

# 2018 BWSR Legislative Session Wrap-Up

After the Legislature adjourned on May 20, Governor Dayton had 14 days to decide whether to sign or veto bills passed that last day. With the last bill addressed on May 31st, the final status of BWSR-related 2018 legislation is now known. It includes:



## OMNIBUS SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET BILL (Ch. 201, SF3656)

On May 23rd, Governor Dayton vetoed the Omnibus Supplemental Budget Bill, writing: “I made my objections to this bill very clear throughout the Session. My Administration sent you over 100 detailed letters throughout the session, carefully explaining my concerns with each of the proposals.” The veto letter is available [here](#).

The 989-page bill passed by the House and Senate included environment provisions and several other articles such as: energy, jobs, public safety, and education. The Governor’s veto means that none of the provisions are signed into law. Items relevant to BWSR’s work included in the bill:

**Clean Water Coordination:** The bill included language to improve Clean Water coordination between state agencies and local governments and was championed by our local government partner associations: MAWD, MASWCD, and AMC (veto means no policy changes).

**Drainage:** The Drainage Work Group (a BWSR-facilitated state-wide work group with participation from nonprofits/ local govt/ state govt/ ag sector/ other stakeholders) reached consensus-based policy recommendations, of which some was included in the bill (veto means no policy changes).

**Pass-through Funds:** The bill included \$25,000 one-time general funds to the Red River Basin Commission (veto means no pass-through funds). All buffer and soil loss language changes proposed earlier in the session were removed from the final bill.

BWSR will continue working with partners and legislators on clean water coordination and drainage work group recommendations for the next legislative session.

## OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND: (Ch. 208, HF3423)

On May 29th, Governor Dayton signed the Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations bill. It includes:

OHF	2018 Appropriation
Wetland Easements	\$10 million
Buffer Easements	\$5 million
Total	\$15 million

The legislature did not send Governor Dayton a Clean Water Fund appropriations bill (which included several implementation appropriations to BWSR). This means the \$25 million of Clean Water funding available will be rolled into the 2019 legislative session.

## **BONDING:** (Ch. 214, HF4425)

On May 30th, Governor Dayton signed the Capital Investment bill. The Governor's statement is available [here](#). The final bonding bill includes the following BWSR-related appropriations:

### **General Obligation Bond Funds**

	<b>2018 Appropriation</b>
MN CREP	\$0
Local Roads Wetlands	\$6.7 million
Seidl's Lake (Pass-Thru)	\$0
Area II (Pass-Thru)	\$0.7 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7.4 million</b>

### **Appropriation Bond Funds**

The bonding bill also shifted several projects, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) recommendations, from G.O. Bonds to Appropriation bonds. The bill directs debt service payment from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund over the next 20 years.

<b>Shift to Approp. Bonds</b>	<b>2018 Appropriation</b>
MN CREP	\$10.0 million
Seidl's Lake (Direct)	\$0.781 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10.781 million</b>

### **Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (LCCMR)**

Legislators also amended the LCCMR appropriations to this bill.

	<b>2018 Appropriation</b>
Lake Agnes Treatment (pass-through to Alexandria Lake Area Sanitary District)	\$0.6 million

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## **AG POLICY BILL:** (Ch. 190, HF4133)

On May 21st, Governor Dayton vetoed the Agriculture Policy Bill, which included a soil loss provision that reversed language from the 2015 legislative session. To read Governor Dayton's veto letter, CLICK [HERE](#).

## **RAMSEY CONSERVATION DISTRICT:** (Ch. 169, HF3819)

On May 19th, Governor Dayton signed into law a bill that will discontinue the Ramsey SWCD and transfer its duties to Ramsey County effective the day after both the county board to adopts a resolution by majority vote to approve of this change, and the clerical officer submits the proper paperwork to the Secretary of State.

## **BUFFER TAX CREDIT:**

A bill authored by Rep. Paul Anderson, that would create a \$50/acre credit for ag land converted to buffers, had two hearings in the House but was not included in any bills sent to the Governor.

## **WHAT THIS MEANS FOR BWSR:**

2018 appropriations for the MN CREP and the Local Roads Wetland Replacement Program means that critical work in these areas now continues. BWSR will also continue collaborating on process and policy improvements (such as clean water coordination enhancements and drainage policy) for next session.