



# Assessing the need: the Biennial Budget Request

## August 2016 Snapshots

In March and April of this year, local governments from across Minnesota responded to BWSR's request to submit planned water resource-oriented activities and budgets for the FY 2018-19 biennium. First initiated in 2012, and then again in 2014, the survey collects information on local government conservation and water management resource needs on a biennial – or two year – basis. The data is used to inform the development of BWSR's biennial budget, hence the name. The activities and projects submitted are contained in local water management plans and could be implemented within the biennium if funds are available.

The total State Fund Request identified by local governments was almost \$369 million for the biennium. Over \$175 million of additional matching and leveraged funds were identified bringing the total budgeted amount of activities and projects that could be acted upon within the biennium to just over \$544 million or \$272 million each year.

BWSR requested budgets in several categories:

- The Natural Resources Block Grant bundles funding to counties as part of the local-state partnership to manage, implement and enforce statewide rules and regulations. This grant covers Individual Sewage Treatment Systems, Shoreland Management, the Wetland Conservation Act, Feedlot Program, and Comprehensive Local Water Management.
- Several types of funds that Soil and Water Conservation Districts receive supplement local funding and facilitate delivery of technical and financial assistance to local landowners. Emphasizing local delivery of these types of assistance is a real strength of Minnesota's conservation effort.
- Clean Water Fund projects that would go above and beyond normal day-to-day operations to deliver meaningful water quality improvements that have been prioritized and targeted during the development of local water plans.
- Conservation easement opportunities for willing landowners to leave a permanent conservation legacy protecting water resources in forested and agricultural areas of the state. These conservation opportunities target specific resources such as prairie and wetland restorations, riparian corridors, wild rice or other sensitive lakes containing populations of cisco, or wellhead protection areas.



*The BBR helps identify activities and projects that are ready to be implemented if funds are available.*

Considerable effort from citizens, elected and appointed officials, and local and state staff goes into the preparation of local water management plans. Resource needs, data, and local capacity are all factored into

plan development. Most plans run from 5-10 years in length however the BBR represents those activities that would be most likely to be carried out in 2018-19.

The value of conservation work that local governments are prepared to undertake? \$369 million, considerably more than is currently available from the Clean Water Fund portion of the Legacy funds. Local governments are ready, but there is a great deal of water quality and conservation need.