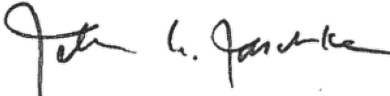


DATE: June 17, 2025

TO: Board of Water and Soil Resources' Members, Advisors, and Staff

FROM: John Jaschke, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: BWSR Board Meeting Notice – June 25, 2025

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) will meet on Wednesday, June 25, 2025, beginning at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in the Lower-Level South conference room, at 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul and by Microsoft Teams. Individuals interested in attending the meeting through Teams should do so by either 1) logging into Teams by [clicking here to join the meeting](#) or 2) join by audio only conference call by calling telephone number: 651-395-7448 and entering the conference ID: 494 929 717#.

The following information pertains to agenda items:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Central Region Committee

1. **Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035** – Washington County has submitted a Groundwater Plan to BWSR for review and approval. The Plan defines the County's role in groundwater resource management for the next ten years and identifies the goals, strategies, and actions to address groundwater quality and quantity issues facing the County. The Central Region Committee met on June 2, 2025, to review the plan and recommends approval per the attached draft Board Order. ***DECISION ITEM***

RIM Reserve Committee

1. **Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Conservation Practices and Reimbursement Payment Rates** – Statute requires the Board to determine approved restoration practices and practices eligible for reimbursement, and to establish reimbursement rates for restoration on RIM easements. Current RIM Reserve conservation practice reimbursement rates are inadequate for establishment of certain conservation practices. The per acre cost caps were last approved by the Board in 2010. The intent of the reimbursement process is to cover all conservation plan implementation costs for a landowner for a typical restoration of a RIM easement. If a landowner makes individual choices for their land that creates a significantly higher cost for their restoration, they are required to cover the difference. Inflation, unique and diverse native seed mixes, necessary site preparation and prevailing wage laws are driving costs of the typical restoration beyond the current maximum in Board Order #10-26. Additionally, the RIM program now has restoration practices and needs that are different than the restoration of previous cropland to either prairie or wetland that was the exclusive focus of the program in 2010. The ability to adapt to evolving costs, prevailing wage requirements, and new restoration techniques and needs are better achieved by providing staff, with Executive Director approval, the ability to establish and update the list of approved practices and conservation practice reimbursement rates. Board Resolution #22-16 established additional approved practices and reimbursement rates specific to working lands.

Both resolutions #10-26 and #22-16 will be rescinded upon publication of new approved practices and reimbursement rates pursuant to the new board order. ***DECISION ITEM***

2. **Technical Amendment to Board Order 25-21** – BWSR Board Order 25-21 was signed April 23, 2025, approving significant changes to the RIM Drinking Water Program. However, the incorrect term was used within the order, specifically in the second BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED.

The second BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT was originally approved as:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Executive Director is delegated to approve Drinking Water Protection Partner Grants consistent with this order.

A technical adjustment is warranted to replace Grants with the word “agreements.”

Per the appropriation language associated with this funding, the RIM Drinking Water Program can utilize “grants or contracts.” Naming a specific grant program specifically can limit the flexibility of program development as future needs may require additional opportunities for drinking water protection. **DECISION ITEM**

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update** – The Nutrient Reduction Strategy compiles the latest science, research, and data and recommends the most effective strategies to reduce nutrients in our waters from both point and nonpoint sources. The strategy serves as a framework that outlines voluntary and regulatory actions to reduce nutrient pollution to meet long-term goals. Reductions in Minnesota’s nitrogen and phosphorus pollution are needed to reach our in-state water quality goals and the 2040 goals that aim to restore the Gulf of Mexico, Lake Winnipeg, and Lake Superior. **INFORMATION ITEM**

If you have any questions regarding the agenda, please feel free to call me at 651-539-2587. We look forward to seeing you on June 25th.

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH
ST. PAUL, MN 55155
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025**

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

9:00 AM CALL MEETING TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MINUTES OF MAY 28, 2025 BOARD MEETING

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM (10-minute agenda time, two-minute limit/person)

REPORTS

- Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee – Todd Holman
- Executive Director – John Jaschke
- Audit & Oversight Committee – Joe Collins
- Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report – Travis Germundson/Rich Sve
- Grants Program & Policy Committee – Mark Zabel
- RIM Reserve Committee – Jayne Hager Dee
- Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee – Joe Collins
- Wetland Conservation Committee – Jill Crafton
- Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee – LeRoy Ose
- Drainage Work Group – Neil Peterson/Tom Gile

AGENCY REPORTS

- Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Thom Petersen
- Minnesota Department of Health – Steve Robertson
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Sarah Strommen
- Minnesota Extension – Joel Larson
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Katrina Kessler

ADVISORY COMMENTS

- Association of Minnesota Counties – Brian Martinson
- Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees – Mike Schultz
- Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts – LeAnn Buck
- Minnesota Association of Townships – Eunice Biel
- Minnesota Watersheds – Jan Voit
- Natural Resources Conservation Service – Troy Daniell

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Central Region Committee

1. Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035 – Michelle Jordan – ***DECISION ITEM***

RIM Reserve Committee

1. Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Conservation Practices and Reimbursement Payment Rates
– Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Technical Amendment to Board Order 25-21 – Sharon Doucette – **DECISION ITEM**

NEW BUSINESS

1. Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update – Matt Drewitz, MPCA – ***INFORMATION ITEM***

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- BWSR Board Tour and Meeting, August 27-29, 2025

ADJOURN

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH
LOWER-LEVEL BOARD ROOM
ST. PAUL, MN 55155
WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2025**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jayne Hager Dee, Jill Crafton, Joe Collins, LeRoy Ose, Mark Zabel, Mike Runk, Neil Peterson, Rich Sve, Ron Staples, Ted Winter, Todd Holman, Tom Schulz, Jason Garms, DNR; Katrina Kessler, MPCA; Steve Robertson, MDH; Thom Petersen, MDA

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Eunice Biel; Lori Cox; Joel Larson, University of Minnesota Extension

STAFF PRESENT:

John Jaschke, Rachel Mueller, Tom Gile, Travis Germundson, Adam Beilke, Rita Weaver, Karli Swenson, Jenny Gieseke, Les Lemm, Ken Powell, John Shea, Dave Weirens, Sara Reagan, Ryan Hughes, Marcey Westrick, Lucy Dahl

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeff Berg, MDA; Sheila Vanney, MASWCD; LeAnn Buck, MASWCD; Alex Trunnell, MN Corn; Grahm Berg-Moberg, MN Townships; Dave Nathe, Michael Hennen, Don Arnosti, Duane Kroll

Chair Todd Holman called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**
25-24 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** - Moved by Joe Collins, seconded by Tom Schulz, to adopt the agenda as presented. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

**
25-25 **MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2025 BOARD MEETING** – Moved by Jill Crafton, seconded by Jayne Hager Dee, to approve the minutes of April 23, 2025, as amended. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM

Duane Kroll spoke about the ACUB Easement Alteration Request – Easement 49-01-12-04 Morrison County that's on the agenda today.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

Chair Holman read the statement:

"A conflict of interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived, occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests, and these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially. At this time, members are requested to declare conflicts of interest they may have regarding today's business. Any member who declares an actual conflict of interest must not vote on that agenda item. All actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest will be announced to the board by members or staff before any vote."

REPORTS

Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee – Chair Todd Holman reported he attended the Tribal-State Relations Training with the Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwe in May. Attended the Environmental Quality Board and stated they will be releasing the Carbon Calculator tool.

Executive Director's Report - John Jaschke reported on the legislature, stated there will be a special session. A federal funding update was given. Stated local government meetings are being scheduled regionally over the summer months. Minnesota Watersheds is having their tour in June in Northwestern Minnesota. The return to office directive from the Governor will be starting next week.

Jill Crafton asked what roles Jared House and Jennifer Hahn have. John stated Jared is the Soil Health Program Coordinator and Jennifer is the Federal Funding Coordinator.

Audit and Oversight Committee – Joe Collins reported the committee has not met.

Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report – Rich Sve reported they have not met. Travis Germundson reported there have been two new appeals filed since the last report.

File 25-6 is an appeal of WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Otter Tail County. The appeal regards the placement of fill in wetland for shoreline access. No decision has been made on the appeal.

File 25-5 is an appeal of a WCA notice of decision for a property in Waseca County. The appeal regards the denial of an exemption application for maintenance of a private ditch. The petition regards the eligibility of the agricultural activities exemption for wetland impacts from drainage maintenance on

areas labeled on valid certified wetland determination by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). No decision has been made on the appeal.

File 25-4 is an appeal of a WCA notice of decision for a property in St. Louis County. The appeal has been denied.

File 24-9 is an appeal of a WCA notice of decision in Morrison County. The parties have mutually agreed to an extension until August 1st.

File 24-8 is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Beltrami County. Travis was noticed that the individual is working with the EPA to restore the site and it should drop off the list by next month.

Travis stated as of April 1st McLeod County adopted a resolution withdrawing their election jurisdiction to enforce buffer law and will default back to the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Grants Program & Policy Committee – Mark Zabel reported they met and have two decision items on the agenda for today. They received a status update on grant funding for the mid-term evaluation of One Watershed One Plan.

RIM Reserve Committee – Jayne Hager Dee reported they have three decision items on the agenda today and will have additional items in June.

Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee – Joe Collins reported they have not met. They previously discussed the Strategic Plan that will be presented today.

Wetland Conservation Committee – Jill Crafton reported they met in April.

Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee – LeRoy Ose reported they have not met.

Drainage Work Group (DWG) – Neil Peterson reported they have not met and will be meeting June 18th. John Jaschke stated a survey was sent out requesting potential topics to be worked on over the next year.

AGENCY REPORTS

Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Thom Petersen reported they were pleased to have their legislative bill passed and provided an overview of what was included.

Joe Collins asked if there were any effects on weather stations with the federal cuts. Commissioner Petersen stated with the National Weather Service's cutbacks we could see more reliance on state weather stations.

Jayne Hager Dee asked what a wolf claim is. Commissioner Petersen stated its cattle or livestock loss due to wolf predation. Mark Zabel asked what the relation to that program is with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Commissioner Petersen stated the APHIS Program is hard to prove and doesn't pay very much, most farmers use the state program.

Minnesota Department of Health – Steve Robertson reported they are waiting for their legislative bill to pass. The Drinking Water Action Plan has been delayed until after the legislative session. Stated EPA has rolled back some of the final PFAS National Water Quality Standards.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Jason Garms reported their legislative bill is still being worked on. They are preparing for the return to office directive from the Governor. Jason provided a forest fire update, stated there are websites that track active fires.

Minnesota Extension – Joel Larson provided a report in the Day of Packet.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Melissa Lewis reported the feedlot rules are being amended with public meetings taking place; the comment period is through July 22nd. The Climate Action Framework is being updated. The Climate Pollution Reduction Grant is moving forward. They are continuing to advocate for sustaining federal funds. Stated the 24-hour Nitrate Network, a Clean Water Fund Program from last year, had some of the initial sensors put in and are anticipating more installed this year. Results are available on their website.

ADVISORY COMMENTS

Association of Minnesota Counties – No report was provided.

Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees – No report was provided.

Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts – No report was provided.

Minnesota Association of Townships – No report was provided.

Minnesota Watersheds – No report was provided.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – No report was provided.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Grants Program and Policy Committee

Grant Noncompliance Policy Revision – Adam Beilke presented Grant Noncompliance Policy Revision.

BWSR grant recipients are responsible for managing State grant funds in compliance with statutes, rules, grant agreements, BWSR requirements, procedures, and other applicable laws and requirements. BWSR has developed the Grant Noncompliance Policy to categorize levels of noncompliance and establish procedures for addressing noncompliance issues. The Board first approved a Grant Noncompliance Policy on June 24, 2015. The most recent version of the policy was approved on June 26, 2019.

Recently, BWSR staff have been working to streamline the agency's delivery and structure of grant program requirements for FY2026. This work includes the elimination of individual grant program policies, defining program requirements within the grant agreement, and reformatting the Grants Administration Manual to better distinguish procedures from guidance.

BWSR staff have identified minor revisions to the Grant Noncompliance Policy that are necessary to reflect changes from the grants streamlining work as well as to provide additional clarification to noncompliance procedures and updated references to Office of Grants Management Policy 08-13.

Grants Program & Policy Committee reviewed the proposed changes on May 19, 2025, and recommend approval to the Board.

Jill Crafton commented that the tiers seem to have more flexibility.

25-26 Moved by Rich Sve, seconded by Mike Runk, to approve the Grant Noncompliance Policy Revision.
Motion passed on a roll call vote.

Funding Recommendations for the FY26 Water Quality and Storage Program Grants – Rita Weaver presented Funding Recommendations for the FY26 Water Quality and Storage Program Grants

The Water Quality and Storage Pilot Grant program was passed into law by the MN Legislature in 2021. The intent of the program is to fund projects that will reduce runoff volume or peak flow rates by implementing storage practices. This will be our fourth round of applications funded.

In January 2025, the Board adopted Board Order #25-03 which authorized staff to conduct a request for proposals for the FY26 Water Quality and Storage Program. An application period was open for approximately nine weeks.

Applications were scored and ranked by a team of BWSR staff, and the scoring team recommends that seven projects be funded. In addition to the seven projects that are recommended for funding, the scoring team would like to keep one of the projects eligible for funding in case funds become available due to design or cost changes as work plans are finalized.

While federal funds have been received to support this program, the agreements are not finalized with the NRCS at this time. Therefore, federal funds are not being used towards these projects. These projects can be counted towards our required match with the federal grant, however.

The staff recommendations were presented to the BWSR SMT May 13, 2025 and the Grants Program and Policy Committee on May 19, 2025. The funding recommendations included in the board order are a result of those meetings.

Mark Zabel stated in the committee meeting it was asked to find out if Le Sueur SWCD project would accept partial funding. Rita stated she reached out to Mike Schultz from Le Sueur County SWCD and Mike stated they would consider it but depends on the amount.

Jill Crafton asked for a little more sense of what these projects are hoping to accomplish. Rita reviewed what the projects are designed to accomplish.

25-27 Moved by Mike Runk, seconded by Joe Collins, to approve the Funding Recommendations for the FY26 Water Quality and Storage Program Grants. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

RIM Reserve Committee

RIM Easement Alteration Request for Blue Earth County Road Improvements - Easement #07-20-99-01 – Karli Swenson presented RIM Easement Alteration Request for Blue Earth County Road Improvements - Easement #07-20-99-01.

The Blue Earth County Highway Department is requesting release of 3.5 acres from RIM Easement 07-20-99-01 to accommodate relocation and reconstruction of CSAH 10, which currently runs adjacent to

the southern boundary of the RIM Easement. This is a 61.1-acre CREP easement, acquired in 2001, and the associated CRP contract that has since expired.

CSAH 10 has been deemed significantly deteriorated with poor sight distances, unsafe vertical and horizontal curves and narrow shoulders, all posing a risk to the public. The purpose of the project is to correct these deficiencies and design a new, safer roadway that meets current MNDOT State Aid standards.

The project will include shifting the location of the roadway further north, onto what is currently RIM easement land. The road will be widened to include 12' driving lanes, 8' shoulders with flatter and safer in-slopes, new drainage pipes under the road, and new pavement. The county has acquired 3.5 acres of the RIM easement lands from the current landowner, for placement of the newly constructed roadway and associated right-of-way.

RIM Statute MN Statute 103F.535, Subd. 5 says the Board can alter an easement only if the board determines that the public interest and general welfare are served by the alteration. The reconstruction of CSAH 10 will provide significant safety improvements to the traveling public and adjacent landowners by providing wider driving lanes, wider shoulders with flatter ditch slopes and softer curves to improve sight distances and reaction time, reducing crash rates, risk and severity, and providing a safer place for stalled vehicles and maintenance vehicles and equipment to stop.

BWSR's Easement Alteration Policy for public benefitted projects allows for release of land from the easement if the public entity compensates BWSR for the released acres at two times the current RIM payment rate, reimburses the State any funds paid for conservation practices, plus a \$500 administrative fee. Blue Earth County has submitted the \$500 fee and has agreed to pay BWSR \$68,390.92 for release of the 3.5 acres as calculated below.

A. Compensation for Easement Release:

Release area = 3.5 acres in Ceresco Township, Blue Earth County (2.6 acres cropland and 0.9 acres non-cropland)

- a. Current Cropland Rate: \$10,604/ac
2x Cropland Rate: \$21,208/ac x 2.6 acres = \$55,140.80
- b. Current Non-cropland Rate: \$7069/ac
2x Non-Cropland Rate: \$14,138/ac x 0.9ac = \$12,724.20

Total compensation to release 3.5 acres = \$67,865.00

B. Conservation Practice Reimbursement: (based on paid cost-share vouchers in easement file)

- a. Practice Area 3: Release 0.5 ac RR8 (158.37/ac) = \$79.18
- b. Practice Area 4: Release 1 ac RR8 (158.37/ac) and RR2FB (98.73/ac) = \$257.10
- c. Practice Area 5: Release 1.6 ac RR2FB (98.73/ac) = \$157.97
- d. Practice Area 9: existing watercourse – no payment = \$0
- e. Practice Area 10: Release 0.2 ac existing trees – no payment = \$0
- f. Practice Area 16: Release 0.2 ac RR8 (158.37/ac) = \$31.67

Total Conservation Practice Reimbursement Payments for release area = \$525.92

Total Due upon BWSR Board Approval (A + B) = \$68,390.92

Recommendation

The RIM Reserve Committee recommends approval of this request to release 3.5 acres from RIM easement 07-20-99-01 as the project will have a significant public safety benefit and the County Highway Department has agreed to compensation according to the Easement Alteration Policy. The Blue Earth SWCD Board has also submitted a letter in support of the alteration request.

Jill Crafton asked about the removal of trees and if they were going to be planting any in their place. Karli stated they will be removing trees within the area acquired and BWSR will be reimbursed for those costs.

Commissioner Petersen asked what happens when money is paid back to BWSR. Sharon Doucette stated there are a couple different options depending on how old the money is, the goal is to reuse the funds for similar purposes.

****** Moved by LeRoy Ose, seconded by Jayne Hager Dee, to approve the RIM Easement Alteration Request for Blue Earth County Road Improvements - Easement #07-20-99-01. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***
25-28

RIM Easement Alteration Request – Easement 21-18-01-01-C Douglas County – Nathe – Karli Swenson presented RIM Easement Alteration Request – Easement 21-18-01-01-C Douglas County – Nathe.

BWSR acquired easement 21-18-01-01 on June 14, 2002 as part of the CREP easement program. The original easement is 136.1 acres consisting of restored wetlands, native grass, forb and tree plantings. The easement area has since been split and sold to 4 different landowners. Mr. Nathe, who submitted this request, purchased a parcel containing 27.2 RIM easement acres in December of 2019, now known as 21-18-01-01-C.

There are 9 acres in the southeast corner of Mr. Nathe's parcel that were excluded from the original RIM easement. This area consists of existing wetlands, and approximately 1 acre of tillable upland where Mr. Nathe currently maintains a food plot and has constructed a shed for personal use. However, there was no access route left out of the easement for the landowner to access the excluded area, which has in-turn become landlocked by the RIM easement. This requires the landowner to drive through the easement area to access his shed and food plot on the excluded land.

Mr. Nathe is requesting to release a 1.5-acre piece of the easement area, adjacent to the township road, to move the exclusion and his shed for easier access. He is offering to add the remaining 9 acres of the parcel to the RIM easement in exchange. This would be a 6:1 replacement ratio that exceeds BWSR's policy requirements.

Mr. Nathe has agreed to discontinue his food plot and would restore the upland areas being added to the easement, at his own cost, to trees and shrubs that would benefit pollinators. Moving the exclusion would also eliminate further disturbance to the easement (and non-easement) area from repeated vehicular access to the shed and food plot and would result in a net gain to the easement of 7.5 acres, providing permanent protection on the remainder of the parcel.

Since purchasing this land, Mr. Nathe has been very active in managing and improving vegetation on the site, by utilizing controlled burning to reduce smooth brome grass cover and invigorate native grasses and forbs. He has re-seeded over 3 acres to enhance and improve biodiversity and has replanted trees in areas where prior tree plantings have failed. Much of the enhancement work has been done at his own cost. Mr. Nathe has been an exceptional steward of the easement lands which he hopes to one day pass on to his children.

Mr. Nathe has submitted the \$500 processing fee for BWSR to consider his request and the Douglas SWCD and DNR Area Wildlife Supervisor have signed a letter in support of this request.

Recommendation

The RIM Reserve Committee recommends approval of this easement alteration request and believe that the public interest is better served by the alteration by adding a net 7.5 acres to the easement and eliminating disturbance to the existing easement area to access the landlocked exclusion. The request meets or exceeds all requirements of the Easement Alteration Policy.

**
25-29

Moved by Ron Staples, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the **RIM Easement Alteration Request – Easement 21-18-01-01-C Douglas County – Nathe. Motion passed on a roll call vote.**

ACUB Easement Alteration Request – Easement 49-01-12-04 Morrison County - Kroll – Karli Swenson presented ACUB Easement Alteration Request – Easement 49-01-12-04 Morrison County – Kroll.

BWSR acquired easement 49-01-12-04 in Morrison County on March 30, 2012 as part of the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program, in partnership with the National Guard Bureau and Camp Ripley. The original easement is 29.4 acres, currently in row crop agriculture, which is an allowed use on federally funded ACUB easements. The current landowner of this parcel, Mr. Kroll, purchased the parcel containing the ACUB easement in January of 2016.

Mr. Kroll is requesting the release of 0.5 acre from the ACUB easement, to enter into a long-term lease with a third party who would like to construct a 5G cellular communications tower on land currently under easement. The landowner would also like to use the proposed tower to host a GPS transmitter that could be used in conjunction with tractor auto-steering equipment. He is offering to add 1.5 acres of the easement in exchange. Mr. Kroll has submitted the \$500 processing fee for BWSR to consider his request.

The purpose of the ACUB program in Minnesota is specifically to preserve open space and to minimize residential, industrial and commercial development within a priority buffer area around Camp Ripley. BWSR acquires easements, through an agreement with the National Guard Bureau, to limit any development or use of the property that would be incompatible with the mission of the installation at Camp Ripley, while preserving open space and habitat within the priority area.

BWSR staff contacted partners at Camp Ripley for input on whether such a change to the easement would present a land use conflict with military operations at Camp Ripley and therefore contradict the purpose of the easement program. The initial response from the Camp Ripley Airfield Manager was that they are in “absolute opposition” to a cell tower in this area. The proposed location falls within their Class D airspace. According to the airfield manager, a tower can be a vertical hazard for aircraft, and with the military training at lower altitudes, it is important to keep the airspace free of towers or hazards.

According to staff at Camp Ripley, even if BWSR were to approve the easement alteration request, a proposed communications tower would need FAA review and clearance. Camp Ripley staff have stated that they would express their opposition to the tower and the hazard it could present to the Army during FAA review.

The ACUB easement language states that: *“if Grantee (BWSR) fails to carry out its duties under this Easement, the United States shall have the same rights as the Grantee. Should Grantee, its successors or assigns allow the Property to be used for a purpose inconsistent with this Easement, its terms and conditions and in a manner inconsistent with the mission of Camp Ripley, the Secretary of the Army, through an authorized official, shall, at his discretion, in accordance with the requirements of 10 U.S.C.*

2684a(d)(4) have the right to demand the transfer of this easement to the United States, or a third party nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of Minnesota.”

This means that if BWSR fails to enforce the ACUB easement or were to allow any use of the property that would be inconsistent with Camp Ripley operations, the easement rights could be transferred to the United States, or a Minnesota non-profit corporation. If BWSR were to approve this request, military approval of the easement boundary alteration and tower construction would be required for BWSR to amend the easement and for the landowner to complete the proposed action.

Recommendation

The RIM Reserve Committee recommended denial of this easement alteration request. The proposed land use would be inconsistent with military operations at Camp Ripley and therefore the purpose of the ACUB program. If BWSR were to allow this land use, it could be viewed as a failure of the State to carry out its duties under the ACUB partnership and the easement rights could be transferred to the United States or a third party.

Joe Collins asked Karli to reaffirm that if we were to allow this, the army would take the easement back. Karli stated that the language states if BWSR fails to enforce this easement or allows the use of the land that conflicts with operations at Camp Ripley, the Secretary of the Army could request to transfer the easement rights to the United States of America.

Commissioner Petersen asked if there is an existing cell tower. Mr. Kroll stated there is an existing tower and wouldn't be any taller than the other one. Chair Holman stated this is a time for staff and members to speak. Commissioner Petersen asked why the military opposes a new tower. Karli stated that Camp Ripley reported any construction of a tower within Camp Ripley airspace would need to undergo review of the FAA. The FAA would then consider Camp Ripley's staff input on this project as part of their review. Camp Ripley staff have stated they would express their opposition to this tower being built on an ACUB easement. Jason Garms reported his understanding from their conversations in committee is the new tower would not be taller but would be more substantial.

Commissioner Sve stated the agreement language is very explicit and doesn't see another option other than to go with the recommendation and deny this request. Commissioner Sve thanked Mr. Kroll for coming today and for his comments.

LeRoy Ose stated if Mr. Kroll came to the board with permission from Camp Ripley and the FAA, he wouldn't see a reason why they couldn't approve the exchange.

Jayne Hager Dee stated if the military says no because it's in airspace and the FAA historically has followed their lead, that doesn't give the board a choice and it should be denied.

Joe Collins stated that the army and the FAA know what they're talking about for safety reasons.

**

25-30

Moved by Jayne Hager Dee, seconded by Tom Schulz, to approve the denial the **ACUB Easement Alteration Request – Easement 49-01-12-04 Morrison County - Kroll. *Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

Chair Holman called a recess at 10:26 a.m. and called the meeting back to order at 10:37 a.m.

Water Management and Strategic Planning Committee

Update on BWSR's Strategic Plan – Jenny Gieseke presented Update on BWSR's Strategic Plan.

In 2024 the BWSR Board approved a new strategic plan for the agency. Jenny Gieseke provided an update to the Water Management and Strategic Planning Committee in March on the status of the plan, and shared that information with the full Board, along with plans for monitoring and evaluation moving forward.

Jill Crafton asked what it means when it states BWSR conservation efforts. Jenny stated it means that it ensures broad support for local led conservation, building local capacity and ensuring full support for BWSR program services in operations.

Joe Collins stated there are considerable conservation efforts that are locally led.

LeAnn Buck asked if there was anything in the plan that reflects technology or data management showing outcomes. LeAnn also asked how it's going to be communicated to the counties, watershed districts and soil and water conservation districts. Jenny stated the Strategic Plan is intended as a document that guides our work internally. Stated they could share it more broadly if it would be beneficial. Jenny highlighted the action item in the plan to use data.

Mark Zabel left the meeting at 11:16 a.m.

Wetland Conservation Committee

Wetland Conservation Act Rulemaking Update – Les Lemm and Ken Powell presented Wetland Conservation Act Rulemaking Update.

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is responsible for promulgation of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Rules (MN Rules Chapter 8420). The current WCA Rule was adopted in 2009, and multiple statute changes have occurred since adoption. Staff have been working on rule-related topics for several years, coordinating with other agencies and obtaining technical and policy input. Most recently, two preliminary drafts of the rule (dated November 12, 2014 and April 25, 2025) were posted on the BWSR website for the purpose of obtaining public input. The BWSR Wetland Conservation Committee has met several times to review rule topics and the preliminary draft rule language. The preliminary draft rules, comments received, and additional information is available on the WCA Rulemaking page of the BWSR website. The next step is to consider any additional feedback received and develop a final draft of the rule for consideration by the Wetland Conservation Committee and the full Board. After board adoption of a final draft rule, it will be posted in the State Register followed by additional opportunities for public review and input under the State Administrative Procedure Act. The purpose of this agenda item is to update the Board on the draft rule development process and provide an overview of the substantive changes currently contained in the preliminary draft rule.

Jill Crafton thanked Les and the team for their work.

LeRoy Ose asked if anyone develops wetlands and then sells them. Les stated that's typically referred to as Wetland Banking.

John Jaschke noted Snapshot articles are in the Day of Packet.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Central Region Committee is scheduled for 2:30 PM, June 2, 2025, in St. Paul and by MS Teams.
- RIM Reserve Committee is scheduled for 10:00 AM, June 9, 2025, in St. Paul and by MS Teams.
- Next BWSR Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 AM, June 25, 2025, in St. Paul and by MS Teams.

Chair Holman adjourned the meeting at 11:43 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Sve
Vice Chair

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Dispute Resolution/Compliance Report

Meeting Date:

June 25, 2025

Agenda Category:

☐ Committee Recommendation ☐ New Business ☐ Old Business

Item Type:

☐ Decision ☐ Discussion ☒ Information

Keywords for Electronic Searchability:

Wetland Conservation Act Appeals/Buffer Compliance

Section/Region:

Resource Conservation/Central

Contact:

Travis Germundson

Prepared by:

Travis Germundson

Reviewed by:

Committee(s)

Presented by:

Germundson

Time requested:

5 minutes

☐ **Audio/Visual Equipment Needed for Agenda Item Presentation**

Attachments: ☐ Resolution ☐ Order ☐ Map ☒ Other Supporting Information

Fiscal/Policy Impact

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget
<input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Requested	<input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget
<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Requested	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget

ACTION REQUESTED

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See attached report.

SUMMARY (Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)

The report provides a monthly update on the number of appeals filed with the Board of Water and Soil Resources and summary on buffer compliance/enforcement actions statewide.

Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report

June 10, 2025

By: Travis Germundson

There has been **one** new appeal filed since the last report and there are currently **four** appeals pending.

Format note: New appeals that have been filed since last report to the Board.

~~Appeals that have been decided since last report to the Board.~~

File 25-7 (June 6, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Brown County. The Restoration Order regards the unauthorized placement of fill material in wetland associated with the expansion of a Campground/RV Park. The petition contends that the applicant still operates a farming operation that qualifies for an agricultural activities exemption. An application for exemption, and no-loss have been submitted to the local unit of government concurrently with the appeal. *No decision has been made on the appeal.*

File 25-6 (May 6, 2025) This is an appeal of WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Otter Tail County. The appeal regards the placement of fill in wetland for shoreline access. *No decision has been made on the appeal.*

~~File 25-5 (May 6, 2025) This is an appeal of a WCA notice of decision for a property in Waseca County. The appeal regards the denial of an exemption application for maintenance of a private ditch. The petition regards the eligibility of the agricultural activities exemption for drainage maintenance activities on areas labeled on valid certified wetland determination by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The appeal has been denied.~~

File 24-9 (12-20-24) This is an appeal of a WCA notice of decision in Morrison County. The appeal regards the approval of an exemption and no-loss decision for an access road associated with a township cartway. Morrison SWCD Board of Supervisors affirmed a decision made by staff under a local appeal and now that decision is being appealed. Note this involves the same property and wetland area associated with previous appeals (Files 23-8 and 23-15) of a wetland boundary and type decision. *The appeal was remanded back to the local unit of government to develop an adequate record that considers a written Technical Evaluation Panel report. The parties have mutually agreed to extend the time period for completion of the remand proceedings (August 1, 2025).*

File 24-8 (9-13-24). This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order for a property located in Beltrami County. The appeal regards the placement of fill material in wetland to create berms. The petition claims that drainage was in place prior to 1991, and the area is considered an artificial wetland. *The appeal was placed in abeyance and the Restoration Order stayed to allow time for completion of a wetland assessment and plan to comply with EPA's requirements of restoration and conditions of the WCA Restoration Order.*

Summary Table for Appeals

Type of Decision	Total for Calendar Year 2024	Total for Calendar Year 2025
Order in favor of appellant		
Order not in favor of appellant	5	4
Order Modified	1	1
Order Remanded	1	
Order Place Appeal in Abeyance	1	
Negotiated Settlement		
Withdrawn/Dismissed		

Buffer Compliance Status Update: BWSR has received Notifications of Noncompliance (NONS) on 67 parcels from the 12 counties BWSR is responsible for enforcement. Currently this is one Corrective Action Notice (CAN), and seven Administrative Penalty Orders (APO) issued by BWSR that are still active. Of the actions being tracked over 59 of those have been resolved.

Statewide 43 counties are fully compliant, and 44 counties have enforcement cases in progress. Of those counties (with enforcement cases in progress) there are currently 264 NONs, 313 CANs, and 33 APOs actively in place. Of the actions being tracked over 3042 of those have been resolved.

**Disclaimer: These numbers are generated monthly from BWSR's Access database. The information is obtained through notifications from LGUs on actions taken to bring about compliance and may not reflect the current status of compliance numbers.*

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Central Region Committee

1. Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035 – Michelle Jordan – ***DECISION ITEM***

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035**Meeting Date:** June 25, 2025**Agenda Category:** ☒ Committee Recommendation ☐ New Business ☐ Old Business**Item Type:** ☒ Decision ☐ Discussion ☐ Information**Keywords for Electronic****Searchability:** Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035**Section/Region:** Regional Operations/Central**Contact:** Michelle Jordan**Prepared by:** Michelle Jordan**Reviewed by:** Central Region Committee(s)**Presented by:** Michelle Jordan**Time requested:** 10 minutes☐ **Audio/Visual Equipment Needed for Agenda Item Presentation****Attachments:** ☐ Resolution ☒ Order ☒ Map ☒ Other Supporting Information**Fiscal/Policy Impact**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the Washington County Groundwater Plan as recommended by the Central Region Committee.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Link to draft plan:

https://bwsr.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2025-05/8.%20Full%20Plan_Groundwater%20Plan%202025-2035%20State%20Review%20Draft.pdf**SUMMARY** (*Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation*)**Background**

In the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, counties have the option to prepare and adopt a Groundwater Plan. The authorities and requirements of these plans are contained entirely within Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255. At this time, three counties have approved groundwater plans (Carver, Dakota, and Washington). Washington County (County) is located on the eastern edge of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan Area, bordered to the east by the St. Croix River. The County is the 5th most populated county in Minnesota and relies entirely on groundwater for its water supply. That supply is known to be impacted by groundwater contamination from polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The County's current Groundwater Plan (Plan) was approved and adopted in 2014. The original expiration date for the Plan was August

28, 2024. The County requested and received a one-year extension to their Plan to accommodate a delay in the Plan update process due to the COVID-19 pandemic and staff transitions and vacancies. The County Board held a workshop in June 2023 to initiate the process to update the Plan.

Plan Process and Highlights

Minnesota statute 103B.255 requires that the County seek the advice of local and state government agencies, and local and regional interests during the development of the Plan. The County formed a groundwater advisory committee, and a technical advisory committee, and these committees met jointly three times over the Plan development process. In addition to these statutory obligations, the County also conducted more general community engagement including administering a survey. An early draft of the Plan was submitted to reviewers and others for unofficial comment prior to the formal review process to gather additional feedback and input. During the formal review process, the County engaged with commenters, including meeting as appropriate to ensure that comments were addressed sufficiently.

The vision statement of this Plan is:

“We envision a future where there is plenty of clean water in Washington County to support human health, community growth, and a thriving natural environment.”

The Plan contains an implementation section detailing four broad goals to reach that vision and 21 strategies to address the goals.

- Goal #1. Groundwater Quality: *Groundwater is safe to drink*
- Goal #2. Groundwater Quantity: *Groundwater is plentiful to support human needs and a thriving natural environment*
- Goal #3. Groundwater Education: *People who live and work in Washington County understand the importance of protecting groundwater, how to conserve water and use it efficiently, and prevent contamination*
- Goal #4. Groundwater Governance: *Groundwater management is coordinated, efficient, and effective.*

The strategies are prioritized from high to low, and further defined by specific actions to take, and how the County will participate in those actions (lead, partner, regulate, educate, fund, advocate, monitor, operate). Many of the actions represent continuation of past efforts that have proven successful and/or necessary, however approximately 40 percent are identified as being new. Each action includes how implementation will be measured, and each strategy includes overall measures of success over the 10-year life of the Plan.

Formal Plan Review Process

The draft Plan was submitted for the 60-day review and comment period to the Board and other required reviewers on November 13, 2024, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255 Subd. 8. The County prepared a written response to comments received and held a public hearing on February 18, 2025. A revised draft of the Plan, comments received, a record of the public hearing, and a summary of changes incorporated as part of the review process was submitted to the Metropolitan Council and state agencies for the 45-day review and comment period on March 12, 2025. Most responses received during that time indicated no additional comments. The Metropolitan Council submitted additional comments which will be incorporated into the final Plan, and those changes are included as replacement pages in the Board packet. With the close of the 45-day review period on April 28, 2025, the Board has 90 days to review and act on the Plan pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255 Subd 10.

Recommendation

On June 2, 2025, the Board’s Central Region Committee and staff met with representatives from Washington County in St. Paul and virtually via Teams, to review and discuss the draft Plan. The Committee’s decision was to recommend to the Board approval of the Washington County Groundwater Plan per the attached draft Board Order.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

In the Matter of the review of the Groundwater
Plan for Washington County, pursuant to
Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255.

**ORDER
APPROVING
GROUNDWATER PLAN**

Whereas, the Washington County Board of Commissioners submitted a Groundwater Plan (Plan) dated March 2025 to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255, and;

Whereas, the Board has completed its review of the Plan;

Now Therefore, the Board hereby makes the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Order:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. **Authority of Plan.** The Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act in Minnesota Statutes section 103B.255 authorized counties in the seven-county metropolitan area to develop and implement groundwater plans, however, development of county groundwater plans is voluntary.
2. **Background and Nature of Groundwater in the County.** Washington County (County) is part of the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and bordered on its east side by the St. Croix River. Groundwater provides 100% of the drinking water supply in the County. The County is the fifth most populous in Minnesota, and current estimated population in the county is 278,936. In the last 10 years the county has added about 32,300 residents, a 13% increase. This growth, along with population projections of 339,700 by 2050, will continue the increased demand on groundwater.

The County’s population primarily uses public water supplies (87%). However, most cities still have some households that are not connected to the municipal water supply and instead have private wells and most residents living in townships also rely on private wells.

The County has continued to become more developed over the last 20 years. Between 2000 and 2020 there was a 16% decrease in the number of acres used for agriculture. Despite this continued development, over half the land in the county is still either undeveloped or being used for agriculture. There were large increases in the amount of land used for mixed use (47.8%), industrial (13.8%), park, and recreational or preserve (7.27%) between 2016 and 2020.

The quantity and quality of groundwater in the county is threatened by climate and human impacts. Quality issues include groundwater contamination, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from industry practices, and nitrates, pesticides, and chlorides from various land use practices. Quantity of groundwater is affected by how much is pumped out of the ground for human use and climate impacts.

3. **Plan Development and Review.** The County began the planning process in June of 2023. The County formed a groundwater advisory committee, and a technical advisory committee, and these committees met jointly three times over the Plan development process. In addition, the County also conducted more general community engagement including administering a survey. An early draft of the Plan was submitted to reviewers and others for unofficial comment prior to the formal review process to gather additional feedback and input.

The draft Plan was received by the Board for the initial 60-day review on November 13, 2024, per MS §103B.255, subdivision 8. The County prepared a written response to the 60-day comments and held a public hearing on February 18, 2025. A revised draft of the Plan, comments received, a record of the public hearing, and a summary of changes incorporated as part of the review process was submitted to the Metropolitan Council and state agencies for the 45-day review and comment period on March 12, 2025. Most responses received during that time indicated no additional comments. The Metropolitan Council submitted additional comments which will be incorporated into the final Plan. With the close of the 45-day review period on April 28, 2025, the Board has 90 days to review and act on the Plan pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255 Subd 10.

4. **Local Review.** Washington County sent a copy of the draft Plan to state review agencies, local government units, and adjacent counties on November 13, 2024 for their review. The draft Plan was also distributed to other stakeholders and was made available to the general public for review. The initial 60-day comment period ended on January 13, 2025. Written comments were received from: the Board of Water and Soil Resources, Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District, City of Woodbury, Dakota County, a member of the Groundwater Technical Advisory Committee, the Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Rice Creek Watershed District, Valley Branch Watershed District, and Washington Conservation District. The County prepared a written response to comments received. The County held a public hearing on February 18, 2025. During the public hearing, the County received comments from Brown's Creek Watershed District as the District had missed the 60-day comment period. The County also received comments from two individuals pertaining to the County's intent to explore becoming a delegated well authority.
5. **Metropolitan Council (Council) Review.** During the 60-day review, the Council submitted comments that included typographic and organizational suggestions, clarifications and additional context, as well as a request to ensure the Plan is Americans with Disabilities Act compliant. The County addressed the comments, and during the final 45-day review, the Council provided three additional comments for consideration, which the County chose to incorporate. The comments included a request to add the Council as a possible partner for Action 4.A.5; and two re-writes of Section 3.2 where the role of the Council is discussed. Four pages of the Plan are impacted by these comments, and replacement pages to be incorporated into the final approved Plan are attached.
6. **Department of Agriculture (MDA) Review.** Comments were submitted to the County during the 60-day review. MDA thanked the County for referencing the Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan (NFMP), the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program, and AgBMP Loan Program. MDA also thanked the County for including mention of their work with area farmers as a high priority. MDA provided additional comments related to metrics, standards, and private well testing, and typography. The County revised the Plan to address these comments, and during the final 45-day review MDA thanked the County for incorporating their previous comments and stated they had no additional comments.
7. **Department of Health (MDH) Review.** MDH commended the County for their hard work and thorough job putting together the Plan during 60-day review, stating that the Plan was a well written, well thought out, and accurate plan that encompassed the groundwater issues and opportunities present in Washington County. Additional comments received included typographic notes, requests for clarification and suggestions for the goals and strategies, as well as comments on the County's intent to explore becoming a delegated well authority, and the requirement of well testing at time of property transfer. The County worked to incorporate the comments from MDH, including meeting to discuss. During the final 45-day review, MDH staff stated they appreciated County staff working collaboratively with them to address their comments, and that all comments were adequately addressed.
8. **Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Review.** During the 60-day review, DNR provided comments related to data centers, appropriations, reuse, and partnering with cities on water level monitoring, among others. DNR staff commented that the Plan was well done and expressed appreciation that the section on wetlands addressed protection of groundwater dependent wetlands. The County responded to comments and during the 45-day review, no additional comments from the DNR were submitted.

9. **Pollution Control Agency (PCA) Review.** The PCA provided comments during the 60-day review related to data centers, measurability of goals, and inclusion of wetland restoration. During the 45-day review, PCA staff thanked the County for incorporating their feedback throughout the process, and stated they had no additional comments.
10. **Department of Transportation (DOT) Review.** The DOT did not provide formal comment.
11. **Board Review.** Comments were submitted to the County during the 60-day review, and County staff and Board staff had follow-up discussions on addressing the comments. Board staff commended the County on conducting a robust community and partner engagement process and noted that the plan was well written and clearly structured. Staff also thanked the County for inclusion of both environmental justice and climate change considerations in the Plan. Additional comments submitted related to measurability of goals and strategies, targeting and prioritization, and typographical comments. BWSR staff had no additional comment during the final review period.
12. **Plan Summary.** The vision statement of this Plan is: “We envision a future where there is plenty of clean water in Washington County to support human health, community growth, and a thriving natural environment.” The Plan contains an implementation section detailing four broad goals to reach that vision and 21 strategies to address the goals.
 - Goal #1. Groundwater Quality: Groundwater is safe to drink
 - Goal #2. Groundwater Quantity: Groundwater is plentiful to support human needs and a thriving natural environment
 - Goal #3. Groundwater Education: People who live and work in Washington County understand the importance of protecting groundwater, how to conserve water and use it efficiently, and prevent contamination
 - Goal #4. Groundwater Governance: Groundwater management is coordinated, efficient, and effective.

The strategies are prioritized from high to low, and further defined by specific actions to take, and how the County will participate in those actions (lead, partner, regulate, educate, fund, advocate, monitor, operate). Many of the actions represent continuation of past efforts that have proven successful and/or necessary, however approximately 40 percent are identified as being new. Each action includes how implementation will be measured, and each strategy includes overall measures of success over the 10-year life of the Plan.

13. **Central Region Committee Meeting.** On June 2, 2025, the Board’s Central Region Committee and staff met in St. Paul and via teleconference to review and discuss the final Plan. Those in attendance from the Board’s committee were Joe Collins (in-person), Jill Crafton (in-person), Jayne Hager Dee (in-person), Mark Zabel (online) Mike Runk (in-person), Lori Cox (online), Joel Larson (online), Heather Johnson (in-person), Steve Robertson (in-person), and Grant Wilson (online). Board staff in attendance included Marcey Westrick (Central Regional Manager, in-person) and Michelle Jordan (Board Conservationist, in-person). Washington County staff in attendance included Stephanie Souter (Senior Program Manager, in-person), Jessica Collin-Pilarski (Senior Planner, in-person), Smita Rakshit (Public Health Program Supervisor, in-person), Adriana Atcheson (Senior Planner, in-person), and Georgia Eilertson (Planner, in-person). Jessica Collin-Pilarski provided highlights of the Plan and process to the committee. Board staff recommended approval of the Plan. After presentation and discussion, the committee unanimously voted to recommend the approval of the Plan to the full board.

CONCLUSIONS

1. All relevant substantive and procedural requirements of law and rule have been fulfilled.
2. The Board has proper jurisdiction in the matter of approving the Groundwater Plan for Washington County pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.255, Subd. 10.

3. Washington County, Minnesota Groundwater Plan 2025-2035, and replacement pages, attached to this Order, defines the groundwater and groundwater-related problems within the County, possible solutions thereto, and an implementation program through 2035.
4. The Washington County Groundwater Plan will be effective June 25, 2025 through June 25, 2035.
5. The attached Plan is in conformance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Sections 103B.255.

ORDER

The Board hereby approves the attached Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035, with replacement pages.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 25th day of June 2025.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

BY: Rich Sve, Vice Chair

June 25, 2025

Board of Commissioners
Washington County
c/o Jessica L. Collin-Pilarski
Washington County Department of Public Works
14949 62nd Street North
Stillwater, MN 55082

Dear Chair and Commissioners:

I am pleased to inform you that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (Board) has approved the Washington County, Minnesota Groundwater Plan 2025-2035 (Plan) at its regular meeting held on June 25, 2025. For your records, I have enclosed a copy of the signed Board Order that documents approval of the Plan. Please be advised that the County must adopt and implement the Plan within 120 days of the date of the Order, in accordance with MN Statutes 103B.255, Subd. 11.

Members of the County Board, county staff, advisory committee members, and all others involved in the planning process are to be commended for developing a plan that clearly presents groundwater management issues in the County, and goals and priorities for addressing these issues. The Plan is well organized and written, and the Board looks forward to working with you as you implement this Plan and document its outcomes.

Please contact Michelle Jordan of our staff at 651-308-6724 or michelle.jordan@state.mn.us for further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rich Sve
Vice Chair

Enclosure: signed Board Order

CC: Jeffrey Berg, MDA (via email)
Abby Shea, MDH (via email)
Joe Richter, DNR (via email)
Sara Mielke, DNR (via email)
Jeff Risberg, MPCA (via email)
Kate MacDonald, MPCA (via email)
Maureen Hoffman, Met Council (via email)
Marcey Westrick, BWSR (via email)
Justin Hanson, BWSR (via email)

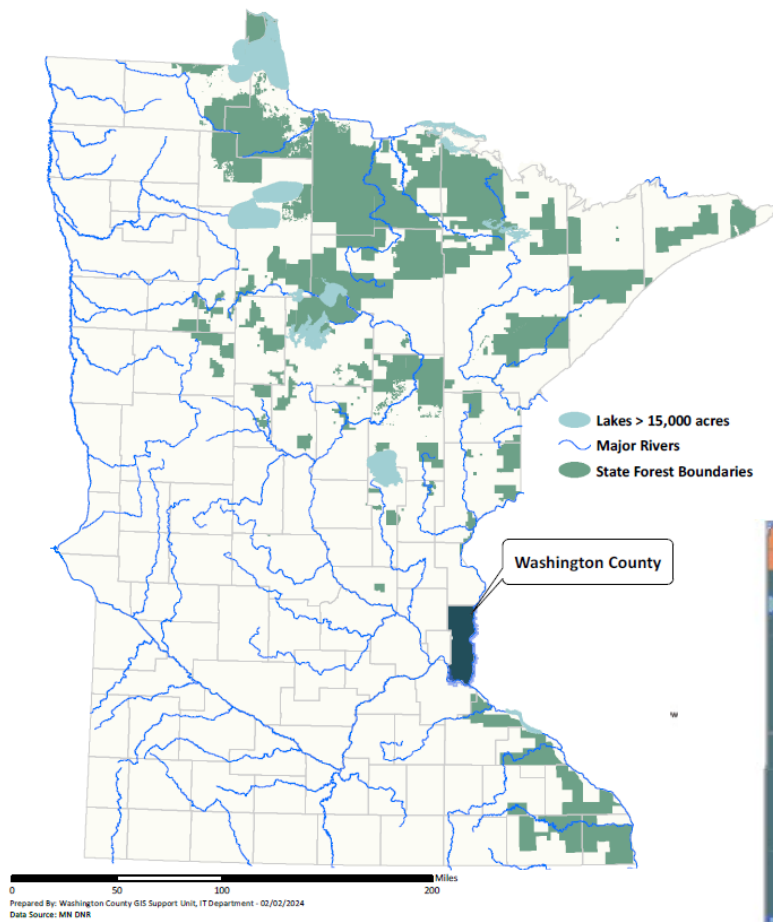


Figure 2. Location of Washington County, Minnesota Map

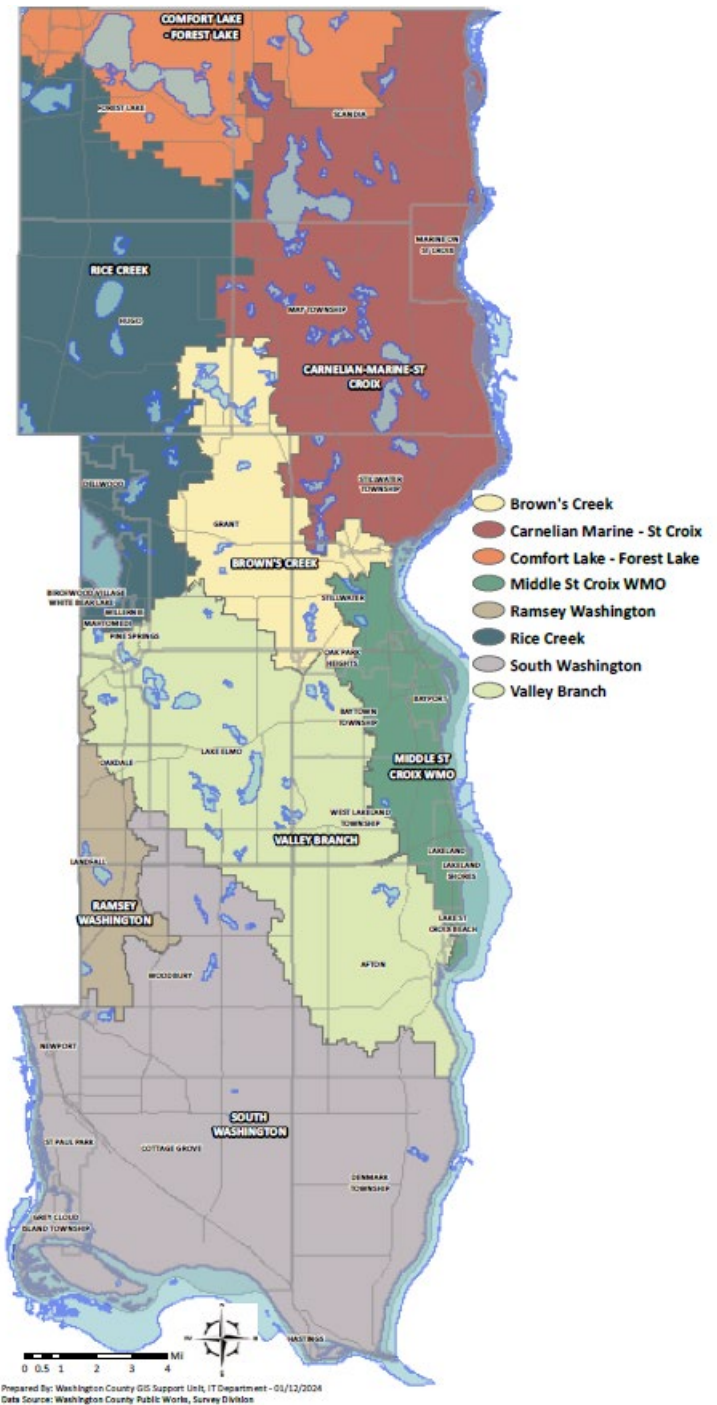


Figure 7. Location of Watersheds in Washington County Map



Washington County, Minnesota

Groundwater Plan

2025-2035



Acknowledgments

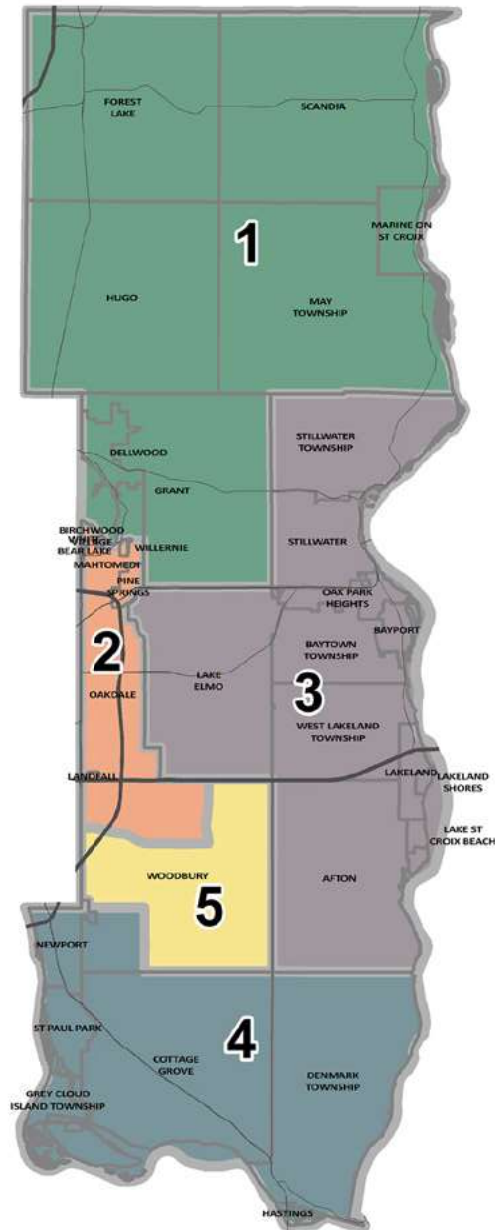


Figure 1. Washington County Commissioner Districts Map

Washington County Board of Commissioners

Washington County, MN

District 1 – Fran Miron

District 2 – Stan Karwoski

District 3 – Bethany Cox

District 3 – Gary Kriesel (now retired)

District 4 – Karla Bigham

District 5 – Michelle Clasen

Design: Washington County Staff – Georgia Eilertson, Jacqueline Johnson

Photography: Brain Kaufenberg

Written by: Washington County Public Health & Environment Department with input from the Groundwater Advisory and Technical Advisory Committees, and the Washington County Board of Commissioners.

The Washington County Groundwater Plan 2025-2035 was approved by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources on **XXXXX** and adopted by the Washington County Board of Commissioners on **XXXXX**.

Staff to Contact:

Stephanie Grayzeck Souter – Senior Program Manager

651-430-6701; stephanie.souter@washingtoncountymn.gov

Smita Rakshit – Planning and Performance Management Team Supervisor

651-430-6661; smita.rakshit@washingtoncountymn.gov

Jessica Collin-Pilarski – Senior Planner

651-430-6703; jessica.collin-pilarski@washingtoncountymn.gov

Adriana Atcheson – Senior Planner

651-430-6716; adriana.atcheson@washingtoncountymn.gov

Georgia Eilertson – Planner

651-430-6712; georgia.eilertson@washingtoncountymn.gov

Groundwater Plan

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	i
Groundwater Advisory Committee	v
Technical Advisory Committee	vi
Key to Acronyms	vii
Executive Summary	viii
Chapter 1. Introduction and Plan Overview	1
1.1 Vision	1
1.2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement	1
1.3 Context	1
1.4 Authority	2
1.5 Alignment with Other Plans	3
1.6 Scope and Plan Period	4
1.7 Planning Process	4
1.8 Partner and Public Engagement	4
1.9 Plan Amendment Process	7
Chapter 2. Plan Implementation	9
2.1 Implementation Framework	9
2.2 Implementation Tables for Groundwater Quality, Quantity, Education and Governance	11
2.3 Funding	32
2.4 Measurement	32
2.5 Work Plans	32
Chapter 3. Governance, Roles, and Responsibilities	33
3.1 Washington County Roles	33

3.2 State, Federal, and Regional Roles	37
3.3 Local Roles	39
3.4 Non-Governmental Roles	42
Chapter 4. Groundwater Resource Overview	45
4.1 Surface Geology	45
4.2 Bedrock Geology	47
4.3 Groundwater Hydrology	51
4.4 Groundwater Recharge	56
4.5 Climate and Groundwater Recharge	60
4.6 Groundwater-dependent Resources	61
Chapter 5. Population and Land Use	66
5.1 Population	66
5.2 Land Use	70
Chapter 6. Groundwater Quality	73
6.1 Groundwater Sensitivity	73
6.2 Contaminants	73
Chapter 7. Groundwater Quantity	89
7.1 Water Supply	90
7.2 Water Use	93
References	Appendix A
Glossary	Appendix B
Public Comments and County Responses	Appendix C
Plan Approval Documents	Appendix D

Groundwater Plan

Table of Contents: Figures

Figure 1. Washington County Commissioner Districts Map	i
Figure 2. Location of Washington County, Minnesota Map	1
Figure 3. Groundwater Concerns Bar Chart.....	7
Figure 4. Plan Approval Timeline.....	8
Figure 5. Land and Water Legacy Program Top 10 Priority Areas	37
Figure 6. Location of Local Government Units in Washington County Map	39
Figure 7. Location of Watersheds in Washington County Map	40
Figure 8. Water Governance Figure	44
Figure 9. Surface Geology Map	45
Figure 10. Geomorphology Map	47
Figure 11. Bedrock Geology Map	48
Figure 12. Bedrock Topography Map	49
Figure 13. Bedrock Sensitivity Map	49
Figure 14. Hydrogeologic Cross Section A- A' Forest Lake Area	52
Figure 15. Hydrogeologic Cross Section M- M' Cottage Grove Area	53
Figure 16. Recharge & Discharge Areas Map	57
Figure 17. Recharge Priority Ranking & WMO Units	59
Figure 18. Washington County Average Temperature Graph.....	60
Figure 19. Washington County Average Precipitation Graph	60
Figure 20. Recharge and Flow Through Lakes Map	62
Figure 21. National Wetlands Inventory Map.....	64
Figure 22. Projected Population Change Map	66
Figure 23. Percent of Household Population with a Well Map	66
Figure 24. Washington County Population by Race Chart.....	68
Figure 25. Areas of Concern for Environmental Justice Map	69
Figure 26. Renter Demographics Map	69
Figure 27. Washington County Land Cover Map, 1984	71
Figure 28. Washington County Land Cover Map, 2024	71
Figure 29. 2040 Planned Land Use Chart.....	72
Figure 30. Near Surface Sensitivity Rating Map.....	74
Figure 31. Bedrock Surface Sensitivity Rating Map	74
Figure 32. 3M PFAS Settlement Timeline.....	75
Figure 33. Solid Waste, Superfund, and SWBCA Map	77
Figure 34. Arsenic Map.....	79
Figure 35. Manganese Ma.....	79
Figure 36. MPCA Ambient Monitoring Wells Map	80
Figure 37. 2040 MUSA Map	82
Figure 38. SSTS Locations Map.....	83
Figure 39. Impaired Waters Map	83
Figure 40. County Regulated Gravel Mining Map.....	85
Figure 41. Solid Waste & Hazardous Waste Map.....	86
Figure 42. Waste Reduction Ranking Chart	88
Figure 43. Drinking Water Supply Management Areas Map	90
Figure 44. Overview of Public Water System Types.....	91
Figure 45. Location of Top 15 Water Users in Washington County Map.....	93
Figure 46. Washington County Groundwater Use per Year by Category Bar Graph	95
Figure 47. Location of Private Wells Map	95

Groundwater Plan

Table of Contents: Tables

** Tables marked with as asterisk represent ‘Table Groups.’ Table groups are multiple tables under the same title & heading and are located across multiple pages.*

Table 1. Minnesota Statute §103B.255, Subd. 7 Contents and Locations in Washington County Groundwater Plan.....	2	Table 9. Surface Geology Unit Type & Description	50
Table 2. Average Ratings of Environmental Concerns by Year, Resident Survey.....	6	Table 10. Hydrostratigraphic Unit, Function, and Importance	54
Table 3. Groundwater Plan Goal & Strategy Tables*	9	Table 11. Hydrostratigraphy, Washington County	54
Table 4. Groundwater Quality Plan Implementation Tables*	11	Table 12. Geomorphic Region – Topography/Geology and Groundwater Recharge Function.....	55
Table 5. Groundwater Quantity Plan Implementation Tables*	21	Table 13. Recharge Factors Bedrock Hydrostratigraphy, Washington County.....	58
Table 6. Groundwater Education Plan Implementation Tables*	25	Table 14. Current and Projected Population, Washington County.....	67
Table 7. Groundwater Governance Plan Implementation Tables*.....	28	Table 15. Washington County Top 15 Water Users by the Five-Year Average (2018-2022)	94
Table 8. Bedrock Geology, Washington County	46		



Groundwater Advisory Committee

Amanda Meyer, Municipal - Cottage Grove

Bob Fossum, Resident

Brian Johnson, Watershed - South Washington WD

Brian Krafthefer, Resident

Brian Zeller, Watershed - Middle St. Croix WMO

Chris Peltier, Construction

Dan Belka, Resident

Dave Schulenberg, Well Drilling †

Elden Lamprecht, Agriculture

Erik Nimlos, Hydrogeologist

Fran Miron, Commissioner District 1

Howard Markus, Resident

Jeff Thron, Well Drilling †

Jim Westerman, Municipal - Woodbury

Kristin Tuenge, Watershed - Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix WD

Liz Finnegan, Municipal - Hugo

Wendy Ward, Municipal - Marine on St. Croix

† Partway through the planning process the well drilling representative changed.

Technical Advisory Committee

Abby Shea, Minnesota Department of Health

Adriana Atcheson, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Angela Defenbaugh, Washington Conservation District

Angie Hong, East Metro Water Resources Education Program

Ann White Eagle, Ramsey County

Anneka Munsell, Minnesota Department of Health

Caleb Johnson, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Dan MacSwain, Washington County Parks

Daniel Elder, Washington County Public Works

David Brummel, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Emily Berquist, Minnesota Department of Health

Eric Alms, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Gary Bruns, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Georgia Eilertson, Washington County Public Health and Environment

James Noyola, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Jay Riggs, Washington Conservation District

Jen Kader, Metropolitan Council

Jessica Collin-Pilarski, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Joe Richter, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

John Hanson, Valley Branch Watershed District

John Loomis, South Washington Watershed District

Karen Kill, Brown's Creek Watershed District

Kim Kaiser, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Matt Downing, Middle St. Croix Water Management Organization

Matt Moore, South Washington Watershed District

Michelle Jordan, Board of Water and Soil Resources

Mike Isensee, Cernelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District

Mike Kinney, Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Nick Tomczik, Rice Creek Watershed District

Nicole Maras, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District

Patrick Sarafolean, Minnesota Department of Health

Rebecca Higgins, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Serena Rath, Washington County Administration

Sharon Kroening, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Smita Rakshit, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Stephanie Souter, Washington County Public Health and Environment

Susanna Wilson Witkowski, Chisago County

Valerie Neppl, Dakota County

Key to Acronyms

BMP	Best Management Practice	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
BWSR	Board of Water and Soil Resources	NPEAP	Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program
DNR	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	PFAS	Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
DWAMP	Drinking Water Ambient Monitoring Program	PHE	Washington County Public Health and Environment
EAW	Environmental Assessment Worksheet	PWS	Public Water Suppliers
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
GIS	Geographic Information Systems	RO	Reverse Osmosis
GWAC	Groundwater Advisory Committee	SCWRS	St. Croix Watershed Research Station
HBV	Health Based Value	SSTS	Subsurface Sewage Treatment System
HHW	Household Hazardous Waste	STATE	State Government (unspecified)
HOA	Homeowners Association	SWCD	Soil & Water Conservation District
IBP	Industrial By-Product	TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
IWMZ	Inner Wellhead Management Zone	TCE	Trichloroethylene
LGU	Local Government Unit	TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
MDA	Minnesota Department of Agriculture	U of M	University of Minnesota
MDH	Minnesota Department of Health	VOC	Volatile Organic Compounds
MGS	Minnesota Geological Survey	WCA	Wetland Conservation Act
MPCA	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	WCD	Washington Conservation District
MSW	Mixed Municipal Solid Waste	WHPP	Wellhead Protection Plan
MUSA	Metropolitan Urban Service Area	WMO	Watershed Management Organization

Executive Summary

Washington County (county) prioritizes water as one of its most valuable resources. The county relies solely on groundwater for drinking water and is home to many high-quality lakes and streams that depend on clean and plentiful groundwater. It also shares the border of the federally designated ‘Wild and Scenic River’ and the state designated ‘Outstanding Resource Water’ – the St. Croix River – with Wisconsin.

Having a county adopted Groundwater Plan (plan) is one way the county works to protect groundwater. Minnesota Statute §103B.255, Metropolitan Groundwater Management, enables a metro county government to prepare and adopt a groundwater plan. Washington County wrote its first groundwater plan in 1992; however, the County Board first formally adopted a groundwater plan in 2003. A second-generation plan was adopted in 2014. This plan serves as the county’s third generation plan. The Plan spans a ten-year period from the date of approval by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), on behalf of the State of Minnesota.

The purpose of preparing, adopting, and implementing a plan is to provide a county-wide structure for the protection and conservation of groundwater resources. The plan is a comprehensive document that lays out the vision, goals, strategies, and actions to address existing and future groundwater-related problems. Throughout the development of this plan the county strived to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and climate and environmental justice into its actions.

The quantity and quality of groundwater in the county is threatened by climate and human impacts. Quality issues include groundwater contamination, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from industry practices, and nitrates, pesticides, and chlorides from various land use practices. Quantity of groundwater is affected by how much is pumped out of the ground for human use and climate impacts.

The county’s groundwater vision over the next ten years is:

“We envision a future where there is plenty of clean water in Washington County to support human health, community growth, and a thriving natural environment.”

This includes the following goals:

- **Groundwater Quality:** Groundwater is safe to drink.
- **Groundwater Quantity:** Groundwater is plentiful to support human needs and a thriving natural environment.
- **Groundwater Education:** People who live and work in Washington County understand the importance of groundwater and adopt practices and behaviors that conserve and protect groundwater.
- **Groundwater Governance:** Groundwater management is coordinated, efficient, and effective.

The county developed an implementation framework to guide groundwater work for the next ten years. The framework consists of many strategies and actions the county and its partners will implement to achieve the above goals and work toward the plan vision. The framework is designed to be prioritized, targeted, and measurable.

Chapter 1. Introduction and Plan Overview

1.1 Vision

Groundwater is one of Washington County's (county) most valuable resources. Clean and abundant groundwater is necessary to sustain a healthy population, protect natural resources, and continue economic growth. The county's vision for the Groundwater Plan 2025-2035 (Plan) is:

"We envision a future where there is plenty of clean water in Washington County to support human health, community growth, and a thriving natural environment."

1.2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and climate and environmental justice are issues that were reflected throughout the Public Health and Environment (PHE) strategic planning process, as well as the countywide strategic plan.

We carry the county's commitment to a vibrant workplace and community that practices engagement, representation, and service to all members inclusively and equitably. This includes providing targeted services and advocacy for vulnerable populations who have and continue to face environmental justice issues in Washington County. We acknowledge that stressors related to global climate change will not fall proportionally amongst our community members.

PHE recognizes the impact these topics have across all programs and services, and we are committed to integrating them into all aspects of our work, including the areas impacted by and intersecting with the Groundwater Plan.

1.3 Context

There are many competing interests for the use of groundwater. The two main uses are for humans and natural ecosystems, including streams, lakes, and wetlands. Currently, groundwater provides 100% of the water supply in the county.

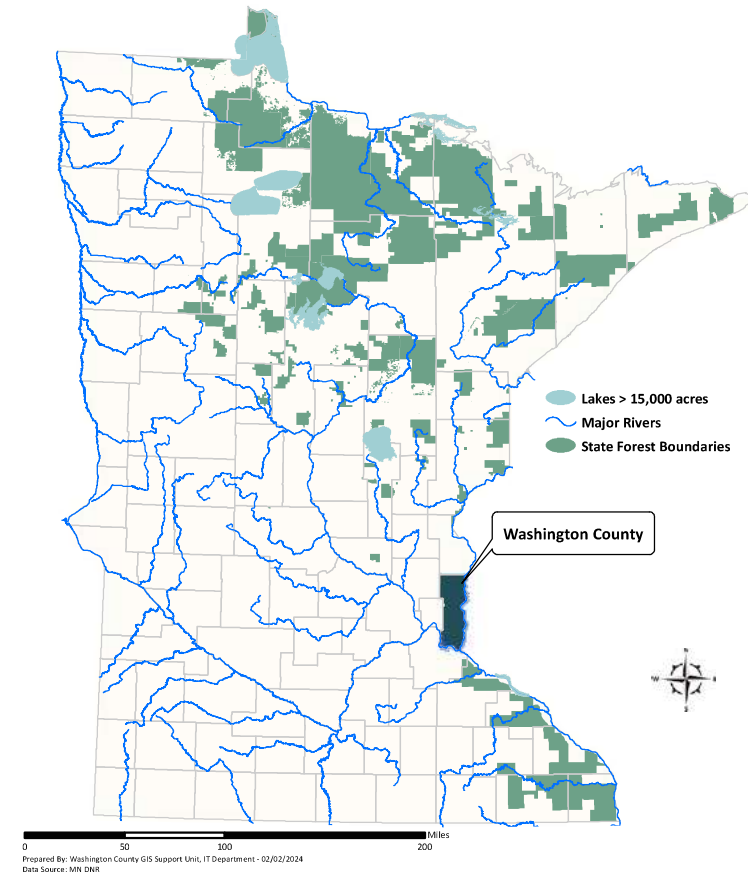


Figure 2. Location of Washington County, Minnesota Map

Human use affects how much, or the quantity, of groundwater that is available for natural resources. Contamination, or groundwater quality, is another factor that affects the amount of groundwater that is available for both human use and natural resources.

Population growth affects groundwater quantity. The current estimated population in the county is 278,936. In the last 10 years the county has added about 32,300 residents, a 13% increase. This growth, along with population projections of 339,700 by 2050, will continue the increased demand on groundwater, see population and land use chapter for more information.

The county is impacted by known groundwater contamination from per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), nitrates, and other substances. The presence of these contaminants decreases the amount of clean drinking water available without costly treatment.

The purpose of preparing, adopting, and implementing a plan is to provide a county-wide structure for the protection and conservation of groundwater resources. The Plan is a comprehensive document that lays out the vision, goals, strategies, and actions to address existing and future groundwater related problems.

1.4 Authority

Minnesota Statute §103B.255, Metropolitan Groundwater Management, enables a metro county government to prepare and adopt a groundwater plan. The county wrote its first groundwater plan in 1992; however, the County Board first formally adopted a plan in 2003. A second-generation plan was adopted in 2014. The requirements listed in statute and their location in the Plan are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. [Minnesota Statute §103B.255, Subd. 7](#) Contents and Locations in Washington County Groundwater Plan

§103B.255, Subd. 7	Content Requirement	Plan Chapter
(1)	cover the entire area within the county;	Chapter 1: Introduction and Plan Overview
(2)	describe existing and expected changes to the physical environment, land use, and development in the county;	Chapter 4: Groundwater Resource Overview Chapter 5: Population and Land Use
(3)	summarize available information about the groundwater and related resources in the county, including existing and potential distribution, availability, quality, and use;	Chapter 4: Groundwater Resource Overview Chapter 6: Quality Chapter 7: Quantity
(4)	state the goals, objectives, scope, and priorities of groundwater protection in the county;	Chapter 1: Introduction and Plan Overview Chapter 2: Plan Implementation
(5)	contain standards, criteria, and guidelines for the protection of groundwater from pollution and for various types of land uses in environmentally sensitive areas, critical areas, or previously contaminated areas;	Chapter 2: Plan Implementation Chapter 4: Groundwater Resource Overview Chapter 5: Population and Land Use Chapter 6: Quality
(6)	describe relationships and possible conflicts between the groundwater plan and the plans of other counties, local government units, and watershed management organizations in the affected groundwater system;	Chapter 1: Introduction and Plan Overview Chapter 3: Governance, Roles, Responsibilities
(7)	set forth standards, guidelines, and official controls for implementation of the plan by watershed management organizations and local units of government; and	Chapter 2: Plan Implementation Chapter 3: Governance, Roles, Responsibilities
(8)	include procedures and timelines for amending the groundwater plan.	Chapter 1: Introduction and Plan Overview

The Groundwater Plan is also guided by a number of Minnesota Statutes, such as §103H, Groundwater Protection; §103G, Waters of the State; §103I, Wells, Borings, and Underground Uses; and §115.55, Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems. The Groundwater Plan will support the goals of the state expressed in these statutes: that groundwater be maintained in its natural condition, free from any degradation caused by human activities, to the extent practicable (MN Statute §103H.001); and to protect health and general welfare by providing a means for the development and protection of the natural resource of groundwater in an orderly, healthful, and reasonable manner (MN Statute §103I.001). Groundwater use is sustainable if it will supply the needs of future generations and will not harm ecosystems, degrade water, or reduce water levels beyond the reach of public water supply and private domestic wells (MN Statute §103G.287).

1.5 Alignment with Other Plans

The Groundwater Plan is aligned with other county plans such as the Strategic Plan 2024-2029, County Comprehensive Plan 2040, and Solid Waste Management Plan 2024-2030. See Chapter 3 for a description of plans developed by other jurisdictions that align with the Groundwater Plan.

[Washington County Strategic Plan 2024-2029](#)

In August 2024, the County Board adopted the Strategic Plan with four strategic priorities. Each priority has a goal and several objectives to achieve that goal. The following strategic priority and associated objectives align with the Groundwater Plan.

Strategic Priority: Strong and Sustainable Environment

Goal: Enhance and maintain investments in the built and natural environment to encourage growth, accessibility, and resilient communities.

Objective E: Develop and implement climate change strategies and policies to improve community resiliency and sustainability of natural resources.

Objective F: Partner with state and local agencies to lead or support efforts to provide clean surface and groundwater of adequate supply to support human health, community growth, and a thriving natural environment.

[Washington County Comprehensive Plan 2040](#)

Goals, policies, and strategies around groundwater protection are also recognized in the Washington County Comprehensive Plan 2040. The county recognized that groundwater and surface water are one of its most valuable natural resources. High quality drinking water, healthy streams and lakes, fish habitat, rare plants, and economic vitality all depend on protecting and conserving water resources.

To guide future decision making and county actions, goals, policies, and strategies have been developed specific to the water resources element. Two water resources goals were identified in the Comprehensive Plan 2040, with corresponding policies and strategies. The goals are as follows:

Water Resources Goal 1: Manage the quality and quantity of water resources to protect human health and ensure sufficient supplies of clean water to support human uses and natural ecosystems for current and future generations.

Water Resources Goal 2: Protect groundwater and surface water resources through coordination and collaboration with state and local water resource organizations.

A 2050 Comprehensive Plan update will occur during the 10-year cycle of this Plan.

[Solid Waste Management Plan 2024-2042](#)

The 2024 Solid Waste Management Plan includes activities that are supported by the Groundwater Plan and enhance an integrated solid waste management system protective of groundwater. Some of the activities include:

1. Provide technical assistance and education on proper storage and disposal of hazardous waste. Provide information on less toxic/hazardous alternatives and best practices to minimize or eliminate toxic materials used.
2. Evaluate and prioritize compliance activities for hazardous waste generators located in sensitive geologic or wellhead protection areas.
3. Evaluate the need for a solid waste and household hazardous waste/agricultural chemical management assistance program.
4. Explore options to identify when and where movement of contaminated soil is occurring and evaluate a process to monitor this activity under existing solid and hazardous waste regulations.

1.6 Scope and Plan Period

The Groundwater Plan addresses groundwater conditions throughout the entirety of the county. The Plan spans a ten-year period from the date of approval by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), on behalf of the State of Minnesota.

1.7 Planning Process

The Washington County Board of Commissioners sets policy direction for the county and has responsibility for adopting the plan. The process began in June 2023 with a board workshop to review the current plan, seek direction on development of a new plan, and identify high level issues. Partner and public engagement, detailed in the next section, followed the initial board workshop. The strategies identified in this Groundwater Plan draft were presented at a County Board workshop in August 2024. After incorporating their feedback, the draft was sent to Groundwater Advisory Committee (GWAC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review.

The county followed the appropriate review process of the draft Groundwater Plan identified in Minnesota Statute §103.255, Subd.8. The county submitted



the draft Plan for a 60-day review and comment period to the adjoining counties, the Metropolitan Council, the state review agencies, BWSR, the Washington Conservation District (WCD), the cities, townships, tribal nations, and watershed management organizations within the county. The county held a public hearing on the draft Groundwater Plan after the 60-day public review period, which was no sooner than 30 days and no later than 45 days. After completion of the review and revisions, the draft Groundwater Plan, all written comments received on the Groundwater Plan, a record of the public hearing, and a summary of changes incorporated as part of the review process were submitted to the Metropolitan Council, the state review agencies, and BWSR for final review and approval.

1.8 Partner and Public Engagement

Partner Engagement

As per Minnesota Statute 103B.255, the county appoints a Groundwater Advisory Committee. The statute requires representatives of various interests. The GWAC members represent the perspectives of citizens, rural and urban Local Government Units (LGUs), Watershed Management Organizations

(WMOs), construction, well drilling, agriculture, and hydrology professionals. The GWAC consists of 15 members to represent all the required interests identified in the statute. The list of members can be found on page v.

In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was convened to represent the additional groundwater partner interests. The TAC included a representative from BWSR, one representative from each of the 8 WMOs in the county, Chisago County, Dakota County, East Metro Water Resources Education Program (EMWREP), Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Ramsey County, WCD, Washington County Administration, Washington County PHE, and Washington County Public Works. The GWAC and the TAC helped create the foundation for the Plan.

Staff convened three meetings to bring together the members of the GWAC and TAC on September 28, 2023; December 18, 2023; and April 3, 2024. The first meeting focused on strategies and actions around groundwater quality and the second meeting focused on strategies and actions around groundwater quantity. In the third meeting, the members of the GWAC and TAC had the opportunity to review the summary of strategies and actions developed during the first two meetings, as well as strategies and actions around education and governance. The Metropolitan Council conducted a parallel planning process for their Metro Area Water Supply Plan and Water Policy Plan, which engaged many of the same partners, over a similar period. County staff worked with the Metropolitan Council staff to obtain the feedback and ideas generated at those meetings and used those to also inform the development of Groundwater Plan actions.

The Plan's partner engagement approach brought together multiple viewpoints and varied opinions that were used to inform decisions and identify key strategies and actions. The process has helped connect county staff with new collaborators and foster relationships with existing partners. The county's engagement process emphasized visibility, transparency of the process, and appreciation of different points-of-view.

Public Engagement

Resident Survey 2022

The county conducts a regular, periodic survey of residents' opinions to understand their needs, with trends going back to 2001. Through this survey, county residents have an opportunity to provide feedback about what is working well and what is not, and to share their priorities for community planning and resource allocation. The most recent iteration of the survey occurred in 2022. The survey was mailed to 3,000 randomly selected households, distributed equally among the five county commissioner districts. The response rate was 22% (648 completed surveys). To make the survey results comparable to other years and other jurisdictions, the ratings were converted to average scores on a 100-point scale, where zero is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating.

Similar to past resident surveys, the 2022 survey asked about potential environmental issues and asked how much of a concern, if at all, each was in the county. The quality of drinking water and the quality of water in lakes and streams were rated of highest concern to residents. Results of the survey showed that residents are moderately concerned with these issues, with average scores between 57 and 59.

Environmental Planning Survey 2023

PHE administered an Environmental Planning Survey in 2023, to inform planning for the groundwater and solid waste programs. The survey was open from August to October of 2023. The survey consisted of 16 questions focused on environmental planning. The survey was distributed in the August edition of 'Staying in Touch,' a quarterly, printed newsletter mailed to all residential properties in the county. Residents could scan a QR code with their mobile devices and take the survey online. The survey was available in English, Spanish, Hmong, and Somali. Paper copies of the survey were also shared with partner agencies such as the Washington County Community Development Agency, Recycling Coordinators, and the Washington Conservation District to

Table 2. Average Ratings of Environmental Concerns by Year, Resident Survey

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is an environmental concern in Washington County
(0=not at all a concern, 100=major concern)

Environmental concern	2022	2019	2016	2013	2008	2006	2001
Quality of drinking water	59	57	41	46	54	47	NA
Quality of water in lakes and streams	57	57	48	55	55	53	NA
Energy use	51	48	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Climate change	50	51	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Quantity of useable water supply	50	50	40	NA	NA	NA	NA
Exposure to radon	38	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lack of recycling	35	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Yard waste disposal	33	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Quality of outdoor air	31	32	28	30	37	37	NA
Proper disposal of garbage	31	31	23	29	38	40	NA
Safety of food in public establishments	28	27	28	34	37	36	NA

Source: Washington County Resident Survey

distribute at their workshops, at the Washington County fair booths, and at the Well Water Screening Clinic in September 2023. A total of 569 residents responded to the survey. Among them, 560 were in English and nine in Spanish.

The survey included three questions around groundwater:

- Do you know where your drinking water comes from?
- What are your concerns about groundwater in Washington County?
- How can Washington County, and our state and local partners, help address groundwater concerns?

Most of the respondents (62%) knew that their drinking water comes from groundwater. The two largest concerns were the presence of contamination and sources of contamination, followed by quantity/use, climate change, and coordination among partners.

Respondents could write in their answer in the ‘Other (please specify)’ option. Below are the comments we received:

- Reverse Osmosis filters for all, not just those who can afford them, and offer discounts.
- Pause and slow down new development.
- Chlorides and road salt.

- Keep business and agricultural waste out of water and restrict use.
- Communicate actions that are being taken to protect residents.
- Give residents better guidance on PFAS to protect ourselves and be transparent about what's in the water.
- Enforce water restrictions.
- Stop treating lawns with chemicals and fertilizers.
- Switch to surface water.
- Make water testing more convenient and less expensive.

For the question on how the county, state, and local partners can help address groundwater concerns, there were six themes:

- Ensuring frequent monitoring and accessibility of at home testing kits.
- Regular, transparent, and honest communication to the public on water analysis.
- Enforce/mandate rules, laws, and ordinances on lawn watering and fertilizer use for all residence, business, and agriculture.
- Easily accessible education, and intentionally educate community about the concerns, and proper disposal of chemicals.
- Free or reduced cost of in-home water filtration (e.g., reverse osmosis).
- Be transparent about PFAS and communicate what can be done so we are drinking safe water.

From the survey responses, it is evident that county residents are aware of existing groundwater issues and would like the county to continue efforts to protect it.

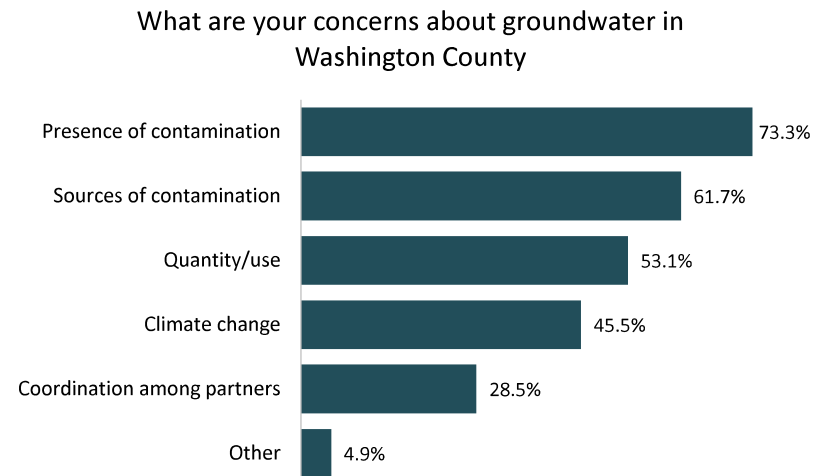


Figure 3. Groundwater Concerns Bar Chart, Resident Survey

1.9 Plan Amendment Process

The Plan is intended to cover a ten-year period beginning with its date of approval by BWSR. The county intends to prepare an annual report to track accomplishments. The county may also review the Plan after any significant state, regional, or county plan updates to ensure consistency with guiding documents and address changing circumstances, as needed. The county may prepare proposed amendments to the Plan at any time during this period. Amendments may be a result of changed conditions, completion of other complementary plans that were identified in this Plan, or other possible circumstances.

The county will propose amendments updating the Plan in accordance with Minnesota Statute 103B.255. The following process will be used:

- Washington County will submit the draft Plan amendments to adjoining counties, the Metropolitan Council, the state review agencies, BWSR, soil and water conservation districts, watershed organizations, and towns and

cities within the county for review in accordance with the provisions of Minnesota Statute 103B.255 subdivisions 8 through 10.

- Notice of the public hearing on the proposed plan amendments shall be published by the county in at least one legal newspaper in the county at least ten days before the hearing. At the hearing the county will solicit comments on the proposed plan amendments.
- After the public hearing, Washington County will submit the plan amendments for approval under Minnesota Statute 103B.255 subdivisions 9 and 10.

- The county will not adopt any proposed plan amendments before BWSR has decided whether the amendments are in accordance with the provisions found in section 103B.255, subdivisions 8 through 10.

Washington County will adopt and implement plan amendments within 120 days after approval by BWSR.

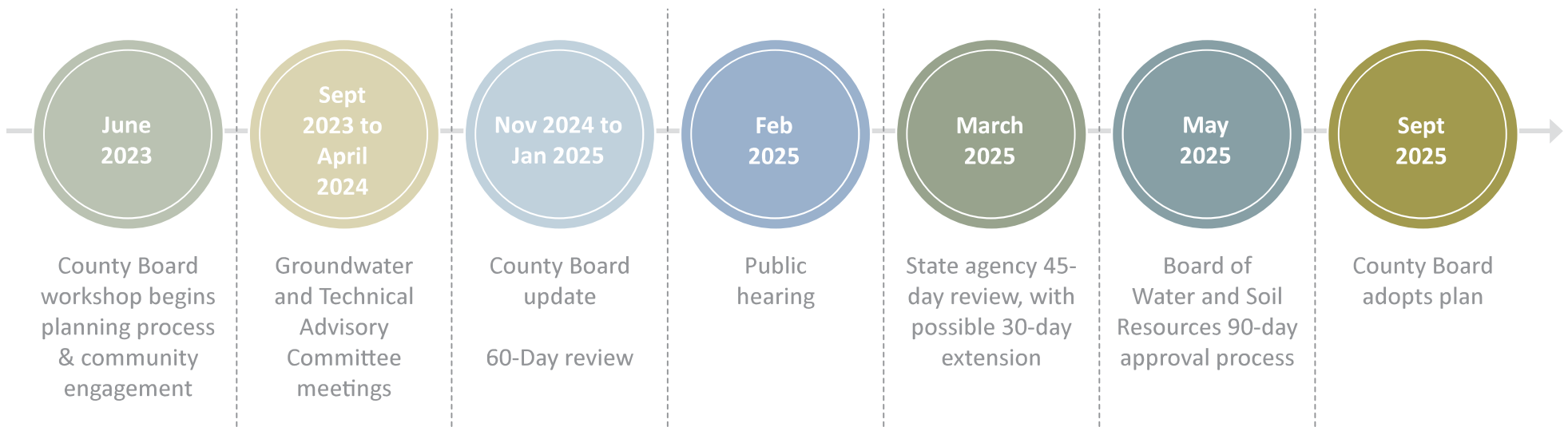


Figure 4. Plan Approval Timeline, Washington County

2.2 Implementation Tables for Groundwater Quality, Quantity, Education, and Governance

Table Group 4. Groundwater Quality Plan Implementation Tables

Goal #1: Groundwater is safe to drink.

A. Strategy: Participate in PFAS activities led by state agencies and communicate with residents. (Priority: High)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.A.1	Assist residents in connecting with PFAS information and resources provided by state agencies and public water suppliers (PWS), and monitor state response for potential gaps related to PFAS testing and lab access.	Continue	Advocate	Residents	Ongoing	MDH LGUs PWSs	# of residents referred Update website quarterly
1.A.2	Monitor, review, and participate in the State of Minnesota PFAS activities and plans, including Minnesota's PFAS Blueprint and Minnesota Biosolids Strategy. Communicate to the public the county's role in these activities.	Continue	Advocate	Businesses Residents	Ongoing	MDH LGUs	# of activities participated in
1.A.3	Participate in 3M Settlement activities.	Continue	Partner	Businesses Residents	Ongoing	LGUs State agencies	# of activities participated in
1.A.4	Partner with the state to provide technical assistance and support for licensed non-community transient public water suppliers with PFAS detections.	New	Partner	Licensed non-community transient PWSs	Ongoing	State agencies Non-comm. transient PWSs	# of Non-community Transient PWSs assisted
1.A.5	Assess role in providing PFAS testing for non-residential wells such as, but not limited to, the county's licensed non-community transient public water suppliers.	New	Regulate	Owners of non-residential wells	Ongoing	MDH	Role is assessed

1.A.6	Monitor and advocate for research and studies (e.g. biomonitoring, additional surveillance) on health effects from PFAS and other contaminants	Continue	Partner	Residents	Ongoing	MDH Health systems	# of studies
-------	--	----------	---------	-----------	---------	--------------------	--------------

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1A.

- Residents know where to find information about PFAS and how to get their water tested.
- Public and private drinking water sources with PFAS values that exceed current health advice are treated and safe to drink.

B. Strategy: Assist private well owners in having their drinking water sampled, abandoned wells sealed, and using appropriate water treatments.
(Priority: High)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.B.1	Review existing well testing and location information for the following, to inform targeted implementation actions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable populations and their access to safe drinking water, including renters. • Potential hot spots or contamination areas such as nitrates, pesticides, manganese, arsenic, and others in the county. • Flood-prone areas. 	New	Lead	Private well owners Vulnerable populations	2025-2026 Ongoing	WCD WMOs State agencies	Existing information is documented and reviewed
1.B.2	Expand testing options for contaminants including but not limited to coliform bacteria, nitrate, arsenic, manganese, lead, and newly identified emerging contaminants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue a fee for service water sampling program. • Explore and implement, as appropriate, options to lessen the cost of sampling such as a free program that rotates throughout the county, lower cost options, and/or identifying opportunities to apply for and offer grants. • Continue to hold one free private water sampling event each year with partners. • Explore and implement options for reminding private well owners to test their well water. • Identify methods for residents to test for pesticides and support MDAs continued work on pesticide identification and treatment. 	Expand	Lead	Private well owners Vulnerable populations	2025 Ongoing	MDH MDA	# of new testing options for residents # of tests provided annually

1.B.3	Explore options for financial assistance for private well water treatment and implement as appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with state and local partners, identify options and funding for low or no cost grants for private well treatment. • Promote existing loan program for private well repair and replacement in accordance with county policy. 	Continue and New	Lead	Private well owners Vulnerable populations	2025 Ongoing	LWCD WMOs State agencies	Low cost or no cost options exist # of treatment systems installed
1.B.4	Continue to work with state agencies and LGUs impacted by TCE on appropriate mitigation strategies.	Continue	Partner	PWSs Private well owners	Ongoing	LGUs State agencies PWSs	# of meetings attended
1.B.5	Continue existing abandoned well sealing grant program and expand by identifying and applying for grant opportunities. Collaborate with local units of government to find and seal abandoned wells.	Continue and Expand	Lead	Businesses Residents	Ongoing	LGUs State agencies PWSs	# of abandoned wells sealed
1.B.6	Explore options for a coordinated private well data information system among agencies that collect well data. If a data information system is created ensure it is easily accessible to the public.	New	Partner	Partners Public	2026-2028	WMOs WCD Met Council State agencies	Data information system is available and accessible by the public

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1B.

- Residents know how to access Washington County's well sampling and abandoned well sealing programs.
- Residents have access to information about drinking water sampling, abandoned well sealing and appropriate water treatment in a representative set of languages.
- Abandoned wells are sealed in accordance with Minnesota Well Code and the county continues to provide well sealing grants.

C. Strategy: Collaborate with relevant partners (e.g., MDH, DNR, Met Council) and Water Suppliers to protect their water supply. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.C.1	Monitor and review wellhead protection (WHP) and water supply planning activities led by agencies, assess county role, and provide comments on both plans.	Continue and New	Partner	PWSs	Ongoing	LGUs PWSs MDH DNR Met Council	County role defined and documented # of WHPs reviewed
1.C.2	Continue to maintain awareness of drinking water standards as they evolve and new information becomes available, and inform partners and residents of PWS actions.	Continue	Partner	Partners Residents	Ongoing	MDH	# of standards changed or newly created # of outreach efforts made to this strategy
1.C.3	Continue water supply testing, sanitary surveys, and inner wellhead management zone (IWMZ) inventory for the Department of Public Health and Environment's licensed Non-community transient public water suppliers.	Continue	Lead	Non-community transient PWSs	Ongoing	MDH Non-community transient PWSs	# of non-community transient PWS tested # of sanitary surveys completed
1.C.4	Work with PWS and partners to build trust and confidence with the general public on actions taken to ensure safe drinking water.	New	Partner	Residents	2026 or later	PWSs MDH DNR	# reached with educational materials

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1C.

- Review all wellhead protection and water supply plans sent to the county.
- Washington County continues its program of licensing non-community transient public water suppliers.

D. Strategy: Reduce agriculture-related groundwater contamination. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.D.1	Continue to support the MDA Nitrate Local Advisory Team activities in Washington County and implementation of the MDAs Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan.	Continue	Partner	Agricultural community	Ongoing	WCD MDA LGUs	# of meetings attended
1.D.2	Continue to partner with the Washington Conservation District, MDA, NRCS, and other organizations, to support whole farm planning that includes promotion of water quality best management practices (BMPs) and soil health practices. ‡ Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Certification Program and AgBMP loans. • Promote peer to peer farmer programs. • Animal waste management. 	Continue	Partner	Agricultural community	Ongoing	WCD MDA NRCS WMOs LGUs	# of practices installed # of acres enrolled in programs
1.D.3	Explore and implement, if feasible, cost share funding for agricultural water quality and soil health BMPs through the Washington Conservation District, Watershed Management Organizations, Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan, and any BWSR funding that becomes available.	New	Partner	Agricultural community	Ongoing	WMOs WCD LSC Partnership BWSR State agencies	Cost share funding programs established

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1D.

- An increased number of farms in Washington County are enrolled in the Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Certification Program.
- There is a reduction in groundwater contamination related to animal waste.

‡ Signifies actions that include both a positive water quality and water quantity benefit.

E. Strategy: Reduce groundwater contamination from chloride. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.E.1	Continue to fund one Smart Salting training in the county each year.	Continue	Partner Fund	Public Works Contractors	Annual	EMWREP MPCA	# of attendees
1.E.2	Promote chloride reduction by advocating and incentivizing the replacement of outdated water softeners with new, efficient on-demand water softeners.	New	Lead	Residents	2026	LGUs WMOs WCD Met Council State agencies	# of replaced water softeners
1.E.3	Investigate testing a sample of collector and/or community septic systems for the concentration of chlorides.	New	Lead	Collector and community septic systems	2026	Internal	Samples are taken from systems
1.E.4	Work with county departments to minimize salt use on county roads, sidewalks, and parking lots while protecting public safety.	New	Partner	Building Services and Public Works	Ongoing	Internal	Lbs. of salt saved
1.E.5	Encourage cities and townships to develop and implement chloride reduction policies and practices.	New	Partner	LGUs	2025; Ongoing	LGUs	# of LGUs with chloride reduction policies and practices in place

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1E.

- Residents know how much salt to apply for safe winter ice practices.
- The county has data on the amount of chlorides discharged from community and collector septic systems.
- Washington County departments follows best practices to reduce salt use without compromising public safety.

F. Strategy: Prevent pollution by minimizing wastewater impacts on groundwater quality. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.F.1	Ensure that subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) in Washington County will be constructed, operated, and maintained in conformance with Minnesota statutes and rules and County Development Code Chapter 4.	Continue	Regulate	Businesses Residents	Ongoing	Internal	# of SSTS permitted # of compliance inspections
1.F.2	Continue to offer SSTS loans and low-income grants and explore additional funding for non-compliant SSTS, including city sewer connection where available.	Continue	Lead	LGUs Businesses Residents	Ongoing	Internal	# of loans and grants administered
1.F.3	Identifying failing SSTSs through the required compliance inspection process at the time of property transfer and requiring their replacement to protect groundwater.	Continue	Regulate	LGUs Businesses Residents	Ongoing	Internal	# of SSTS inspected at time of property transfer
1.F.4	Periodically review and update the SSTS Risk Assessment database and promote it as a tool for land-use planning, including identified opportunities to expand municipal sewers.	Continue	Lead	Developers LGUs	Ongoing	Internal	# of updates
1.F.5	The county will define its role regarding community sewers and their effect on groundwater.	New	Lead	Community sewer systems	2025	State agencies	Role defined
1.F.6	Continue administering county SSTS operating permits program.	Continue	Lead	Businesses Residents	Ongoing	Internal	# of operating permits
1.F.7	Utilize approved nutrient and bacterial total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) and other studies as a tool to work with partners (e.g. watershed, cities) to identify areas for focused septic system maintenance and management.	Continue	Partner	Partners Residents	Ongoing	WMOs	# of focused SSTS maintenance and management

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1F.

- SSTS in the county are functioning properly.
- The SSTS Risk Assessment Database is updated regularly and being utilized in land use planning decisions.
- Residents have access to information about the SSTS loan and grant programs in a representative set of languages.

G. Strategy: Address pollution potential from industrial operations, mining, and historically contaminated sites. (Priority: Low)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.G.1	Continue to track, review, and comment on environmental impact statements, environmental assessment worksheets, alternative urban areawide reviews, and proposals for developments with increased impacts to groundwater quantity and quality.	Continue	Partner	Developers LGUs	Ongoing	Internal	# of studies reviewed
1.G.2	Evaluate the need for a solid waste and household hazardous waste/ agricultural chemical management assistance program.	New	Lead	Residents	2030	WCD	Evaluation complete
1.G.3	Continue the county's hazardous waste licensing role by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to enforce Washington County ordinances that regulate the proper collection, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Identifying and evaluating businesses and other non-residential entities served by SSTs that generate or potentially generate hazardous waste and ensure that hazardous waste is not disposed of in an onsite well or SSTs. Provide tailored assistance to licensed establishments with SSTs or a non-community water supply. 	Continue and New	Lead	Licensed generators	Ongoing	MPCA	# of licenses
1.G.4	Work with Public Works, Administration, WMOs, and the WCD to develop a process to review and provide comments on mining permits that includes professional engineering as well as hydrological review and analysis.	Continue and New	Partner	Mining operations	2025	WCD WMOs	Process is developed Engineer is on contract # of mining permits
1.G.5	The county will explore options to identify when and where movement of contaminated soil is occurring and evaluate a process to monitor this activity under existing solid and hazardous waste regulations.	New	Lead	Developers LGUs	2026; Ongoing	Internal	Process is developed
1.G.6	The Washington County Groundwater Plan supports the work of the Washington County Solid Waste Management Plan to implement activities for an integrated solid waste management system that is protective of groundwater.	Continue	Lead	Residents Businesses LGUs	Ongoing	Internal	Both plans implemented

1.G.7	<p>The county will continue the following with respect to landfills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The county supports Minnesota Rule 7001.3111 “Additional Siting Requirements for Certain Landfills that have not Received a Permit before January 1, 2011.” • The county will continue to review and provide comments on any proposed landfill operations within the county to protect groundwater. • The county will review and comment on any proposed statute or rule changes from the state with regards to landfill operations to protect groundwater. 	Continue	Lead	State agencies	Ongoing	State agencies	Zero new landfills
-------	--	----------	------	----------------	---------	----------------	--------------------

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1G.

- *Waste in the county is collected, stored and disposed of properly.*
- *Washington County departments collaborate to efficiently review and comment on mining permits.*

H. Strategy: Continue a land spreading program that is protective of groundwater. (Priority: Low)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.H.1	Explore collaboration and partnerships with local WMOs, WCD, Met Council, researchers and/or other potential partners on review of land spreading permitting by the county and/or other agencies for the beneficial use of byproducts that are land-spread as soil amendments.	New	Lead	Partners	2026 or later	IWMOs WCD Met Council State agencies	Collaborative process is developed
1.H.2	Establish a shareable data management and mapping system to track proposed sites for land application to reduce the risk of direct human exposure to waste or contamination of groundwater.	New	Lead	Partners	2027 or later	Internal	Sharable data management system is developed
1.H.3	Develop and implement educational resources for residents regarding land spreading of septage.	New	Lead	Residents	Ongoing	EMWREP WCD WMOs LGUs MPCA	# of social media views # reached with ed. materials

1.H.4	<p>Advocate that the MPCA evaluate and effectively regulate land spreading of septage to avoid adversely affecting public health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't allow spreading in karst areas or vulnerable Drinking Water Source Management Areas, or areas of high pollution sensitivity. • Require sample analyses to include emerging contaminants including PFAS. • Monitor permitted applications beyond annual self-reporting including monitoring adjacent surface and groundwater to check for emerging contaminants after land spreading activity. 	Continue and New	Partner	MPCA	2025; Ongoing	MPCA MDH	MPCA regulates land spreading of septage to protect groundwater
-------	---	------------------	---------	------	---------------	----------	---

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1H.

- Washington County works with its partners to review and create awareness of land spreading permits.
- Washington County has established a shareable data management and mapping system to track proposed sites for land application.

I. Strategy: Manage stormwater to prevent groundwater pollution. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
1.I.1	Continue to implement Washington County MS4 to prevent pollution to surface and groundwater.	Continue	Lead (Public Works)	Residents Municipalities	Ongoing	Municipalities WCD	MS4 reporting complete
1.I.2	Follow the MPCA Stormwater Manual and any guidance from MDH for safe placement of infiltration practices, working with state agencies to address barriers to implementation.	Continue	Lead (Public Works)	Residents Municipalities Watersheds	Ongoing	Municipalities WCD WMOs MDH MPCA	Infiltration practices are safely placed
1.I.3	Encourage partners to implement stormwater best management practices that are protective of groundwater, including safe and feasible water reuse. ‡	Continue	Advocate	Municipalities Watersheds Public Works	Ongoing	WCD WMOs LGUs	Stormwater BMPs are safely placed

10-Year Outcome Measures. 1I.

- Stormwater management practices are sited appropriately based on geologic conditions.

‡ Signifies actions that include both a positive water quality and water quantity benefit.

Table Group 5. Groundwater Quantity Plan Implementation Tables

Goal #2: Groundwater is plentiful to support human needs and a thriving natural environment.

A. Strategy: Expand understanding of groundwater and surface water connection in the county. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
2.A.1	Support research and modeling to increase understanding of the surface and groundwater connection and how it impacts groundwater availability and contaminant flow.	Continue	Advocate	County-wide	Ongoing	Met Council State agencies WCD WMOs	# of research projects supported
2.A.2	Partner with the WCD and watersheds to support efforts for soil health. ‡	Continue	Partner	Landowners	Ongoing	WMOs WCD State agencies	# of soil health projects

10-Year Outcome Measures. 2A.

- The county successfully partners with the WCD to implement projects that improve soil health and groundwater quality and quantity.

B. Strategy: Promote and implement water conservation and efficiency efforts. (Priority: High)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
2.B.1	Explore funding opportunities for water conservation and efficiency, and work with partners to create, promote, and/or expand programs (including, but not limited to, moisture sensors for irrigation systems, smart controls, water efficient appliances, and water leak detection projects).	Expand	Lead Partner	PWSs Property and building managers HOAs	Ongoing	WCD WMOs Met Council State agencies LGUs PWSs	# of water efficiency and conservation practices implemented

‡ Signifies actions that include both a positive water quality and water quantity benefit.

2.B.2	Identify opportunities for water use audits and implementation of water conservation and efficiency projects on county-owned property.	New	Lead	County property	Ongoing	WCD EMWREP	# of water efficiency and conservation practices implemented
2.B.3	Continue supporting rain barrel sales offered through the Public Health and Environment Department.	Continue	Lead	Residents	Ongoing	Recycling Association of Minnesota	# of rain barrels sold

10-Year Outcome Measures. 2B.

- *The county has implemented water conservation efforts and reduced its water use.*
- *Residents are aware of and utilize water efficiency and conservation programs.*

C. Strategy: Support stormwater retention, infiltration and opportunities to replenish aquifer storage. (Priority: Low)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
2.C.1	Support partner efforts to maximize stormwater retention and infiltration where it can be done safely.	New	Advocate	County-wide	Ongoing	State agencies Met Council LGUs	# of actions taken
2.C.2	Support research by partners to establish feasibility and safety of direct injection of aquifers and infiltration, including shallow injection from dewatering construction projects.	New	Advocate	County-wide	Ongoing	State agencies Met Council LGUs	# of actions taken

10-Year Outcome Measures. 2C.

- *The county and its partners understand the effects of direct injection on water quality and geology.*

D. Strategy: Protect, preserve, and restore resources that support groundwater-dependent ecosystems. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
2.D.1	Continue to fund WCD's administration of the Wetland Conservation Act through the BWSR Natural Resource Block Grant.	Continue	Lead Partner	Partner Fund	Ongoing	BWSR WCD	Acres of wetland managed
2.D.2	Encourage projects and activities that will improve groundwater quality, temperature, and quantity for groundwater dependent resources. ‡ Examples include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land protection • Soil health practices • Volume control/Stormwater infiltration (Minimal Impact Design Standards, MIDS) • Wetland restoration 	Continue	Lead	Partner	Ongoing	WCD LGUs	# of practices implemented Acres protected

10-Year Outcome Measures. 2D.

- Washington County has worked with partners to increase the number of acres of land protected.

E. Strategy: Support and encourage safe and feasible water reuse. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
2.E.1	Support efforts to determine water reuse options, including use of treated and commercial containment water, which are safe for public health and their implementation. ‡	New	Advocate	Partners	Ongoing	Met Council State agencies	# of interactions
2.E.2	Support increased landscape storage and retention of water for reuse, for both quantity and quality. ‡	New	Advocate	Partners Developers Businesses Residents	Ongoing	WMOs WCD LGUs Met Council State agencies	# of initiatives conducted in support

‡ Signifies actions that include both a positive water quality and water quantity benefit.

2.E.3	Support agencies exploring development of diversified grades of water (non-potable for non-drinking uses).	Ongoing	Advocate	Partners	Ongoing	Met Council State agencies	# of initiatives conducted in support
2.E.4	Promote projects in the county to encourage more reuse in development and redevelopment.	New	Advocate	Developers	Ongoing	WMOs WCD LGUs Met Council	# of initiatives conducted to promote

10-Year Outcome Measures. 2E.

- The county understands how water reuse projects can be done safely.
- Washington County and its partners have implemented reuse projects to manage water supply and demand.

F. Strategy: Regularly update and share water quantity-related data. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
2.F.1	Support and encourage agency water supply modeling and a groundwater database that can be used to identify areas at risk for depletion, areas for storage for future use, predict aquifer levels and trends and other water management issues.	Continue	Advocate	Partners	Ongoing	Met Council State Agencies	# of initiatives conducted in support
2.F.2	The county will compile water usage data and publish annually to water suppliers.	New	Lead	PWSs	Annually	Met Council DNR LGUs PWSs	Published annually
2.F.3	Encourage regular and consistent data updates to Atlas 14.	New	Advocate	NOAA	Ongoing	WCD WMOs LGUs Met Council State Agencies NOAA	% of updates made

2.F.4	Explore, and if feasible, implement additional groundwater level data collection, to complement state efforts to monitor groundwater levels. This could include cost-sharing with other local agencies.	New	Lead Partner	LGUs WMOs	2026 or later	DNR Met Council WCD WMOs	County determined feasibility
-------	---	-----	--------------	--------------	---------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------

10-Year Outcome Measures. 2F.

- *Washington County has a water usage dashboard updated annually.*

Table Group 6. Groundwater Education Plan Implementation Tables

Goal #3: People who live and work in Washington County understand the importance of protecting groundwater, how to conserve water and use it efficiently, and prevent contamination.

A. Strategy: Inform and educate targeted audiences (e.g., well and septic system owners, business and property managers), and encourage adoption of practices that are protective of groundwater quality and quantity. **(Priority: High)**

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
3.A.1	Support elected official education through Workshop on the Water, MPCA's Smart Salting For Community Leaders workshops, and other opportunities.	Continue	Partner Fund Educate	Elected officials	Annual	EMWREP WCD MN/WI DNRs Adjoining counties LSC Partnership MPCA	# of attendees
3.A.2	Host realtor education classes on well water, SSTs, household hazardous waste, and other topics that impact groundwater. Include well sealing requirements and well disclosure agreements.	Continue	Partner Educate	Realtors	Annual	St. Paul Area Association of Realtors	# of realtors who attended training

3.A.3	Educate targeted audiences on adoption of practices regarding proper salt use, use of irrigation and drought-tolerant practices, and other topics.	Continue	Partner Fund Educate	Property managers HOAs Public Works Developers	Ongoing	EMWREP WCD LSC Partnership	Social media metrics # of training attendees # reached with educational materials
3.A.4	Provide relevant information to targeted audiences on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well testing and water quality information, resources, and funding opportunities including PFAS. Best practices with respect to proper disposal of solid and hazardous waste. 	Continue	Partner Educate	Targeted audiences	Ongoing	MDH MPCA	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials
3.A.5	Develop and promote education for targeted audiences on climate change impacts, adaptation, and mitigation in addition to groundwater and surface water interaction.	New	Partner Educate	Targeted audiences	Ongoing	EMWREP Met Council DNR MPCA BWSR	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials
3.A.6	Support education efforts from EMWREP, the Lower St. Croix Partnership, and other partners to work with rural and agricultural landowners.	Continue	Partner Educate	Landowners	Ongoing	EMWREP LSC Partner-ship Adjacent Counties	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials
3.A.7	Develop tailored messages for private well and/or septic system owners on maintenance, testing and other practices that protect public health. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate dissemination of existing guidance and brochures already available from state agencies. Coordinate opportunity to test well when SSTS is serviced. Proper disposal of treatment filters as appropriate. 	Expand	Partner Operate Educate	Owners of wells and SSTS	Ongoing	EMWREP MPCA MDH	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials

10-Year Outcome Measures. 3A.

- The county and its partners have developed and distributed educational information on climate change's effect on groundwater.
- Private well and septic system owners have access to information about maintenance and testing in a representative set of languages.

B. Strategy: Inform and educate residents and encourage adoption of practices that are protective of groundwater quality and quantity. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
3.B.1	Educate residents on proper disposal of pharmaceuticals (county drop boxes) and household hazardous waste and promote the use of the county Environmental Center(s) and satellite HHW events.	Continue	Lead Educate	Residents	Ongoing	EMWREP	# of pharmaceuticals/ HHW dropped off
3.B.2	Educate residents on the importance of properly sealing abandoned wells as per state statute and promote the County Abandoned Well Sealing Grant and Cost Share Programs.	Continue	Lead Educate	Residents	Ongoing	MDH WCD	# of wells sealed
3.B.3	Develop and promote education for residents on climate change impacts, adaptation, and mitigation in addition to groundwater and surface water interaction.	New	Partner Educate	Residents	Ongoing	EMWREP WCD WMOs MDH UMN Met Council LGUs	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials
3.B.4	Work with partners to coordinate education of residents on fish consumption concerns related to PFAS and other contaminants.	Continue	Partner Educate	Residents	Ongoing	EMWREP WCD WMOs LGUs MDH	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials
3.B.5	Educate residents on how to use best management practices to minimize contamination of groundwater caused by the use and storage of fertilizers, pesticides, and salt (including softeners).	Continue	Partner Educate	Residents	Ongoing	EMWREP WCD State agencies LGUs	Social media metrics # reached with educational materials
3.B.6	Plan and support the Metro Children's Water Festival.	Continue	Partner Educate	Students	Ongoing	Metro counties Met Council WMOs	# of students who attend the CWF each year

10-Year Outcome Measures. 3B.

- The county and its partners have developed and distributed educational information on climate change's effect on groundwater.
- Residents are aware of the recommendations related to safe consumption of fish from water contaminated by PFAS and other contaminants.
- County residents are aware of and utilize safe disposal practices.

Table Group 7. Groundwater Governance Plan Implementation Tables

Goal #4: Groundwater management is coordinated, efficient, and effective.

A. Strategy: Collaborate with all levels of government. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
4.A.1	Continue the Washington County Water Consortium and explore additional options for collaboration with partners.	Continue	Lead	Water resource professionals Elected officials Residents Agencies	Ongoing	WCD EMWREP	Average # of attendees per meeting # of consortium meetings held
4.A.2	Monitor and participate with White Bear Lake court order and its effects.	Continue	Monitor	Maintain awareness	Ongoing	Met Council State agencies LGUs	# of meetings attended
4.A.3	Participate in the DNR's North and East Metro Groundwater Management Area work group, monitor activities, and ensure the county's needs are represented.	Continue	Monitor Advocate	Maintain awareness and advocate for county needs	Ongoing	State agencies Met Council LGUs WCD WMOs	# of meetings attended
4.A.4	Support any needed updates to the County Geologic Atlas Part A and the Hydrogeologic Atlas Part B.	Continue	Advocate	Water resource professionals County-wide	Ongoing	MGS DNR	# of needed updates completed

4.A.5	Participate and track coordinated wellhead protection efforts with MDH and public water suppliers.	Expand	Partner	PWSs	Ongoing	PWSs MDH LGUs	# of wellhead protection plans reviewed
4.A.6	Continue membership in the Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan Partnership.	Continue	Partner	1W1P Partners	Ongoing	1W1P Partners	Joint Powers membership

10-Year Outcome Measures. 4A.

- The county is actively involved in regional planning and management activities.

B. Strategy: Support and create regulations and policies that improve and protect groundwater quality and quantity. (Priority: High)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
4.B.1	To maximize local public health protection and support private well owners, work toward becoming a delegated well authority under Minnesota Statute 103I.111. If delegation is pursued, the county will explore a well testing requirement at the time of property transfer.	New	Lead	Private well owners	2025	MDH LGUs	County makes decision on if it will become a delegated well authority If the county becomes a delegated well authority, measure is % of wells sampled at time of property transfer
4.B.2	Support limited liability legislation for salt applicators and support best practices to reduce chloride contamination from road salt and water softeners.	New	Advocate	Legislators Salt applicators	Ongoing	LGUs WMOs	# of initiatives conducted in support
4.B.3	Support laws that require private well testing and treatment at time of sale for relevant contaminants.	New	Advocate	Legislators Private well owners	Ongoing	MMDH LGUs WMOs Realtors	# of initiatives conducted in support

4.B.4	Work with interagency task force and partners to clarify regulatory and guidance framework and updates to state code that support safe water reuse.	New	Advocate Partner	Safe Water Reuse	Ongoing	Met Council State agencies WMOs LGUs WCD	Guidance document is developed
4.B.5	Support legislative changes requested by communities that allow them to charge rates that support reuse and conservation investments.	New	Advocate	PWSs LGUs	Ongoing	PWSs LGUs	# of initiatives conducted in support
4.B.6	Monitor requests for groundwater appropriation and advocate for limiting groundwater exportation.	New	Monitor Advocate	Residents Businesses	Ongoing	Met Council State agencies LGUs WMOs	100% of groundwater stays in the county

10-Year Outcome Measures. 4B.

- *Legislation and policies are in place to allow and support better protection of groundwater.*

C. Strategy: Advocate for more funds to support access to safe drinking water for all residents. (Priority: High)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
4.C.1	Advocate for renewal of Clean Water Fund.	New	Advocate	Legislature	2030-2034	WMOs WCD	# of initiatives conducted
4.C.2	Support and encourage expanded grant and funding programs by the state that allow for well testing, monitoring, and treatment for private well owners (including PFAS).	New	Advocate	State agencies Legislature	Ongoing	State agencies	# of grant programs advocated for
4.C.3	Advocate for funding to become available for private well owners to connect to city water in areas of contamination (including PFAS).	New	Advocate	State agencies Legislature	Ongoing	State agencies	# of grant programs advocated for

4.C.4	Advocate for funding for community and public water suppliers to offset costs of supplying water, especially in communities impacted by PFAS and other contaminants.	New	Advocate	State agencies Legislature	Ongoing	LGUs Water suppliers State agencies	# of grant dollars awarded
4.C.5	Advocate for additional funding for best management practices that protect groundwater from both a quality and quantity perspective.	Continue	Partner	State agencies Legislature	Ongoing	WMOs	Monitor legislation and encourage BMP and groundwater funding

10-Year Outcome Measures. 4C.

- Adequate funding is in place so all Washington County residents have access to safe drinking water.

D. Strategy: Support and create county programs that improve and prioritize groundwater protection. (Priority: Medium)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
4.D.1	Implement the county's Land and Water Legacy Program, under the direction of the county board, which seeks to protect and improve the quality of rivers, lakes, streams, and groundwater resources through the acquisition of land or interests in land via conservation easement.	Continue	Lead (Admin)	Landowners	Ongoing	Landowner WCD WMOs LGUs State agencies	Acres protected
4.D.2	Invest in and support the restoration and enhancement of the county's protected lands to promote improved water quality and increased water quantity.	Continue	Partner	Land preservation	Ongoing	WCD WMOs LGUs	Acres improved

10-Year Outcome Measures. 4D.

- A funded program continues to be in place to secure high priority areas for the protection of groundwater.

4.A.5	Participate and track coordinated wellhead protection efforts with MDH and public water suppliers.	Expand	Partner	PWSs	Ongoing	PWSs MDH LGUs Met Council	# of wellhead protection plans reviewed
4.A.6	Continue membership in the Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan Partnership.	Continue	Partner	1W1P Partners	Ongoing	1W1P Partners	Joint Powers membership

10-Year Outcome Measures. 4A.

- The county is actively involved in regional planning and management activities.

B. Strategy: Support and create regulations and policies that improve and protect groundwater quality and quantity. (Priority: High)

Action No.	Action	Activity	Role	Target	Time Frame	External Partners	Measure
4.B.1	To maximize local public health protection and support private well owners, work toward becoming a delegated well authority under Minnesota Statute 103I.111. If delegation is pursued, the county will explore a well testing requirement at the time of property transfer.	New	Lead	Private well owners	2025	MDH LGUs	County makes decision on if it will become a delegated well authority If the county becomes a delegated well authority, measure is % of wells sampled at time of property transfer
4.B.2	Support limited liability legislation for salt applicators and support best practices to reduce chloride contamination from road salt and water softeners.	New	Advocate	Legislators Salt applicators	Ongoing	LGUs WMOs	# of initiatives conducted in support
4.B.3	Support laws that require private well testing and treatment at time of sale for relevant contaminants.	New	Advocate	Legislators Private well owners	Ongoing	MMDH LGUs WMOs Realtors	# of initiatives conducted in support

Waste: EPA regulates household, industrial, and manufacturing solid and hazardous wastes under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

Metropolitan Council

Under state law, the Metropolitan Council (Council) is charged with guiding regional development in the Twin Cities area. This regional framework is adopted by the council every 10 years and sets in motion the next round of comprehensive plans for counties, cities and townships within the seven-county metro area. Current Comprehensive Plans at the time of this plan's drafting were developed under Thrive MSP 2040. The new regional framework, Imagine 2050, was adopted by the Council in February 2025. This framework includes policy plans that guide efforts in the metro, including a 2050 Water Policy Plan which addresses wastewater, surface water, groundwater, and water supply. Communities will be expected to submit updated comprehensive plans by the end of 2028.

Part of the council's responsibilities include management of the regional wastewater system, known as the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA). Centralized sewer and water serve most of the area within the MUSA or the boundary of an urban reserve area. Figure 37 in Chapter 6 depicts the location of the MUSA within the county.

In addition to its role providing regional wastewater service and supporting watershed planning, the Met Council has a responsibility for developing a Metro Area Water Supply Plan. This plan is developed with leadership from the Governor-appointed Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee, which also approves the plan. While it is approved separately, its regional and subregional actions have clear connections to the Water Policy Plan policies.

3.3 Local Roles

Local Government Units

Local Government Units (LGUs) can have a lot of influence and responsibility with respect to groundwater management. LGUs include cities, townships, watershed organizations, and soil and water conservation districts. Sound water resource management requires partnership between these many local entities.



Figure 6. Location of Local Government Units in Washington County Map

Appendix C.

Public Comments and County Responses

State Agency Review Comments

Page & Section	Source / Agency	Comment	County Response
Action 4.A.5	Metropolitan Council	In the implementation table, please add Met Council as a possible partner for Action 4.A.5. We are currently partnering with MDH on a pilot multi-community WHPP in the west metro and anticipate discussing this with other communities through the continuation of the subregional engagement effort we conducted in advance of drafting the 2050 Water Policy Plan.	Thank you for this comment. This change has been made.
Section 3.2	Metropolitan Council	<p>In Section 3.2 where the role of Met Council is described, please consider these rewrites:</p> <p>1. Imagine 2050 has now been adopted. Consider updating the first paragraph to read: “Under state law, the Metropolitan Council (Council) is charged with guiding regional development in the Twin Cities area. This regional framework is adopted by the council every 10 years and sets in motion the next round of comprehensive plans for counties, cities and townships within the seven-county metro area. Current Comprehensive Plans at the time of this plan’s drafting were developed under Thrive MSP 2040. The new regional framework, Imagine 2050, was adopted by the Council in February 2025. This framework includes policy plans that guide efforts in the metro, including a 2050 Water Policy Plan which addresses waste-water, surface water, groundwater, and water supply. Communities will be expected to submit updated comprehensive plans by the end of 2028.”</p> <p>2. In the final paragraph of the description, please consider this rewrite: “In addition to its role providing regional wastewater service and supporting watershed planning, the Met Council has a responsibility for developing a Metro Area Water Supply Plan. This plan is developed with leadership from the Governor-appointed Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee, which also approves the plan. While it is approved separately, its regional and subregional actions have clear connections to the Water Policy Plan policies.”</p>	Thank you for this comment. This change has been made.
General	Minnesota Department of Agriculture	The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has no comments for the 45 day review.	Thank you for your support and partnership throughout this process.
General	Minnesota Department of Health	SWP staff were able to review both an informal draft and the 60-day draft of the Plan and provided several comments, in addition to providing input at Technical Advisory Committee meetings. All comments provided by SWP staff have been adequately addressed. We appreciate Public Health and Environment staff working collaboratively with MDH to address these comments and enhance the Plan.	Thank you for your support and partnership throughout this process.
General	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	We have no comments as part of the official 90-day Review and Comment Period and recommend it for approval.	Thank you for your support and partnership throughout this process.

Appendix D.

Plan Approval Documents

Developed Upon Next Draft of Plan.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RIM Reserve Committee

1. Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Conservation Practices and Reimbursement Payment Rates
– Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Technical Amendment to Board Order 25-21 – Sharon Doucette – **DECISION ITEM**

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:	Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Conservation Practices and Reimbursement Payment Rates		
Meeting Date:	<u>June 25, 2025</u>		
Agenda Category:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> New Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Old Business
Item Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Public Data
Keywords for Electronic Searchability:	<u>RIM, Cost-share, Rates, Practice, Reimbursement</u>		
Section/Region:	<u>Easement</u>		
Contact:	<u>Sara Reagan</u>		
Prepared by:	<u>Sara Reagan</u>		
Reviewed by:	<u>RIM</u>	<u>Committee(s)</u>	
Presented by:	<u>Sharon Doucette</u>		
Time requested:	<u>10 minutes</u>		

☐ **Audio/Visual Equipment Needed for Agenda Item Presentation**

Attachments: ☐ Resolution ☒ Order ☐ Map ☐ Other Supporting Information

Fiscal/Policy Impact

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |

ACTION REQUESTED

Authorize Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) staff to update and maintain the list of approved conservation practices and establish conservation practice reimbursement payment rates, with Executive Director approval, for RIM Reserve Conservation Easement Programs.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Board Resolution #10-26

Board Resolution #22-16

SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

Statute requires the Board to determine approved restoration practices and practices eligible for reimbursement, and to establish reimbursement rates for restoration on RIM easements. Current RIM Reserve conservation practice reimbursement rates are inadequate for establishment of certain conservation practices. The per acre

cost caps were last approved by the Board in 2010. The intent of the reimbursement process is to cover all conservation plan implementation costs for a landowner for a typical restoration of a RIM easement. If a landowner makes individual choices for their land that creates a significantly higher cost for their restoration, they are required to cover the difference. Inflation, unique and diverse native seed mixes, necessary site preparation and prevailing wage laws are driving costs of the typical restoration beyond the current maximum in Board Order #10-26. Additionally, the RIM program now has restoration practices and needs that are different than the restoration of previous cropland to either prairie or wetland that was the exclusive focus of the program in 2010. The ability to adapt to evolving costs, prevailing wage requirements, and new restoration techniques and needs are better achieved by providing staff, with Executive Director approval, the ability to establish and update the list of approved practices and conservation practice reimbursement rates. Board Resolution #22-16 established additional approved practices and reimbursement rates specific to working lands.

Both resolutions #10-26 and #22-16 will be rescinded upon publication of new approved practices and reimbursement rates pursuant to the new board order.

BOARD ORDER**Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Conservation Practices and Reimbursement Payment Rates****PURPOSE**

Authorize the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) staff to update and maintain the list of approved conservation practices and establish conservation practice reimbursement payment rates for RIM Reserve Conservation Easement Programs.

RECITALS /FINDINGS OF FACT

- A. The Minnesota State Legislature has appropriated funds to BWSR to acquire and restore permanent RIM conservation easements under Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103F.505 to 103F.531.
- B. Minnesota Statutes, Section 103F.527, subdivision 2, directs the board to determine which approved practices are eligible for payments or reimbursement under a conservation easement program.
- C. Minnesota Statutes, Section 103F.515, subdivision 6, authorizes the board to establish rates for payments to the landowner for the conservation easement and related practices.
- D. BWSR has established approved practices and practice reimbursement rates through Board Resolutions 10-26 and 22-16 and now seeks greater flexibility to update and maintain appropriate payments in changing market conditions.
- E. Establishing and streamlining the authority for staff to set RIM Reserve conservation practice reimbursement payment rates will promote clarity and efficiency and further the goals of the program.

ORDER

NOW THEREFORE, the Board hereby authorizes BWSR staff, with Executive Director approval, to:

- 1. Update and maintain the list of approved conservation practices and the subset of approved practices that are eligible for reimbursement from BWSR. If the list of approved conservation practices is modified, BWSR will publish the updated list of approved conservation practices.
- 2. Establish conservation practice reimbursement payment rates that reflect existing market conditions. These rates shall be reviewed, updated, and published annually.
- 3. Upon publication of RIM conservation practice reimbursement payment rates, any previously established rates are superseded by the new published rates.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that:

- 4. Board Resolution 10-26 and Board Resolution 22-16, which established the approved practices and current payment rates are rescinded upon publication of new practices and reimbursement rates established pursuant to this order.

Dated at St. Paul, Minnesota, this June 25, 2025.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Rich Sve, Vice Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: _____



Board Resolution # 22-16

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Working Lands Conservation Code and Cost Share Rates

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State Legislature has appropriated Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) Reserve funds to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to acquire and restore permanent RIM conservation easements under Minnesota Statutes, Section 103F.515 to 103F.531; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 103F.515, Subdivision 6(a) states that the Board shall establish rates for payment of conservation practices; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Rule 8400.3630, Subpart 1 establishes criteria for approved conservation practices; and

WHEREAS, Laws of Minnesota 2019, Chapter 2, Article 1, Section 4(a) appropriated \$10,000,000 to BWSR to “acquire conservation easements from landowners to preserve, restore, create, and enhance wetlands and associated uplands of prairie and grasslands, and restore and enhance rivers and streams, riparian lands, and associated uplands of prairie and grasslands in order to protect soil and water quality, support fish and wildlife habitat, reduce flood damage, and provide other public benefits” and “that no more than \$1,000,000 may be used to acquire working lands easements”; and,

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2021, the Board passed Resolution # 21-04 authorizing staff to implement the Working Lands RIM Easement Pilot Program; and

WHEREAS, the Working Lands RIM Easement Pilot Program is designed to work with agricultural producers to keep cattle on the landscape while improving water quality and wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, grazing plans that meet USDA or other widely accepted practice standards for grazing management will be required; and

WHEREAS, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has certified grazing plan writers who can write many but not all the grazing plans; and

WHEREAS, grazing plans will require certain infrastructure such as fencing, and stock watering facilities be implemented to keep cattle away from sensitive areas and facilitate rotational grazing; and

WHEREAS, the RIM program currently lacks a conservation practice code and payment rates for grazing plan writing and related infrastructure needs; and

WHEREAS, RIM Conservation Codes and Practices and associated payment rates were previously established by Board Resolution # 10-26; and

WHEREAS, this resolution is supplemental to previously approved BWSR Board resolutions and will remain in effect until material changes in the program warrants an amendment; and

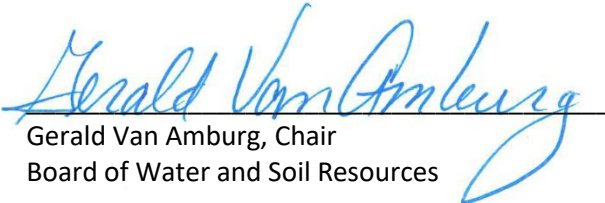
WHEREAS, the BWSR RIM Reserve Committee met on February 4, 2022, and recommends the following.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources authorizes staff to:

1. Implement a new practice code, RR-15, that authorizes RIM cost share for grazing infrastructure practices.
2. Implement cost share rates for RR-15 and grazing plan development and publish said rates and practices in the RIM Handbook as follows:
 - a. up to 50% of total eligible costs not to exceed \$300 per acre for grazing infrastructure on permanent conservation easements.
 - b. up to 100% of total eligible costs not to exceed \$3800 per grazing plan on permanent conservation easements.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 23rd day of March, 2022.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES


Gerald Van Amburg, Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: March 23, 2022

Resolution # 10-26

**Establish Policy and Conservation Practice Rates for the Reinvest in Minnesota
(RIM) Reserve Program**

WHEREAS the RIM Reserve Program began requiring native seed to be used in 1998 on all conservation easement restorations acquired;

WHEREAS in 2009 Legislation "To the extent possible, any person conducting a restoration with money appropriated in this section must plant vegetation or sow seed only of ecotypes native in Minnesota, and preferably of the local ecotype, using high diversity of species originating from as close to the restoration site as possible, and protect existing native prairies from genetic contamination";

WHEREAS in 2009 the BWSR developed the "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" which allows us to meet the 2009 Legislative requirement;

WHEREAS these new legislative requirements have created additional complexity and costs associated to establish high species diversity to promote native community stabilization and function, to provide benefits to multiple wildlife species and to prevent the establishment of invasive species;

WHEREAS the BWSR Senior Water Resources Engineer, has just recently completed an analysis of construction costs data for wetland restoration project work completed through RIM Reserve since 2002. The BWSR has completed 567 total construction projects totaling 14,329 wetland acres restored at a cost of \$9.2 million. Average construction cost per acre is \$645 per acre;

WHEREAS we have been able to cover higher engineering costs due to most of our projects being done in partnership with USDA Farm Service Agency or NRCS-in RIM-WRP Partnership, we continue to emphasize leveraging of other funds within the RIM Reserve Program;

WHEREAS existing RIM Reserve conservation practice rates are inadequate in many instances covering increasing engineering costs and high diversity native vegetation establishment on conservation easement acres;

WHEREAS the BWSR RIM Reserve Management Planning Committee met on Wednesday, March 17th to review and unanimously recommends the following RIM Reserve Policy and conservation practice rate recommendations:

The RIM Reserve program will not exceed 100% of the eligible costs for the practice to be established.

The RIM Reserve program will pay 100% of total eligible costs of wetland restoration up to \$1,200 per acre.

The RIM Reserve program will pay 100% of total eligible cost for native species restoration up to \$600 per acre for perpetual easements.

The RIM Reserve program will pay 100% of total eligible costs for native trees and shrubs up to \$800 per acre for perpetual easements.


For limited duration easements the RIM Reserve program will pay up to 75% of eligible costs not to exceed actual costs;

WHEREAS the Conservation Easement Section Manger has been authorized to exceed the conservation practice rate limits established by the Board on a case-by-case basis. This authority applies only when all factors related to the easement and restoration project functions have been evaluated and the extra expense is determined to be necessary to ensure the public's benefit in completing the project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources authorizes staff to implement the new conservation practice rates and policy adopted in support of the RIM Reserve Program.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 24th day of March, 2010.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

By: 
Randy Kramer, Chair

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:**Technical Amendment to Board Order 25-21****Meeting Date:**

June 25, 2025

Agenda Category:☒ Committee Recommendation ☐ New Business ☐ Old Business**Item Type:**☐ Decision ☐ Discussion ☐ Information ☐ Non-Public Data**Keywords for Electronic
Searchability:**

RIM, Drinking Water, Technical Amendment, Agreement

Section/Region:

Easement

Contact:

Sara Reagan

Prepared by:

Sara Reagan

Reviewed by:

RIM Committee(s)

Presented by:

Sharon Doucette

Time requested:

10 minutes

☐ **Audio/Visual Equipment Needed for Agenda Item Presentation****Attachments:** ☐ Resolution ☒ Order ☐ Map ☐ Other Supporting Information**Fiscal/Policy Impact**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval for a technical amendment to Board Order 25-21 Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Drinking Water Program.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**SUMMARY** *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

BWSR Board Order 25-21 was signed April 23, 2025, approving significant changes to the RIM Drinking Water Program. However, the incorrect term was used within the order, specifically in the second BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED.

The second BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT was originally approved as:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Executive Director is delegated to approve **Drinking Water Protection Partner Grants** consistent with this order.

A technical adjustment is warranted to replace **Grants** with the word “**agreements**.”

Per the appropriation language associated with this funding, the RIM Drinking Water Program can utilize “grants or contracts.” Naming a specific grant program specifically can limit the flexibility of program development as future needs may require additional opportunities for drinking water protection.

TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO BOARD ORDER**Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Drinking Water Program****PURPOSE**

To correct a language error in Board Order #25-21.

RECITALS /FINDINGS OF FACT

- A. On April 23, 2025, the Board issued Board Order #25-21, which stated in part:
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Executive Director is delegated to approve Drinking Water Protection Partner Grants consistent with this order (emphasis added).
- B. The use of the word “Grants” in Board Order #25-21 was made in error as it unintentionally limits the scope of the Order.
- C. Consistent with statute, the word intended to be used in Board Order #25-21 was “Agreements” rather than “Grants.”

ORDER

The Board hereby Orders:

- 1. That Board Order #25-21 be amended by substituting the word “Agreements” for “Grants” as described in the Recitals above.
- 2. That a corrected version of Board Order #25-21 reflecting this Amendment be attached hereto and filed.

Dated at St. Paul, Minnesota, this June 23, 2025.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Rich Sve, Vice Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: _____

Board Order # 25-21

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Drinking Water Program

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State Legislature has established the program to acquire RIM conservation easements under Minnesota Statutes, Sections 103F.515 to 103F.531 to restore and protect land and water resources; and,

WHEREAS the Board has authority under Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.101 to award grants and contracts to accomplish water and related land resources management; and,

WHEREAS, ML 2024 Chapter 106, Article 2, Section 6 (e) designates funds “for conservation easements acquired under Minnesota Statutes, sections 103F.501 to 103F.535, or for grants or contracts to local units of government or Tribal governments, including for fee title acquisition or for long-term protection of groundwater supply sources. Consideration must be given to drinking water supply management areas and alternative management tools in the Department of Agriculture *Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan*, including using low-nitrogen cropping systems or implementing nitrogen fertilizer best management practices. Priority must be placed on land that is located where the vulnerability of the drinking water supply is designated as high or very high by the commissioner of health, where drinking water protection plans have identified specific activities that will achieve long-term protection, and on lands with expiring conservation contracts”; and,

WHEREAS, future funds may become available to acquire Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) conservation easements and enter into agreements under the RIM Drinking Water Program; and,

WHEREAS, drinking water protection can only be accomplished on specific and limited parcels of lands within drinking water supply management areas; and,

WHEREAS, lands within priority areas for drinking water protection may have high crop production rates and higher than average estimated market value, requiring higher landowner compensation than rates established for other RIM programs that are targeted to less productive agricultural lands; and,

WHEREAS, protection and restoration of drinking water at its source is a long-term and effective mechanism to provide clean drinking water; and,

WHEREAS, resolutions 13-107, 19-34, 20-13, 21-55 authorized the RIM Wellhead Protection Initiative and Wellhead Protection Partner Grant Pilot program and will be replaced by this order; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Water and Soil Resources RIM Reserve Committee met on March 25, 2025 and recommends the following provisions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources authorizes staff to:

1. Utilize existing and future designated funds for similar purpose to implement the RIM Drinking Water Program.
2. Establish payment rates for perpetual and limited-term easements and for fee title acquisitions via agreements with other organizations.
3. Conduct Request for Proposals and establish agreements for partner efforts, including fee title acquisition.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, resolutions 13-107, 19-34, 20-13, 21-55 are replaced by this order for any unobligated funds that remain; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Executive Director is delegated to approve **Drinking Water Protection Partner Grants** consistent with this order.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, this order will remain in effect, as funding is available, until material changes in the program warrant an amendment.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 23rd day of April, 2025.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES



Todd Holman, Chair
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: 4/23/2025

NEW BUSINESS

1. Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update – Matt Drewitz, MPCA – ***INFORMATION ITEM***

BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:
Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update
Meeting Date:

June 25, 2025

Agenda Category:
☐ Committee Recommendation ☒ New Business ☐ Old Business

Item Type:
☐ Decision ☐ Discussion ☒ Information

Keywords for Electronic Searchability:

Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update

Section/Region:
Contact:
Prepared by:

Justin Hanson

Reviewed by:

Justin Hanson Committee(s)

Presented by:

Matt Drewitz, MPCA

Time requested:

30 minutes

☐ **Audio/Visual Equipment Needed for Agenda Item Presentation**
Attachments: ☐ Resolution ☐ Order ☐ Map ☐ Other Supporting Information

Fiscal/Policy Impact

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amended Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Heritage Fund Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Water Fund Budget |

ACTION REQUESTED
LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
[Reducing nutrients in waters | Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#)
SUMMARY *(Consider: history, reason for consideration now, alternatives evaluated, basis for recommendation)*

The Nutrient Reduction Strategy compiles the latest science, research, and data and recommends the most effective strategies to reduce nutrients in our waters from both point and nonpoint sources. The strategy serves as a framework that outlines voluntary and regulatory actions to reduce nutrient pollution to meet long-term goals. Reductions in Minnesota's nitrogen and phosphorus pollution are needed to reach our in-state water quality goals and the 2040 goals that aim to restore the Gulf of Mexico, Lake Winnipeg, and Lake Superior.