



What is AWQPIP?

January 2015 Snapshots



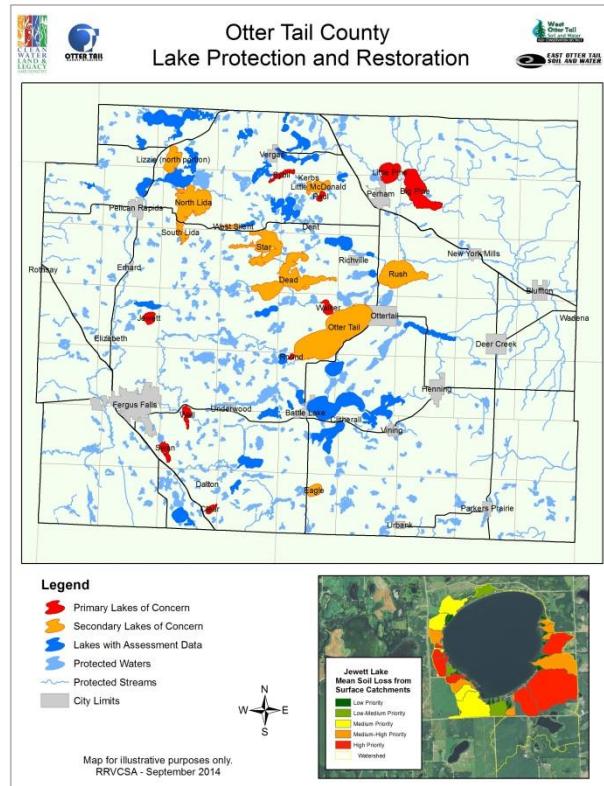
These days, technology touches virtually every part of our lives, so it's no surprise that technology is impacting conservation work. For example, ArcGIS analysis – widely used within conservation to map a variety of geographic and other data – has improved significantly over the years, allowing the State of Minnesota to invest in collecting high resolution elevation data, which make it easier to track the impact of erosion on land, among other uses. A 2014 Clean Water Fund Shared Services grant is helping a group of local governments use technology more effectively.

The Accelerated Water Quality Project Implementation Program (AWQPIP) is a joint venture of Technical Service Area (TSA) 1 and 8 in northwestern and north central Minnesota. In this program, technology will help landowners and local government units (LGUs) better understand their landscape. This will accelerate efforts to address non-point source pollution to surface waters throughout the 25-county area. Partners or contributors in the program include the International Waters Institute, Mississippi Headwaters Board, The Nature Conservancy, 27 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, 25 Counties, the Minnesota DNR and the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources.

The AWQPIP has multiple purposes:

- 1)** Provide partners and landowners with a clear understanding of resource concerns;
- 2)** Focus outreach efforts on the portions of landscape with the greatest resource need;
- 3)** Use the ArcGIS technology to determine project feasibility, which will improve the efficiency of conservation delivery;
- 4)** Provide watershed and stormwater assessments, measuring the water quality impacts of potential projects on an individual, collective or watershed basis;
- 5)** Maximize current TSA staff by prioritizing feasible and economically viable projects that demonstrate an immediate benefit to water quality; and
- 6)** Further develop mobile tools to increase the efficiency of program partners in responding to landowner inquiries or informing planning processes.

Ultimately, the AWQPIP will increase local government and landowner ability to install the right projects and practices for the protection and restoration of water quality and wildlife habitat on the local landscape. In the long run, that means stronger projects yielding better results.



Prioritizing the lakes of Otter Tail County and targeting conservation practices was one of the first projects of the AWQPIP.