



Association of Minnesota Counties

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COOK AND LAKE COUNTIES' LAKE SUPERIOR NORTH WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN RECEIVES 2016 COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARD

(St. Paul, MN)— The **Lake Superior North Watershed Management Plan** created by **Cook and Lake Counties** was recognized by Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) during AMC's Annual Conference December 5 in Minneapolis. The County Conservation Award recognizes leadership, innovation and excellence by counties in protecting or improving their natural resources.

This year's award goes to Cook and Lake Counties for their partnership and collaboration with each other and their respective Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) to develop the Lake Superior North Watershed Management Plan as part of BWSR's One Watershed, One Plan pilot program.

Lake and Cook County Commissioners were integral to the development of the Plan via leadership on both Policy and Advisory Committees. County Commissioners were actively engaged in understanding the science and aligning the values of their citizens to identify prioritized, targeted and measurable actions to follow. Biology, hydrology, water quality and geomorphology are the science parts of sustaining the health and beauty of the water resources that comprise Minnesota's iconic North Shore, but equally important is building the community support for how to do that among citizens and businesses that call it home. Special thanks to Lake County Commissioner Sve and Cook County Commissioner Gamble for their participation and extra leadership effort to conjoin the two-county effort via a Memorandum of Agreement.

In summary, the merit of this award is encapsulated in the purpose statement of their joint watershed plan: "by integrating collaborative governance, leveraged partnerships, and active stewardship by local residents, businesses and visitors, the ecological health and economic vitality of the Lake Superior North Watershed will be maintained for generations to come."

AMC is a voluntary statewide organization that assists the state's 87 counties in providing effective county governance to the people of Minnesota. It is the mission of the Association to assist in the provision of effective county governance for the people of Minnesota. The association works closely with the legislative and administrative branches of government in seeing that legislation and policies favorable to counties are enacted. In addition, the Association provides educational programs, training, research and communications for county officials.

BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens.

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Editors: Photo Attached

Caption: (from left to right) Cook County Commissioner Garry Gamble, Lake County Commissioners Rich Sve and Derrick Goutermont, and BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke.