



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **BWSR Launches Statewide Water Initiative**

St. Paul, Minn. —The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) launched the *One Watershed, One Plan* pilot program yesterday, allocating up to \$900,000 in Clean Water Fund grants to fund five pilot projects to address water quality on a watershed basis. BWSR's vision with this program is to align planning on major watershed boundaries with prioritized, targeted, and measurable watershed plans that will be developed and implemented locally.

Pilot plans will build on existing efforts, using current local water plans, state and local knowledge and a systematic, science-based approach to watershed management. The resulting plans will address the largest threats that provide the greatest environmental benefits to each watershed. The pilot program will involve a broad range of stakeholders, including local governments, state agencies, and community members as true partners in the planning process.

"The One Watershed One Plan Pilot Program is a holistic and coordinated approach to addressing water quality improvements," BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke said. "This innovative new program will result in plans with prioritized, targeted and measurable implementation actions that meet or exceed current water plan content standards. That's good news for Minnesota's natural resources and its citizens."

The five pilot areas are:

- **Lake Superior North watershed**, a two-county area that includes Cook County and Lake County.
- **North Fork Crow River watershed**, a six-county area that includes parts of Hennepin County, Kandiyohi County, Meeker County, Pope County, Stearns County and Wright County.
- **Red Lake River watershed**, a five-county area that includes parts of Beltrami County, Clearwater County, Pennington County, Polk County, and Red Lake County.
- **Root River watershed**, a six-county area that includes parts of Dodge County, Fillmore County, Houston County, Mower County, Olmsted County, and Winona County.

- **Yellow Medicine River watershed**, a four-county area that includes Lac qui Parle County, Lincoln County, Lyon County, and Yellow Medicine County.

The One Watershed, One Plan program is grounded in 2011 recommendations from the Minnesota Local Government Water Roundtable, which said that local governments charged with water management responsibility should organize and develop implementation plans on a watershed scale. In 2012, the Minnesota Legislature gave BWSR the authority to work with local governments to develop and implement this comprehensive watershed management plan approach.

More information about the One Watershed One Plan program, including its guiding principles and plan outcomes as well as a map of the pilot watersheds, can be found at BWSR's website: [www.bwsr.state.mn.us](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us).

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