are likely to be interested in environmental topics.
	CMR-3	Keep the VRWJPO website up to date by regularly reviewing and posting pertinent content.
	CMR-4	Electronically distribute VRWJPO newsletter with watershed updates, news, and tips.
	CMR-5	Annually plan, promote, and provide financial incentives for partner programs that align with the goals and objectives of this Plan.
	CMR-6	Engage stakeholders and the public through insightful social media posts.

Evaluating Success

Within 120 days of the end of each calendar year, the VRWJPO must submit an annual activity and financial report to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in accordance with [Minnesota Rule 8410.0150](#). Items in the submitted report include, but are not limited to:

- Descriptions of activities completed relating to the previous year's annual work plan
- Expenditures relating to the VRWJPO's general budget categories and special projects
- Monitoring data for water quantity, quality, temperature, and biological characteristics at several stream reaches
- A budgeted work plan and activities for the next year

In prior years, the VRWJPO would also create a measurable outcomes evaluation of progress made towards goals and implementation actions within the 2016-2025 Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan, including items part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), every two years. Beginning in 2024, staff began folding measurable outcomes data into the annual activity report. If, during the evaluation process, it is found that the Plan should be modified to continue planned progress towards goals and actions, VRWJPO staff will follow the amendment process described in [Subsection 1.4: Amendments to the Plan](#).

Local Water Management Plan Implementation

Following adoption of the Plan by the JPB, Local Government Units (LGUs) having land use planning and regulatory authority for territory within the VRWJPO must prepare a local water management plan (LWMP), a CIP, and official controls to ensure local water management is consistent with the VRWJPO's Plan.

Content must follow guidelines described in [MN Statute 103B.235](#) and [MN Rule 8410.0160](#). LGUs are responsible for permitting and implementation of local or state jurisdictional controls to ensure they meet or exceed the VRWJPO's Standards ([Appendix D](#)).

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Water Quality	WQ-1	Vermillion River Monitoring Network	Annually administer the VRMN, including physical, chemical, and biological monitoring. Costs include: DCSWCD staff/consultant time for water quality, aquatic macroinvertebrate and fish monitoring; data analyses; samples analyses; report preparation; agency coordination; equipment/supplies and United States Geological Survey (USGS), and DNR flow gaging.	High	Use surface water quality monitoring data to inform restoration and protection decisions.	Watershed-wide	DCSWCD, SSWCD, DNR, MPCA	General Fund	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$1,226,635
	WQ-2	Assessments	Fund additional subwatershed, geomorphic, and other assessments to identify projects and practices as well as their project costs and pollutant loading reductions or water resource/habitat improvement metrics.	High	Protect surface waters from impairments. Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Grants	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$35,000
	WQ-3	Projects Identified within the City of Lakeville North Creek and East Lake Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as infiltration, filtration, ponding, reuse, hydrodynamic separator, and MTDs identified within the North Creek and East Lake Subwatershed Assessment conducted within the bounds of the City of Lakeville.	High	Protect surface waters from impairments. Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list.	North Creek and East Lake	City of Lakeville	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$180,000
	WQ-4	Projects Identified within the City of Apple Valley East Lake Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as infiltration, diversion, reuse, and alum identified within the East Lake Subwatershed Assessment conducted within the bounds of the City of Apple Valley.	High	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list.	East Lake	City of Apple Valley	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$345,000
	WQ-5	Projects Identified within the Vermillion River Headwaters Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as filter strips, grassed waterways, WASCOBs, wetland restoration, and native grasses identified within the Vermillion River Headwaters subwatershed assessment.	High	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list. Protect surface waters from impairments.	Vermillion River Headwaters Subwatershed	SSWCD, Landowners	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$100,309
	WQ-6	Projects Identified within the Upper Mainstem Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as filter strips, grassed waterways, WASCOBs, streambank, and shoreline stabilizations identified within the Upper Mainstem subwatershed assessment.	High	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list. Protect surface waters from impairments.	Upper Mainstem Subwatershed	Landowners, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$315,257
	WQ-7	Projects Identified within the South Branch Vermillion River Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as grassed waterways, WASCOBs, critical area plantings, filter strips, grade stabilizations, streambank stabilizations, and wetland restorations identified within the South Branch Vermillion River subwatershed assessment.	High	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list. Protect surface waters from impairments.	South Branch Vermillion River Subwatershed	Landowners, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$100,309

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Water Quality	WQ-8	Projects Identified within the Vermillion Lower Mainstem South Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as WASCOPS and grassed waterways identified within the Vermillion Lower Mainstem South subwatershed assessment.	High	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list. Protect surface waters from impairments.	Lower Mainstem Subwatershed	Landowner, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$100,309
	WQ-9	Opportunity Projects/assessments	Through the life of the Plan, the VRWJPO will remain open to projects, initiatives, studies or other opportunities that align with Plan goals and objectives as they arise which are unknown at the time of Plan creation.	Medium	Many	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000
	WQ-10	BMP Performance Monitoring	Monitor performance of pollutant reductions associated with BMPs implemented with funding assistance from grant or partner dollars.	Medium	Use surface water quality monitoring data to inform restoration and protection decisions.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$22,800
	WQ-11	Vermillion River Groundwater Interaction Assessment	Fund an assessment in the Hastings DWSMA to investigate surface water-groundwater interaction from the Vermillion River and its tributaries.	Medium	Coordinate with others to assess impacts to groundwater from the Vermillion River and its tributaries.	South Branch, Lower Mainstem, and Mississippi Direct Subwatersheds	Dakota County, City of Hastings	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$49,400
	WQ-12	Groundwater Quality Projects, Programs and Practices	Assist lead groundwater organizations with projects, programs and practices that protect or improve groundwater quality, such as soil health initiatives, increasing continuous cover and other actions identified within the Dakota County Agricultural Chemical Reduction Effort (ACRE).	Medium	Support and implement projects, programs and practices to protect or improve groundwater quality.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$200,618
	WQ-13	Enhanced Street Sweeping Study	Complete an Enhanced Street Sweeping Study to prioritize areas for enhanced sweeping based on pollutant recovery/removal potentials.	Medium	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list. Protect surface waters from impairments.	Regulated MS4s	Dakota County	General Fund, Partner Funds	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$45,000
	WQ-14	Assist with Development of Low Salt Design Standards	Support the development of low salt design and stormwater management standards.	Medium	Protect surface waters from impairments. Support and implement projects, programs and practices that protect or improve groundwater quality.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Administration and Operations; Regulation	\$10,000

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Water Quality	WQ-15	Projects that Address E. coli	Partner with lead agencies to investigate and implement projects that address E. coli in Scott County.	Low	Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list. Use surface water monitoring data to inform restoration and protection decisions.	Upper Mainstem Subwatershed	SSWCD, Scott County	General Fund, Partner Funds	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$7,500
	WQ-16	Projects that Address Toxics/Metals/ECOC/Pesticides	Investigate opportunities to partner with lead agencies to implement projects that address toxics/metals/ECOC/pesticides.	Low	Support and implement projects, programs and practices to protect or improve groundwater quality.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Fund, Grants	Many	+
Stormwater Management	SW-1	Projects Identified within the Hastings Direct Drainage Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as infiltration, filtration, and hydrodynamic separators identified within the Hastings Direct Drainage Assessment Report.	High	Promote and implement infiltration practices. Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape.	Lower Mississippi Direct Subwatershed	City of Hastings	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$130,000
	SW-2	Projects Identified within the South Creek Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as infiltration, filtration, pervious paver, boulevard tree trench, cistern, wetland and stream revitalization, and MTDs identified within South Creek Subwatershed Assessment.	High	Promote and implement infiltration practices. Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape.	South Creek Subwatershed	City of Lakeville, Landowners, Dakota County	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$30,000
	SW-3	Projects Identified within the City of Farmington Subwatershed Assessment	Implement projects such as treatment train, underground vault/pipe gallery, and biofiltration projects identified within City of Farmington Subwatershed Assessment.	High	Promote and implement infiltration practices. Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape.	North Creek, Middle Creek and Middle Mainstem Subwatersheds	City of Farmington	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$75,000
	SW-4	Projects Identified within the City of Farmington Stormwater Retrofit Assessment for Independent School District 192	Implement projects such as bioretention basin, retention pond, impervious reduction, and stormwater reuse identified within City of Farmington Stormwater Retrofit Assessment for Independent School District 192.	High	Promote and implement infiltration practices. Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape.	North Creek, Middle Creek and Middle Mainstem Subwatersheds	City of Farmington	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	+

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Stormwater Management	SW-5	Innovative Stormwater Management Projects and Practices	Implement innovative stormwater management projects in partnership with LGUs such as green infrastructure, stormwater reuse, and LID BMPs.	High	Promote and implement infiltration practices. Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape.	Watershed-wide	Cities, Counties	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$270,000
	SW-6	Opportunity Projects/assessments	Through the life of the Plan, the VRWJPO will remain open to projects, initiatives, studies or other opportunities that align with Plan goals and objectives as they arise which are unknown at the time of Plan creation.	Medium	Many	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000
	SW-7	Projects identified within the Long and Farquar TMDL Implementation Plan and Long and Farquar Pond Feasibility Analysis	Implement stormwater projects identified within the Long and Farquar TMDL Implementation Plan such as: road corridor BMPs, infiltration benches, infiltration basins, private large lot redevelopments, and residential BMPS/buffers/sweeping. Implement projects identified within the Long and Farquar Pond Feasibility Analysis.	Medium	Promote and implement infiltration practices. Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape.	Long and Farquar Lakes	City of Apple Valley	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$58,000
	SW-8	Low Impact Development Practice Policies and Programs	Promote implementation of LID practices through the development of policies and programs to further adoption.	Medium	Assist in the development and implementation of policies and programs that promote green infrastructure and Low Impact Development practices.	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	Many	General Fund	Many	+
Groundwater Sustainability	GS-1	Groundwater Conservation Assessments	Collaborate with partners for local, regional and state groundwater conservation assessments.	High	Assist with and coordinate groundwater supply planning, protection and improvement efforts with lead groundwater organizations.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Inventory, Assessments and Research	\$10,000
	GS-2	Projects, Programs and Practices Identified within the Dakota County Groundwater Plan's Groundwater Quantity Tactics	Implement projects, programs and practices identified within the Dakota County Groundwater Plan such as: a VRWJPO-wide water supply/conservation initiative, cost-sharing for water conservation projects, working with the DNR to ensure large groundwater appropriation requests are sustainable, and more.	Medium	Assist with and implement projects, programs and practices that reduce landscape and agricultural water use. Assist with and implement projects, programs and practices that promote infiltration.	Dakota County	Dakota County, LGUs, DCSWCD	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance; Regulation; Inventory, Assessments and Research	\$75,000

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Groundwater Sustainability	GS-3	Groundwater Conservation Assessment Projects	Implement projects, programs and practices identified within other groundwater conservation assessments.	Medium	Assist with and implement projects, programs and practices that reduce landscape and agricultural water use. Assist with and implement projects, programs and practices that promote infiltration.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	+
	GS-4	Soil Health Initiative Partnerships	Assist with implementation and promotion of partner soil health programs.	Medium	Assist with and implement projects, programs and practices that reduce landscape and agricultural water use.	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	Many	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance; Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	+
	GS-5	Opportunity Projects/assessments	Through the life of the Plan, the VRWJPO will remain open to projects, initiatives, studies or other opportunities that align with Plan goals and objectives as they arise which are unknown at the time of Plan creation.	Medium	Many	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000
Climate Resilience	CR-1	Climate Resiliency Plan	Partner in the development of a Climate Resiliency Plan to establish a baseline assessment of climate resiliency and develop strategic goals and recommendations to move towards a more climate resilient Watershed. Scope to include, but not be limited to: inventory of inadequate stormwater infrastructure, feasibility of stormwater pond smart technology, flood risk assessment, and natural resource susceptibilities to drought.	High	Foster partnerships to implement projects, programs and practices that improve stormwater infrastructure's resilience to climate impacts.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Grants	Feasibility/ Preliminary Engineering; Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$100,000
	CR-2	Climate Resilient Project Incentives	Provide incentives for projects identified within the Climate Resiliency Plan.	High	Foster partnerships to implement projects, programs and practices that improve stormwater infrastructure's resilience to climate impacts.	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	Cities, Counties, SWCDs	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$153,000

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Climate Resilience	CR-3	Floodplain Reconnection	Implement restoration and enhancement projects that connect water resources to the historic floodplain.	Medium	Promote reconnection to historic floodplains	Floodplains	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance; Feasibility/ Preliminary Engineering	\$55,000
	CR-4	Opportunity Projects/assessments	Through the life of the Plan, the VRWJPO will remain open to projects, initiatives, studies or other opportunities that align with Plan goals and objectives as they arise which are unknown at the time of Plan creation.	Medium	Many	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000
	CR-5	Stormwater Infrastructure Adaptation	Partner with LGUs to upgrade existing stormwater infrastructure to be more climate resilient.	Low	Support LGUs in stormwater infrastructure adaptation	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	LGUs	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$30,000
	CR-6	Green Infrastructure BMPs	Implement green infrastructure BMPs in partnership with LGUs.	Low	Foster partnerships to implement projects, programs and practices to increase the amount of green infrastructure	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	LGUs	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	+
	CR-7	Updated Floodplain Model	Assist partners in the investigation of updated floodplain models.	Low	Support re-evaluation of Watershed floodplains using updated data	Watershed-wide	Cities, Counties, DNR	General Fund, Partner Funds	Feasibility/ Preliminary Engineering	+
Natural Environments	NE-1	Projects identified within the South Creek Geomorphic Assessment	Implement projects such as natural channel restoration/relocation, grade control, floodplain management, riparian management, bank stabilization, and culvert crossing projects identified within the South Creek Geomorphic Assessment.	High	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	South Creek Subwatershed	City of Lakeville, Dakota County	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$85,000
	NE-2	Projects identified within the Etter Creek and Ravenna Coulee Geomorphic Assessment	Implement projects such as natural channel restoration/relocation, grade control, floodplain management, riparian management, bank stabilization, and culvert crossing projects identified within the Ravenna Coulee Geomorphic Assessment.	High	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Mississippi Direct Subwatershed	Dakota County, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$10,000

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Natural Environments	NE-3	Projects identified within the Middle and North Creek Geomorphic Assessment	Implement projects such as bank stabilization, floodplain management, grade control, natural channel restoration and riparian management projects identified within the Middle and North Creek Geomorphic Assessment.	High	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Middle Creek and North Creek Subwatersheds	City of Lakeville, City of Farmington, Dakota County	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$45,000
	NE-4	Projects identified within the Empire Drainages Geomorphic Assessment	Implement projects such as bank stabilization, culvert crossing, natural channel restoration, infrastructure, and riparian management projects identified within the Empire Drainages Geomorphic Assessment.	High	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Middle Mainstem Subwatershed	City of Empire, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$20,000
	NE-5	Projects identified within the Lower Mainstem Geomorphic Assessment	Implement projects such as bank stabilization, riparian management, and infrastructure improvement projects identified within the Lower Mainstem Geomorphic Assessment.	High	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Lower Mainstem Subwatershed	Dakota County, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$20,000
	NE-6	VRWJPO Wetland Banking Program	Restore priority wetlands and administer the VRWJPO Wetland Banking Program to achieve a no-net-loss of wetlands within the VRWJPO.	High	Identify and improve high-priority water resource environments found to be significantly impacted by humans.	Restorable Wetlands	SWCDs, Counties, BWSR	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	+
	NE-7	Priority Wetland Restoration	Restore areas identified within Priority Wetland Restoration studies, not just for the purpose of the creation of a wetland bank.	High	Identify and improve high-priority water resource environments found to be significantly impacted by humans.	Restorable Wetlands	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$105,000
	NE-8	East Lake In-lake Projects and Practices	Implement projects and practices to address East Lake's LA defined within the Vermillion River Watershed TMDL. Examples include, but are not limited to invasive fish management, fish stocking, native aquatic plant establishment, AIS management, alum treatments, lake drawdown, and shoreline restorations.	High	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	East Lake	City of Apple Valley, City of Lakeville, DNR, Dakota County	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$45,000
	NE-9	Cost-share for DCSWCD and SSWCD Incentive Programs	Provide cost-share for the following programs: DCSWCD's Incentive Payment Practices Program; SSWCD's Cover Crop and Soil Health Incentives; and others as they are developed.	Medium	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that improve soil health	Agricultural Landscapes	DCSWCD and SSWCD	General Fund	CIP and Maintenance	\$272,267

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Natural Environments	NE-10	In-stream Habitat Restoration	Implement projects not identified in a geomorphic assessment that restore in-stream habitat.	Medium	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Streams	Many	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$190,000
	NE-11	Opportunity Projects/assessments	Through the life of the Plan, the VRWJPO will remain open to projects, initiatives, studies or other opportunities that align with Plan goals and objectives as they arise which are unknown at the time of Plan creation.	Medium	Many	Watershed-wide	Many	Many	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000
	NE-12	In-lake management projects identified within the Long and Farquar TMDL Implementation Plan	In-lake management projects identified within the Long and Farquar TMDL Implementation Plan such as AIS management activities, fisheries management (surveys, stocking, removals), aeration, and lake drawdown.	Low	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Long and Farquar Lakes	DNR and City of Apple Valley	Grants, Partner Funds, General Fund	CIP and Maintenance	+
	NE-13	Upland Restoration Adjacent to Water Resources	Partner with stakeholders to restore upland areas adjacent to lakes, rivers, and wetlands.	Low	Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the Watershed's aquatic and riparian habitats.	Watershed-wide	Many	Grants, Partner Funds, General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations; CIP Maintenance	\$5,000

Community Relationships	CMR-1	Stewardship Grants	Provide cost-share funding to individuals and groups in the watershed who are looking to install BMPs with direct water resource benefits.	High	Create and support opportunities for stakeholder connection and engagement with the Watershed's natural resources. Engage citizens to promote sustainable stewardship of lakes and streams.	Residents, landowners, businesses, community groups	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations; Administration and Operations	\$346,221
	CMR-2	Public Event Participation	Host display tables at community events where attendees are likely to be interested in environmental topics. Examples may include, but are not limited to: Dakota County Fair, Take a Kid Fishing Day, Home and Garden Expos, Parks and Recreation Month, Fix-It Clinics	High	Consistently communicate and promote the work of the VRWJPO with partners and stakeholders. Grow the amount of watershed stakeholders.	Many	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$96,221
	CMR-3	Maintain Website	Keep the VRWJPO website up to date by regularly reviewing and posting pertinent content. Website contents include: upcoming events; watershed project updates; project fact sheets; watershed assessment studies; volunteer opportunities; recreational resources; and anything else determined relevant.	High	Consistently communicate and promote the work of the VRWJPO with partners and stakeholders. Maintain or increase ways for stakeholders to provide relevant input to the VRWJPO.	Many	N/A	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$53,456

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Community Relationships	CMR-4	Distribute Newsletter	Electronically distribute VRWJPO newsletter with watershed updates, news, and tips.	High	Consistently communicate and promote the work of the VRWJPO with partners and stakeholders. Communicate with stakeholders regarding the environmental issues that directly impact the watershed.	Newsletter subscribers	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$85,530
	CMR-5	Partner Programs	Annually plan, promote and provide financial incentives for programs that align with the goals and objectives of this Plan. Examples include, but are not limited to: the Dakota SWCD Landscaping for Clean Water Program, the Dakota County Lawns Reimagined Program, Scott SWCD Clean Water Education Program, Smart Salting Trainings in Dakota County, Turfgrass Maintenance Trainings in Dakota County, volunteer events with direct benefits to the watershed (e.g. Trout Unlimited)	High	Create and support opportunities for stakeholder connection and engagement with the Watershed's natural resources. Engage citizens to promote sustainable stewardship of lakes and streams.	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$899,915
	CMR-6	Social Media Presence	Engage stakeholders and the public through insightful social media posts. Topics include, but are not limited to: project updates, BMP suggestions for residents, relevant news articles, photos from around the watershed, events, on Facebook and Instagram.	High	Communicate with stakeholders regarding environmental issues that directly impact the watershed	Many	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$138,986
	CMR-7	Collaborative Education and Outreach	Collaborate with partners to develop and distribute educational materials on topics including, but not limited to: MS4 Permit requirements to reduce stormwater pollution; residential BMPs to improve water quality; water conservation BMPs; indoor appliance water conservation rebates; soil health; interesting fish and macroinvertebrate information	Medium	Communicate with stakeholders regarding environmental issues that directly impact the watershed. Grow the number of watershed stakeholders.	Residents, landowners, businesses	LGUs	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$117,603
	CMR-8	Engagement with Schools in the VRWJPO	Connect with teachers and education professionals in the watershed and participate in their programming as appropriate. Examples may include but are not limited to Outdoor Education Days, Earth Day events, in-class discussions.	Medium	Grow the number of watershed stakeholders	Students	DCSWCD and SSWCD	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$83,456

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Community Relationships	CMR-9	VRWJPO Watershed Tours	Host watershed tours for stakeholders to highlight demonstrations of innovative technology, successful water quality and quantity improvement projects, and restoration and enhancement activities	Medium	Consistently communicate and promote the work of the VRWJPO with partners and stakeholders. Grow the amount of watershed stakeholders.	Elected and appointed officials	LGUs, state agencies, environmental organizations	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$53,456
	CMR-10	Project Signage	Post signage that directs stakeholders and the public to the Project Update landing page for on-going projects. Place interpretive signs at completed VRWJPO project sites to inform the public about what the projects do for water resources.	Low	Consistently communicate and promote the work of the VRWJPO with partners and stakeholders.	Many	LGUs	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$7,000
Administration	AD-1	Staffing	Staffing for VRWJPO Administrator, Co-Administrator, Senior Watershed Specialist, Water Resources Engineer and Communications and Outreach Specialist for hours related to: Administration and Operations; Planning; Inventory, Assessment, Research; Feasibility/Preliminary Engineering; Regulation; and CIP and Maintenance.	High	Many	N/A	Dakota County, Scott County	General Fund	All Budget Categories minus Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$5,944,337
	AD-2	Insurance	Fees associated with insurance required for operation of the VRWJPO.	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$51,587
	AD-3	Legal Support	Fees associated with legal support for contract and/or agreement establishment, bidding document review and other legal support.	High	N/A	N/A	Dakota County	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$286,597
	AD-4	Public Notices	Keep website updated on following information: JPB agendas, meeting packets and meeting minutes; CAC agendas, meeting packets and meeting minutes; the Watershed Management Plan; VRWJPO Standards; monitoring reports; annual reports; legal public notices.	High	N/A	N/A		General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$53,456

Table 3-14: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: 10-Year Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Description	Priority Level	Objective(s) Addressed	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	*Total 10-Year Cost
Administration	AD-5	Watershed Management Plan Update	Funds to hire a contractor to update the Plan following MN Rule 103B and MN Statute 8410 requirements.	High	N/A	N/A	Dakota County and Scott County	General Fund	Planning	\$195,000
	AD-6	CIP Maintenance	Funding for maintenance of CIP projects completed through partnerships with LGUs or independently by the VRWJPO.	High	Many	N/A	LGUs	General Fund	CIP and Maintenance	\$343,916
	AD-7	Miscellaneous Operational Costs	Funding for miscellaneous operational costs including, but not limited to: website technical support, webpage host, software licenses, public notices, tools, equipment, subscriptions, communication materials, clothing, CAC per diems, trainings and mileage reimbursements.	High	Many	N/A	N/A	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$150,000

Notes:

(*) Dollars shown reflect only those costs sourced from the VRWJPO general budget. If funding source identifies grants or partner funds, additional dollars would be needed for full project implementation. VRWJPO general budget expenditures have been accounted for as partners have identified action within 2-, 5- or 10-year CIP programs, or other long-range implementation plans. Generally, for CIP partnerships, VRWJPO contributions range from 10-25% of the full project cost.

(+) Currently, no funding from the VRWJPO is identified to support this action. This action may be completed as partner and/or grant funding becomes available.

	Total 10-Year Cost
Water Quality Total	\$2,746,136
Stormwater Management Total	\$571,000
Groundwater Sustainability Total	\$93,000
Climate Resilience Total	\$346,000
Natural Environments Total	\$805,267
Community Relationships Total	\$1,881,843
Administration Total	\$7,024,894
Total	\$13,468,141

DRAFT

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	
Water Quality	WQ-1	Vermillion River Monitoring Network	Watershed-wide	DCSWCD, SSWCD, DNR, MPCA	General Fund	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$107,000	\$110,210	\$113,516	\$116,922	\$120,429	\$124,042	\$127,764	\$131,597	\$135,544	\$139,611	
	WQ-2	Assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Grants	Inventory, Assessment and Research					\$35,000						
	WQ-3	Projects Identified within City of Lakeville North Creek and East Lake Subwatershed Assessment	North Creek and East Lake	City of Lakeville	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance			\$60,000	\$60,000						\$30,000	\$30,000
	WQ-4	Projects Identified within City of Apple Valley East Lake Subwatershed Assessment	East Lake	City of Apple Valley	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance		\$57,500	\$57,500	\$115,000	\$115,000						
	WQ-5	Projects Identified within Vermillion River Headwaters Subwatershed Assessment Projects	Vermillion River Headwaters	SSWCD, Landowners	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$8,750	\$9,013	\$9,283	\$9,561	\$9,848	\$10,144	\$10,448	\$10,761	\$11,084	\$11,417	
	WQ-6	Projects Identified within Upper Mainstem Subwatershed Assessment	Upper Mainstem Subwatershed	Landowners, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$27,500	\$28,325	\$29,175	\$30,050	\$30,951	\$31,880	\$32,836	\$33,822	\$34,836	\$35,881	

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	
Water Quality	WQ-7	Projects Identified within South Branch Vermillion River Subwatershed Assessment	South Branch Subwatershed	Landowners, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$8,750	\$9,013	\$9,283	\$9,561	\$9,848	\$10,144	\$10,448	\$10,761	\$11,084	\$11,417	
	WQ-8	Projects Identified within Vermillion Lower Mainstem South Subwatershed Assessment	Lower Mainstem Subwatershed	Landowner, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$8,750	\$9,013	\$9,283	\$9,561	\$9,848	\$10,144	\$10,448	\$10,761	\$11,084	\$11,417	
	WQ-9	Opportunity projects/assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000										
	WQ-10	BMP Performance Monitoring	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$2,000		\$2,200	\$2,300	\$2,400	\$2,500	\$2,700	\$2,800	\$2,900	\$3,000	
	WQ-11	Vermillion River Groundwater Interaction Assessment	South Branch, Lower Mainstem and Mississippi Direct Subwatersheds	Dakota County, City of Hastings	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	Inventory, Assessment and Research										\$49,400	
	WQ-12	Groundwater Quality Projects, Programs and Practices	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	\$17,500	\$18,025	\$18,566	\$19,123	\$19,696	\$20,287	\$20,896	\$21,523	\$22,168	\$22,834	
	WQ-13	Enhanced Street Sweeping Study	Regulated MS4s	Dakota County	General Fund, Partner Funds	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$45,000										

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Water Quality	WQ-14	Assist with Development of Low Salt Design Standards	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Administration and Operations; Regulation		\$5,000				\$5,000				
	WQ-15	Projects that Address E. coli	Upper Mainstem Subwatershed	DCSWCD, SSWCD, Dakota County, Scott County	General Fund, Partner Funds	Inventory, Assessment and Research	\$7,500									
	WQ-16	Projects that Address Toxics/Metals/ECOC/Pesticides	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Fund, Grants	CIP and Maintenance; Inventory, Assessment and Research; and Communication, Outreach and Public Relations										
Stormwater Management	SW-1	Projects Identified within Hastings Direct Drainage Subwatershed Assessment	Lower Mississippi Direct Subwatershed	City of Hastings	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance		\$25,000			\$50,000		\$55,000			
	SW-2	Projects Identified within South Creek Subwatershed Assessment	South Creek Subwatershed	City of Lakeville, Landowners, Dakota County	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance					\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000	
	SW-3	Projects Identified within City of Farmington Subwatershed Assessment	North Creek, Middle Creek and Middle Mainstem Subwatersheds	City of Farmington	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance						\$75,000				

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partners	Funding Source	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Stormwater Management	SW-4	Projects Identified within City of Farmington Stormwater Retrofit Assessment for Independent School District 192	North Creek, Middle Creek and Middle Mainstem Subwatersheds	City of Farmington	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									
	SW-5	Innovative Stormwater Management Projects and Practices	Watershed-wide	Cities, Dakota County, Scott County	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance		\$65,000	\$65,000				\$70,000	\$70,000		
	SW-6	Opportunity projects/assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000									
	SW-7	Projects identified within the Long and Farquar TMDL Implementation Plan and Long and Farquar Pond Feasibility Analysis	Long and Farquar Lakes	City of Apple Valley	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$18,000					\$40,000				
	SW-8	Low Impact Development Practice Policies and Programs	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	Many	General Fund	Many	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									

Groundwater Sustainability	GS-1	Groundwater Conservation Assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Inventory, Assessments and Research			\$10,000							
	GS-2	Projects, Programs and Practices Identified within the Dakota County Groundwater Plan's Groundwater Quantity Tactics	Dakota County	Dakota County, LGUs, DCSWCD	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance; Regulation; Inventory, Assessments and Research	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Groundwater Sustainability	GS-3	Groundwater Conservation Assessment Projects	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									
	GS-4	Soil Health Initiative Partnerships	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	Many	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance; Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									
	GS-5	Opportunity projects/assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000									
Climate Resilience	CR-1	Climate Resiliency Plan	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Grants	Feasibility/ Preliminary Engineering; Inventory, Assessment and Research			\$50,000	\$50,000						
	CR-2	Climate Resilient Project Incentives	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	Cities, Counties, SWCDs	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance						\$25,000	\$40,000	\$28,000	\$35,000	\$25,000
	CR-3	Floodplain Reconnection	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance; Feasibility/ Preliminary Engineering				\$20,000				\$35,000		

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Climate Resilience	CR-4	Opportunity projects/assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000									
	CR-5	Stormwater Infrastructure Adaptation	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	LGUs	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance					\$15,000				\$15,000	
	CR-6	Green Infrastructure BMPs	Urban and Suburban Landscapes	LGUs	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									
	CR-7	Updated Floodplain Model	Watershed-wide	Cities, Counties, DNR	General Fund, Partner Funds	Feasibility/Preliminary Engineering	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									

Natural Environments	NE-1	Projects identified within the South Creek Geomorphic Assessment	South Creek Subwatershed	City of Lakeville, Dakota County	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance		\$50,000	\$35,000							
	NE-2	Projects identified within the Etter Creek and Ravenna Coulee Geomorphic Assessment	Mississippi Direct Subwatershed	Dakota County, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance				\$10,000						
	NE-3	Projects identified within the Middle and North Creek Geomorphic Assessment	Middle Creek and North Creek Subwatersheds	City of Lakeville, City of Farmington, Dakota County	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance							\$45,000			

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/ Audience	Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	
Natural Environments	NE-4	Projects identified within the Empire Drainages Geomorphic Assessment	Middle Mainstem Subwatershed	City of Empire, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance								\$20,000			
	NE-5	Projects identified within the Lower Mainstem Geomorphic Assessment	Lower Mainstem Subwatershed	Dakota County, DCSWCD	Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance								\$20,000			
	NE-6	VRWJPO Wetland Banking Program	Restorable Wetlands	SWCDs, Counties, BWSR	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.										
	NE-7	Priority Wetland Restoration	Restorable Wetlands	Many	General Fund, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance				\$25,000		\$35,000					\$45,000
	NE-8	East Lake In-lake Projects and Practices	East Lake	City of Apple Valley, City of Lakeville, DNR, Dakota County	General Fund, Partner Funds, Grants	CIP and Maintenance	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000			\$25,000					
	NE-9	Cost-share for DCSWCD and SSWCD Incentive Programs	Agricultural landscapes	DCSWCD and SSWCD	General Fund	CIP and Maintenance	\$23,750	\$24,463	\$25,196	\$25,952	\$26,731	\$27,533	\$28,359	\$29,210	\$30,086	\$30,988	
	NE-10	In-stream Habitat Restoration	Streams	Many	General Fund, Grants, Partner Funds	CIP and Maintenance		\$15,000			\$50,000		\$37,500	\$62,500		\$25,000	

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Natural Environments	NE-11	Opportunity projects/assessments	Watershed-wide	Many	Many	All Budget Categories excluding Administration and Operations	\$8,000									
	NE-12	In-lake management projects identified within the Long and Farquar TMDL Implementation Plan	Long and Farquar Lakes	DNR and City of Apple Valley	Grants, Partner Funds, General Fund	CIP and Maintenance	Currently, no funding identified. This action may be completed as partnerships and funding becomes available.									
	NE-13	Upland Restoration Adjacent to Water Resources	Watershed-wide	Many	Grants, Partner Funds, General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations; CIP Maintenance	\$2,500	\$2,500								

Community Relationships	CMR-1	Stewardship Grants	Residents, landowners, businesses, community groups	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations; Administration and Operations	\$32,650	\$33,033	\$33,434	\$33,856	\$34,299	\$34,764	\$35,252	\$35,764	\$36,303	\$36,868
	CMR-2	Public Event Participation	Many	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$7,650	\$8,033	\$8,434	\$8,856	\$9,299	\$9,764	\$10,252	\$10,764	\$11,303	\$11,868
	CMR-3	Maintain Website	Many	N/A	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$4,250	\$4,463	\$4,686	\$4,920	\$5,166	\$5,424	\$5,695	\$5,980	\$6,279	\$6,593

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses continued

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Community Relationships	CMR-4	Distribute Newsletter	Newsletter subscribers	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$6,800	\$7,140	\$7,497	\$7,872	\$8,265	\$8,679	\$9,113	\$9,568	\$10,047	\$10,549
	CMR-5	Partner Programs	Watershed-wide	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$78,500	\$80,855	\$83,281	\$85,779	\$88,352	\$91,003	\$93,733	\$96,545	\$99,441	\$102,425
	CMR-6	Social Media Presence	Many	Many	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$11,050	\$11,603	\$12,183	\$12,792	\$13,431	\$14,103	\$14,808	\$15,548	\$16,326	\$17,142
	CMR-7	Collaborative Education and Outreach	Residents, landowners, businesses	LGUs	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$9,350	\$9,818	\$10,308	\$10,824	\$11,365	\$11,933	\$12,530	\$13,156	\$13,814	\$14,505
	CMR-8	Engagement with Schools in the Watershed	Students	DCSWCD and SSWCD	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$7,250	\$7,463	\$7,686	\$7,920	\$8,166	\$8,424	\$8,695	\$8,980	\$9,279	\$9,593
	CMR-9	VRWJPO Watershed Tours	Elected and appointed officials	LGUs; state, local and regional agencies	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$4,250	\$4,463	\$4,686	\$4,920	\$5,166	\$5,424	\$5,695	\$5,980	\$6,279	\$6,593
	CMR-10	Project Signage	Many	LGUs	General Fund	Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500		\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$3,000

Table 3-15: VRWJPO 2026-2035 Implementation Plan: Annual Expenses

Category	Item ID	Action	Target Resource/Audience	Partner(s)	Funding Source(s)	Budget Category	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	
Administration	AD-1	Staffing	N/A	Dakota County, Scott County	General Fund	All Budget Categories minus Public Communications, Outreach and Public Relations	\$472,602	\$496,232	\$521,044	\$547,096	\$574,451	\$603,173	\$633,332	\$664,998	\$698,248	\$733,161	
	AD-2	Insurance	N/A	N/A	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$4,500	\$4,635	\$4,774	\$4,917	\$5,065	\$5,217	\$5,373	\$5,534	\$5,700	\$5,871	
	AD-3	Legal Support	N/A	Dakota County	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$25,000	\$25,750	\$26,523	\$27,318	\$28,138	\$28,982	\$29,851	\$30,747	\$31,669	\$32,619	
	AD-4	Public Notices	N/A	N/A	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$4,250	\$4,463	\$4,686	\$4,920	\$5,166	\$5,424	\$5,695	\$5,980	\$6,279	\$6,593	
	AD-5	Watershed Management Plan Update	N/A	Dakota County and Scott County	General Fund	Planning										\$95,000	\$100,000
	AD-6	CIP Maintenance	N/A	LGUs	General Fund	CIP and Maintenance	\$30,000	\$30,900	\$31,827	\$32,782	\$33,765	\$34,778	\$35,822	\$36,896	\$38,003	\$39,143	
	AD-7	Miscellaneous Operational Costs	N/A	N/A	General Fund	Administration and Operations	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000

Note:

Annual dollar expenditures reflect only those costs sourced from the VRWJPO general budget. If funding source identifies grants or partner funds, additional dollars would be needed for full project implementation. VRWJPO general budget expenditures have been accounted for as partners have identified action within 2-, 5- or 10-year CIP programs, or other long-range implementation plans. Generally, for CIP partnerships, VRWJPO contributions range from 10-25% of full project cost.

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Water Quality Total	\$240,750	\$246,098	\$308,805	\$372,079	\$318,022	\$249,141	\$215,540	\$222,025	\$308,102	\$265,576
Stormwater Management Total	\$26,000	\$90,000	\$65,000	\$0	\$60,000	\$115,000	\$135,000	\$70,000	\$10,000	\$0
Groundwater Sustainability Total	\$15,500	\$7,500	\$17,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Climate Resilience Total	\$8,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$70,000	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$40,000	\$63,000	\$50,000	\$25,000
Natural Environments Total	\$44,250	\$96,963	\$65,196	\$60,952	\$76,731	\$87,533	\$110,859	\$131,710	\$30,086	\$100,988
Community Relationships Total	\$162,250	\$167,368	\$172,694	\$178,238	\$183,509	\$190,018	\$196,273	\$202,787	\$209,571	\$219,136
Administration Total	\$551,352	\$576,980	\$603,853	\$632,033	\$661,584	\$692,574	\$725,073	\$759,156	\$889,900	\$932,388
Total	\$1,048,102	\$1,184,907	\$1,283,048	\$1,320,802	\$1,322,346	\$1,366,765	\$1,430,245	\$1,456,178	\$1,505,159	\$1,550,588

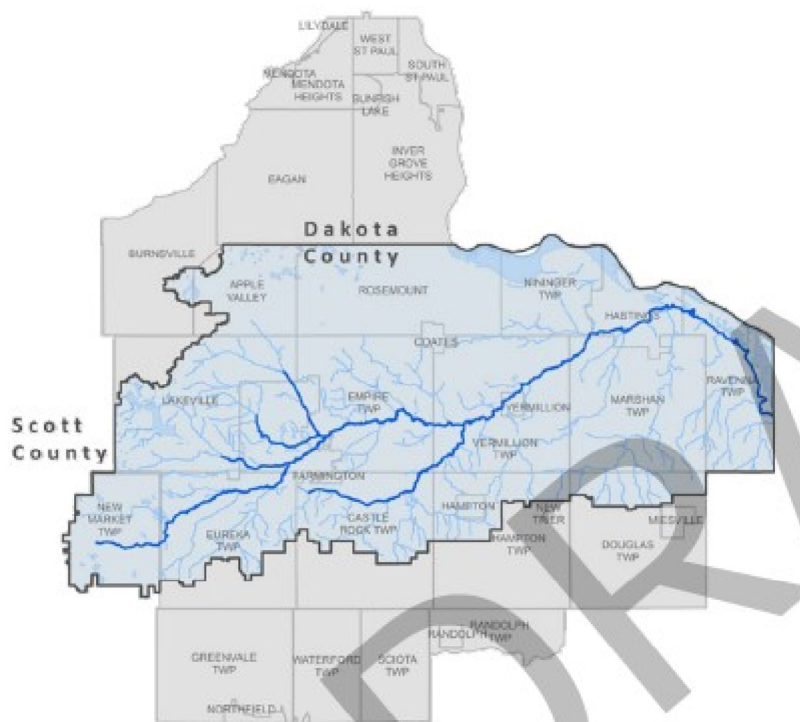


Figure E-1: Map of VRWJPO Political Boundaries

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Eagan-Inver Grove Watershed Management Plan

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Eagan-Inver Grove Watershed Management Plan

Section/Region: Regional Operations/Central

Contact: Anne Sawyer

Prepared by: Anne Sawyer

Reviewed by: Central Region Committee

Presented by: Anne Sawyer

Time requested: 5 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- None
- Amended Policy Request
- New Policy Request
- General Fund Budget
- Capital Budget
- Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget
- Clean Water Fund Budget
- Other:

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Plan as recommended by the Central Regional Committee.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Plan: https://eaganinvergroveheightswmo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/E-IGH_WMO_WMP_2026_90-day-Plan-Revisions-Incorporated-260224-FINAL-ALL.pdf

Implementation Table: https://eaganinvergroveheightswmo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/EIGHWMO-Watershed-Plan-90-day-Implementation-Table_20260224.xlsx

SUMMARY (Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)

Background

The Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization (E-IGHWMO) encompasses approximately 30 square miles in northwest Dakota County. The watershed is bordered by the Lower Mississippi River WMO to the north and east, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District to the west, the Black Dog WMO on the southwest, and the Vermillion River Watershed to the south. E-IGHWMO is a suburban watershed, mostly within the City of Eagan, and a small amount (approximately 4%) within the City of Inver Grove Heights. The watershed is characterized by rolling glacial topography with 32 lakes and numerous wetlands. While there are no perennial streams within the watershed, many of the lakes and wetlands are connected to stormwater conveyance systems. The watershed features abundant parks and natural areas, including the nearly 2000-acre

Lebanon Hills Regional Park, which is managed by Dakota County. The dominant land use in the watershed is single-family residential (43%), with most future development anticipated to be residential, commercial, and industrial land uses in existing developed corridors. Groundwater resources supply all drinking water in the watershed, and about half of the watershed falls into the Eagan Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA).

Plan Process and Highlights

On June 18, 2024, E-IGHWMO sent notification of planning process initiation for the 2026-2035 Watershed Management Plan to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410.0045. The notification solicited each agency's priority issues and opportunities, water management goals, and water resource data, reports, and other relevant information. The Board of Directors hosted an initial planning meeting on February 18, 2025. Several Board workshops were held in collaboration with state and local partners in 2025. Additional input was gathered through city advisory commissions and a community survey.

The E-IGHWMO Board has identified three priority issue categories: nutrient pollution in surface water resources; chloride contamination to both surface and groundwater resources; and groundwater use and sustainability. Each resource issue category has at least one primary measurable goal and several supporting goals. The Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of a robust education and outreach program and collaborative project implementation with member cities and local partners.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

In the Matter of the review of the Watershed Management Plan for the **Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization**, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subdivision 9.

**ORDER
APPROVING
A WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Whereas, the Board of Directors of the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization (E-IGHWMO) submitted a Watershed Management Plan (Plan) on February 24, 2026, to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subd. 9, and;

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. Watershed Management Organization Establishment.** The Eagan-Inver Grove Watershed Management Organization was established by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) in 2014 between the Cities of Eagan and Inver Grove Heights following the dissolution of the Gun Club WMO in 2013. The first-generation E-IGHWMO Watershed Management Plan was approved by the Board in 2016.
- 2. Authority of Plan.** The Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act requires the preparation of a watershed management plan for the subject watershed area which meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251. The current E-IGHWMO Watershed Management Plan was approved by Board Order on May 25, 2016. One minor amendment was completed in 2020.
- 3. Nature of the Watershed.** The E-IGHWMO encompasses approximately 30 square miles in northwest Dakota County. The watershed is bordered by the Lower Mississippi River WMO to the north and east, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District to the west, the Black Dog WMO on the southwest, and the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization to the south. E-IGHWMO is a suburban watershed, mostly within the City of Eagan and a small amount (approximately 4%) within the City of Inver Grove Heights. The watershed is characterized by rolling glacial topography with 32 lakes and numerous wetlands. While there are no perennial streams within the watershed, many of the lakes and wetlands are connected to stormwater conveyance systems. The watershed features abundant parks and natural areas, including the nearly 2000-acre Lebanon Hills Regional Park, which is managed by Dakota County. The dominant land use in the watershed is single-family residential (43%), with most future development anticipated to be in existing developed corridors. Groundwater resources supply all drinking water in the watershed, and about half of the watershed falls into the Eagan Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA).
- 4. Plan Development and Review.** On June 18, 2024, E-IGHWMO sent notification of planning process initiation for the 2026-2035 Watershed Management Plan to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410.0045. The notification solicited each agency's priority issues and opportunities, water management goals, and water resource data, reports, and other relevant information. The Board of

Directors hosted an initial planning meeting on February 18, 2025. Several Board workshops were held in collaboration with state and local partners in 2025. Additional input was gathered through city advisory commissions and a community survey.

The draft Plan was submitted to the Board, review agencies, and local governments for 60-day review on November 18, 2025, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231 Subd. 7. E-IGHWMO prepared a written response to comments, which was sent to reviewers on January 19, 2026. A public hearing on the 60-day draft plan was held on February 17, 2026; no comments were received. The final draft Plan, including revisions based on 60-day comments, was released for agency review and submitted to the Board for approval on February 24, 2026.

5. **Local Review.** E-IGHWMO distributed copies of the draft Plan to local units of government for their review pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231 Subd. 7. Dakota County submitted corrections, clarifications, and additional resources, largely with respect to groundwater. They also commented on discrepancies between the activity tables in Section 4 and the Implementation Table in Section 5. E-IGHWMO provided responses to all comments and incorporated changes.
6. **Metropolitan Council (Council) Review.** During the 60-day review, the Council stated that the Plan is consistent with Met Council policies and the Met Council's *Water Policy Plan*. They offered comments on typographical errors and suggested several minor clarifications to the narrative. During the 90-day review, Met Council stated they had no further comments.
7. **Department of Agriculture (MDA) Review.** The MDA did not provide formal comment.
8. **Department of Health (MDH) Review.** During the 60-day review, MDH thanked E-IGHWMO for including them in the Plan process and providing informal drafts for review. They provided several examples of typos and errors in the narrative, including the distinct lack of clarity when "priorities" and "goals" are not consistent throughout the Plan. They commented on the misalignment between the goals and actions in Section 4 and the Implementation Table in Section 5. They gave suggestions for clarification regarding karst, fish consumption guidelines, and stormwater reuse. E-IGHWMO replied to all comments and incorporated all suggested changes. During the 90-day review period, MDH stated their comments had been adequately addressed, although there are places where the Plan would further benefit from minor clarification and refinement, including consistency in goals and priorities as well as fixing any remaining discrepancies between tables in Section 4 and Section 5.
9. **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Review.** The DNR stated that the priority concerns they put forward during early input had been adequately addressed in the Plan. They also thanked E-IGHWMO for prioritizing native shoreline restorations and chloride reduction. The DNR stated they had no additional comments during the 90-day review.
10. **Pollution Control Agency (PCA) Review.** During the 60-day review, the PCA provided clarifications and corrections including, Native American history in the watershed background, climate data and trends, chlorides, lake prioritization, and AIS information. E-IGHWMO provided a response to comments and incorporated all suggested changes. During the 90-day review, the PCA stated that they had no further comments.
11. **Department of Transportation (DOT) Review.** The DOT did not provide formal comment.
12. **Board Review.** During the 60-day review, Board staff provided positive feedback regarding continuity in the outreach and education program and the additional focus on chloride reduction. Board staff provided many comments for narrative clarification, particularly with respect to the roles of member cities and the WMO; resource management in Lebanon Hills Regional Park; repeating and conflicting priority issues, focus areas and goals; resource prioritization; and monitoring. Staff also commented on the misalignment of priority

issues and action items between the table in Section 4 and the Implementation Table, measurability of goals, plan evaluation, and other aspects to bring the plan into conformance with Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251 and Minnesota Rules 8410. Comments also included factual errors in the comments, such as incorrect references, out-of-date text, and irrelevant text copied from the previous plan. BWSR staff also sent a list of unofficial typographical, grammatical, and formatting comments. E-IGHWMO provided responses for all formal comments and made substantial changes to address deficiencies in plan content requirements. BWSR staff feel that the changes made to the Plan are sufficient to meet plan content requirements.

13. **Plan Summary.** The E-IGHWMO Board has identified three priority issue categories: nutrient pollution in surface water resources; chloride contamination to both surface and groundwater resources; and groundwater use and sustainability. Each resource issue category has at least one primary measurable goal and several supporting goals. The Plan will build on previous success through the continuation of a robust education and outreach program and collaborative project implementation with member cities and local partners.
14. **Central Region Committee Meeting.** On April 6, 2026, the Board's Central Region Committee and staff met in St. Paul and online to review and discuss the final Plan. Those in attendance from the Board's committee were Joe Collins (in person), Jill Crafton (in person), Jayne Hager Dee (in person), Mark Zabel (in person), Mike Runk (in person), Lori Cox (online), Grant Wilson (online) and Heather Peterson (online). Board staff in attendance were Marcey Westrick (Central Regional Manager, in person) and Anne Sawyer (Board Conservationist, in person). Others in attendance included Victoria Ranua (E-IGHWMO administrator and Dakota SWCD staff, in person) and Joe Barten (Dakota SWCD staff, in person) who provided highlights of the Plan and process. After presentation and discussion, the committee recommended approval of the Plan to the full Board.

CONCLUSIONS

1. All relevant substantive and procedural requirements of law and rule have been fulfilled.
2. The Board has proper jurisdiction in the matter of approving the Watershed Management Plan for the E-IGHWMO pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.231, Subd. 9.
3. The E-IGHWMO Watershed Management Plan, attached to this Order, defines the water and water-related problems within the E-IGHWMO's boundaries, possible solutions thereto, and an implementation program through 2036.
4. The attached Plan is in conformance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.201 to 103B.251.

ORDER

The Board hereby approves the attached Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Plan submitted on February 2, 2026.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 22nd day of April, 2026.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

BY: Todd Holman, Chair

April 22, 2026

Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization
c/o Victoria Ranua, Administrator
3830 Pilot Knob Rd
Eagan, MN 55122-1810

Dear Chair and Board Members:

I am pleased to inform you that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) has approved the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization (E-IGHWMO) Watershed Management Plan (Plan) at its regular meeting held on April 22, 2026. For your records I have enclosed a copy of the signed Board Order that documents approval of the Plan. Please be advised that the E-IGHWMO must adopt and implement the Plan within 120 days of the date of the Order, in accordance with MN Statutes 103B.231, Subd. 10.

The board, plan steering committee members, consultants, and all others involved in the planning process are to be commended for their work on developing the Plan. With continued implementation of your Plan, the protection and management of the water resources within the watershed will be greatly enhanced to the benefit of the residents. The Board looks forward to working with you as you implement this Plan and document its outcomes.

Please contact Board Conservationist, Anne Sawyer at 651-392-5064, anne.sawyer@state.mn.us, or at the central office address for further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Todd Holman
Chair

Enclosure

CC: Reid Christianson, MDA (via email)
Abby Shea, MDH (via email)
Megan Moore, DNR (via email)
Katie Kowalczyk, DOT (via email)
Maureen Hoffman, Met Council (via email)
Melinda Neville, MPCA (via email)
Marcey Westrick, BWSR (via email)
Anne Sawyer, BWSR (via email)
File Copy

2026-2035

E-IGHWMO SECOND GENERATION WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN



Limitless Production

Eagan-Inver Grove Heights
Watershed Management
Organization

Executive Summary

This watershed management plan describes how the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization (E-IGHWMO) will manage activities in the watershed in the ten-year period from 2026-2035.

The Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization was formed on January 7, 2014 using a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) developed under authority conferred to the member communities – Eagan and Inver Grove Heights - by Minnesota Statutes 471.59 and under the authority of MS 103B.201 through 103B.251. The watershed had previously been established as the Gun Club Lake Watershed Management Organization. That joint powers organization was dissolved in 2013 when the City of Mendota Heights withdrew.

The watershed is located in the southeast portion of the Minneapolis-St. Paul seven county metropolitan area (Figure 1.1) in the Lower Minnesota River basin of the Upper Mississippi River watershed. The Organization's purpose is set forth in Minnesota Statutes 103B.210, Metropolitan Surface Water Planning, which codified the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act of 1982. Minnesota Statutes 103B.231 and Minnesota Rules 8410 establish requirements for watershed management plans within the Twin Cities Metro Area. Minn. Stat. 103B.201 outlines the purposes of a watershed management organization:

- 1) Protect, preserve, and use natural surface and groundwater storage and retention systems;
- 2) Minimize public capital expenditures needed to correct flooding and water quality problems;
- 3) Identify and plan for means to effectively protect and improve surface and groundwater quality;
- 4) Establish more uniform local policies and official controls for surface and groundwater management;
- 5) Prevent erosion of soil into surface water systems;
- 6) Promote groundwater recharge;
- 7) Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities; and
- 8) Secure the other benefits associated with the proper management of surface and ground water.

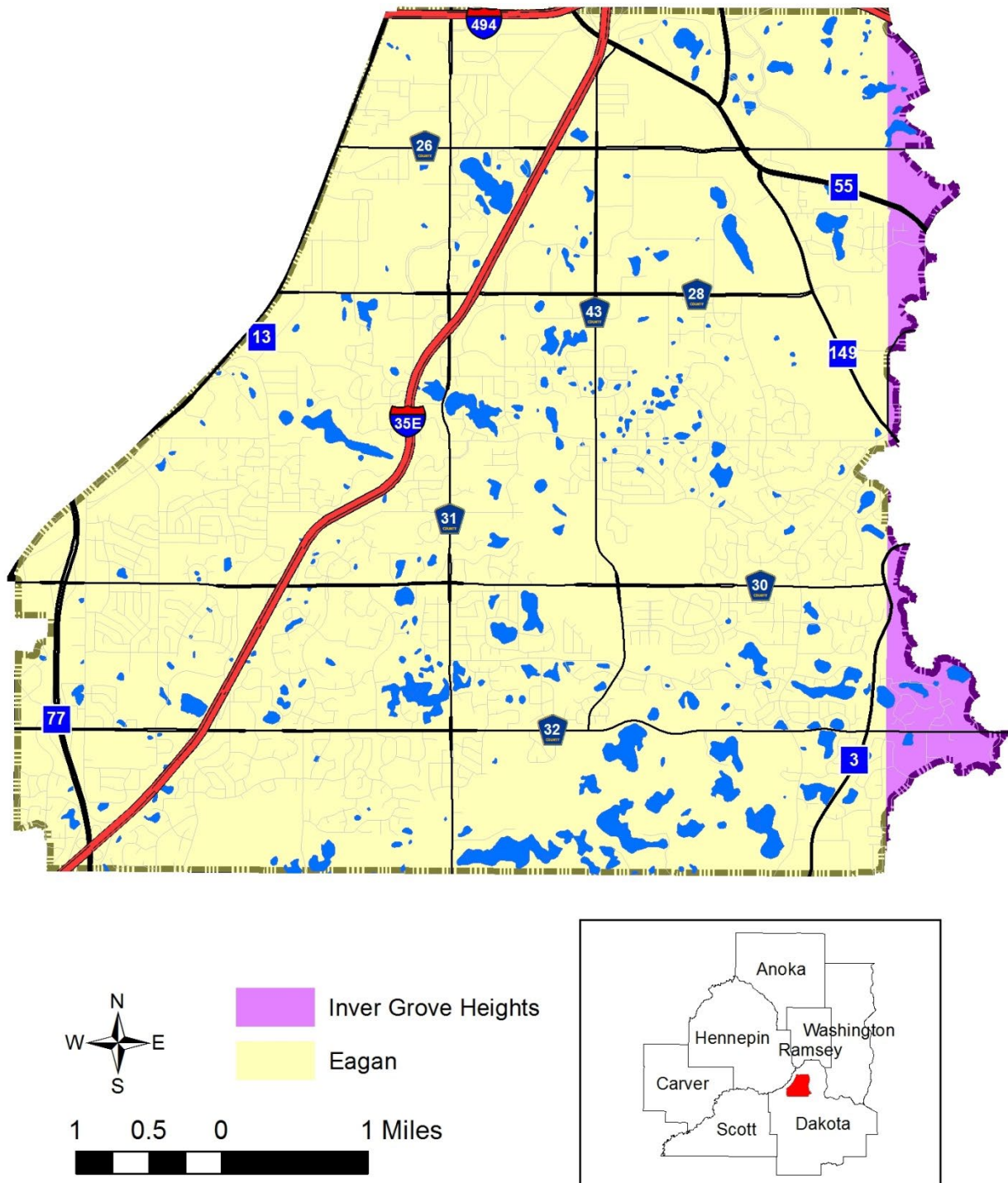


Figure ES.1: Cities in the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights watershed.

Second-Generation Watershed Management Plan

The Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization initiated work on the Second-Generation Plan on June 18, 2024. The Plan includes information required in Minnesota Administrative Rules Chapter 8410, Local Water Management: an updated land and water resources inventory, assessment of issues and identification of corrective actions and corresponding goals; an implementation program; and a process for amending the Plan.

Key Roles of Watershed Management Organization and Partners

A Board of Managers has been established as the governing body of the E-IGHWMO tasked with the implementation of this Watershed Management Plan. This WMO is relatively unique in the Metro Area: it is almost entirely comprised of land in one city—Eagan—and encompasses most of that city.¹ It faces some special challenges defining a role for the Board that fulfills its statutory obligations without creating duplication of effort. The Cities of Eagan and Inver Grove Heights already operate comprehensive and effective stormwater and water-quality programs that are sufficiently protective of local water resources. Therefore, the Board has identified education and outreach efforts as the primary implementation role of the watershed to reduce redundancy. The E-IGHWMO focuses its direct efforts on:

- Education and outreach to residents, businesses, and local decision-makers;
- Projects and cost-share programs, in collaboration with member cities, to protect and improve water resources; and

The Board will facilitate and financially contribute to city-led capital projects for construction by member cities. While the WMO does not undertake capital projects, it may facilitate them through cost-share and grant funding and supplement them by providing education and outreach opportunities. The Cities of Eagan and Inver Grove Heights are the regulatory authorities for E-IGHWMO and engage in hands on implementation of water resource management. The Board will continue to ensure that City standards and programs remain protective of water resources through local plan review, participation in city ordinance updates, and evaluations of water quality trends. The Dakota County Environmental Resources Department operates a number of programs to conserve natural and water resources in the county and the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights watershed. The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is the state's administrative agency for watershed districts; thus, BWSR reviews and approves watershed management plans and periodically assesses watershed organizations as part of its Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP).

Process for Watershed Management Plan Input

The plan development process included soliciting input from state agencies (BWSR, MDNR, MDA, MDH, MetCouncil, and MPCA), member cities, citizen advisory groups (Sustainable Eagan Advisory Commission and Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission) and a community

¹ E-IGHWMO is the successor to the former Gun Club Lake WMO that disbanded in 2014 when one member City withdrew.

survey. This early input included both a review of resources available from the agencies to assist with the planning and implementation process and an overview of issue areas that the agencies recommended the E-IGHWMO to consider in the Plan.

Board-Identified Priority Issues

Through this process the Board identified three priority issues that will guide actions during 2026–2035:

1. Nutrient Pollution: Excess nutrients, primarily phosphorus, from urban runoff and connected stormwater systems continue to threaten lake and wetland water quality. Some lakes have been removed from the impaired-waters list, but ongoing attention is needed to sustain these gains.
2. Chloride Contamination: Accumulated salt from winter de-icing and water-softening contributes to rising chloride levels with the watershed and waters leaving the watershed. Fish Lake has been identified by the MPCA as at risk for impairment.
3. Groundwater Use and Sustainability: High summer irrigation demand places stress on local aquifers. Conservation and public education remain central to long-term groundwater health.

Watershed Management Plan Guiding Principles

Through the identification of issues in the watershed, the E-IGHWMO developed the following guiding principles to inform water resources planning and management functions:

1. *Water Quantity*
 - a. Principle 1 – Protect existing flood-storage and conveyance capacity.
 - i. Continue to assist city management of stormwater infrastructure to maintain designed flood protection levels.
 - b. Principle 2 – Promote infiltration and volume-control practices.
 - i. Through outreach and cost-share incentives, prioritize projects that reduce runoff volume and peak flow—especially in redevelopment areas. Infiltration will be promoted where safe and feasible.
 - c. Principle 3 – Support stormwater reuse.
 - i. Assist cities and partners in identifying opportunities for irrigation reuse or stormwater harvesting where technically feasible and safe.

2. *Water Quality & Habitat*

- a. Principle 1 – Reduce nutrient loading to lakes and wetlands.
 - i. Promote best management practices (BMPs) that reduce nutrient loading to lakes and prevent the listing of lakes for nutrient impairment. Financially support programs such as *Landscaping for Clean Water* and *Lawns Re-Imagined* that encourage native or low-input plantings.
- b. Principle 2 – Reduce chloride inputs.
 - i. Advocate for and participate in behavior changing efforts that help prevent the listing of lakes for chloride impairments such as:
 - 1. The Low Salt, No Salt Initiative (Dakota County), can be paired with popular salt cup distribution efforts;
 - 2. The Low Salt Model City Program (Eagan); and
 - 3. Promoting the MPCA Smart Salting Program to enact changes in winter maintenance service providers and the business’s and HOA’s that engage their services.
- c. Principle 3 – Support nutrient- and chloride-focused retrofits.
 - i. Provide cost-share assistance for retrofit or maintenance projects that improve impaired or at-risk waterbodies based on documented water quality concerns.
- d. Principle 4 – Support responsible fishing and lake stewardship.
 - i. Partner with cities and the MNDNR to promote fishing as a community recreation activity. Assist with signage or outreach regarding mercury and PFAS fish-consumption advisories and explore funding fish-testing efforts led by member cities.

3. *Public Stormwater System*

- a. Principle 1 – Support maintenance of city-owned stormwater systems.
 - i. Assist member cities with identifying and pursuing grants or cost-share funding for maintenance, repair, or retrofit projects that provide measurable water-quality improvements.
- b. Principle 2 – Prioritize water-quality enhancements in drainage projects.

- i. When streets or drainage systems are reconstructed, maximize inclusion of water-quality BMPs (e.g., pretreatment basins, iron-enhanced sand filters, underground infiltration).

4. *Groundwater*

- a. Principle 1 – Encourage groundwater conservation in irrigation.
 - i. Promote education about efficient outdoor water use, smart irrigation controllers, and advances in low-input turf such as fine fescue lawns.
- b. Principle 2 – Promote awareness of surface- and groundwater connections.
 - i. Through outreach, highlight how salt, fertilizer, and household chemical use affect both groundwater quality and surface-water ecosystems.
- c. Principle 3 – Coordinate with Dakota County and member cities on groundwater planning.
 - i. Participate in county and regional planning efforts that promote sustainable groundwater management.

5. *Wetlands*

- a. Principle 1 – Support small-scale restoration and enhancement projects.
 - i. Provide matching or partnership funding for wetland restoration or enhancement when restoration results in water quality improvement on a nearby lake or improves a wetland in a pre-MS4 development that has been used for stormwater management.
- b. Principle 2 – Increase public understanding of urban wetlands.
 - i. Develop or sponsor educational materials explaining how wetlands store runoff, filter pollutants, and support wildlife—even in developed areas.

Watershed Management Plan Goals

In accordance with the above guiding principles, the E-IGHWMO will use the following goals under 4 broad categories (Water Quantity, Water Quality & Habitat, Groundwater, and Wetlands) in water resources planning and management practices through the implementation plan.

Goal Area 1: Water Quantity

- 1.1 Ensure cities maintain the existing 100-year flood capacity to minimize flood damage to private and public property and minimize public capital expenditures needed to correct flooding problems by reducing or achieving no net increase in the rate of runoff from the watershed to limit any impacts to the flood profile.
- 1.2 Reduce stormwater runoff volume and increase infiltration and groundwater recharge.
- 1.3 Ensure adequate management of intercommunity stormwater flows, particularly with respect to changing precipitation patterns.

Goal Area 2: Water Quality and Habitat

- 2.1 Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.
- 2.2 Protect water resources from chloride impacts in priority city waterbodies towards no new impairments.
- 2.3 Support cities in efforts to prevent erosion of the soil into surface water systems, prioritizing projects with the most cost-effective reduction in downstream TSS contribution.
- 2.4 Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.
- 2.5 Raise public awareness about fish consumption advisories in watershed lakes.

Goal Area 3: Groundwater

- 3.1 Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. Promote groundwater recharge where protective of groundwater quality and human health.

Goal Area 4: Wetlands

- 4.1 Member cities, in accordance with their wetland management plans (WMPs), will protect, restore, or enhance wetlands to improve or maintain their functions and values. Cities establish priority wetlands in their respective WMPs.

Implementation Plan Highlights

Implementation of the Second-Generation Plan will consist primarily of an education and outreach program. The Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization does not operate a regulatory program but will participate in member city processes to update policies and ordinances to promote water quality and quantity protections. The WMO will implement projects through a

cost-share partnership program to support water quality improvement efforts within the watershed. WMO collaboration with member cities' capital improvement projects include aiding with projects, or specific aspects of a project, that meet the WMO's goals and priorities. Projects include runoff capacity improvements, erosion control and stabilization projects, and improved shoreline stabilization and education at fishing access points. Capital projects are funded 100% by the member cities though the WMO may fund specific portions of a project targeted to WMO goals and priorities (e.g. educational signage, shoreline stabilization). The E-IGHWMO will assist cities in leveraging grant funding or identifying other funding sources when available. The Plan provides annual estimates and general programs, projects, and costs for 2026-2035 activities.

Plan Amendments

This Watershed Management Plan provides direction for the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization's activities through the year 2035. The Board may initiate amendments to the Plan at any time based on new requirements or data availability, policies, programs, practices, or emerging concerns. The Board will annually review the Implementation Plan and Capital Improvements Program (CIP), which may require future minor or major plan amendments.

Looking Ahead

From 2026 to 2035, the WMO will continue to assist its member cities in implementing best management practices that protect local lakes, wetlands, and groundwater. The plan emphasizes measurable, achievable goals and coordination among local and state partners. Progress will be reviewed annually through reporting to the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Program	Goal #	Action Item ID	Goal Category	Goal	Action Item	Partners	Funding Source	E-IGHWMO 10-year Costs	Estimated Grant/Partner Funds	Total 10-year Cost	Estimated Cost by Year (Planning Level) - presented in 2025 dollars									
											2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Regulatory	1.2	A, D	Water Quantity	Reduce stormwater runoff volume and increase infiltration and groundwater recharge through city NPDES stormwater permit requirements.	1.2.A. Require member cities to maintain a regulatory program with volume and runoff standards at least as stringent as the NPDES MS4 general stormwater permit requirements. 1.2.D. Participate in member city processes when cities update land use and stormwater policies and ordinances to ensure water quality and quantity protections for local water resources. Identify areas for E-IGHWMO involvement through education and outreach. Consider drinking water supply management areas (DWSMAs) when promoting infiltration and mitigate the possible introduction of new contaminants or exacerbation of existing contamination.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	E-IGHWMO and Member Cities	Included in staff costs under Administration	-	Included in staff costs under Administration		***					***			
	1.3	A	Water Quality & Habitat	Ensure adequate management of intercommunity stormwater flows, particularly with respect to changing precipitation patterns.	1.3.A. Every five years, facilitate review of existing intercommunity stormwater runoff design and planning with the member communities, similar to the existing agreement between Eagan and Inver Grove Heights.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	E-IGHWMO and Member Cities	Included in staff costs under Administration	-	Included in staff costs under Administration		***					***			
	2.1	C	Water Quality & Habitat	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.	2.1.C. Participate in two collaborative water quality improvement efforts, such as the Metropolitan Council Subregional Engagement effort or the Dakota County Master Gardeners Let's Grow workshop.	MetCouncil, Dakota County	E-IGHWMO and Member Cities	Included in staff costs under Administration	-	Included in staff costs under Administration			***							***
Monitoring & Technical Assistance	2.1	E	Water Quality & Habitat	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.	2.1.E. Provide technical assistance to homeowners including layout, mid-point, and final inspections for raingardens, native plantings, and shoreline stabilization via partnerships with existing programs such as the SWCD.	Dakota SWCD's Landscaping for Clean Water Program	E-IGHWMO	\$ 72,000	-	\$ 72,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200
	2.3	D	Water Quality & Habitat	Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.	2.4.D. Support shoreline health evaluations as aligned with city needs in the watershed to support planned lake studies by member cities. Build on resources such as "Score Your Shore".	Dakota SWCD City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	E-IGHWMO	\$ 50,000	-	\$ 50,000		\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000
	2.3	B	Water Quality & Habitat	Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.	2.4.B. Leverage financial resources to engender improvements in fishing access points (ie. new piers, shore fishing spots to reduce shoreline erosion impact) or aquatic habitat at two waterbodies, aligned with City of Eagan CIP priority waterbodies.	MN DNR Dakota SWCD City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	DNR (FINS, Shore Fishing Program, etc.)	\$ 30,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 120,000				\$ 50,000					\$ 70,000	
	1.1	B	Water Quantity	Assuming cities maintain the NPDES discharge rates, ensure cities maintain the existing 100-year flood capacity to minimize flood damage to private and public property and minimize public capital expenditures needed to correct flooding problems. It is assumed that reducing or achieving no net increase in the rate of runoff to the streams will limit any impacts to the flood profile.	1.1 B. Incorporate runoff volume reduction messaging into the communication and outreach plan, emphasizing the importance of effective stormwater management for reducing the impact of runoff volumes on downstream flooding.		E-IGHWMO	\$ 2,000	-	\$ 2,000			\$ 2,000							
	2.1, 3.1	F, E	Water Quality & Habitat, and Groundwater	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs. Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. Promote groundwater recharge where protective of groundwater quality and human health.	F. Provide access to the Dakota County SWCD's Landscaping for Clean Water program through introduction class, design course, and maintenance workshop. E. Collaborate with member cities and Dakota County to protect groundwater sources through educational outreach on well sealing practices and value. Disseminate information about septic system maintenance.	Dakota County SWCD Programs: Landscaping for Clean Water Lawns Re-Imagined	E-IGHWMO	\$ 110,000	-	\$ 110,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000
	1.2, 3.1	A, C, B	Water Quantity and Groundwater	Reduce stormwater runoff volume and increase infiltration and groundwater recharge through city NPDES stormwater permit requirements. Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. Promote groundwater recharge where protective of groundwater quality and human health.	1.2.A. Require member cities to maintain a regulatory program with volume and runoff standards at least as stringent as the NPDES MS4 general stormwater permit requirements. 1.2.C. Address stormwater runoff and groundwater usage reduction through three community outreach events targeted at designing low water use landscapes and irrigation systems and educating the public on reducing irrigation water usage. 3.1.B. Promote water conservation, particularly reducing water use for irrigation and incorporating water reuse tactics in priority groundwater recharge areas listed in the Groundwater Protection Plan through targeted education outreach to at least fifty community members. Efforts may leverage programs such as Dakota SWCD Lawns Re-Imagined, WaterSmart Yards, U of Mn Extension, Water Wisely, MetCouncil and/or EPA WaterSense and may include participation in local events such as Lakefest or the Groundwater Source-Water Protection Collaborative.	Dakota SWCD Lawns Re-Imagined WaterSmart Yards U of Mn Extension Water Wisely MetCouncil EPA WaterSense Local Events such as LakeFest	E-IGHWMO	\$ 2,000	-	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000			***				***		

Program	Goal #	Action Item ID	Goal Category	Goal	Action Item	Partners	Funding Source	E-IGHWMO 10-year Costs	Estimated Grant/Partner Funds	Total 10-year Cost	Estimated Cost by Year (Planning Level) - presented in 2025 dollars											
											2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035		
Education and Outreach	2.4	C	Water Quality & Habitat	Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.	2.4.C. Partner with MDNR and assist in aquatic invasive species education, early detection, and rapid response through three community education program events.	MN DNR Community Education SWCD Local Events such as LakeFest	E-IGHWMO	\$ 1,000	-	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000					***			***		
	2.1	B	Water Quality & Habitat	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.	2.1.B. Communicate water quality updates each year to the public. Updates may include annual lake water quality trend analyses, metrics on water quality goals, and information on completed improvement projects. Additionally, provide educational messages on water quality topics such as the importance of restricting the surface runoff of household chemicals, yard waste, illicit discharges, and pet waste to lakes within the watershed. Communications may be through city newsletters or WMO outlets such as emails, website, and social media posts.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	E-IGHWMO and Member Cities	\$ 10,000	Member City Monitoring programs	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
	2.2	A, E	Water Quality & Habitat	Support city efforts to protect water resources from chloride impacts in priority city waterbodies towards no new impairments.	2.2.A. Provide deicing salt reduction education at two events annually. Outreach may include items such as: information on the impact of salt and chloride on water bodies, distribution of salt cups, and information on local efforts to reduce deicing salt use. 2.2.E. Partner with member cities on efforts for reducing deicing salt use through development of low salt design standards that minimize the need for deicing salt in key areas as needed for water quality protection and improvement.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights Dakota County Low Salt No Salt Local Events such as LakeFest MPCA Smart Salting	E-IGHWMO	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,000	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
	2.2	B	Water Quality & Habitat	Support city efforts to protect water resources from chloride impacts in priority city waterbodies towards no new impairments.	2.2.B. Promote chloride impact reduction actions annually each winter for businesses and residents in the watershed through targeted communication with local business owners and property managers, local training events, and website postings. Efforts may host local training sessions and utilize messaging from existing programs such as MPCA Smart Salting and the Dakota County Low Salt No Salt program.	Dakota County Low Salt No Salt MPCA Smart Salting	E-IGHWMO	\$ 20,000	-	\$ 20,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
	2.1	D	Water Quality & Habitat	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.	2.3.D. Promote the Adopt-a-Drain program to clean out storm drain collection areas of silt and debris throughout the year through annual volunteer recruitment events.	Adopt-a-drain Hamline University Local Events such as LakeFest	E-IGHWMO	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,000	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
	2.3	A	Water Quality & Habitat	Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.	2.4.A. Post signage raising awareness of invasive species and/or native landscapes at five popular recreational waterbodies in the watershed in alignment with City of Eagan waterbody prioritization system.	MN DNR	Grants (BWSR, DNR)	\$ 5,000	\$25,000	\$ 30,000		\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000
	2.3	E, F	Water Quality & Habitat	Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities.	2.4.E. Promote native shoreline vegetation restoration annually through community outreach and education events. Leverage participation by residents who participate in shoreline restoration programs or highlight their stories on the E-IGHWMO website. 2.4.F. Host annual public engagement event to educate citizens about healthy lake shorelines, causes of lake algal blooms, aquatic macrophytes and macroinvertebrates that are indicators of aquatic ecosystem health, and other water quality topics. (i.e. Landscaping for Clean Water Shoreland Workshops).	Dakota SWCD, Landscaping for Clean Water, Local Events such as LakeFest	E-IGHWMO	\$ 2,000	-	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
	2.4	A	Water Quality & Habitat	Raise public awareness about fish consumption advisories in watershed lakes.	2.5.A. Raise awareness about impaired aquatic consumption to reduce public health risk through two fish consumption mercury-focused or PFAS-focused events or outreach efforts. (i.e. signage at access areas, social media posts, etc.).	MDH	E-IGHWMO	\$ 4,000	-	\$ 4,000					\$ 2,000							\$ 2,000
	3.1	B, C	Groundwater	Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. Promote groundwater recharge where protective of groundwater quality and human health.	3.1.B. Incorporate groundwater system and aquifer recharge education into one public education outreach event each year to raise awareness of water conservation and recharge, potentially using a watershed model (i.e. Landscaping for Clean Water Introductory Class). 3.1.C. Develop visual display of local groundwater system to promote understanding and share on the E-IGHWMO website.	Dakota SWCD Dakota County Eagan Inver Grove Heights	E-IGHWMO	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
	2.1	F	Water Quality & Habitat	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.	2.1.F. If requested, participate in and provide water quality education at community events such as LakeFest and the Eagan Home and Leisure Show. 2.1.G. Incorporate education on watershed stewardship to K-12 students at Eagan Elementary schools each year through activities such as library kits, in class education programs, or providing cost share on field trips to local locations with watershed education (e.g. nature centers, SMM, Bell Museum).	Dakota SWCD Eagan Inver Grove Heights Local Events such as LakeFest Nature Centers Museums	E-IGHWMO	\$ 20,000	-	\$ 20,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
3.1	E	Groundwater	Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. Promote groundwater recharge where protective of groundwater quality and human health.	3.1.E. Collaborate with member cities to protect groundwater sources through educational outreach on well sealing practices and value.	Dakota County	E-IGHWMO	\$ 1,500	-	\$ 1,500	\$ 500				\$ 500						\$ 500		

Program	Goal #	Action Item ID	Goal Category	Goal	Action Item	Partners	Funding Source	E-IGHWMO 10-year Costs	Estimated Grant/Partner Funds	Total 10-year Cost	Estimated Cost by Year (Planning Level) - presented in 2025 dollars										
											2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	
	4.1	B	Wetlands	Member cities, in accordance with their wetland management plans (WMPs), will protect, restore, or enhance wetlands to improve or maintain their functions and values. Cities establish priority wetlands in their respective WMPs.	4.1.A. Incorporate education on the benefits and functions of wetlands at one event annually and promote/recruit community volunteers to participate in the Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP).	WHEP Local Events such as LakeFest	E-IGHWMO	\$ 500	-	\$ 500	\$ 500										
Project Cost Share	2.2	C, D	Water Quality & Habitat	Support city efforts to protect water resources from chloride impacts in priority city waterbodies towards no new impairments.	2.2.C. Target low-salt programming to 10 local businesses or property managers, particularly around lakes at-risk for chloride impairment. 2.2.D. Target informational programming about removing or reducing home water softener use (i.e. provide information on settings for water softeners that reduce salt use to general public). Prioritizing properties with private septic systems as their septic drainfield effluent stay within the watershed.	Business Owners Homeowners	E-IGHWMO	\$ 10,000	-	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
	1.2, 2.3, 3.1	B, B, A	Water Quantity, Water Quality & Habitat, and Groundwater	Reduce stormwater runoff volume and increase infiltration and groundwater recharge through city NPDES stormwater permit requirements. Support cities in efforts to prevent erosion of the soil into surface water systems, prioritizing projects with the most cost-effective reduction in downstream TSS contribution. Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources. Promote groundwater recharge where protective of groundwater quality and human health.	1.2.B. Fund at least three stormwater management projects per year through a cost-share program such as the Landscaping for Clean Water Program. 2.3.B. Promote installation of water quality BMPs, such as bioinfiltration and filtration basins and shoreline and wetland native buffers, by providing information and educational opportunities to property owners and by funding at least ten projects per year through a cost-share program such as the Landscaping for Clean Water Program. In addition, this will help prevent backsliding for lakes that meet or exceed the State of Minnesota water quality goals. 3.1.A. Fund implementation of groundwater recharge BMPs, such as infiltration, bioswales, or permeable pavements in the watershed to infiltrate stormwater runoff and support natural water absorption in areas where groundwater and human health can remain protected. Fund at least ten projects per year through a cost-share program such as the Landscaping for Clean Water Program. The WMO does not monitor groundwater levels or groundwater quality but can provided data on BMP implementation to those that do.	Dakota County SWCD's Landscaping for Clean Water Program	E-IGHWMO	\$ 30,000	-	\$ 30,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
	4.1	A	Wetlands	Member cities, in accordance with their wetland management plans (WMPs), will protect, restore, or enhance wetlands to improve or maintain their functions and values. Cities establish priority wetlands in their respective WMPs.	4.1.A. Provide matching or partnership funding for wetland restoration or enhancement when restoration results in water quality improvement on a nearby lake or improves a wetland in a pre-MS4 development that has been used for stormwater management.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	E-IGHWMO	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,000						\$ 5,000					
Capital Improvement	1.1	A	Water Quantity	Assuming cities maintain the NPDES discharge rates, ensure cities maintain the existing 100-year flood capacity to minimize flood damage to private and public property and minimize public capital expenditures needed to correct flooding problems. It is assumed that reducing or achieving no net increase in the rate of runoff to the streams will limit any impacts to the flood profile.	1.1.A. Leverage grant dollars to partner on two volume reduction projects as requested by member cities to reduce downstream flooding.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	City funds and/or outside grants, WMO Costs cover grant application staff time	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,003,000				\$ 1,500					\$ 1,500		
	2.1	A	Water Quality & Habitat	Supplement the cities' activities to achieve, maintain, or improve water quality in the watershed's lakes so that each lake meets or exceeds the State of Minnesota intended use and classification and water quality standards for nutrients, specifically targeting Total Phosphorus (TP) so that median TP values remain at or below the shallow lake state standard of 60 ug/L. Waterbodies will be prioritized in accordance with cities' lake management programs.	2.1.A. Leverage grant funding and WMO resources to assist member cities with implementation of at least two water quality capital improvement projects including stormwater water quality infrastructure and in-lake treatments.	City of Eagan City of Inver Grove Heights	City funds and/or outside grants, WMO Costs cover grant application staff time	\$ 4,500	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,504,500				\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500			
Administration				Organizational Administration	Staff Services	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 220,000	-	\$ 220,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	
					Engineering and Consultant Services	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 30,000	-	\$ 30,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
					Legal Services	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,000	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	
					File Annual Activity Report, Finance Report, and Audit	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 40,000	-	\$ 40,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
					Publish/Distribute Annual Newsletter or Communication	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 3,000	-	\$ 3,000	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300
					Website	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 30,000	-	\$ 30,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
					Board Education	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,000	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
				Watershed Plan	Develop three-year communication and outreach plan and update plan on given schedule	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 4,500	-	\$ 4,500	\$ 1,500			\$ 1,500			\$ 1,500				
					Watershed Plan Update	-	E-IGHWMO	\$ 50,000	-	\$ 50,000									\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	

Total	Total Expenses	\$ 5,400,000	\$ 69,000	\$ 82,500	\$ 115,000	\$ 80,500	\$ 65,500	\$ 82,500	\$ 64,500	\$ 149,000	\$ 87,000	\$ 104,500
--------------	-----------------------	--------------	-----------	-----------	------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	------------	-----------	------------

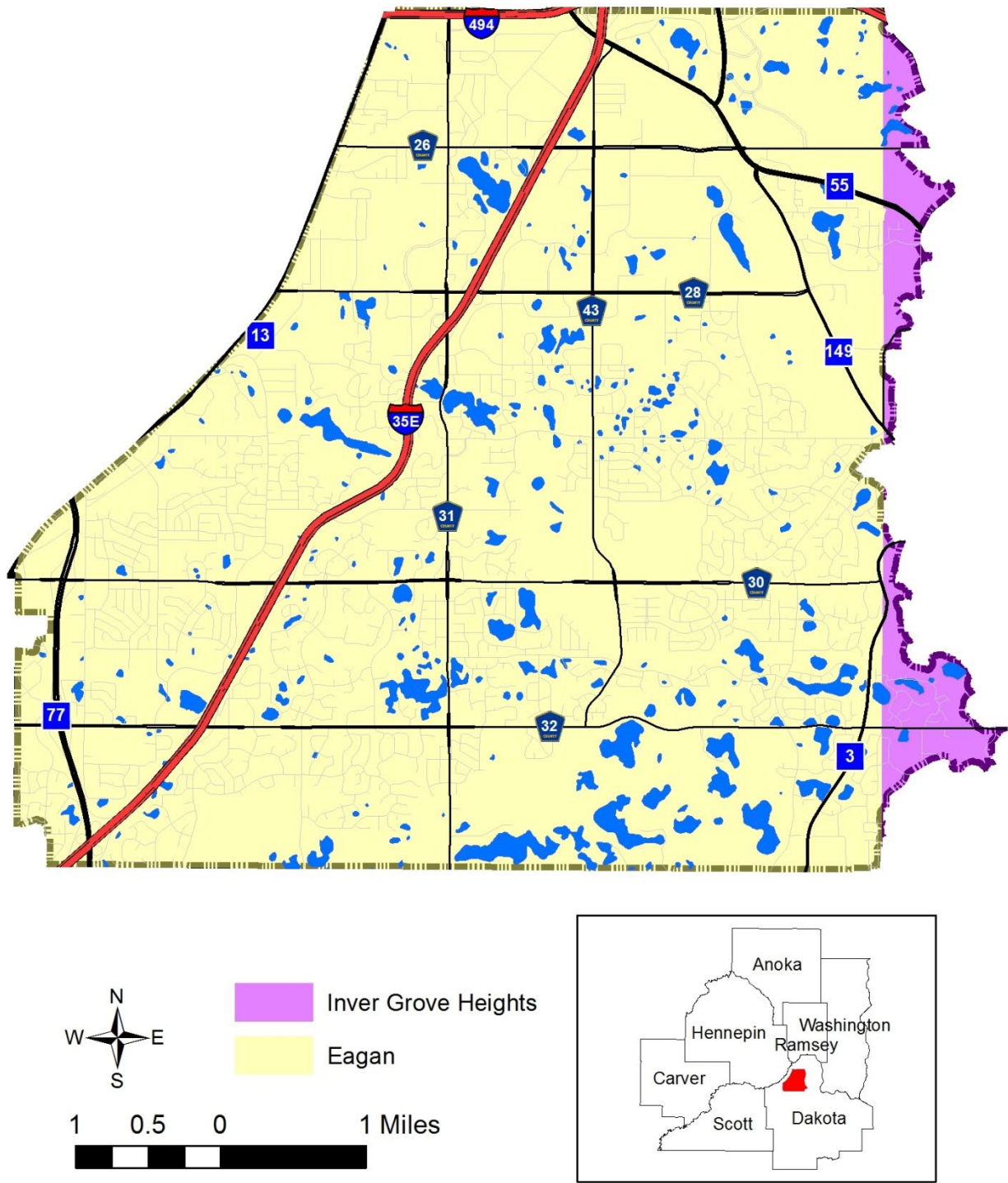


Figure ES.1: Cities in the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights watershed.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Southern Region Committee

1. Minnesota River Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan – Ted Winter and Shane Bugeja – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Extension – Luke Olson – ***DECISION ITEM***

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Minnesota River Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Minnesota River Mankato, 1W1P, CWMP, Planning, Watershed

Section/Region: Regional Operations / Southern

Contact: Ed Lenz

Prepared by: Shane Bugeja

Reviewed by: Southern Regional Committee

Presented by: Ted Winter, Southern Regional Chair and Shane Bugeja, Board Conservationist

Time requested: 10 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the Minnesota River - Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan as recommended by the Southern Regional Committee.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[BWSR One Watershed, One Plan Participating Watersheds \(Plans in Final 90-day Review – Minnesota River - Mankato\)](#)

[Minnesota River - Mankato 1W1P General Webpage](#)

SUMMARY (Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)

At 370,960 acres (approximately 580 square miles), the Minnesota River - Mankato is a small watershed in southern Minnesota, eventually draining into the Mississippi. Dominated by productive, tile drained row crops (68% of acres), the region nevertheless contains sizeable, developed areas (9% of acres) such as the city of Mankato. This area also hosts rare natural aspects such as calcareous fens and the endangered rusty patch bumblebee. Swan Lake is also present in the watershed, which is the largest prairie pothole lake in North America and a major waystation for waterfowl and other wildlife. Highlighting the need for pollution reduction, this watershed has significant zones of vulnerable drinking water sources, particularly near the city of Saint Peter.

The Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed Partnership (Partnership) established a memorandum of agreement between the planning partners for the purpose of writing a comprehensive watershed management plan on March 26, 2024. The membership of the Partnership includes: the Counties of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet; the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, and Nicollet; and the Cities of North Mankato, Mankato, Lake Crystal, and Saint Peter.

Per BWSR Operating Procedures, if less than 10% of the jurisdictional land area of the local government is within the watershed planning boundary, participation by that local government is optional. The Counties of Brown, Sibley, Renville, Watonwan---as well as their respective SWCDs---opted out of the planning process. However, the district manager for Sibley SWCD, Joel Wurscher, participated in the Partnership's advisory committee.

On January 27, 2026, the Board received the Plan, a record of the public hearing, all partner resolutions, and comment responses. Pertaining to the Plan for final State review pursuant to Board decision #23-50, state agency representatives attended and provided input at advisory committee meetings during development of the Plan. No agency had additional comments and all recommended approval.

BWSR staff completed their review and subsequently found the Plan meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes and BWSR Policy. BWSR staff recommended Plan approval.

On April 1, 2026, the Southern Regional Committee (Committee) met to review and discuss the Plan. The Committee's decision was to recommend approval of the Minnesota River - Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to the full Board per the attached draft Order.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

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

**ORDER
APPROVING
COMPREHENSIVE
WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Whereas, the Policy Committee of the Minnesota River - Mankato Watershed Partnership (Partnership) submitted a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan) to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) on January 27, 2026 pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.101, Subdivision 14 and 103B.801 and Board Decision #23-50, and;

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

- Partnership Establishment.** The Partnership was established on March 26, 2024, through adoption of a Memorandum of Agreement for the purpose of developing a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The membership of the Partnership includes: the Counties of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet; the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, and Nicollet; and the Cities of North Mankato, Mankato, Lake Crystal, and Saint Peter.
- 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.
- Nature of the Watershed.** At 370,960 acres (approximately 580 square miles), the Minnesota River - Mankato is a small watershed in southern Minnesota, eventually draining into the Mississippi. Dominated by productive, tile drained row crops (68% of acres), the region nevertheless contains sizeable, developed areas (9% of acres) such as the city of Mankato. This area also hosts rare natural aspects such as calcareous fens and the endangered rusty patch bumblebee. Swan Lake is also present in the watershed, which is the largest prairie pothole lake in North America and a major waystation for waterfowl and other wildlife. Highlighting the need for pollution reduction, this watershed has significant zones of vulnerable drinking water sources, particularly near the city of Saint Peter.

4. **Plan Development.** The Plan was developed with the primary goals to improve water and soil outcomes across the watershed. To achieve this, a prioritized, targeted, and measurable strategy was devised by the Partnership. Public input identified 16 core issues of concern, which were then classified into six high, five medium, and five low priorities. High and medium priorities were then assigned measurable 10-year goals. Each 10-year goal was further divided across four unique implementation regions. Each region was responsible for certain portions of said goals, which were shaped from local partner feedback, watershed modeling, and state agency reports.
5. **Plan Review.** On January 27, 2026, the Board received the Plan, a record of the public hearing, all partner resolutions, and comment responses. Pertaining to the Plan for final State review pursuant to Board decision #23-50, 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 final State review period:
 - A. Minnesota Department of Agriculture: “MDA has no additional comments on this version, and we appreciated the inclusion of the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) and the AgBMP Loan Program in your program lists.”
 - B. Minnesota Department of Health: “MDH appreciates the plan partners for including groundwater and drinking water into the plan and recognizing the comments submitted by MDH on November 14, 2025, as part of the public comment requirement. Thank you for including MDH priorities within your plan. We look forward to working with you on the implementation of your plan. The Minnesota Department of Health recommends approval of this plan.”
 - C. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: “The Minnesota DNR has received the final Minnesota River – Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (1W1P) and have reviewed the responses to comments submitted under the 60-day review of the draft plan. The DNR is satisfied with the responses to issues raised during our review and would have no additional comments. The DNR recommends that BWSR approve this plan.”
 - D. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: “The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) appreciates the opportunity to participate and provide input throughout the Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed (MRMW) Final Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (MRMWMP) development process for the MRMW Planning Area. Overall, the MRMWMP is very well written, concise, and thorough. After further review of the comments to the final MRMWMP, MPCA has no further comments as part of the official Final Review and Comment Period and recommends that Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) approve the MRMWMP.”
 - E. Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB): Policy requires that EQB be notified of the final draft document. EQB confirmed receipt of the Plan and did not provide comments on the 90-day final draft Plan.
 - F. Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources regional staff: “BWSR regional staff have no further comments or required changes to the final draft of the Plan. We recommend the Plan be approved. The Partnership is to be commended, as the watershed is a complex mixture of urban and rural stakeholders. Every city, county, and soil & water conservation district was highly engaged throughout the 1W1P planning process and contributed valuable insight and perspective.”
6. **Plan Summary and Highlights.**
 - Watershed-wide, 10-year goals include reducing 3,150 pounds of phosphorus, 60,748 pounds of nitrogen, and 314 tons of sediment each year. These reductions will come from not only

agricultural lands, but urban stormwater practices as well. As mentioned earlier, Minnesota – River Mankato holds a diverse array of both urban and rural landscapes.

- The Plan identified surface waters which were nearly or barely impaired as well as ones which were locally prominent. These were then classified into Tier 1 and Tier 2, with Tier 1 being the highest priority for project funding. Tier 1 waters included Crystal Lake, Lake Ballantyne, and Minneopa Creek in Blue Earth County; Lake Emily and Lake Washington in Le Sueur County; and Swan Lake in Nicollet County.
 - The Plan also includes goals to cover key research gaps over 10 years. These include five feasibility studies for water storage projects, a watershed-wide septic system and unsealed well inventory, and two sub-watershed assessments to protect priority surface waters.
 - During the planning process in 2024, record-breaking flooding occurred in the Minnesota River – Mankato and neighboring watersheds. As a result, flooding was moved to a higher priority by the Partnership. To support this change, seven capital improvement projects will store 619 acre-feet of water and improve water quality.
 - Education and outreach were a key part of implementation, aiming to go above and beyond current efforts made by partners. This includes hosting 10 well testing clinics which will examine nitrate, lead, manganese, arsenic, and coliform bacteria; five public programs devoted to stormwater best management practices; and five aquatic invasive species programs.
7. **Southern Regional Committee.** On April 1, 2026, the Southern Regional Committee met to review and discuss the Plan. Those in attendance from the Board’s Committee were Ted Winter, Kevin Wilson, Eunice Biel, Scott Hanson (an alternate for member Steve Robertson), and Heather Johnson. Board staff in attendance included Southern Regional Manager Ed Lenz, Board Conservationists Shane Bugeja and Luke Olson, Office and Administrative Specialist Denise Lauerman, and Clean Water Specialists Jeremy Maul and Mark Hiles. The representatives from the Partnership were Mackenzie Bratsch and Blake Honetschlager, both district technicians of the Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District. Other participants included Houston Engineering Incorporated employees Rachel Olm and Katie Cassidy, as well as Michelle Overholser and William Briggs, representatives from the Yellow Medicine Watershed. Board regional staff provided a recommendation for Plan approval to the Committee. After discussion, the Committee’s decision was to present a recommendation for approval of the Plan to the full Board.
8. This Plan will be in effect for a ten-year period until April 22, 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 Minnesota River – Mankato pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103B.101, Subd. 14 and 103B.801 and Board Decision #23-50.
3. The Minnesota River Mankato 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 #23-50.
5. The attached plan when adopted through local resolution 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 approves the attached Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan of the Minnesota River – Mankato, submitted January 27, 2026.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota, this 22nd of April 2026.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Todd Holman, Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: _____

1. Executive Summary





1. Executive Summary

The Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed (referred to throughout the plan as “the watershed”) spans across the plains of south-central Minnesota, covering over 370,000 acres of land. Bisected by the Minnesota River, the watershed shares land over multiple counties, including large portions within Blue Earth, Le Sueur, and Nicollet counties. The Minnesota River flows through the central valley of the watershed towards the Mississippi River, supported by tributaries including Eight Mile Creek, Minneopa Creek, and Shanaska Creek. Larger cities in the watershed include Mankato, North Mankato, St. Peter, and Lake Crystal.

Topography and geology influence land use. The watershed’s rolling plains boast productive agricultural land, bringing economic opportunity through predominately corn and soybean production. The Minnesota River Valley cuts through the watershed creating steep elevation changes and recreational sites for visitors such as the Kasota Prairie Scientific and Natural Area, and the waterfalls in Minneopa State Park. Watershed lakes provide opportunities for connection among residents and are home to many recreational outlets such as fishing, kayaking, boating and swimming.

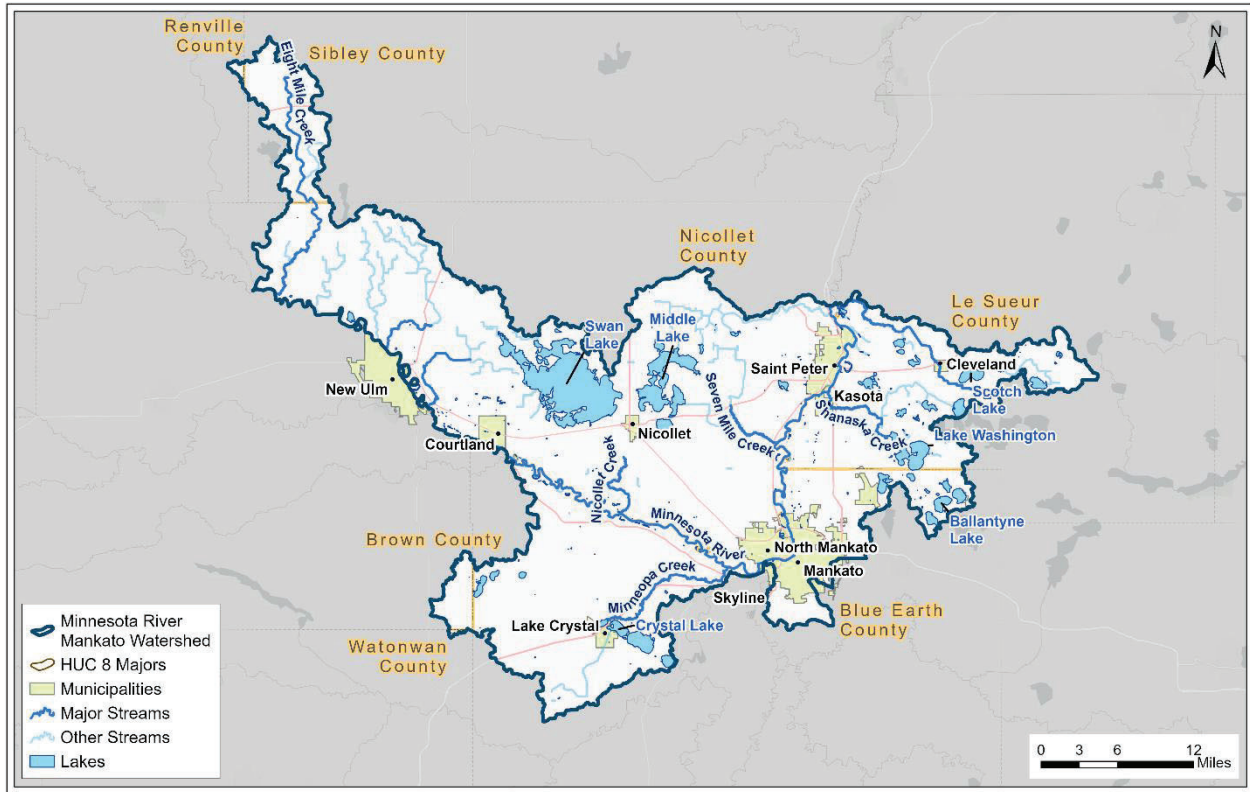


Figure 1-1: The Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed plan area.



The Plan

This Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) was developed from 2024-2025 through the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) program. 1W1P was created to aid in the transition for water planning in Minnesota to be along watershed boundaries rather than jurisdictional and political ones. This plan creates a guiding framework that can be used by its partnering Local Government Units to implement actions and meet shared goals for managing water and natural resources within the watershed.



This plan identifies watershed priority issues, sets 10-year measurable goals, and plans specific actions to make progress towards those goals. This CWMP is active from 2026-2036, at which point the issues, goals, and actions will be reevaluated. Progress will be assessed on an annual basis along with a mid-point evaluation.

Planning Partners

The planning process for the watershed CWMP began with a planning Memorandum of Agreement (**Appendix A**) between the counties and soil and water conservation districts of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, and Nicollet, and the cities of Lake Crystal, North Mankato, Mankato, and Saint Peter. The planning process was guided through decisions made by three committees: the Policy Committee, the Steering Committee, and the Advisory Committee.

Policy Committee

Consists of elected and appointed board members from each of the participating entities

Approved plan content

Steering Committee

Consists of local staff from participating entities, state agency staff and consultants

Developed plan content

Advisory Committee

Consists of agency staff, non-governmental organizations, and residents

Advised on plan content



The CWMP will be implemented through a Joint Powers Collaborative agreement between the following entities: Blue Earth County and the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Le Sueur County and SWCD, Nicollet County and SWCD, and the cities of Lake Crystal, North Mankato, Mankato, and Saint Peter. **Section 7 – Plan Administration and Coordination** describes partnership roles and responsibilities during plan implementation.

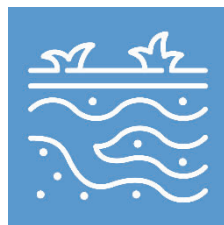
Priority Issues and Goals

To begin this planning process, the local partnership wanted to gather as much public feedback as possible. Public hearings were held on July 23rd and July 30th, 2024, to allow residents to review presented issues and highlight resources important to them. Residents gave feedback on what resources and issues are the most important to them through discussion and a survey. This survey was online for one month to allow residents who could not attend to share their input as well. Approximately 40 community members attended these meetings, and there were 75 responses to the public survey.

To identify issues impacting natural resources in the watershed, existing agency reports, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), county water plans, and feedback from both planning committees and public responses were reviewed. After reviewing feedback and existing data, 16 issues were identified. To better manage and organize efforts to meet the needs of these issues, they were placed into one of four resource categories.



**Surface Water
Quality**



**Drinking Water and
Groundwater**



**Flood Damage
Reduction and
Hydrology**









**Land Use and
Habitat**

All 16 issues are important, but were prioritized to focus implementation efforts. Feedback from the public, prominence of issues mentioned in existing reports, TMDLs, county water plans and agency letters were utilized to prioritize issues. Issues were categorized as high, medium, and low. The high (**Table 1-1**) and the medium (**Table 1-2**) priority issues have actions and goals assigned to them in the plan. Low priority issues are not directly addressed throughout the plan, but may be indirectly impacted by addressing higher priority issues. A summary of issues and impacts is in **Section 3 – Priority Issues**.



An essential part of effective resource management is creating 10-year goals that are measurable and quantifiable. The planning partners developed seven goals addressing high and medium priority issues, summarized in **Table 1-1** for high issues and **Table 1-2** for medium issues. It should be noted that some goals address multiple priority issues.

Table 1-1: High Priority Issues and 10-Year Goals. Note: some goals address multiple issues and are not cumulative.

High Priority	Issue	Issue Statement	10-Year Goal
	 Nutrient Loading	Nutrient loading (phosphorus and nitrogen) has led to habitat and recreation impairments from algae blooms.	Reduce total phosphorus by 3,150 lbs/year (1.4% reduction); reduce total nitrogen by 60,748 lbs/year (1.1% reduction)
	 Sediment and Erosion	Excess sediment, largely from channel / ravine erosion and upland erosion, is the cause of numerous aquatic life impairments.	Stabilize or enhance 2,640 linear feet of lake shoreline, ravines, or streambanks; reduce sediment loading by 314 tons/year (or 1.7% reduction) from upland sources
	 Surface Water/ Groundwater Interaction	A significant portion of the population obtains their drinking water from a groundwater source influenced by surface water, which makes contamination (especially with nitrate) more likely.	Protect or treat 395 acres of vulnerable groundwater Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs) and 2,575 acres of vulnerable surface water DWSMAs; seal 100 wells ; conduct 10 outreach events
	 Loss of Water Storage	Land use change has led to a loss of water storage in the landscape, which contributes to excess flow and pollutants in streams.	Add 619 ac-ft of water storage to the landscape
	 Altered Hydrology	Altered hydrology due to changes in land use and drainage, combined with an increase in precipitation has led to flooding and high flow volume.	Add 619 ac-ft of water storage to the landscape
	 Soil Health	Degraded soil health on productive land can lead to more erosive soils.*	Implement soil health practices (e.g. cover crops, tillage management) on 3,960 acres

* Soil health will be addressed watershed-wide, including in the Mankato surface water Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA).



Table 1-2: Medium Priority Issues and 10-Year Goals.






Medium Priority	Issue	Issue Statement	10-Year Goal
	 Bacteria	Bacteria from livestock, human, and wildlife waste contribute to <i>E. coli</i> and fecal coliform impairments.	Implement 10 manure management practices or plans and address 220 noncompliant septic systems
	 Groundwater Quality	Groundwater that is used for drinking water can be contaminated with pollutants such as nitrate and arsenic, making it a public health problem.	Protect or treat 395 acres of vulnerable DWSMAs; seal 100 wells ; conduct 10 outreach events
	 Stormwater	Stormwater from developed areas contains salt, sediment, nutrients, fertilizer, and more that pollutes receiving waters.	Reduce total phosphorus (TP) by 30 lbs/year and total nitrogen (TN) by 480 lbs/year through treating 200 acres of municipal land with best management practices
	 Flooding	Altered hydrology combined with an increase in annual and heavy rain events has increased the likelihood of flooding, which is costly to infrastructure or farmland in impacted areas.	Add 619 ac-ft of water storage to the landscape
	 Invasive Species	The presence of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species degrades habitat quality and recreation opportunities.	Prevent the spread of invasive species through 5 outreach and education efforts



Photo: Minneopa State Park, Minnesota River Valley webpage



Targeting Actions

With over 370,000 acres of land within the watershed spanning seven counties, resource management priorities can shift depending on where in the watershed issues and resources are most prominent. To maximize efficiency when addressing issues, the watershed has been organized into four implementation regions to aid in prioritizing funding and actions where they are most needed.

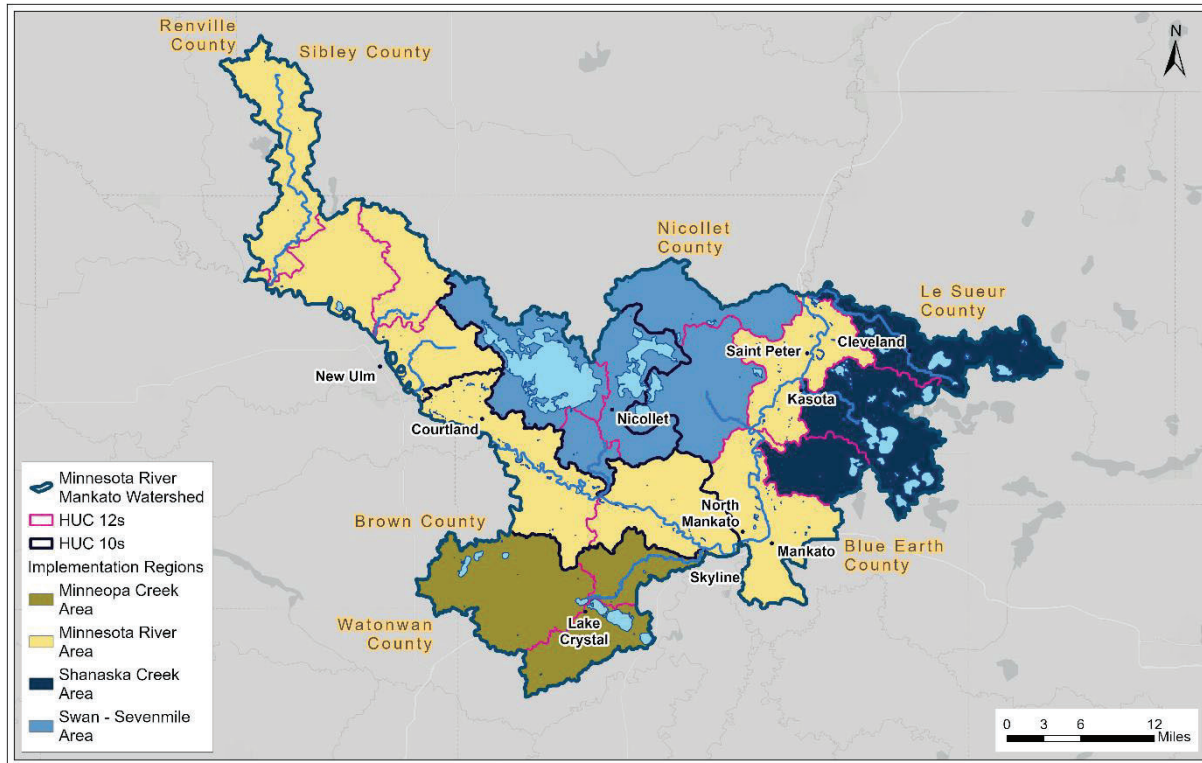


Figure 1-2: Implementation Regions in the Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed.

Ten-year measurable goals are summarized for each high and medium priority issue in **Tables 1-1** and **1-2**. In **Section 4 – Measurable Goals**, each goal is accompanied by a focus map to help show where targeted actions could make the most impact on addressing an issue. In addition to the focus maps for the goals, there is also a focus map for priority lakes and streams within the watershed based on local input and waters listed as barely or nearly impaired in the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy report. Of the priority resources, ‘Tier 1’ resources will be the focus during implementation. ‘Tier 2’ resources are acknowledged as locally important but not a primary focus of the plan. The priority water bodies are summarized on the next page.

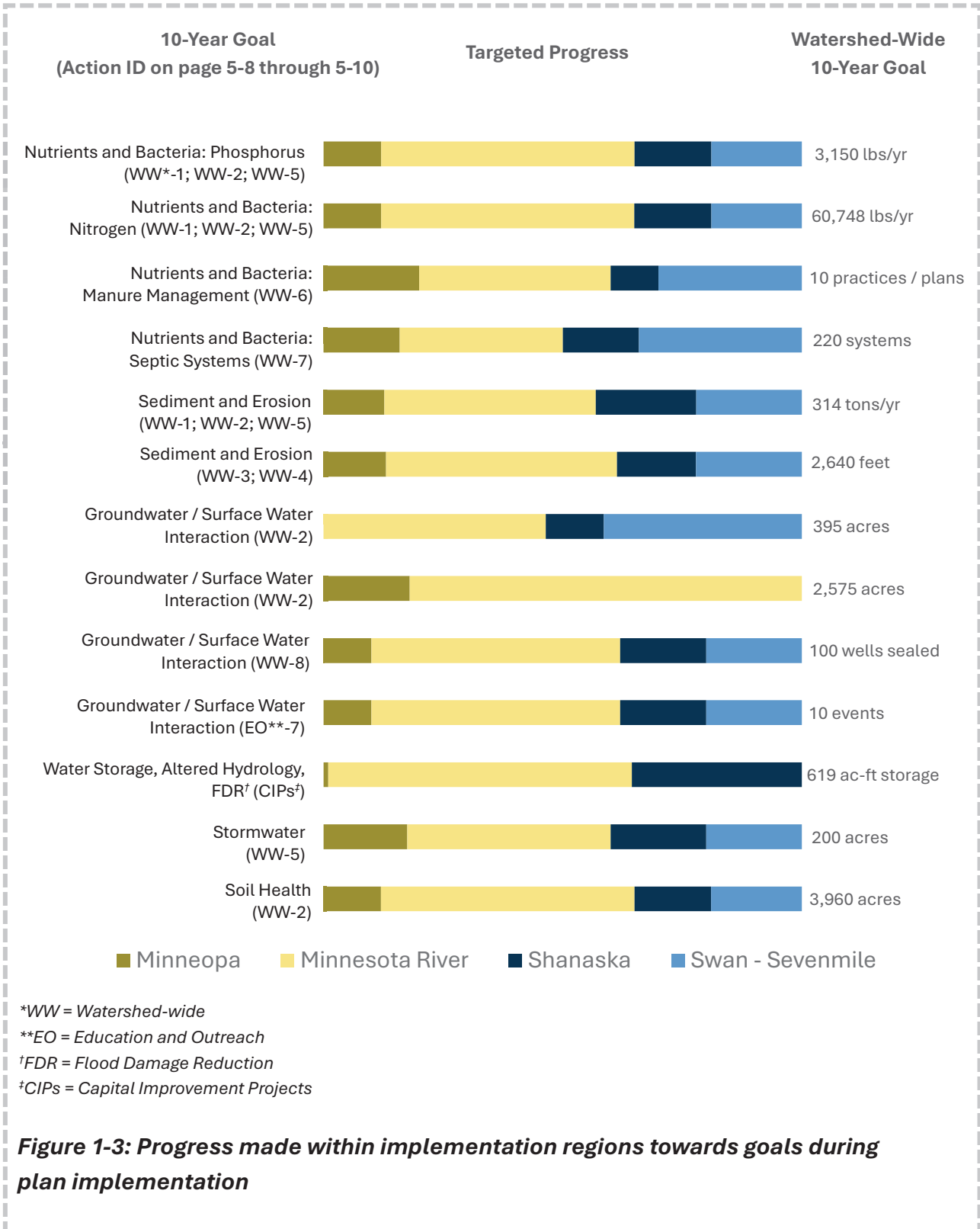


Tier 1 Priority Resources	Tier 2 Priority Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crystal Lake (Blue Earth County)• Lake Ballantyne (Blue Earth County)• Lake Emily (Le Sueur County)• Lake Washington (Le Sueur County)• Minneopa Creek• Swan Lake (Nicollet County)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duck Lake (Blue Earth County)• Duck Lake (Nicollet County)• Indian Creek• Lake Hallett (Nicollet County)• Loon Lake (Blue Earth County)• Nicollet Creek• Seven Mile Creek• Shanaska Creek• St. Peter Trout Ponds (Le Sueur County)

Figure 1-3 visually shows how work towards the goals in the plan will be split across the four implementation regions. This milestone chart shows the watershed-wide goal on the right, with each bar displaying the extent to which progress will be made in each implementation region, following the goal focus area maps. Implementation regions where the milestone chart has larger contributions for a goal indicate that the issue is more prominent in that area.



Photo: Minneopa State Park, Minnesota River Valley webpage





Implementation

To make progress towards the measurable goals with the plan, targeted actions will be implemented. Targeted actions being used to achieve plan goals are summarized within action tables. The action tables include a description of the action, the focus area, the measurable output, impacted goals, responsible entity, estimated timeframe and the estimated cost for the action. Action tables are categorized by plan programs, as shown in **Figure 1-4**. A complete summary of actions can be found in **Section 5 – Targeted Implementation** for both watershed-wide and implementation region scales.

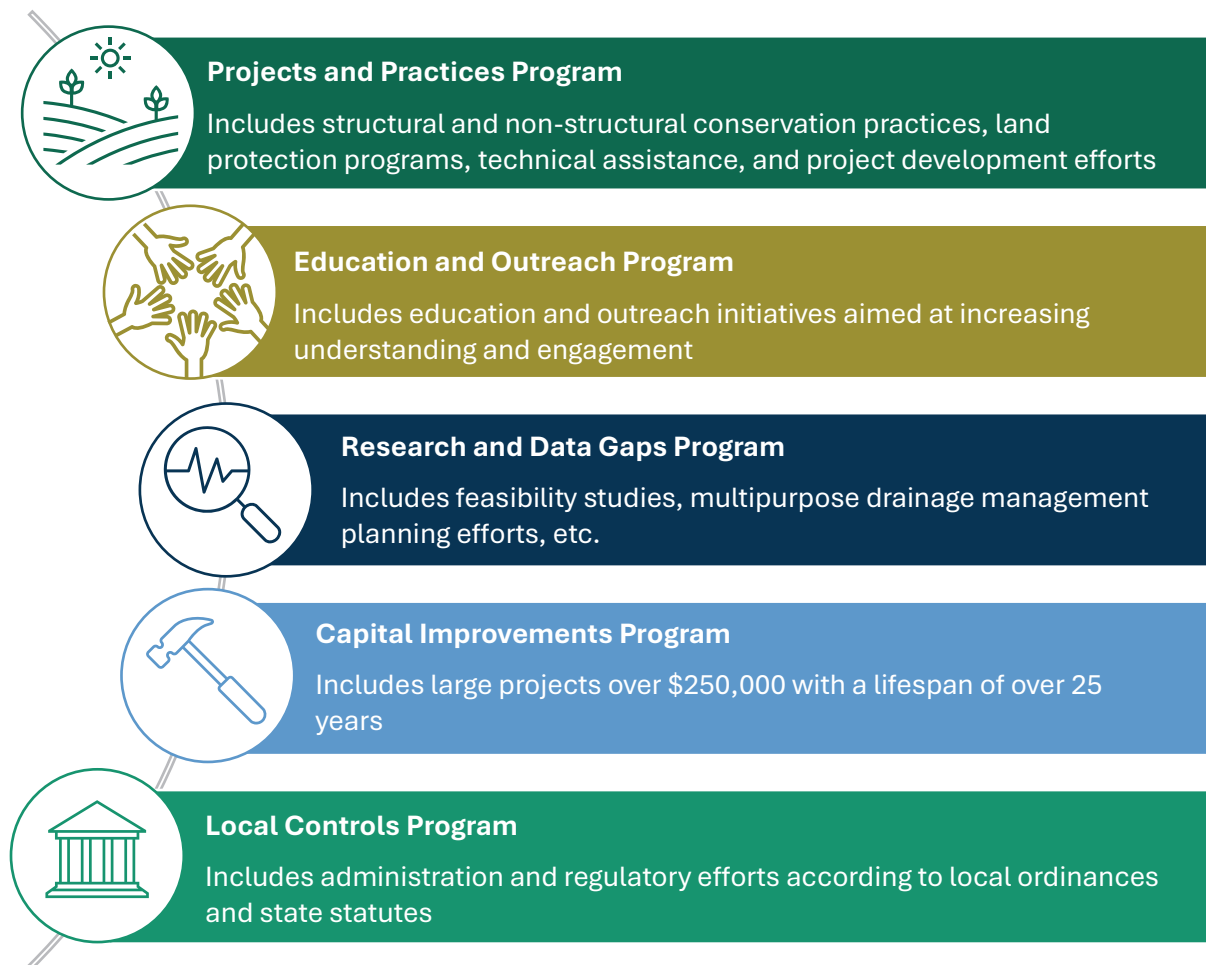


Figure 1-4: Implementation programs in the Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed.



Implementation Costs and Benefits

Progress towards goals can be impacted by many factors. One of the most significant factors is the funding available during the 10-year plan. To create a realistic scope of the actions that can be completed with anticipated state and local funding, this plan includes an estimated “Local 10-Year Plan Cost” that will be needed to implement the plan (**Table 1-3**). The local cost includes baseline funding already available in the watershed on the county and state level.



Photo: Arboretum at Gustavus Adolphus College, Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway webpage

Planning partners acknowledge that to make full progress towards the watershed’s goals, some actions will need to be funded beyond the “Local 10-Year Cost” and pursued by partnering entities (e.g., Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Department of Natural Resources, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy), federal dollars (e.g. Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program), or other competitive funding programs. These funds and actions are represented in the action tables as “Partner/Federal 10-Year Cost” to account for all the funding needed to implement the goals of this plan. A full scope of implementation funding is illustrated in **Table 1-3**.

Table 1-3: Costs of implementing the Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed CWMP.

Program	Local 10-Year Cost	Partner 10-Year Cost
Projects and Practices	\$3,509,300	\$7,001,500
<i>Project Development</i>	\$2,178,000	N/A
<i>Technical Assistance</i>	\$2,003,000	N/A
Research and Data Gaps	\$560,000	N/A
Education and Outreach	\$5,676,000	N/A
Local Controls	\$5,273,000	N/A
Capital Improvements	\$1,825,000	\$8,995,000
Operations and Maintenance	\$574,000	N/A
Plan Administration	\$420,000	N/A
Total	\$ 22,018,300	\$15,996,500

The Minnesota River – Mankato Partnership anticipates a local and state budget of \$2,090,600 annually, or \$20,906,000 over the 10-year plan (for more details, see Section 7—Plan Administration and Coordination). **This means that to meet plan goals, the Partnership estimates needing an additional \$111,230 per year, or \$1,112,300 over the 10-year plan.**

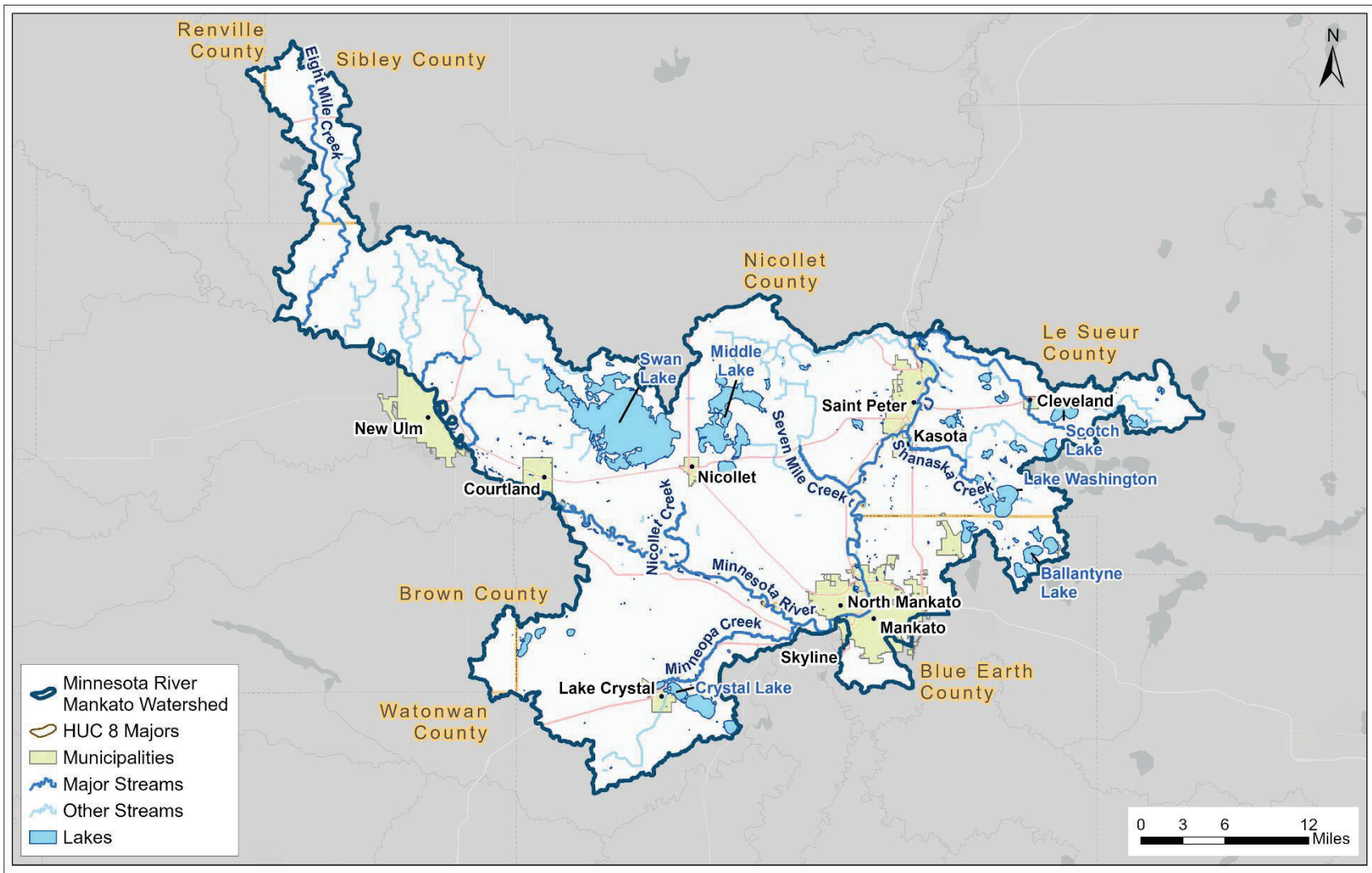


Figure 2-1: Map of the watershed.

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Extension

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability:

Section/Region: Regional Operations / Southern

Contact: Ed Lenz, Southern Regional Manager

Prepared by: Luke Olson, Board Conservationist

Reviewed by: Southern Regional Committee (April 1, 2026)

Presented by: Luke Olson, Board Conservationist

Time requested: 10 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve extending the revision date of the Yellow Medicine River One Watershed One Plan Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to December 31, 2028.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

The Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan was approved by the BWSR Board as a pilot plan December 14, 2016, and will expire December 31, 2026. The partnership, through individual participating board resolutions, intends to extend the plan expiration date to December 31, 2028. To align the watershed planning cycle with new data, specifically MPCA's WRAPS cycle 2 report/data, the extension is being proposed. MPCA offered a timeline for report/data to be available by June 2026. New data will inform the partnership as a plan renewal amendment is considered.

BOARD ORDER

EXTENSION OF COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

PURPOSE

Authorize extending the revision date of the Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

RECITALS /FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On December 14, 2016, the Board approved through Board Order #16-95 the Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The order states the plan will remain in effect until December 31, 2026.
2. Following the original Board approval, local governments that participated in developing the Yellow Medicine River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan adopted the plan and entered into a memorandum of agreement to implement the plan. Participating members include Lac qui Parle County, Lac qui Parle SWCD, County, Lincoln County, Lincoln SWCD, Lyon County, Lyon SWCD, Yellow Medicine County, Yellow Medicine SWCD, the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District, and Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects.
3. On March 19, 2026, the board conservationist received a request from the partnership, including resolutions from each member of the partnership, to extend the plan expiration date to December 31, 2028. The rationale for the extension request is to incorporate new data and information from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s watershed restoration and protection strategies (WRAPS) report update, which is not currently available.
4. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency informed the partnership that a draft of the Yellow Medicine River Watershed Protection and Restoration Strategy Update will be available by June 2026.
5. The Board has authority under Minn. Stat. §103B.3367 to grant extensions to the revision date of a comprehensive watershed management plan.
6. On April 1, 2026, the partnership presented their extension request to the Southern Regional Committee (“Committee”). Following the presentation, the Committee recommended approval to the Board.

ORDER

The Board hereby:

1. Approves extending the revision date of the Yellow Medicine River One Watershed One Plan Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to December 31, 2028.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Todd Holman, Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: _____

Olson, Luke K (He/Him/His) (BWSR)

From: Weckwerth, Michael (MPCA)
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 6:16 AM
To: Olson, Luke K (He/Him/His) (BWSR)
Subject: Re: Yell. Med Update

Hi Luke,

I am anticipating the DRAFT WRAPS report to be released on or before June 1, 2026.

Mike

Mike Weckwerth | Watershed Project Manager

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
Watershed Division
504 Fairgrounds Road, Suite 200 | Marshall, MN 56258
Office: (507) 476-4267
michael.weckwerth@state.mn.us



Our mission is to protect and improve the environment and human health.

NOTICE: This email (including attachments) is covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2521. This email may be confidential and may be legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any retention, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. Please reply back to the sender that you have received this message in error, then delete it. Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS

1. BWSR and MOSH Soil Health Updates – Jared House and Marcelle Lewandowski (U of M) –
INFORMATION ITEM

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item Title: BWSR and MOSH Soil Health Updates

Meeting Date: April 22, 2026

Agenda Category: Committee Recommendation New Business Old Business

Item Type: Decision Discussion Information Non-Public Data

Keywords for Electronic Searchability: Soil Health Programming, MOSH

Section/Region: Resource Conservation

Contact: Jared House

Prepared by: Jared House

Reviewed by:

Presented by: Jared House and Marcelle Lewandowski

Time requested: 50 minutes

Attachments: Resolution Order Map Other supporting information

Fiscal/Policy Impact:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

ACTION REQUESTED

None

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

To provide a comprehensive update on BWSR's soil health programs – including supplemental staffing, delivery, and federally funded programs – alongside an update from the Minnesota Office For Soil Health (MOSH) on collaborative research and training initiatives.