

# 2017 Performance Review and Assistance Program

Report to the Minnesota Legislature

February 2018

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**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources**  
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This report has been prepared for the Minnesota State Legislature by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in partial fulfillment of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103B.102, subdivision 3.

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## MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP)

### Executive Summary

Since 2008, BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program has assessed the performance of the local units of government constituting Minnesota's local delivery system for conservation of water and related land resources. These local units of government include 89 soil and water conservation districts, 87 counties, 45 watershed districts and 18 watershed management organizations. The program goal is to assist these local government partners to be the best they can be in their management of Minnesota's land and water resources and thereby, ensure that the State of Minnesota receives commensurate value from the investments it is making through these entities.

#### **PRAP focuses on three aspects of Local Governmental Unit (LGU) performance:**

- 1) Plan Implementation—how well an LGU's accomplishments meet planned objectives.
- 2) Compliance with performance standards—administrative mandates and best practices.
- 3) Collaboration and Communication—the quality of partner and stakeholder relationships.

BWSR's PRAP uses four levels of review to assess performance ranging from statewide oversight in Level I, to a focus on individual LGU performance in Levels II and III, and to remediation in Level IV.

#### **2017 Program Summary**

- Completed 24 Level II performance reviews. These reviews included 11 soil and water conservation districts, 10 counties, 2 watershed districts and one watershed management organization. See pages 10-12 for discussion of findings for the Level II reviews.
- Surveyed 15 LGUs reviewed in 2015 to assess implementation of BWSR's recommendations for organizational improvements and action items. Of the 14 LGUs that completed the survey, LGUs reported fully completing 45% of their recommendations, and reported partially completing another 45% of their recommendations in their Level II performance review reports. This means that LGUs took some action on 90% of their recommendations. *(Note: A watershed-based PRAP was completed for the Crow Wing Watershed in 2015, including the SWCDs and Counties of Becker, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard and Wadena. Because all of these reports had joint recommendations for both the SWCD and county, the follow-up survey was sent only to the SWCDs. The SWCDs were asked to report on implementation of recommendations to prevent duplicative information. All 5 SWCDs involved in the Crow Wing River Watershed PRAP responded to the survey.)*
- Completed two Level III PRAP Assessments (one soil and water conservation district and 1 watershed district) in 2017.
- Tracked 239 LGUs' Level I performance.
- Incorporated metrics for Wetland Conservation Act program implementation responsibilities into Level II and Level III assessments for the first time to measure local government unit compliance with this program.
- Evaluated and updated potential key performance measures for PRAP Level II reviews within the framework of the watershed-based One Watershed-One Plan approach to LGU water plan implementation. Developed draft concepts for performance based funding for One Watershed-One Plan implementation.
- Updated the PRAP page of the BWSR website to provide more accessible information about the program.

- Executed three new PRAP Assistance Grant agreements to enhance LGU organizational effectiveness.
- Completed a BWSR Program Review for the Performance Review and Assistance Program, evaluating effectiveness and future direction for the program.

## 2017 Results of Annual Tracking of 239 LGUs' Plans and Reports (PRAP Level I)

Overall compliance with LGU plan revision and reporting requirements improved slightly in 2017. All drainage buffer reports were submitted on time, and WMO compliance continued to improve to 89% this year compared to 78% in 2016 and 44% in 2015. However, staff efforts will continue in 2018 to improve compliance, particularly among Watershed Districts.

- **Long-range Plan Status: the number of overdue plans total 3 in 2017** (*down from 8 in 2016*).
  - Counties: one local water management plan is overdue.
  - Watershed Districts: One watershed management plan is overdue (down from four overdue plans in 2016).
  - Watershed Management Organizations: one watershed management plan is overdue.
- **LGUs in Full Compliance with Level I Performance Standards: 90%.**
  - Soil & Water Conservation Districts: 93% compliance (83/89).
  - County Water Management: 94% compliance (82/87).
  - Watershed Districts: 80% compliance (36/45).
  - Watershed Management Organizations: 89% compliance (16/18).

## Selected PRAP Program Objectives for 2018

- Track 239 LGUs' Level I performance.
- Continue efforts to improve WMO and WD reporting.
- Maintain the target of 24 Level II performance reviews per year.
- Complete up to two Level III performance reviews if needed in 2018.
- Increase the focus on developing and reporting resource outcomes by LGUs in Level II performance reviews.
- Survey LGUs from 2016 Level II PRAP reviews to track LGU implementation of PRAP recommendations.
- Continue monitoring and reviewing compliance with Action Items identified during a Level II review. This will allow us to determine if we are meeting the goal of 100% compliance within 18 months established in 2016 for required Action Items.
- Continue the promotion and use of PRAP Assistance Grants to enhance LGU organizational effectiveness.
- Continue evaluating and updating protocol for PRAP Level I and Level II reviews for performance based funding for implementation of watershed-based One Watershed-One Plans.
- Evaluate implementation progress of at least 3 Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program projects as part of Level II reviews. (*New for 2018*)
- Develop protocol for evaluating Technical Service Area (TSA) performance including development of performance standards and evaluate one TSA if time permits. (*New for 2018*)

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# What is the Performance Review & Assistance Program?

## Supporting Local Delivery of Conservation Services

PRAP is primarily a performance assessment activity conducted by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The subjects of the assessments are the local governmental units (LGUs) that deliver BWSR's water and land conservation programs and the process is designed to evaluate how well LGUs are implementing their long-range plans. The LGUs reviewed include soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), watershed districts (WDs), watershed management organizations (WMOs), and the water management function of counties—a total of 239 distinct organizations. PRAP, authorized in 2007 (see Appendix A), is coordinated by one BWSR central office staff member, with assistance from BWSR's 18 Board Conservationists and 3 regional managers, who routinely work with these LGUs.

## Guiding Principles

PRAP is based on and uses the following principles adopted by the BWSR Board.

- Pre-emptive
- Systematic
- Constructive
- Includes consequences
- Provides recognition for high performance
- Transparent
- Retains local ownership and autonomy
- Maintains proportionate expectations
- Preserves the state/local partnership
- Results in effective on-the-ground conservation

The principles set parameters for the program's purpose of helping LGUs to be the best they can be in their operational effectiveness. Of particular note is the principle of proportionate expectations. This means that LGUs are rated on the accomplishment of their own plan's objectives. Moreover, BWSR rates operational performance using both basic and high performance standards specific to each type of LGU. (For more detail see [www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP/index.html](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP/index.html).)

## Multi-level Process

PRAP has three operational components:

- Performance review
- Assistance
- Reporting

The **performance review** component is applied at four levels (see pages 9-12).

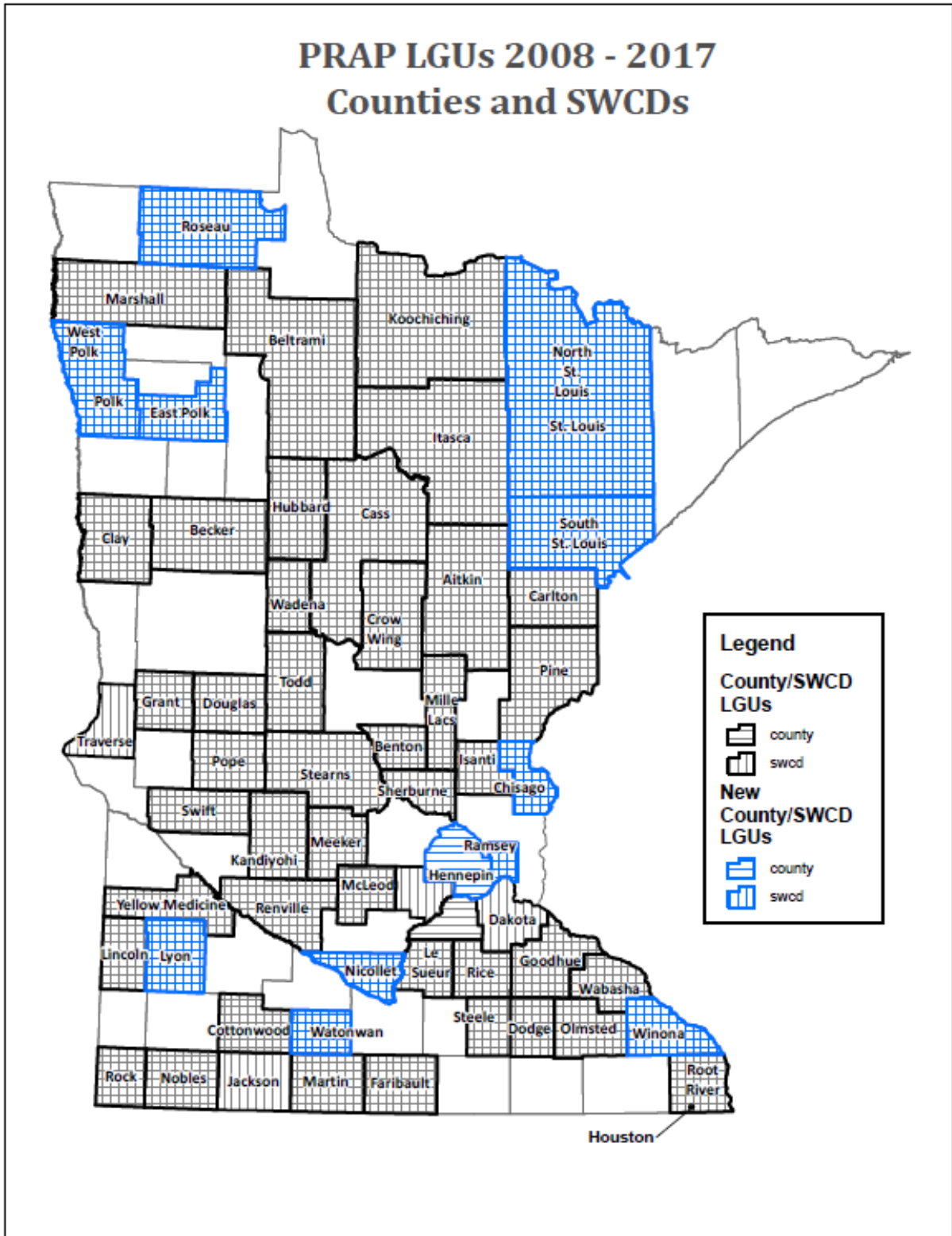
**Level I** is an annual tabulation of required plans and reports for all 239 LGUs. Level I is conducted entirely by BWSR staff and does not require additional input from LGUs.

**Level II** is a routine, interactive review intended to cover all LGUs at least once every 10 years. A Level II review evaluates progress on plan implementation, operational effectiveness, and partner

relationships. This review includes assessing compliance with Level II performance standards. The maps on pages 3-5 show which LGUs have gone through a Level II review since the program started in 2008.

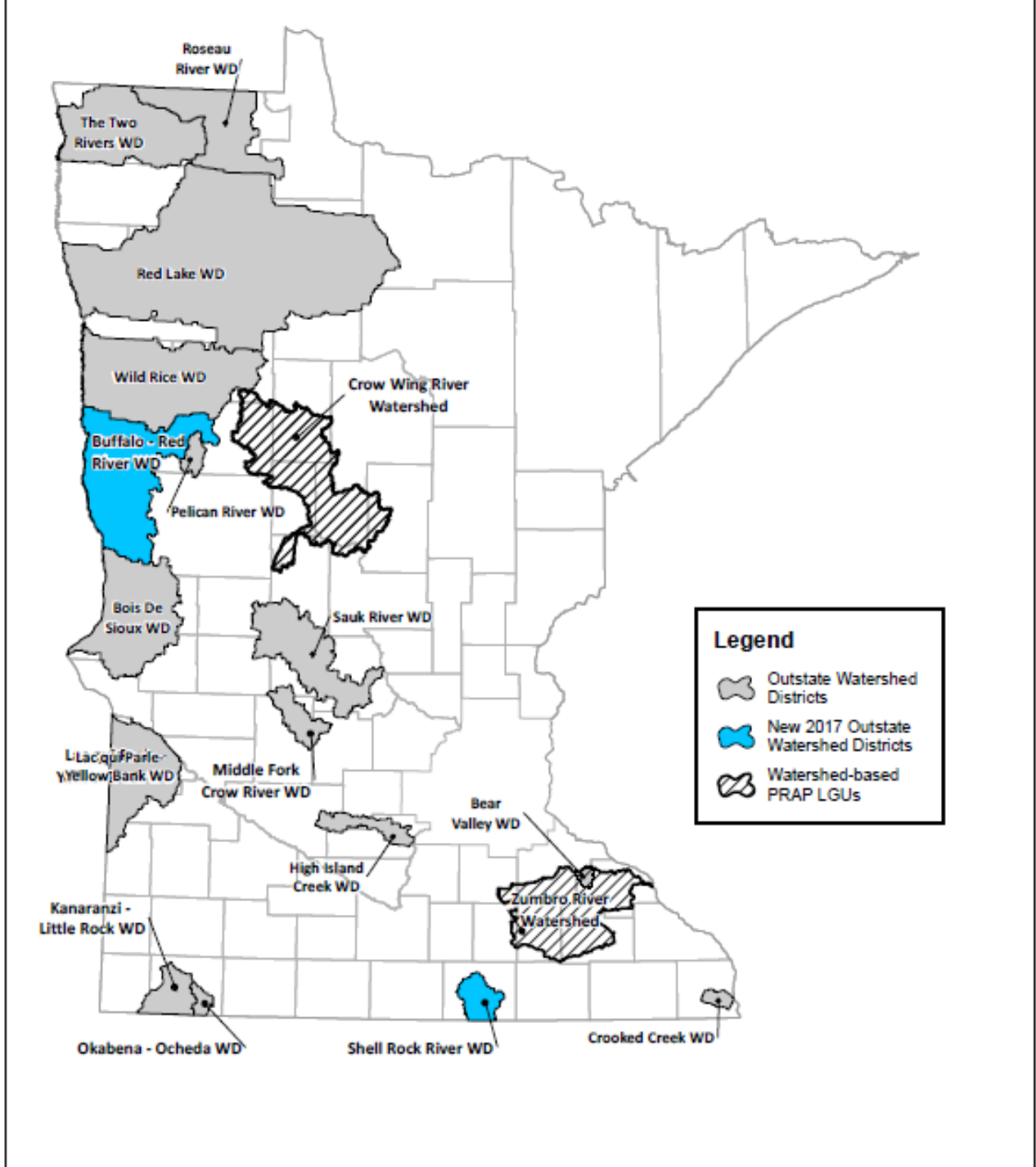
**Level III** is an in-depth assessment of an LGU's performance problems and issues. A Level III review is initiated by BWSR or the LGU and usually involves targeted assistance to address specific performance needs. Since 2008 BWSR has conducted Level III reviews for three LGUs at their request and in 2017 we completed two more. BWSR regularly monitors all LGUs for challenges that would necessitate a Level III review.

**Level IV** is for LGUs with significant performance deficiencies, and includes BWSR Board action to assign penalties as authorized by statute. Levels I-III are designed to avoid the need for Level IV. To date there have not been any Level IV reviews.

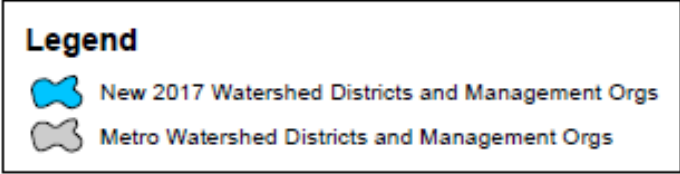
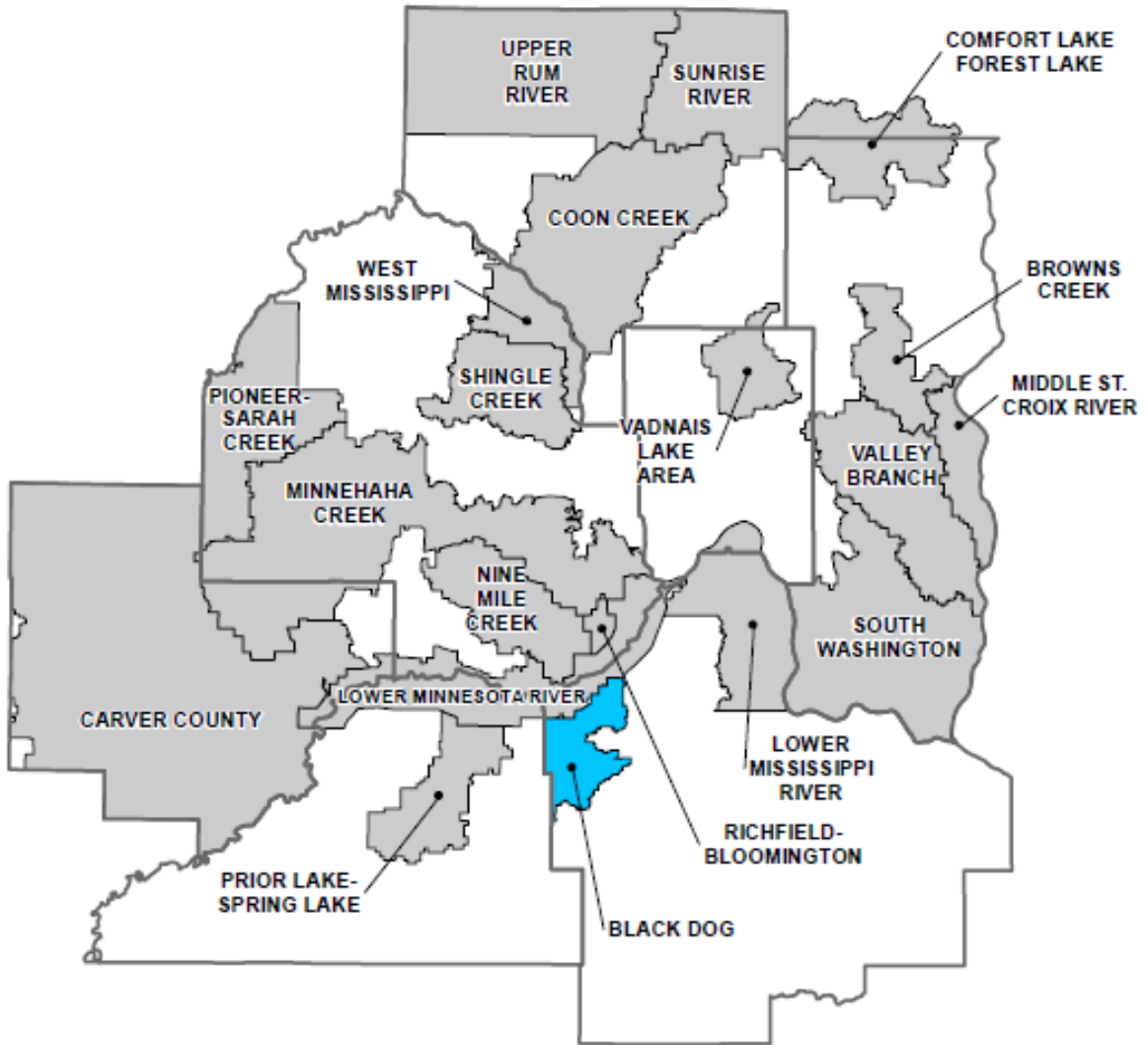




## PRAP LGUs 2008 - 2017 Outstate Watershed Districts and Watersheds



## PRAP LGUs 2008-2017 Metro Watershed Districts and Management Organizations



**Assistance** (page 13) In 2012, BWSR began awarding PRAP assistance grants to assist LGUs in obtaining practical and financial assistance for organizational improvements or to address performance issues. The grants are typically used for consultant services for activities identified by the LGU, or recommended by BWSR in a performance review.

**Reporting** (pages 15-16) makes information about LGU performance accessible to the LGUs' stakeholders and constituents. Reporting methods specific to PRAP include links to performance review summaries and this annual report to the legislature, which can be accessed via the PRAP page on BWSR's website <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP/index.html> In addition, the PRAP Coordinator presents results from Level II performance reviews to LGU boards at the completion of the review, and to additional boards/committees upon request.

### **Accountability: From Measuring Effort to Tracking Results**

The administration of government programs necessitates a high degree of accountability. PRAP was developed, in part, to deliver on that demand by providing systematic local government performance review and then reporting results. One significant change was made to the program in 2017. BWSR incorporated metrics for Wetland Conservation Act program implementation responsibilities into Level II and Level III assessments for the first time to measure local government unit compliance with this program. This addition to PRAP helped BWSR evaluate LGU performance in implementing the program and resulted in recommendations for LGUs on how to better implement the wetland protection program.

# Report on PRAP Performance

## BWSR's Accountability

BWSR continues to hold itself accountable for the objectives of the PRAP program. In consideration of that commitment, this section lists 2017 program activities with the corresponding objectives from the 2016 PRAP legislative report.

<b>PERFORMANCE REVIEW OBJECTIVES</b>	
<b>What We Proposed</b>	<b>What We Did</b>
Track 239 LGUs' Level I performance.	All LGUs were tracked for basic plan and reporting compliance. Level I Compliance is documented in the PRAP Legislative report. Overall, Level I performance continued its upward trend in 2017, reaching 90%. Overdue long-range water management plans decreased from 8 in 2016 to 3 in 2017.
Take measures to improve WMO and WD reporting.	Reminders were sent by PRAP Coordinator to Board Conservationists and LGUs to remind them of deadlines. WMO and WD compliance increased again in 2017, although about one-fifth of Watershed Districts still do not meet reporting or audit requirements.
Maintain the target of 24 Level II performance reviews per year.	In 2017, 24 Level II performance reviews were completed.
Complete the 2 Level III performance reviews initiated in 2016.	Both Level III performance reviews initiated in 2016 were completed in 2017. One Level III Assessment was completed for a Watershed District in western Minnesota and a Level III assessment was completed for a soil and water conservation district in the southeastern region of the state.
Survey LGUs from 2015 Level II PRAP reviews to track LGU implementation of PRAP recommendations.	Surveyed 15 LGUs reviewed in 2015 to assess implementation of BWSR's recommendations for organizational improvements and action items. Of the 14 LGUs that completed the survey, LGUs reported fully completing 45% of their recommendations, and reported partially completing another 45% of their recommendations in their Level II performance review reports, meaning that LGUs took action on 90% of the recommendations. A summary of survey results is in the report.
Develop a process for monitoring and reviewing compliance with Action Items identified during a Level II review. This will allow us to determine if we are meeting the goal of 100% compliance	All Action Items identified during 2017 PRAP Level II reviews were assigned an 18 month timeline for completion. BWSR will follow up with these LGUs to verify completion within 18 months. Starting in

within 18 months established in 2016 for required Action Items.	2017, the PRAP follow-up survey will ask LGUs about correction of action items.
Evaluate incorporation of metrics into Level II and Level III assessments to measure local government unit compliance with Wetland Conservation Act program implementation responsibilities.	Completed incorporation of metrics for Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) program implementation responsibilities into Level II and Level III assessments for the first time to measure local government unit compliance with this program. All four LGU performance standards checklists were updated to include WCA metrics. Added a WCA assessment and section to the report for all Level II LGUs who were responsible for WCA implementation.
Evaluate and update protocol for PRAP Level II reviews within the framework of watershed-based One Watershed-One Plan approach to LGU water plan implementation.	Evaluated and updated potential key performance measures for PRAP Level II reviews within framework of watershed-based One Watershed-One Plan approach to LGU water plan implementation. Developed draft concepts for performance based funding for One Watershed-One Plan implementation.
Update the PRAP page of the BWSR website to provide more detailed information about the program.	Developed a PRAP link on the homepage of BWSR website so that LGUs and interested parties can more easily access PRAP information.

<b>ASSISTANCE OBJECTIVES</b>	
<b>What We Proposed</b>	<b>What We Did</b>
Continue the promotion and use of PRAP Assistance Grants to enhance organizational effectiveness.	Board Conservationists were encouraged to work with LGUs who could benefit from PRAP Assistance grants. LGUs undergoing a Level II PRAP review were also notified of PRAP assistance funding when recommendations were made for activities that would be eligible for PRAP funds. In fiscal year 2017, PRAP Assistance Grants were provided for Cottonwood SWCD, Wabasha SWCD and the Middle-Snake-Tamarac River Watershed District for a total of \$13,503.

<b>REPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	
<b>What We Proposed</b>	<b>What We Did</b>
Maintain the focus on resource outcomes in Level II performance reviews.	All 24 Level II performance reviews included a review and assessment of resource outcomes in the LGU's water plan.

# 2017 LGU Performance Review Results

## Level I Results

The Level I Performance Review monitors and tabulates all 239 LGUs’ long-range plan updates and their annual reporting of activities, ditch buffer reports, grants, and finances. BWSR tracks these performance measures each year to provide oversight of legal and policy mandates, but also to screen LGUs for indications of potential problems. Chronic lateness in financial or grant reporting, for example, may be a symptom of operational issues that require BWSR assistance.

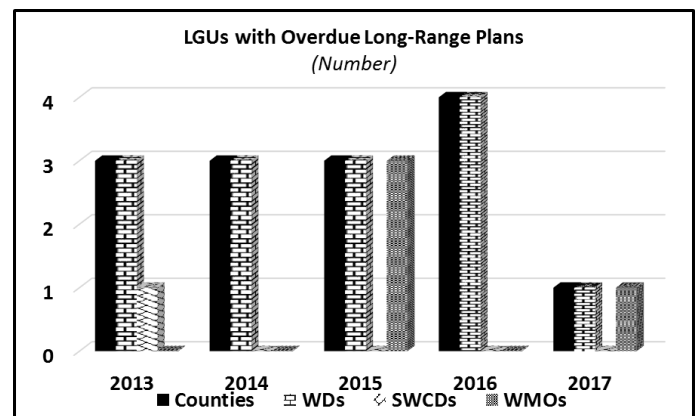
	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
<b>239 LGUs</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>68%</b>
SWCDs (89)	93%	93%	87%	88%	82%
Counties (87)	94%	91%	91%	87%	62%
WMOs (18)	89%	78%	44%	28%	61%
WDs (45)	80%	73%	65%	65%	57%

Overall, LGU compliance with Level I standards improved somewhat in 2017. BWSR began tightening Level I compliance tracking in 2013, and as can be seen in the table above, improvement in overall compliance has occurred since that time.

**Long-range plans.** BWSR’s legislative mandate for PRAP includes a specific emphasis on evaluating progress in LGU plan implementation. Therefore, helping LGUs keep their plans current is basic to that review. Level I PRAP tracks whether LGUs are meeting their plan revision due dates. For the purposes of Level I reviews, LGUs that have been granted an extension for their plan revision are not considered to have an overdue plan. At the time of this report, 18 Local Water Management plans were operating under extensions granted by the BWSR Board. The number of overdue plans decreased to three

in 2017 compared to 8 in 2016. One Watershed District has an overdue plan. One Watershed Management Organization plan is overdue. There is one county with an overdue Local Water Management Plan, but it is in the update process and is expected to be reviewed early in 2018. Until these plans are revised and approved, these organizations are ineligible for Clean Water Fund grants. The Carver County Groundwater management plan was approved by the BWSR Board in January, 2016. Ramsey County and Scott County metro area county groundwater plans need updating, but are not considered overdue because the plans are optional and these counties are still eligible for Clean Water Fund grants.

Appendix D (page 23) lists the LGUs that are overdue for plan revisions.



**Annual activity and grant reports.** LGU annual reports are an important means of providing citizens and BWSR with information about LGU activities and grants expenditures. The Level I review tracks both missing and late reports.

As in 2016, there was complete on-time submittal of drainage system buffer strip reports by both County and WD drainage authorities in 2017. Of the 96 LGUs that

must submit annual buffer reports, 100% met the February 1, 2017 deadline, compared to 100% in 2016 and 2015, 91% in 2014 and 67% in 2013. This continued compliance is attributed to persistent efforts by BWSR staff to contact LGUs with missing reports before the due date.

SWCDs and counties showed a slight improvement in their on-time submittal of grant status reports via BWSR's on-line eLINK system, with 97% of LGUs meeting the deadline compared with 96% in 2016, 95% in 2015, 93% in 2014 and 86% in 2013.

Watershed district compliance with the annual activity report requirement was slightly higher in 2017 at 84% compliance compared 82% in 2016 and 80% in 2015, but is not as good as it should be. Continued improvement in WMO and WD reporting will continue to be an objective of BWSR staff in 2018.

Appendix E (page 24) contains more details about reporting.

**Annual financial reports and audits.** All SWCDs submit annual financial reports to BWSR, and most are required to prepare annual audits of their financial records. SWCDs whose annual expenditures fall below a certain threshold do not have to prepare audits. In 2017, only one SWCD financial report was not submitted on time, leaving 88 of 89 SWCDs in full compliance (99%), an improvement from last year. 97% met the audit performance standard for SWCDs.

Watershed Districts and WMOs are also required to prepare annual audits. In 2017, 80% of WDs met the audit performance standard compared to 76% in 2016 and 80% in 2015. In 2017, 94% of WMOs met this standard, continuing the trend toward better compliance in recent years. In 2016, 78% of WMOs met the standard, which was a significant improvement from 2015 when only 56% were in compliance with the audit standard. See Appendix F (page 25) for financial report and audit details.

BWSR does not track county audits because counties are accountable to the Office of the State Auditor.

## Level II Performance Review Results

The Level II performance review process is designed to give both BWSR and the individual LGUs an overall assessment of the LGU's effectiveness in both the delivery and the effects of their efforts in conservation. The review looks at the LGU's implementation of their plan's action items and their compliance with BWSR's operational performance standards. Level II reviews also include surveys of board members, staff and partners to assess the LGU's effectiveness and existing relationships with other organizations.

### Standard Level II Performance Reviews

BWSR conducted standard Level II reviews of 24 LGUs in 2017: **Nicollet County and SWCD, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District, Roseau County and SWCD, Shell Rock River Watershed District, North St. Louis SWCD, South St. Louis SWCD and St. Louis County, Hennepin County, Black Dog WMO, Winona County and SWCD, Chisago County and SWCD, East Polk SWCD, West Polk SWCD and Polk County, Watonwan County and SWCD, Ramsey Conservation District and Ramsey County and Lyon County and SWCD.** In the instances where the County and the SWCD share the same local water plan (*Nicollet, Roseau, St. Louis, Winona, Chisago, Polk, Watonwan, Ramsey and Lyon*) the reviews were conducted jointly. The remaining LGUs received individual reviews. Appendix G (page 26-40) contains summaries of the performance review reports. Full reports are available from BWSR by request.

While none of the findings or conclusions from these reviews apply to all LGUs, there were general observations about LGU performance worth noting.

**1. Add PTM specifics into water plan.** All of the non-watershed based Level II PRAP reviews resulted in a recommendation that organizations include, or expand on existing

use of Prioritized, Targeted and Measured as criteria in their next water planning efforts. This recommendation is a result of most plans failing to include resource outcomes. The PTM criteria are the new standard for One Watershed-One Plan efforts currently underway and beyond those pilot projects, the degree to which this criteria is currently being used varies. However, continued and expanded use of these criteria by all organizations will be beneficial even before One Watershed-One Plan becomes the prevailing format for water planning efforts.

**2. Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.**

BWSR has been recommending for both county water plan updates and new One Watershed-One Plan efforts currently underway that priority concerns be identified by major or minor watershed and action items also be carefully targeted to differing watershed priorities. While some recent water plans had begun to organize plans by watershed, this approach has been a standard recommendation for most PRAP Level II reports.

**3. Ensure that input from citizens and stakeholder groups within the LGU is incorporated into the development of watershed planning initiatives.**

This recommendation recognizes the importance of keeping the water plan task force members engaged in the watershed plan development and the implementation phase. Participation in the development of watershed plans in the future will require significant engagement with the task force members.

**4. Evaluate, maintain or improve implementation of the Wetland Conservation Act.**

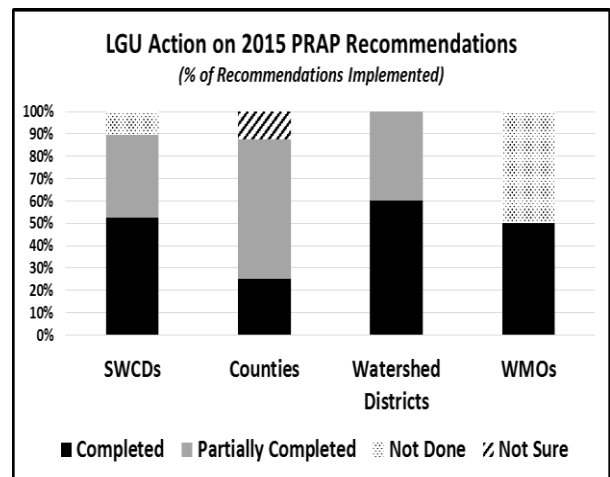
For the first time in 2017, Level II reviews included an evaluation of the LGU’s performance in implementing the Wetland Conservation Act. In general, most local government units were doing a good job implementing the program. This new initiative helped identify some

weaknesses in LGU program implementation resulting in recommendations for improvement. The addition of the Wetland Conservation Act to PRAP resulted in better coordination among LGU and state agency staff for surface water management.

**Coordination with One Watershed-One Plan.** Elements of the watershed-based performance review process were used in BWSR’s *One Watershed-One Plan* initiative. In a few years, BWSR will use the PRAP watershed-based process to assess the implementation of these new watershed-based plans.

**Survey of LGU Implementation of PRAP Recommendations**

A PRAP program goal for 2017 was to find out to what extent LGUs are following through on the recommendations BWSR offers as part of each performance review.



BWSR surveyed 15 LGUs that had a Level II performance review in 2015. Lead staff were asked to indicate the level of completion for each recommendation included in their PRAP reports.

Fourteen of the 15 LGUs surveyed responded. (Note: In the 2016 report, it was reported that 20 Level II reviews were



completed. A watershed-based PRAP was completed for the Crow Wing Watershed in 2015, including the SWCDs and counties of Becker, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard and Wadena. Because all of these reports had joint recommendations for both the SWCD and the County, the follow-up survey was sent only to the SWCDs. The SWCDs were asked to report on implementation of recommendations to prevent duplicative responses and information. All five SWCDs involved in the Crow Wing River Watershed PRAP responded to the survey.) This survey response rate in 2017 (93%) was much better than in 2016 (61%). Additional reminders were sent in an effort to improve the survey response rate in 2017. Survey results showed that LGUs self-reported fully completing 45% of the recommendations and partially completing another 45%, meaning that 90% of BWSR's recommendations for these LGUs were addressed to some degree. All action items (requirements) were implemented.

These survey results indicate that LGUs find the majority of the recommendations contained in the PRAP reports to be useful for their organizations. Additional follow up is needed to determine why some recommendations are implemented while others are not.

### Level III Results

Two Level III performance reviews were completed in 2017. One assessment was for a SWCD in southeastern Minnesota and the second was for a Watershed District in western Minnesota.

Below is a brief summary of the recommendations and progress made for the two Level III reviews completed in 2017:

Wabasha SWCD Level III recommendations included:

- Contracting with a consulting SWCD to provide guidance to staff and board to improve organizational performance,
- Monitor Staff Delivery of Programs,

- Conduct a strategic assessment of the District to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity is sufficient to meet the needs and demands for conservation services in the district,
- Begin utilizing existing programs such as Clean Water Funds to implement land treatment to accelerate progress toward solving the District's top priority concerns,
- Develop orientation and continued education plan for the board of supervisors and staff and keep records of trainings attended,
- Address items from MASWCD Self-Assessment and select PRAP high performance standards as goals to implement to improve organizational performance, and
- Present Wabasha SWCD 2018 Annual Work Plan to the Wabasha County Board of Commissioners.
- Address 2 action items within 18 months (*Develop a data practices policy and submit eLINK Grant Reports on time, up to date and complete per BWSR guidance*).

The Wabasha SWCD has hired a consultant to provide guidance and assistance and is making good progress in implementing several of the recommendations. Both action items have been addressed and four of the recommendations have been completed, with another two that are currently in progress and the remaining two to be addressed in 2018.

Bois de Sioux Watershed District Level III recommendations included:

- The Watershed District should provide opportunities for staff for networking and mentoring with high performing Watershed Districts,

- Conduct a strategic assessment of the District to determine whether the existing mission, goals, bylaws and board member responsibilities are understood and remain relevant, and to ensure staffing is sufficient,
- Develop an Annual Work Plan to address high priority items with specific, measurable action items and monitor Staff Delivery of Programs and Projects,
- Strengthen Partnerships with Local, State and Federal agencies and Non-Government Organizations to accelerate use of outside funding and programs to support multi-purpose projects,
- Develop orientation and continued education plan for the board and staff to provide for continued growth of the District and Board members through education, succession of positions and outreach to partners,
- Select two to three PRAP high performance standards as goals to implement to improve organizational performance,
- Develop and Implement a Communication Plan for the Watershed District, and
- Continue and strengthen use of the Project Team of the Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup to balance Flood Damage Reduction and Natural Resource Enhancement.
- Action Item: Re-establish a functioning advisory committee which provides recommendations on projects, reports and maintains a two way communication with the board.

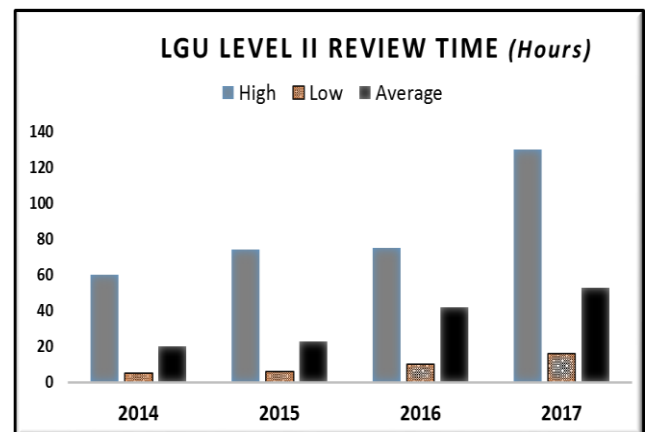
Bois de Sioux Watershed District has corrected the action item identified in the Level III report and has made progress in addressing several of the recommendations. In addition, they are participating in development of One Watershed, One Plan for the Mustinka-Bois de Sioux Watershed. They are also partnering with the Wilkin SWCD to implement the FY18 Multipurpose Drainage Management grant for Wilkin County Ditch 8.

### Level IV Results

No Level IV actions were conducted in 2017.

### PRAP Performance Review Time

BWSR tracks the time spent by LGUs in a performance review as a substitute for accounting their financial costs. Factors affecting an LGU's time include the number of action items in their long-range plan, the number of staff who help with data collection, and the ready availability of performance data. In 2017 LGU staff spent an average of 52 hours on their Level II review, about 20% higher than previous years, primarily due to the addition of the Wetland Conservation Act program review to PRAP Level II reviews.



This additional LGU workload is likely offset by improved efficiencies for LGUs by eliminating the need to do a separate WCA program review.

Not including overall performance review administration and process development, BWSR staff spent an average of 71 hours for each Level II performance review, significantly higher than the past few years, due primarily to the addition of review of the Wetland Conservation Act, where BWSR Wetland Specialists spent time with LGU staff reviewing program implementation and writing a section of the report.

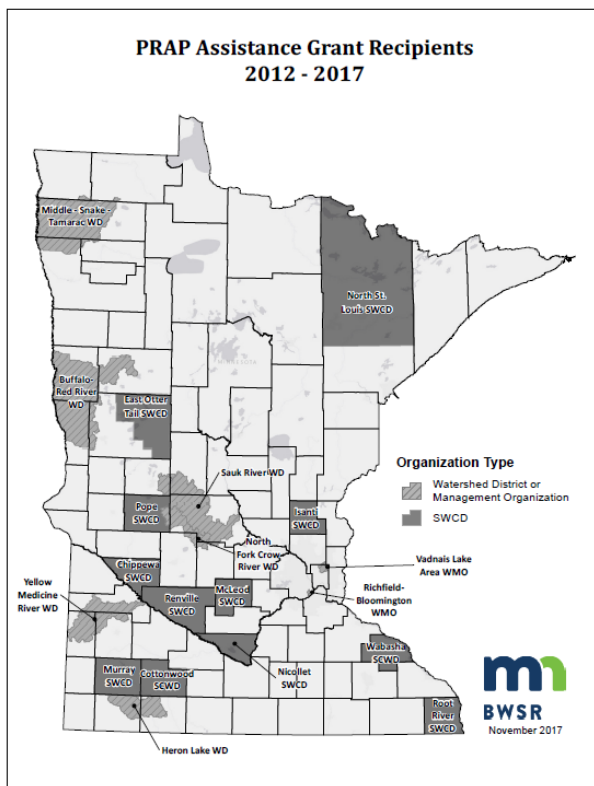
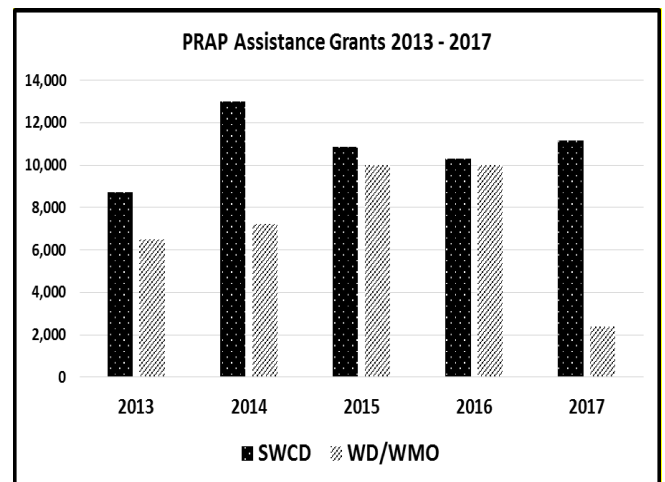
BWSR seeks to maintain a balance between getting good information and minimizing the LGU time required to provide it. Our goal is to gather as much pertinent information as needed to assess the performance of the LGU, and offer realistic and useful recommendations for improving performance.

# Assistance Services to Local Governments

## PRAP Assistance Program

In 2012, BWSR developed the PRAP Assistance program to provide financial assistance to LGUs for improving operating performance and executing planned goals and objectives. Since the program started, more than \$90,000 has been awarded to LGUs around Minnesota. Priority is given to applicants submitting projects related to eligible PRAP Level II, III, or IV recommendations, but other organizations are also eligible. The grants are made on a cost-share, reimbursement basis with a cap of \$10,000 per LGU. The application process requires basic information about the need, the proposed use of funds, a timeline, and the source of match dollars. BWSR staff assess the LGU need as part of the application review process, and grants are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis as long as funds are available.

In 2015, the BWSR Board delegated authority to the Executive Director to award grants or contracts for the purpose of assisting LGUs in making organizational improvements (see resolution in Appendix B). The board will continue to receive regular updates on the program, but will not need to renew the resolution each biennium until they choose to modify the program.



During FY 2017 Grants totaling \$13,503 were issued to Cottonwood SWCD, the Middle-Snake-Tamarac River Watershed District, and the Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation District. The awarded funds will be used for the development of operating policies, organizational assessments, strategic planning and goal setting.

In 2015, BWSR changed some of the application requirements for PRAP assistance funds, and provided more clarity about what types of activities and expenses are eligible for the grants. The new guidance and application information maintains the streamlined process used in the past, but now asks applicants to describe how their Board will be involved in the project, to outline a scope of

work, and to provide more detailed budget information as part of the application. The revised application information can be found in Appendix C.

The BWSR Executive Director regularly informs Board members of assistance grant status. Potential applicants can find information on the BWSR website <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP/index.html>.

# Reporting

## Purpose of Reporting

BWSR reports on LGU performance to:

- meet the legislative mandate to provide the public with information about the performance of their local water management entities, and
- provide information that will encourage LGUs to learn from one another about methods and programs that produce the most effective results.

## Report Types

PRAP either relies on or generates different types of reports to achieve the purposes listed above.

### LGU-Generated

These include information posted on the LGU websites and the required or voluntary reports submitted to BWSR, other units of government, and the public about fiscal status, plans, programs and activities. These all serve as a means of communicating what each LGU is achieving and allow stakeholders to make their own evaluations of LGU performance. PRAP tracks submittal of required, self-generated LGU reports in the Level I review process.

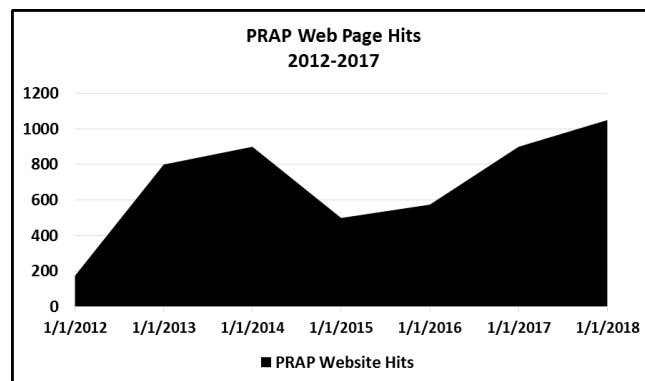
### BWSR Website

The BWSR website contains a webpage devoted to PRAP information. The site provides background information on the program including:

- Guiding principles for the program
- A description of the 4 Levels of PRAP
- Application information for PRAP grants
- Background on the PRAP Legislative Report
- Description of Level I Reporting

For more information see:

<http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP/index.html>



The BWSR website also includes regularly updated maps of long-range plan status by LGU type. Visitors to the PRAP webpage can find general program information, tables of current performance standards by LGU type, summaries of Level II performance review reports, and copies of annual legislative reports.

### Performance Review Reports

BWSR prepares a report containing findings, conclusions, and recommendations for each LGU subject of a Level II or Level III performance review. The LGU lead staff and board or water plan task force members receive a draft of the report to which they are invited to submit comments. BWSR then sends a final report to the LGU. A one page summary from each review is included in the annual legislative report (see Appendices G and H). In 2014 BWSR added a resource outcomes feature to all Level II reports, highlighting those changes in resource conditions related to LGU projects and program.

**Annual Legislative Report**

As required by statute, BWSR prepares an annual report for the legislature containing the results of the previous year's program activities and a general assessment of the performance of the LGUs providing land and water conservation services and programs. These reports are reviewed and approved by the BWSR board and then sent to the chairpersons of the senate and house environmental policy committees, to statewide LGU associations and to the office of the legislative auditor.

**Recognition for Exemplary Performance**

The PRAP Guiding Principles include a provision for recognizing exemplary LGU performance. Each year this legislative report highlights those LGUs that are recognized by their peers or other organizations for their contribution to Minnesota's resource management and protection, as well as service to their local clientele. (See Appendix I, page 47.)

For those LGUs that undergo a Level II performance review, their report lists a "commendation" for compliance with each high performance standard, demonstrating practices over and above basic requirements. All 2017 standard Level II LGUs received such commendations.

# Program Conclusions and Future Direction

## Conclusions from 2017 Reviews

- Reminders and incentives contribute significantly to on-time reporting by LGUs.** Overall reporting performance and plan status improved slightly in 2017. Buffer strip reporting reached 100% compliance in 2015 and was maintained at full compliance in 2016 and 2017, which can be attributed to close attention from BWSR staff. In the last year WMO overall compliance improved to 89% in 2017 compared to 78% in 2016 and 44% compliance in 2015. WD reporting improved to 84% compliance in 2017 from 73% in 2016 and 65% in 2015.
- In 2017, for the first time, LGU implementation of the Wetland Conservation Act was incorporated into Level II PRAP reviews.** Completed incorporation of metrics for Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) program implementation responsibilities into Level II and Level III assessments to measure local government unit compliance with this program. All four LGU performance standards checklists were updated to include WCA metrics. Added a WCA assessment and section to report for all Level II LGUs who were responsible for WCA implementation. WCA program specific recommendations were incorporated where appropriate.
- The watershed based PRAP level II process is most useful if there is an existing watershed based plan in place.** BWSR PRAP staff spent significant time working on an internal staff team evaluating key performance measures that may be used in the future to measure LGU progress in implementing One Watershed, One Plans. Implementation of plans developed through the One Watershed One Plan initiative has begun, but several years will be needed to evaluate implementation progress.
- A common recommendation for several local government units in 2017 was to conduct a strategic assessment** of the LGU to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands and need for conservation services in the district. This recommendation was used where there appeared to be underperformance of the LGU due to shortage of staff or lack of focus on targeted land treatment and resource improvement.
- Staff and board training was identified as a need in multiple LGUs in 2017.** New programs and increasing water management expectations for local governments require a commitment to continued training. A simple training plan provides a means of ensuring that staff is able to continue to build the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities. Several LGUs received recommendations that new board members be provided with orientation training and all board members have an individual training plan for continuing education in leadership, organizational management and water resource management. The individualized training plan would provide a means of ensuring that staff and board members can continue to build the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities.
- Website reporting of resource trends should be improved.** Many of the LGUs included in 2017 Level II reviews participate in or lead water quality monitoring programs, yet the use of websites to report trends and results is limited. Additional efforts to make these results easily accessible to the public will be beneficial.



- **A 2017 LGU survey showed that 90% of 2015 PRAP Level II recommendations for LGU improvements were seen as useful or necessary, as shown by the rates at which LGUs have adopted them** (*from a follow-up survey of LGUs who participated in PRAP Level II in 2015*). This compares to 87% from the follow-up survey conducted in 2016 and 76% from the follow-up survey

conducted in 2015. This data shows a trend of more LGUs implementing recommendations in recent years. However, BWSR must do more to follow-up with LGUs to find out why some recommendations are not being adopted, and promote PRAP Assistance Grants as a means to implement improvements.

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## PRAP Program Objectives for 2018

### Selected PRAP Program Objectives for 2018

- Track 239 LGUs' Level I performance.
- Continue efforts to improve WMO and WD reporting.
- Maintain the target of 24 Level II performance reviews per year.
- Complete up to two Level III performance reviews if needed in 2018.
- Increase the focus on developing and reporting resource outcomes by LGUs in Level II performance reviews.
- Survey LGUs from 2016 Level II PRAP reviews to track LGU implementation of PRAP recommendations.
- Continue monitoring and reviewing compliance with Action Items identified during a Level II review. This will allow us to determine if we are meeting the goal of 100% compliance within 18 months established in 2016 for required Action Items.
- Continue the promotion and use of PRAP Assistance Grants to enhance LGU organizational effectiveness.
- Continue evaluating and updating protocol for PRAP Level I and Level II reviews for performance based funding for implementation of watershed-based One Watershed-One Plans.
- Evaluate implementation progress of at least 3 Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program projects as part of Level II reviews. (*New for 2018*)
- Develop protocol for evaluating Technical Service Area (TSA) performance including development of performance standards and evaluate one TSA if time permits. (*New for 2018*)

# Appendix A

## PRAP Authorizing Legislation

### 103B.102, Minnesota Statutes 2013

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#### 103B.102 LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT.

##### Subdivision 1. Findings; improving accountability and oversight.

The legislature finds that a process is needed to monitor the performance and activities of local water management entities. The process should be preemptive so that problems can be identified early and systematically. Underperforming entities should be provided assistance and direction for improving performance in a reasonable time frame.

##### Subd. 2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this section, "local water management entities" means watershed districts, soil and water conservation districts, metropolitan water management organizations, and counties operating separately or jointly in their role as local water management authorities under chapter 103B, 103C, 103D, or 103G and chapter 114D.

##### Subd. 3. Evaluation and report.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources shall evaluate performance, financial, and activity information for each local water management entity. The board shall evaluate the entities' progress in accomplishing their adopted plans on a regular basis as determined by the board based on budget and operations of the local water management entity, but not less than once every ten years. The board shall maintain a summary of local water management entity performance on the board's Web site. Beginning February 1, 2008, and annually thereafter, the board shall provide an analysis of local water management entity performance to the chairs of the house of representatives and senate committees having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources policy.

##### Subd. 4. Corrective actions.

(a) In addition to other authorities, the Board of Water and Soil Resources may, based on its evaluation in subdivision 3, reduce, withhold, or redirect grants and other funding if the local water management entity has not corrected deficiencies as prescribed in a notice from the board within one year from the date of the notice.

(b) The board may defer a decision on a termination petition filed under section [103B.221](#), [103C.225](#), or [103D.271](#) for up to one year to conduct or update the evaluation under subdivision 3 or to communicate the results of the evaluation to petitioners or to local and state government agencies.

##### History:

[2007 c 57 art 1 s 104](#); [2013 c 143 art 4 s 1](#)

# Appendix B

## Board Authorization of Delegation for PRAP Assistance Grants



Board Resolution # 15-37

**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources**  
**Board Authorization of Delegation for PRAP Assistance Grants to LGUs**

**WHEREAS** the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is mandated under Minnesota Statutes Chap 103B.102 to regularly review the performance of local government water management entities in the state and provide assistance for “underperforming entities,” and

**WHEREAS** BWSR routinely monitors the performance of Minnesota’s local government water and land management entities, and during the course of those reviews has identified the need for specialized assistance to improve their operational performance, and

**WHEREAS** BWSR receives other requests for specialized assistance to address particularly difficult operational or performance problems that cannot be addressed by routine BWSR staff support, and

**WHEREAS** the legislature has specifically authorized use of cost share rollover funds for local government assistance to address specialized assistance needs, and

**WHEREAS** the BWSR board has previously authorized the PRAP Assistance Grants as a delegated authority to the Executive Director,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the BWSR Board authorizes the Executive Director to expend up to \$10,000 per grant or contract for specialized assistance to local government water management entities to address operational or service delivery needs identified through a PRAP assessment or specialized assistance request, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the BWSR Board requires that all such funds awarded be cost shared by the grantee at a percentage dependent on the size of the grant and determined by the Executive Director, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the aggregate amount of expenditures for the PRAP program and awards are consistent with any appropriation conditions set by the legislature and are reported to the Board at least once per year.

  
 Brian Napstad, Chair

Date: 6/24/15

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

## Appendix C

### PRAP Assistance Grant Application Information

The PRAP Assistance program provides financial assistance to LGUs to improve operating performance and execution of planned goals and objectives. Funding priority is given to activities recommended as part of a Level II, III or IV PRAP review.

**Examples of eligible activities:** facilitation, mediation or consulting services related to organizational improvement such as reorganizations/mergers, strategic planning, organizational development, assessments for shared services, benchmarking, non-routine audits, and staff and board capacity assessments.

**Activities that are not eligible for grant funds, or to be used as LGU match:** Technology upgrades (computer equipment, software, smartphones, etc.), infrastructure improvements (vehicles, office remodel, furniture), staff performance incentives (bonuses, rewards program), basic staff training (BWSR Academy fees and expenses; Wetland Delineator Certification, subjects offered at BWSR Academy, training for promotion, basic computer training), water planning, conservation practices design or installation, publication or publicity materials, food & refreshments, (other than costs associated with meetings and conferences where the primary purpose is an approved, eligible grant activity) lodging, staff salaries, and regular board member per diems.

**Note:** Board member per diems and associated expenses outside of regular meetings, and associated with an approved, eligible activity are eligible for grant funds or can be used as match.

**Grant Limit:** \$10,000. In most cases a 50 percent cash match will be required.

**Who May Apply:** County water management/environmental services; SWCDs; watershed districts; watershed management organizations. In some cases, LGU joint powers associations or boards, or other types of LGU water management partnerships will be eligible for grants. Priority is given to applicants submitting projects related to eligible PRAP Level II, III, or IV recommendations.

**Terms:** BWSR pays its share of the LGU's eligible expenditures as reimbursement for expenses incurred by the LGU after the execution date of the grant agreement. Reporting and reimbursement requirements are also described in the agreement. Grant agreements are processed through BWSR's eLINK system.

**How to Apply:** Submit an email request to Dale Krystosek, PRAP Coordinator ([dale.krystosek@state.mn.us](mailto:dale.krystosek@state.mn.us)) with the following information:

- 1) Description, purpose and scope of work for the proposed activity (If the activity or services will be contracted, do you have a contracting procedure in by-laws or operating guidelines?)
- 2) Expected products or deliverables
- 3) Desired outcome or result

- 4) Does this activity address any recommendations associated with a recent Level II, III or IV PRAP Assessment? If so, describe how.
- 5) How has your Board indicated support for this project? How will they be kept involved?
- 6) Duration of activity: proposed start and end dates
- 7) Itemized Project Budget including
  - a. Amount of request
  - b. Source of funds to be used for match (cannot be state money nor in-kind)
  - c. Total project budget
- 8) Have you submitted other funding requests for this activity? If yes, to whom and when?
- 9) Provide name and contact information for the person who will be managing the grant agreement and providing evidence of expenditures for reimbursement.

# Appendix D

## Level I: 2017 LGU Long-Range Plan Status as of December 31, 2017

### Soil and Water Conservation Districts

(Districts have a choice of option A or B)

**A. Current Resolution Adopting County Local Water Management Plan**

All resolutions are current.

**B. Current District Comprehensive Plan**

All comprehensive plans are current.

### Counties

**Local Water Management Plan Revision Overdue: Plan Revision in Progress**

- Koochiching

**Metro County Groundwater Plan Revision Not Updated (*These Plans are Optional*)**

- Ramsey
- Scott

The Carver County Groundwater Plan update was approved by BWSR in 2016. Anoka and Hennepin Counties have chosen not to participate in this optional program authorized under 103B.255. Ramsey and Scott County have decided to not update their groundwater plan. Washington County's groundwater plan was approved in 2014. Dakota County's groundwater plan was last approved in 2000 and they are currently working on an update. Development of these groundwater plans is optional and so they are not considered overdue.

### Watershed Districts

**10-Year Watershed Management Plan Revision Overdue: Plan Revision in Progress**

- High Island Creek WD

### Watershed Management Organizations

- Upper Rum River WMO (*currently updating*)

# Appendix E

## Level I: Status of Annual Reports for 2016 as of December 31, 2017

### Soil and Water Conservation Districts

#### **eLINK Status Reports of Grant Expenditures**

One SWCD report was late and one was not submitted.

#### **Late Reports:**

- Lake SWCD

#### **Reports Not Submitted:**

- Sibley SWCD

### Counties

#### **Drainage Authority Buffer Strip Reports**

All reports submitted on time.

#### **eLINK Status Reports of Grant Expenditures**

Four counties submitted late reports.

#### **Late Reports:**

- Hennepin County
- Scott County
- Stevens County

#### **Reports Not Submitted:**

- Lincoln County

### Watershed Districts

#### **Drainage Authority Buffer Strip Reports**

All reports submitted on time.

#### **Annual Activity Reports Not Submitted:**

- Ramsey Washington Metro WD
- Joe River WD

#### **Annual Activity Reports Submitted Late:**

Four reports were submitted late:

- Cormorant Lakes WD
- Sand Hill River WD
- Bear Valley WD
- Stockton-Rollingstone-MN City WD

### Metro Joint Powers Watershed Management Organizations

#### **Annual Activity Reports not submitted**

- Eagan Inver Grove Heights

## Appendix F

### Level I: Status of Financial Reports and Audits for 2016 as of December 31, 2017

#### Soil and Water Conservation Districts

##### Annual Financial Reports (all 89 Districts)

Due to the difficult new accounting standard that SWCDs are adjusting to in 2016-2017, BWSR did not consider any late provided they were received by April 30, 2017. However, there was one SWCD that did not fully complete the annual financial report.

##### Incomplete Financial Reports:

- East Polk SWCD

##### Annual Audits (68 required)

##### Annual Audits Not Submitted

- Cottonwood SWCD
- Crow Wing SWCD
- Pipestone SWCD

#### Watershed Districts

##### Annual Audits Not Completed:

- Cormorant Lakes WD
- Joe River WD
- High Island Creek WD
- Stockton-Rollingstone-MN City WD
- Ramsey-Washington Metro WD

#### Metro Joint Powers Watershed Management Organizations

##### Annual Audits Not Submitted:

- Eagan Inver Grove Heights



# Appendix G

## Standard Level II Performance Review

### Final Report Summaries

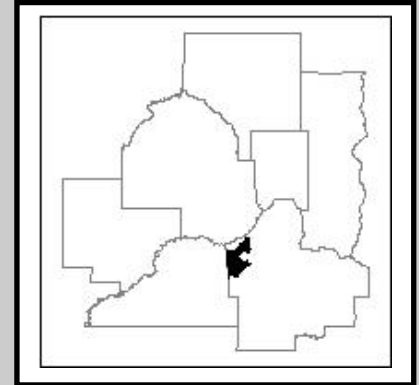
#### Black Dog Watershed Management Organization

##### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Black Dog WMO has a good record of accomplishment in implementation of their current water management plan which covers the years 2012-2022.

The WMO's compliance with BWSR performance standards is very good in meeting the essential, administrative, planning and communication practices that lead to an effective, efficient organization.

The WMO's partners reinforce these conclusions in their high marks` for communication, quality of work, relations with customers and follow-through.



##### Resource Outcomes

The Black Dog WMO watershed management plan contains specific, measureable resource outcomes goals for water quality. The WMO annual water quality report contains information about the water quality results achieved in area surface waters. The Black Dog WMO has completed 3 of 28 action items in the current plan with another 16 activities ongoing.

##### Action Item:

Work with the cities of Lakeville and Eagan to come into compliance with requirement for water plan approval by BDWMO.

##### Commendations

The Black Dog WMO is commended for meeting 5 out of 9 High Performance Standards (applicable to WMOs).

##### Recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Develop and implement training plan for each board member.

**Recommendation 2:** Make water quality data and trends easily accessible to the public.

**Recommendation 3:** Conduct a strategic planning initiative and workload analysis to assess the WMO's ability to comply with the 8410.0105 Subpart 1, and 8410.0140 Subpart 1. C. requirements that the WMO shall evaluate progress for the implementation of plan actions at a minimum of every two years.

**Recommendation 4:** Address the action item by working with the cities of Lakeville and Eagan to come into compliance with requirement for water plan approval by BDWMO.

## Buffalo-Red River Watershed District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

Buffalo-Red River Watershed District is doing a very good job of administering local water management and conducting water monitoring programs and projects. The organization is getting important work done in the areas of flood damage reduction, drainage maintenance, and water quality protection.

With the upcoming opportunity to participate in One Watershed, One Plan development, there is an opportunity for the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District to focus its local water plan to problems and priorities specific to the watershed's major waterbodies, and to provide resource specific outcomes.

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District shows excellent compliance with BWSR's basic and high performance standards.



### Resource Outcomes

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District Plan does contain some resource outcome goals and objectives. However, progress toward those goals is not routinely reported.

### Commendations

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District is commended for meeting 12 out of 15 High Performance Standards.

**Action Item** – The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District has one action item which should be addressed within the next 18 months, or by November 2018:

- The Watershed Management Plan should be amended by November, 2018 to include the petitioned enlargement of the Watershed District approved by BWSR on April 25, 2012 or the Watershed District should initiate a One Watershed, One Plan in cooperation with other LGUs by November 2018.

### Recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Continue and expand the use of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable as criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan as appropriate.

**Recommendation 2:** Develop orientation and continued education plan for both board and staff and keep records of trainings attended.

**Recommendation 3:** Participate in the development of One Watershed One plans for watersheds within the District using the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Recommendation 4:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

## Chisago County Environmental Services/Zoning and Parks Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Chisago County Environmental Services/Zoning and Parks (County) and the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) need to continue to build a strong working relationship to meet the water management and conservation challenges in the county. For the most part, their partners believe both entities are doing good work and are good to work with. New water management challenges have created the necessity to forge new working relationships among partners, but there is a strong base to build upon for future local water management in Chisago County. With the upcoming opportunities for development of One Watershed, One Plan, there will be an opportunity for Chisago County and SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's waterbodies.



The partners who responded to the PRAP survey provided good to strong marks in their judgement of the performance of the County, and good to strong marks in the performance of the SWCD.

### Resource Outcomes

The Chisago Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 9 of 13 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Chisago County Environmental Services/Zoning and Parks Office is commended for meeting 8 of 14 high performance standards for counties.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals and implementation of County Water Plan.

**Chisago County Recommendation 1:** Address action items in the next year.

**Chisago SWCD Recommendation 1:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the SWCD to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands for conservation services in the district.

### Action Items:

Chisago SWCD has no action items.

Chisago County has 2 action items which should be addressed in the next 18 months:

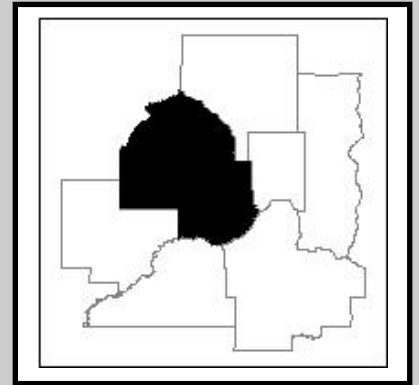
- The County did not submit all eLINK Grant Reports on time in 2015.
- The County has not posted all BWSR grant reports on their website.

## Hennepin County Environment and Energy

### Key Findings and Conclusions

Hennepin County Environment and Energy has been effective in providing conservation services to the residents of the county that are typically provided by soil and water conservation districts in Minnesota. A survey of the agency partners resulted in acceptable to strong ratings for communication, quality of work, customer relations, initiative and timelines/follow through.

New resource challenges have created the need to forge new working relationships among partners, and build stronger programs for future local water management in Hennepin County. With the upcoming opportunity to participate in development of One Watershed-One Plan, there will be an opportunity for Hennepin County to reorient its Natural Resources Strategic Plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's watersheds.



### Resource Outcomes

The Natural Resources Strategic Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

Hennepin County Environment and Energy is commended for meeting 6 of 12 high performance standards for SWCDs and for meeting 6 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

### Recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Recommendation 2:** Consider developing a supporting water management plan that uses Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives to support the Natural Resources Strategic Plan.

**Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Recommendation 4:** Develop and adopt a Groundwater Plan under Minnesota Statutes 103B.255.

**Recommendation 5:** Improve coordination with Watershed Districts and Watershed Management Organizations regarding watershed protection priorities and water quality data collection and trends analysis.

**Recommendation 6:** Provide annual report to Hennepin County Board on the Environment and Energy activities to better align upcoming needs.

**Recommendation 7:** Increase participation in Wetland Conservation Act Technical Evaluation Panels.

**Recommendation 8:** Continue to make it a priority to have staff attend BWSR Academy, WDCP, WPA and other wetland training sessions.

Hennepin County Environment and Energy Department does not have any action items.

## Lyon County Planning and Zoning Department and Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Lyon County Planning and Zoning Department (P&Z) and the Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) need to have an effective working relationship in order to provide needed services to the residents of the county.

A survey of the agency's partners demonstrates that the agencies are well regarded by their partners who gave generally good marks in rating their performance. New challenges have created the need to forge new working relationships among partners, and build stronger programs for future local water management in Lyon County.



With the current opportunities to participate in development of One Watershed-One Plans, there will be the ability for Lyon County and the SWCD to reorient the plans to specific problems and priorities for the county's watersheds.

### Resource Outcomes

The Lyon Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 5 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Lyon County Planning and Zoning Office is commended for meeting 5 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in future watershed management plans.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Meet annually with Water Plan Task Force to review annual accomplishments and set priorities for the next year.

**Lyon SWCD Recommendation 1:** Consider adding high performance standards to improve organizational performance.

**Lyon SWCD Recommendation 2:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the SWCD to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the district.

**WCA Administrative Recommendation #1:** The Local Government Unit should reconsider the current decision-making delegation consisting of three staff and identify a single staff as responsible for decision making.

## Nicollet County Property Services Department and Nicollet Soil & Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Nicollet County Property Services Department (PSD) and the Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) need to have an effective working relationship in order to provide needed services to the residents of the county. A survey of both agencies partners demonstrates that there may be a need to evaluate and improve performance. New challenges have created the need to forge new working relationships among partners, and build stronger programs for future local water management in Nicollet County.



With the upcoming opportunity to participate in development of One Watershed-One Plan, there will be an opportunity for Nicollet County and SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's watersheds.

### Resource Outcomes

The Nicollet Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Nicollet County Property Services Office is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for counties.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Evaluate and consider restructuring Wetland Conservation Act LGU Responsibilities.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Nicollet SWCD Recommendation 1:** Address action item and consider adding high performance standards to improve organizational performance.

**Nicollet SWCD Recommendation 2:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the SWCD to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the district.

**Nicollet County Property Services Department Recommendation 1:** Select high performance standards to implement to improve organizational performance.

### Action Items:

Nicollet County Property Services does not have any action items. Nicollet SWCD has one action item:

- The SWCD does not have a data practices policy that has been updated in the last 5 years.

## East Polk Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The East Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), West Polk SWCD and the Polk County Environmental Services Office need to continue to work toward developing a strong working relationship that will serve all three agencies well. This performance assessment has confirmed their effective administration of local water management and land conservation programs and projects. For the most part, their partners believe the three agencies are doing good work and are good to work with. The partners who responded to the PRAP survey generally provided good to high marks in their judgement of the performance of the East Polk SWCD, West Polk SWCD and the Polk County Environmental Services Office.



### Resource Outcomes

The Polk County Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes. Therefore, resource outcomes are not reported in this review of plan accomplishments.

### Commendations:

The East Polk Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs, the West Polk SWCD is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Environmental Services Office is commended for meeting 5 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

**Action Item for East Polk SWCD** - The following action item should be addressed within the next 18 months, or by December 2018.

- Provide annual financial statements that are on time and complete.

### Recommendations:

**SWCD Joint Recommendation 1:** Create a unified message and vision to address the county Board at times when programs affect all entities.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #2:** SWCDs should communicate more effectively to deliver programs consistently throughout the county.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #3:** Active participation and involvement in watershed district activities.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #4:** Employ a method of grant tracking to adequately monitor and report on all specific individual grant funds.

**East Polk SWCD Recommendation #1:** Modernize financial record keeping to accurately monitor, report, and track financial records for an increased grant and financial workload.

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Participate in the development of One Watershed One plans for watersheds within the county using the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Participate in development of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the development of the One Watershed, One Plan for watershed plans within the county.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends in achieving resource outcome goals as resource outcome goals are determined as part of 1W1P development.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Ensure that input from citizens and stakeholder groups within Polk County are incorporated into the development of the One Watershed One Plan watershed planning initiatives.

## West Polk Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The East Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), West Polk SWCD and the Polk County Environmental Services Office need to continue to work toward developing a strong working relationship that will serve all three agencies well. This performance assessment has confirmed their effective administration of local water management and land conservation programs and projects. For the most part, their partners believe the three agencies are doing good work and are good to work with. The partners who responded to the PRAP survey generally provided good to high marks in their judgement of the performance of the East Polk SWCD, West Polk SWCD and the Polk County Environmental Services Office.



### Resource Outcomes

The Polk County Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes. Therefore, resource outcomes are not reported in this review of plan accomplishments.

### Commendations:

The West Polk SWCD is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Environmental Services Office is commended for meeting 5 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

### Action Items for West Polk SWCD

The following action items should be addressed within the next 18 months, or by December 2018.

- Develop a data practices policy.
- Provide annual financial statements that are on time and complete.

### Recommendations:

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #1:** Create a unified message and vision to address the county Board at times when programs affect all entities.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #2:** SWCDs should communicate more effectively to deliver programs consistently throughout the county.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #3:** Active participation and involvement in watershed district activities.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #4:** Employ a method of grant tracking to adequately monitor and report on all specific individual grant funds.

**West Polk SWCD Recommendation #1:** Evaluate current office structure to determine the needs of the district in regards to capacity and providing professional services.

**West Polk SWCD Recommendation #2:** WCA Administrative Recommendation for Increased Staff Training.

**West Polk SWCD Recommendation #3:** Execution and Coordination Recommendation regarding compliance with Minnesota Statutes 15.99.

**Joint Recommendation #1:** Participate in the development of One Watershed One plans for watersheds within the county using the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation #2:** Participate in development of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in development of the One Watershed, One Plan for watershed plans within county.

**Joint Recommendation #3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends in achieving resource outcome goals as resource outcome goals are determined as part of 1W1P development.

**Joint Recommendation #4:** Ensure that input from citizens and stakeholder groups within Polk County are incorporated into the development of the One Watershed One Plan watershed planning initiatives.



## Polk County Environmental Services

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The East Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), West Polk SWCD and the Polk County Environmental Services Office need to continue to work toward developing a strong working relationship that will serve all three agencies well. This performance assessment has confirmed their effective administration of local water management and land conservation programs and projects. For the most part, their partners believe the three agencies are doing good work and are good to work with. The partners who responded to the PRAP survey generally provided good to high marks in their judgement of the performance of the East Polk SWCD, West Polk SWCD and the Polk County Environmental Services Office.



### Resource Outcomes

The Polk County Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes. Therefore, resource outcomes are not reported in this review of plan accomplishments.

### Commendations:

The Polk County Environmental Services Office is commended for meeting 5 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

### Action Items for Polk County Environmental Services Office

Polk County Environmental Services Office has no action items.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Participate in the development of One Watershed One plans for watersheds within the county using the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Participate in development of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the development of the One Watershed, One Plan for watershed plans within the county.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends in achieving resource outcome goals as resource outcome goals are determined as part of 1W1P development.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Ensure that input from citizens and stakeholder groups within Polk County are incorporated into the development of the One Watershed One Plan watershed planning initiatives.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation 1:** Create a unified message and vision to address the county Board at times when programs affect all entities.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #2:** SWCDs should communicate more effectively to deliver programs consistently throughout the county.

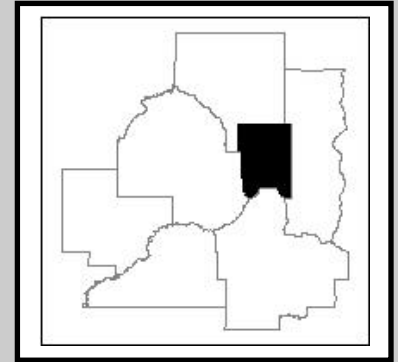
**SWCD Joint Recommendation #3:** Active participation and involvement in watershed district activities.

**SWCD Joint Recommendation #4:** Employ a method of grant tracking to adequately monitor and report on all specific individual grant funds.

## Ramsey Conservation District and Ramsey County

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Ramsey Conservation District and Ramsey County have fostered a good working relationship that serves both agencies well. For the most part, the Conservation District partners believe they are doing good work and are good to work with. Recent board member changes at the Conservation District has created some challenges and new opportunities for future local water management in Ramsey County. With the recent revision of the Ramsey Conservation District comprehensive plan, there will be an opportunity for Ramsey Conservation District and Ramsey County to prioritize implementation activities to address specific problems and priorities for the county's water resources. The partners who responded to the PRAP survey provided strong to good marks in their judgement of the performance of the Conservation District and Ramsey County.



### Commendations:

The Ramsey Conservation District is commended for meeting 9 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs. Ramsey County is commended for meeting 6 of 9 of the relevant high performance standards.

### Ramsey Conservation District Recommendations:

**Ramsey Conservation District Recommendation 1:** Improve communication and interaction among Board members by working with a conflict management or mediation specialist and conduct a strategic assessment of the District to determine whether the existing mission, goals, bylaws and board member responsibilities are understood and remain relevant.

**Ramsey Conservation District Recommendation 2:** Organize Annual Work Plan to address high priority items with specific, measurable action items and monitor staff and Board delivery of programs and projects.

**Ramsey Conservation District Recommendation 3:** Develop a fiscal management agreement between Ramsey Conservation District and Ramsey County.

**Ramsey Conservation District Recommendation 4:** Develop orientation and continued education plan for the board and staff to provide for continued growth of the District and Board members through education, succession of positions and outreach to partners.

**Ramsey Conservation District Recommendation 5:** Continue to build on the use of major or minor watershed scale in the comprehensive plan by the use of PTM criteria in implementation of action items of the plan.

### Ramsey County Recommendations:

**Ramsey County Recommendation 1:** Develop and adopt a Groundwater Plan under Minnesota Statutes 103B.255.

**Ramsey County Recommendation 2:** Develop a fiscal management agreement between Ramsey County and Ramsey Conservation District.

**Ramsey County Recommendation 3:** Review and update delegation agreements for natural resource management programs, as needed, with LGUs within the county.

**Ramsey County Recommendation 4:** Ramsey County should provide clarity on the website regarding the structure and cooperative agreements for water resource management within the county.

## Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District and Roseau County Environmental Office

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the Roseau County Environmental Office need to have an effective working relationship in order to provide needed services to the residents of the county. New challenges have created the need to forge new working relationships among partners, and build stronger programs for future local water management in Roseau County.

Roseau County and the Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District are participating in the development of a One Watershed, One Plan for the Lake of the Woods Watershed. This will be an opportunity for Roseau County and SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and prioritize the county's waterbodies.



### Resource Outcomes

The Roseau Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 4 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Environmental Office is commended for meeting 2 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

### Action Item for Roseau SWCD

The following action item should be addressed within the next 18 months, or by October 2018.

- Develop a data practices policy

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Participate in the development of One Watershed One plans for watersheds within the county using the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Structure website information to report progress and trends in achieving resource outcome goals as resource outcome goals are determined as part of 1W1P development.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Ensure that input from citizens and stakeholder groups within Roseau County is incorporated into the development of the One Watershed One Plan for the Lake of the Woods Watershed and other new watershed planning initiatives.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Update Wetland Conservation Act Joint Powers Agreement

**Joint Recommendation 5:** The Wetland Conservation Act Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) should include full membership in TEP meetings.

**SWCD Recommendation 1:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the SWCD to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the district.

**SWCD Recommendation 2:** Develop orientation and continued education plan for the board of supervisors and staff and keep records of trainings attended.

## North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department (PCDD), the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District (SSLSWCD) and the North St. Louis SWCD (NSLSWCD) have fostered a good working relationship that serves the three agencies well. For the most part, their partners believe both entities are doing good work and are good to work with. Recent staff additions at the North St. Louis SWCD have created the necessity to forge new working relationships among partners, but there is a strong base to build upon for future local water management in St. Louis County.



With the upcoming revision of the comprehensive local water plan, there will be an opportunity for St. Louis County and the South St. Louis SWCD and North St. Louis SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's waterbodies.

The partners who responded to the PRAP survey provided good marks in their judgement of the performance of the North St. Louis SWCD.

### Resource Outcomes

The St. Louis Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Revisit membership of the Water Plan Technical Advisory Task Force to ensure that agency representation is adequate and schedule annual meetings.

**Joint Recommendation 5:** Update Wetland Conservation Act contracts between St. Louis County and South St. Louis SWCD and North St. Louis SWCD to reflect current workloads and responsibilities.

**North St. Louis SWCD Recommendation 1:** Address action items and consider adding high performance standards to improve organizational performance.

### Action Items:

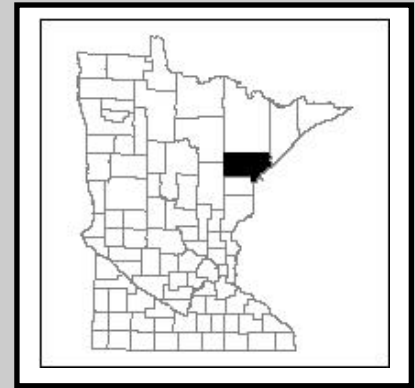
North St. Louis SWCD has 2 action items which should be addressed in the next 18 months.

- The North St. Louis SWCD data practices policy has not been updated in the last 5 years.
- The North St. Louis SWCD personnel policy has not been updated in the last 5 years.

## South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department (PCDD), the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District (SSLSWCD) and the North St. Louis SWCD (NSLSWCD) have fostered a good working relationship that serves the three agencies well. For the most part, their partners believe both entities are doing good work and are good to work with. Recent staff additions at the North St. Louis SWCD have created the necessity to forge new working relationships among partners, but there is a strong base to build upon for future local water management in St. Louis County.



With the upcoming revision of the comprehensive local water plan, there will be an opportunity for St. Louis County and the South St. Louis SWCD and North St. Louis SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's waterbodies.

The partners who responded to the PRAP survey provided good marks in their judgement of the performance of the South St. Louis SWCD.

### Resource Outcomes

The St. Louis Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 8 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Revisit membership of the Water Plan Technical Advisory Task Force to ensure that agency representation is adequate and schedule annual meetings.

**Joint Recommendation 5:** Update Wetland Conservation Act contracts between St. Louis County and South St. Louis SWCD and North St. Louis SWCD to reflect current workloads and responsibilities.

**South St. Louis SWCD Recommendation 1:** Address action items and consider adding high performance standards to improve organizational performance.

### Action Items:

South St. Louis SWCD has 2 action items which should be addressed in the next 18 months.

- The South St. Louis SWCD data practices policy has not been updated in the last 5 years.
- The South St. Louis SWCD personnel policy has not been updated in the last 5 years.

## St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department (PCDD), the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District (SSLSWCD) and the North St. Louis SWCD (NSLSWCD) have fostered a good working relationship that serves the three agencies well. For the most part, their partners believe both entities are doing good work and are good to work with. Recent staff additions at the North St. Louis SWCD have created the necessity to forge new working relationships among partners, but there is a strong base to build upon for future local water management in St. Louis County.



With the upcoming revision of the comprehensive local water plan, there will be an opportunity for St. Louis County and the South St. Louis SWCD and North St. Louis SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's waterbodies.

The partners who responded to the PRAP survey provided good marks in their judgement of the performance of the St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department.

### Resource Outcomes

The St. Louis Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

St. Louis County PACDD is commended for meeting 3 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Revisit membership of the Water Plan Technical Advisory Task Force to ensure that agency representation is adequate and schedule annual meetings.

**Joint Recommendation 5:** Update Wetland Conservation Act contracts between St. Louis County and South St. Louis SWCD and North St. Louis SWCD to reflect current workloads and responsibilities.

### Action Items:

The St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department does not have any action items.

## Shell Rock River Watershed District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

Shell Rock River Watershed District is doing a good job of administering local water management and conducting watershed management programs and projects. The organization is getting important work done, but will need to continue to adapt to achieve higher performance in watershed management.

With the upcoming opportunity to participate in One Watershed, One Plan development, there is an opportunity for the Shell Rock River Watershed District to reorient its local water plan to problems and priorities specific to the watershed's major waterbodies, and to provide resource specific outcomes.

The Shell Rock River Watershed District shows good compliance with BWSR's basic and high performance standards.



### Resource Outcomes

The Shell Rock River Watershed District Plan does contain some resource outcome goals and objectives. However, progress toward those goals is not routinely reported.

### Commendations

The Shell Rock River Watershed District is commended for meeting 9 out of 15 High Performance Standards

### Action Items

Action Items are those Basic Practice Standards from the Part 2 Performance Standards checklist that must be addressed because of non-compliance. The Shell Rock River Watershed District has no action items.

### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Continue and expand the use of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable as criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan as appropriate.

**Recommendation 2:** Accelerate implementation of watershed Management Plan

**Recommendation 3:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the watershed district to determine whether its existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the district and how to ensure it is complying with Minnesota Statutes 103D.

**Recommendation 4:** Develop orientation and continued education plan for both board and staff and keep records of trainings attended.

## Watonwan County Land Management and Zoning Department and Watonwan Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Watonwan County Land Management and Zoning Department (LMZD) and the Watonwan Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) need to have an effective working relationship in order to provide needed services to the residents of the county. A survey of both agencies partners demonstrates that there may be some need to improve performance. New challenges have created the need to forge new working relationships among partners, and build stronger programs for future local water management in Watonwan County. With the upcoming opportunity to participate in development of One Watershed-One Plan, there will be an opportunity for Watonwan County and SWCD to reorient its local water plan to specific problems and priorities for the county's watersheds.



### Resource Outcomes

The Watonwan Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The Watonwan Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 4 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Watonwan County Land Management and Zoning Office is commended for meeting 3 of 13 high performance standards for counties.

**Action Items** - Watonwan County Land Management and Zoning Office has one action item:

- WCA Requirement: Ensure that all Notice of Decisions are filled out completely.

### Recommendations:

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Consider using Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan.

**Joint Recommendation 3:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

**Joint Recommendation 4:** Meet annually with Water Plan Task Force to review annual accomplishments and set priorities for next year.

**Watonwan SWCD Recommendation 1:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the SWCD to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the district.

**Watonwan County Recommendation 1:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the Environmental Services Department to determine whether the existing mission, goals, staff capacity is sufficient to meet the needs and demands for conservation services in the district.

**Watonwan County Recommendation 2:** For Wetland Conservation Act Implementation - Consistently make written record of Technical Evaluation Panel meetings.



## Winona County Planning and Environmental Services and Winona County Soil and Water Conservation District

### Key Findings and Conclusions

The Winona County Planning and Environmental Services Department and the Winona County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) have fostered a good working relationship that serves both agencies well. New challenges have created the need to forge new working relationships among partners, and build stronger programs for future local water management in Winona County. For the most part, their partners believe both entities are doing good work and are good to work with. There appears to be a strong base to build upon for future local water management in Winona County. With past and future participation in One Watershed, One Plan development, there will be an opportunity for Winona County and SWCD to reorient the local water plan to specific problems and priorities county's watersheds. Some of the recommendations address an approach that will bring the plan into line with the statewide trend of conducting local water management within a watershed framework.



### Resource Outcomes

The Root River One Watershed, One Plan contains prioritized, targeted and measurable outcomes for part of the county, however the Winona County Local Water Management Plan does not include targets or objectives for resource outcomes.

### Commendations:

The Winona County Soil and Water Conservation District is commended for meeting 7 of 14 high performance standards for SWCDs and the Winona County Planning and Environmental Services Office is commended for meeting 5 of 12 high performance standards for counties.

### Recommendations:

**SWCD Recommendation 1:** Address action items and consider adding high performance standards to improve organizational performance.

**SWCD Recommendation 2:** Develop orientation and continued education plan for the board of supervisors and staff and keep records of trainings attended.

**SWCD Recommendation 3:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the SWCD to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the district.

**Winona County (as they apply to BWSR programs) Recommendation #1:** Conduct a strategic assessment of the Department to determine whether existing mission, goals and staff capacity are sufficient to meet the demands of conservation services in the county.

**Winona County (as they apply to BWSR programs) Recommendation #2:** For Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) program administration, continue development of a joint agreement with neighboring counties to hire a wetland specialist that would be a shared employee.

**Winona County (as they apply to BWSR programs) Recommendation #3:** Develop orientation and continued education plan for staff and keep records of trainings attended.

**Joint Recommendation 1:** Continue to use the major or minor watershed scale for plan organization with participation in future One Watershed, One Plan development.

**Joint Recommendation 2:** Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

### Winona County SWCD has 2 action items which should be addressed in the next 18 months:

- The SWCD financial statement has not been submitted on time.
- The SWCD does not have a personnel policy that has been updated in the last 5 years.

# Appendix H

## Performance Standards Checklists used in Level II Reviews

### COUNTY LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

LGU Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Area	Performance Standard	Level of Review	Rating	
	■ Basic practice or statutory requirement ★ High Performance standard (see instructions for explanation of standards)	I Annual Compliance II BWSR Staff Review & Assessment (1/10 yrs)	Yes	No
Admin	■ eLINK Grant Report(s): submitted on time	I		
	■ <b>County has resolution assuming WCA responsibilities and delegation resolutions (if needed).</b>	II		
	■ <b>County has knowledgeable and trained staff to manage WCA program or secured a qualified delegate.</b>	II		
	■ Drainage authority buffer strip report submitted on time	I		
	★ Public drainage records: meet modernization guidelines	II		
Planning	■ Local water mgmt plan: current	I		
	★ Metro counties: groundwater plan up-to-date	I		
	■ Biennial Budget Request submitted on-time	I		
	★ Prioritized, Targeted & Measureable criteria are used for Goals & Objectives in local water management plan as appropriate.	II		
	★ Water quality trend data used for short- and long-range plan priorities	II		
Execution	■ <b>WCA decisions and determinations are made in conformance with WCA requirements.</b>	II		
	■ <b>WCA TEP reviews and recommendations are appropriately coordinated.</b>	II		
	★ <b>Certified wetland delineator on staff or retainer</b>	II		
	★ Water quality data collected to track outcomes for each priority concern	II		
	★ Water quality trends tracked for priority water bodies	II		
Communication & Coordination	■ BWSR grant report(s) posted on website	I		
	★ Communication piece sent within last 12 months: indicate target audience below	II		
	Communication Target Audience:			
	★ Obtain stakeholder input: within last 5 yrs	II		
	★ Partnerships: liaison with SWCDs/WDs and cooperative projects/tasks done	II		
	★ Annual report to water plan advisory committee on plan progress	II		
	★ Track progress for I & E objectives in Plan	II		
	★ County local water plan on county website	II		
★ Water management ordinances on county website	II			

**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

LGU Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Area	Performance Standard	Level of Review	Rating	
			YES	NO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Basic practice or Statutory requirement</li> <li>★ High Performance standard (see instructions for explanation of standards)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I Annual Compliance</li> <li>II BWSR Staff Review &amp; Assessment (1/10 yrs)</li> </ul>	Yes, No, or Value	
Administration	■ Financial statement: annual, on-time and complete	I		
	■ Financial audit: completed as required by statute (see guidance) or as per BWSR correspondence	I		
	■ eLINK Grant Report(s) submitted on-time	I		
	■ Data practices policy: exists and reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II		
	■ Personnel policy: exists and reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II		
	■ Technical professional appointed and serving on WCA TEP	II		
	■ SWCD has an adopting resolution assuming WCA responsibilities and appropriate decision delegation resolutions as warranted (If WCA LGU)	II		
	★ Job approval authorities: reviewed and reported annually	II		
	★ Operational guidelines and policies exist and are current	II		
	★ Board training: orientation & cont. ed. plan and record for each board member	II		
★ Staff training: orientation and cont. ed. plan/record for each staff member	II			
Planning	■ Comprehensive Plan: updated within 5 yrs or current resolution adopting unexpired county LWM plan	I		
	■ Biennial Budget Request submitted on time	I		
	★ Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria are used for Goals and Objectives in the local water management plan as appropriate.	II		
	★ Annual Plan of Work: based on comp plan, strategic priorities	II		
Execution	■ Are state grant funds spent in high priority problem areas	II		
	■ Total expenditures per year (over past 10 yrs)	II	see below	
	■ Months of operating funds in reserve	II		
	■ Replacement and restoration orders are prepared in conformance with WCA rules and requirements.	II		
	■ WCA TEP member is knowledgeable/trained in WCA technical aspects	II		
	■ WCA TEP member contributes to TEP reviews, findings & recommendations	II		
	■ WCA decisions and determinations are made in conformance with all WCA requirements (If WCA LGU)	II		
	■ WCA TEP reviews/recommendations appropriately coordinated(if LGU)	II		
	★ Certified wetland delineator: on staff or retainer	II		
★ Outcome trends monitored and reported for key resources	II			
Communication & Coordination	■ Website contains all required content elements	I		
	★ Website contains additional content beyond minimum required	II		
	★ Track progress on I & E objectives in Plan	II		
	★ Obtain stakeholder input: within last 5 yrs	II		
	★ Annual report communicates progress on plan goals	II		
	★ Partnerships: cooperative projects/tasks with neighboring districts, counties, watershed districts, non-governmental organizations	II		
	★ Coordination with County Board by supervisors or staff	II		

**METRO WATERSHED DISTRICT and WMO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

LGU Name:

Performance Area	Performance Standard	Level of Review	Rating	
			YES	NO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ High Performance standard</li> <li>■ Basic practice or statutory requirement (see instructions for explanation of standards)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I Annual Compliance</li> <li>II BWSR Staff Review &amp; Assessment (1/5 yrs)</li> </ul>	Yes, No, or Value	
Administration	■ Activity report: annual, on-time	I		
	■ Financial report & audit completed on time	I		
	■ Drainage authority buffer strip report submitted on time	I		
	■ eLink Grant Report(s): submitted on time	I		
	■ Rules: date of last revision or review	II	mo/yr	
	■ Personnel policy: exists and reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II		
	■ Data practices policy: exists & reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II		
	■ Manager appointments: current and reported	II		
	■ Consultant RFP: within 2 yrs for professional services	II		
	■ <b>WD/WMO has resolution assuming WCA responsibilities and appropriate delegation resolutions as warranted(N/A if not LGU)</b>	II		
	■ <b>WD/WMO has knowledgeable &amp; trained staff that manages WCA program or has secured a qualified delegate. (N/A if not WCA LGU)</b>	II		
	★ Administrator on staff	II		
	★ Board training: orient.& cont. ed. Plan, record for each board member	II		
	★ Staff training: orient. & cont. ed. plan and record for each staff person	II		
★ Operational guidelines for fiscal procedures and conflicts of interest exist and current	II			
★ Public drainage records: meet modernization guidelines	II			
Planning	■ Watershed management plan: up-to-date	I		
	■ City/twp. local water plans not yet approved	II		
	■ Capital Improvement Program: reviewed every 2 yrs	II		
	★ Biennial Budget Request submitted on time	II		
	★ Strategic plan identifies short-term priorities	II		
Execution	■ Engineer Reports: submitted for DNR & BWSR review	II		
	■ <b>WCA decisions and determinations are made in conformance with all WCA requirements. (if delegated WCA LGU)</b>	II		
	■ <b>WCA TEP reviews &amp; recommendations appropriately coordinated. (if delegated WCA LGU)</b>	II		
	■ Total expenditures per year (past 10 yrs)	II	see below	
	★ Water quality trends tracked for key water bodies	II		
	★ Watershed hydrologic trends monitored / reported	II		
Communication & Coordination	■ Website: contains information as required by MR 8410.0150 Subp. 3a, i.e. as board meeting, contact information, water plan, etc.	II		
	■ Functioning advisory committee(s): recommendations on projects, reports, 2-way communication with Board	II		
	■ Communication piece: sent within last 12 months	II		
	Communication Target Audience:			
	★ Track progress for I & E objectives in Plan	II		
	★ Coordination with County Board, SWCD Board, City/Twp officials	II		
Partnerships: cooperative projects/tasks with neighboring organizations, such as counties, soil and water districts, watershed districts and non-governmental organizations	II			

**GREATER MN WATERSHED DISTRICT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

LGU Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Area	Performance Standard	Level of Review	Rating	
			YES	NO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ High Performance standard</li> <li>■ Basic practice or Statutory requirement (see instructions for explanation of standards)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I Annual Compliance</li> <li>II BWSR Staff Review &amp; Assessment (1/10 yrs)</li> </ul>	Yes, No, or Value	
Administration	■ Annual report: submitted by mid-year	I		
	■ Financial audit: completed within last 12 months	I		
	■ Drainage authority buffer strip report submitted on time	I		
	■ eLink Grant Report(s): submitted on time	I		
	■ Rules: date of last revision or review	II	mo/yr	
	■ Personnel policy: exists and reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II		
	■ Data practices policy: exists and reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II		
	■ Manager appointments: current and reported	II		
	■ <b>WD has resolution assuming WCA responsibilities &amp; appropriate delegation resolutions as warranted. (N/A if not LGU)</b>	II		
	■ <b>WD has knowledgeable &amp; trained staff that manages WCA program or has secured a qualified delegate. (N/A if not WCA LGU)</b>	II		
	★ Administrator on staff	II		
	★ Board training: orientation & cont. ed. Plan/record for each board member	II		
	★ Staff training: orientation & cont. ed. Plan/record for each staff	II		
	★ Operational guidelines exist and current	II		
★ Public drainage records: meet modernization guidelines	II			
Planning	■ Watershed management plan: up-to-date	I		
	★ Biennial Budget Request submitted on time	II		
	★ Strategic plan identifies short-term activities & budgets based on state and local watershed priorities	II		
	★ Member of County Water Plan Advisory Committee(s)	II		
Execution	■ Engineer Reports: submitted for DNR & BWSR review	II		
	■ <b>WCA decisions and determinations made in conformance with all WCA requirements. (N/A if not LGU)</b>	II		
	■ <b>WCA TEP reviews/recommendations coordinated (N/A if not LGU)</b>	II		
	■ Total expenditures per year for past 10 years	II	attach	
	★ Water quality trends tracked for key water bodies	II		
★ Watershed hydrologic trends monitored / reported	II			
Communication & Coordination	■ Functioning advisory committee: recommendations on projects, reports, maintains 2-way communication with Board	II		
	■ Communication piece sent within last 12 months	II		
	★ Website: contains annual report, financial statement, board members, contact info, grant report(s), watershed management plan, meeting notices, agendas & minutes, updated after each board	II		
	★ Obtain stakeholder input: within last 5 yrs	II		
	★ Track progress for I & E objectives in Plan	II		
	★ Coordination with County Board, SWCD Board, City/Twp officials	II		
	★ Partnerships: cooperative projects/tasks with neighboring districts, counties, soil and water districts, non-governmental organizations	II		

# Appendix I

## 2017 Local Government Performance Awards and Recognition

(Awarding agency listed in parentheses.)

### Outstanding SWCD Employee

(Board of Water and Soil Resources)

**Peter Mead, Becker SWCD Manager**

### Outstanding SWCD Supervisor Award

(Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts)

**Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay SWCD Supervisor**

### SWCD of the Year

(Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts)

**Crow Wing SWCD**

### SWCD Appreciation Award

(Department of Natural Resources)

**Olmsted SWCD**

### Community Conservationist Award

(Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts /Minnesota Pollution Control Agency)

**Cheryl Seeman, Anoka Conservation District**

### Outstanding Forest Steward Award

(Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts / Department of Natural Resources)

**Dave Parent, Itasca SWCD**

### Outstanding Watershed District Employee

(Board of Water and Soil Resources)

**Phil Belfiori, Rice Creek Watershed District Administrator**

### Watershed District of the Year

(Department of Natural Resources)

**Cedar River Watershed District**

### WD Project of the Year

(Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts)

**Keller Golf Course, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District**

### County Conservation Award

(Association of Minnesota Counties and Board of Water and Soil Resources)

**Flood Disaster Recovery Assistance Program,  
Rock County**