

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES  
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH  
ST. PAUL, MN 55155  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021**

**AGENDA**

**9:00 AM CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MINUTES OF AUGUST 26, 2021 BOARD MEETING**

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

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF**

- Teresa Pickar, Financial Analyst
- Rick Ingli, Easement Acquisition Specialist
- Brittany Polzin, Easement Acquisition Specialist

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION**

*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 staff before any vote.*

**REPORTS**

- Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee – Gerald Van Amburg
- Executive Director – John Jaschke
- Audit & Oversight Committee – Joe Collins
- Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report – Travis Germundson/Rich Sve
- Grants Program & Policy Committee – Todd Holman
- RIM Reserve Committee – Jayne Hager Dee
- Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee – Andrea Date
- Wetland Conservation Committee – Jill Crafton
- Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee – Kathryn Kelly
- 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 – Nicole Bernd
- Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts – LeAnn Buck
- Minnesota Association of Townships – Eunice Biel
- Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts – Emily Javens
- Natural Resources Conservation Service – Troy Daniell

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

### ***Grants Program and Policy Committee***

1. Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023 Natural Resources Block Grants Authorization – Kevin Bigalke and Marcey Westrick – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Fiscal Year 2022 SWCD Local Capacity Grant Authorization – Kevin Bigalke and Marcey Westrick – ***DECISION ITEM***

### ***Southern Region Committee***

1. Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects Biennial Plan & Area II Floodplain Management Grant – Ted Winter – ***DECISION ITEM***

### ***Northern Region Committee***

1. Mississippi River Headwaters Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan – Rich Sve and Ryan Hughes – ***DECISION ITEM***

### ***Central Region Committee***

1. Mississippi Watershed Management Organization Watershed Management Plan – Steve Christopher – ***DECISION ITEM***

### ***RIM Committee***

1. Resolution Authorizing the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve - Targeted RIM Easement Program to the Individual Parcel: Pine & Leech Watersheds Phases 1 and 2 – Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
2. Resolution Authorizing the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve - Riparian Habitat Protection in the Kettle and Snake River Watersheds – Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
3. Resolution Reauthorizing the RIM Rum River Watershed Protection Program – Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
4. Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Wetlands Program – Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
5. Resolution Authorizing RIM Buffers Program – Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***
6. Resolution Authorizing the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve - Lower Otter Tail River Corridor Habitat Restoration – Sharon Doucette – ***DECISION ITEM***

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Southern Region Committee is scheduled for October 7, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. Murray Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), 2740 22nd Street, Slayton and by phone or virtually.
- Central Region Committee meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul and by WebEx.
- Grants Program and Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2021 at 12:30 p.m. 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul and by WebEx.
- BWSR Board meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. in the Lower Level Conference Rooms at 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul and by WebEx.
- Northern Region Committee meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Wild Rice Watershed District 11 5th Avenue East, Ada and by phone or virtually.

## ADJOURN

## BOARD ORDER

### Fiscal Year 2022 SWCD Capacity Grants Program

#### PURPOSE

Provide Fiscal Year 2022 Clean Water Fund Capacity Grant Funds to Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

#### FINDINGS OF FACT / RECITALS

1. The Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Capacity Program supports implementation of the various duties and responsibilities of SWCDs as provided for in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103C.
2. The Laws of Minnesota 2021, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 2, Sec. 6(q), appropriated \$12 million in Fiscal Year 2022 SWCD Capacity Program funds.
3. This appropriation limits funds for the Board's administration of the program to two percent.
4. The appropriation includes language that requires providing an increase in the base amount of \$100,000 per year, and for remaining funds to be distributed to each SWCD based on county allocations to SWCDs and on the amount of private land and public waters.
5. The attached allocation table includes: 1) a \$107,500 per SWCD base amount, 2) 10% of the funds to the land and water portion using a distribution of 75% based on private land and a distribution of 25% based on public waters, and 3) an amount based on the 2020 county allocation to the SWCD.
6. The Grants Program and Policy Committee, at their September 21, 2021 meeting, reviewed the proposed allocations and recommended approval to the Board.

#### ORDER

The Board hereby:

1. Approves the allocations in the attached table which includes: 1) a \$107,500 base amount per eligible SWCD and Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, 2) 10% of the funds to the land & water portion using a distribution of 75% based on private land and 25% based on public waters per each eligible SWCD and Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, and 3) an amount per SWCD based on the 2020 county allocation to the SWCD, consistent with the attached table.
2. Establishes that the 2022 Capacity Grants awarded pursuant to this resolution will conform to SWCD Conservation Delivery and Capacity Grants Policy.
3. Acknowledges the two percent limit prescribed in statute for agency costs.
4. Authorizes staff to enter into grant agreements for these purposes.

Dated at St. Paul, Minnesota, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September 2021.

**MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES**

\_\_\_\_\_

Gerald Van Amburg, Chair  
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attachments: FY2022 SWCD Capacity Grants Allocation Table

**FY2022 SWCD Capacity Grants Allocation Table**

<b>SWCD Name</b>	<b>FY22 Base Grant</b>	<b>Land &amp; Water Allocation</b>	<b>2022 County Contribution</b>	<b>Total FY22 Allocation</b>
AITKIN	\$107,500	\$17,892	\$8,514	\$133,906
ANOKA	\$107,500	\$9,312	\$14,488	\$131,300
BECKER	\$107,500	\$23,429	\$10,715	\$141,643
BELTRAMI	\$107,500	\$20,074	\$7,300	\$134,874
BENTON	\$107,500	\$7,056	\$15,065	\$129,621
BIG STONE	\$107,500	\$9,533	\$5,661	\$122,694
BLUE EARTH	\$107,500	\$13,502	\$7,043	\$128,045
BROWN	\$107,500	\$10,541	\$13,317	\$131,357
CARLTON	\$107,500	\$12,036	\$9,606	\$129,142
CARVER	\$107,500	\$7,339	\$16,900	\$131,739
CASS	\$107,500	\$22,766	\$7,234	\$137,501
CHIPPEWA	\$107,500	\$9,974	\$5,599	\$123,073
CHISAGO	\$107,500	\$7,886	\$18,078	\$133,465
CLAY	\$107,500	\$17,897	\$13,758	\$139,155
CLEARWATER	\$107,500	\$12,458	\$4,363	\$124,321
COOK	\$107,500	\$14,424	\$5,946	\$127,870
COTTONWOOD	\$107,500	\$11,299	\$9,335	\$128,135
CROW WING	\$107,500	\$18,571	\$7,717	\$133,789
DAKOTA	\$107,500	\$10,368	\$15,848	\$133,716
DODGE	\$107,500	\$7,476	\$5,881	\$120,857
DOUGLAS	\$107,500	\$13,711	\$15,494	\$136,705
FARIBAUT	\$107,500	\$12,382	\$5,356	\$125,238
FILLMORE	\$107,500	\$14,806	\$2,038	\$124,344
FREEBORN	\$107,500	\$11,671	\$11,511	\$130,682
GOODHUE	\$107,500	\$13,548	\$25,160	\$146,208
GRANT	\$107,500	\$10,529	\$8,959	\$126,988
HENNEPIN	\$107,500	\$13,145	\$0	\$120,645
HUBBARD	\$107,500	\$12,984	\$2,426	\$122,910
ISANTI	\$107,500	\$8,146	\$34,876	\$150,522
ITASCA	\$107,500	\$30,986	\$308	\$138,794
JACKSON	\$107,500	\$12,034	\$1,419	\$120,953
KANABEC	\$107,500	\$8,782	\$8,124	\$124,406
KANDIYOHI	\$107,500	\$15,125	\$9,605	\$132,230
KITSON	\$107,500	\$16,790	\$2,043	\$126,334
KOOCHICHING	\$107,500	\$17,477	\$3,564	\$128,541
LAC QUI PARLE	\$107,500	\$13,226	\$7,384	\$128,111
LAKE	\$107,500	\$21,120	\$3,611	\$132,231
LAKE OF THE WOODS	\$107,500	\$7,603	\$6,906	\$122,009
LE SUEUR	\$107,500	\$8,606	\$14,549	\$130,655
LINCOLN	\$107,500	\$9,960	\$9,435	\$126,895

<b>SWCD Name</b>	<b>FY22 Base Grant</b>	<b>Land &amp; Water Allocation</b>	<b>2022 County Contribution</b>	<b>Total FY22 Allocation</b>
LYON	\$107,500	\$12,202	\$0	\$119,702
MAHNOMEN	\$107,500	\$9,746	\$6,761	\$124,007
MARSHALL	\$107,500	\$27,178	\$6,101	\$140,779
MARTIN	\$107,500	\$12,617	\$6,353	\$126,470
MC LEOD	\$107,500	\$8,904	\$5,743	\$122,147
MEEKER	\$107,500	\$11,772	\$8,729	\$128,001
MILLE LACS	\$107,500	\$8,642	\$8,255	\$124,398
MORRISON	\$107,500	\$18,163	\$8,251	\$133,914
MOWER	\$107,500	\$12,074	\$11,144	\$130,719
MURRAY	\$107,500	\$12,845	\$12,346	\$132,691
NICOLLET	\$107,500	\$7,658	\$14,787	\$129,945
NOBLES	\$107,500	\$12,895	\$7,234	\$127,629
NORMAN	\$107,500	\$16,109	\$0	\$123,609
OLMSTED	\$107,500	\$11,352	\$15,304	\$134,156
OTTERTAIL EAST	\$107,500	\$19,418	\$9,058	\$135,976
OTTERTAIL WEST	\$107,500	\$20,738	\$7,991	\$136,229
PENNINGTON	\$107,500	\$9,905	\$7,065	\$124,470
PINE	\$107,500	\$19,447	\$3,418	\$130,365
PIPESTONE	\$107,500	\$8,309	\$9,121	\$124,929
POLK EAST	\$107,500	\$13,903	\$1,791	\$123,194
POLK WEST	\$107,500	\$20,388	\$0	\$127,888
POPE	\$107,500	\$13,634	\$4,602	\$125,736
RAMSEY	\$107,500	\$3,434	\$0	\$110,934
RED LAKE	\$107,500	\$7,639	\$7,670	\$122,809
REDWOOD	\$107,500	\$14,870	\$6,290	\$128,660
RENVILLE	\$107,500	\$16,015	\$7,863	\$131,378
RICE	\$107,500	\$9,185	\$14,008	\$130,693
ROCK	\$107,500	\$8,472	\$2,340	\$118,312
ROOT RIVER	\$107,500	\$9,922	\$7,745	\$125,166
ROSEAU	\$107,500	\$20,878	\$6,058	\$134,436
SCOTT	\$107,500	\$7,262	\$49,533	\$164,295
SHERBURNE	\$107,500	\$7,673	\$17,336	\$132,508
SIBLEY	\$107,500	\$10,157	\$5,963	\$123,620
ST. LOUIS N.	\$107,500	\$48,257	\$3,261	\$159,018
ST. LOUIS S.	\$107,500	\$18,091	\$4,340	\$129,931
STEARNS	\$107,500	\$25,195	\$10,672	\$143,367
STEELE	\$107,500	\$6,895	\$9,499	\$123,895
STEVENS	\$107,500	\$10,178	\$6,919	\$124,597
SWIFT	\$107,500	\$12,739	\$4,623	\$124,862
TODD	\$107,500	\$17,146	\$978	\$125,624
TRAVERSE	\$107,500	\$9,890	\$6,903	\$124,294
WABASHA	\$107,500	\$9,235	\$2,964	\$119,699
WADENA	\$107,500	\$8,614	\$8,073	\$124,187

<b>SWCD Name</b>	<b>FY22 Base Grant</b>	<b>Land &amp; Water Allocation</b>	<b>2022 County Contribution</b>	<b>Total FY22 Allocation</b>
WASECA	\$107,500	\$7,502	\$3,920	\$118,923
WASHINGTON	\$107,500	\$8,316	\$16,538	\$132,354
WATONWAN	\$107,500	\$7,874	\$24,176	\$139,551
WILKIN	\$107,500	\$11,962	\$7,690	\$127,151
WINONA	\$107,500	\$10,927	\$9,215	\$127,642
WRIGHT	\$107,500	\$13,464	\$15,142	\$136,106
YELLOW MEDICINE	\$107,500	\$13,838	\$10,416	\$131,755
<b>ALLOCATED TOTALS</b>	<b>\$9,675,000</b>	<b>\$1,199,998</b>	<b>\$799,324</b>	<b>\$11,674,322</b>

**FY2021 SWCD Local Capacity Grants Allocation Table**

<b>SWCD Name</b>	<b>FY21 Base Grant</b>	<b>3 Year Average County Match 2017-2019</b>	<b>Land &amp; Water Allocation</b>	<b>Total FY21 Allocation</b>
Aitkin	107,500	24,917	7,455	139,872
Anoka	107,500	16,800	3,880	128,180
Becker	107,500	14,500	9,762	131,762
Beltrami	107,500	9,600	8,364	125,464
Benton	107,500	21,467	2,940	131,907
Big Stone	107,500	13,333	3,972	124,805
Blue Earth	107,500	25,301	5,626	138,427
Brown	107,500	12,667	4,392	124,559
Carlton	107,500	18,000	5,015	130,515
Carver	107,500	11,990	3,058	122,548
Cass	107,500	15,600	9,486	132,586
Chippewa	107,500	6,667	4,156	118,323
Chisago	107,500	33,500	3,286	144,286
Clay	107,500	18,000	7,457	132,957
Clearwater	107,500	13,650	5,191	126,341
Cook	107,500	13,650	6,010	127,160
Cottonwood	107,500	22,750	4,708	134,958
Crow Wing	107,500	29,398	7,738	144,636
Dakota	107,500	12,567	4,320	124,387
Dodge	107,500	19,717	3,115	130,332
Douglas	107,500	18,000	5,713	131,213
Faribault	107,500	22,733	5,159	135,392
Fillmore	107,500	2,000	6,169	115,669
Freeborn	107,500	16,800	4,863	129,163
Goodhue	107,500	23,333	5,645	136,478
Grant	107,500	25,397	4,387	137,284
Hennepin	107,500	-	5,477	112,977
Hubbard	107,500	17,833	5,410	130,743
Isanti	107,500	51,833	3,394	162,727
Itasca	107,500	8,700	12,911	129,111
Jackson	107,500	-	5,014	112,514
Kanabec	107,500	23,333	3,659	134,492
Kandiyohi	107,500	16,000	6,302	129,802
Kittson	107,500	14,369	6,996	128,865
Koochiching	107,500	16,542	7,282	131,324
Lac qui Parle	107,500	9,600	5,511	122,611
Lake of the Woods	107,500	21,233	3,168	131,901
Lake	107,500	10,499	8,800	126,799
Le Sueur	107,500	20,045	3,586	131,131
Lincoln	107,500	15,600	4,150	127,250
Lyon	107,500	15,600	5,084	128,184
Mahnomen	107,500	22,500	4,061	134,061
Marshall	107,500	12,133	11,324	130,957
Martin	107,500	6,000	5,257	118,757

McLeod	107,500	19,717	3,710	130,927
Meeker	107,500	25,256	4,905	137,661
Mille Lacs	107,500	22,750	3,601	133,851
Morrison	107,500	19,742	7,568	134,810
Mower	107,500	16,800	5,031	129,331
Murray	107,500	10,800	5,352	123,652
Nicollet	107,500	15,600	3,191	126,291
Nobles	107,500	23,500	5,373	136,373
Norman	107,500	15,250	6,712	129,462
Olmsted	107,500	12,567	4,730	124,797
Otter Tail East	107,500	21,383	8,091	136,974
Otter Tail West	107,500	19,717	8,641	135,858
Pennington	107,500	15,167	4,127	126,794
Pine	107,500	10,000	8,103	125,603
Pipestone	107,500	15,600	3,462	126,562
Polk East	107,500	1,307	5,793	114,600
Polk West	107,500	1,307	8,495	117,302
Pope	107,500	22,750	5,681	135,931
Ramsey	107,500	-	1,431	108,931
Red Lake	107,500	22,083	3,183	132,766
Redwood	107,500	15,600	6,196	129,296
Renville	107,500	15,600	6,673	129,773
Rice	107,500	15,600	3,827	126,927
Rock	107,500	16,875	3,530	127,905
Root River	107,500	4,800	4,134	116,434
Roseau	107,500	19,717	8,699	135,916
Scott	107,500	46,035	3,026	156,561
Sherburne	107,500	12,567	3,197	123,264
Sibley	107,500	15,600	4,232	127,332
St. Louis North	107,500	20,317	20,107	147,924
St. Louis South	107,500	21,667	7,538	136,705
Stearns	107,500	15,367	10,498	133,365
Steele	107,500	6,341	2,873	116,714
Stevens	107,500	9,600	4,241	121,341
Swift	107,500	14,250	5,308	127,058
Todd	107,500	19,333	7,144	133,977
Traverse	107,500	22,750	4,121	134,371
Wabasha	107,500	-	3,848	111,348
Wadena	107,500	23,167	3,589	134,256
Waseca	107,500	2,580*	3,126	113,206
Washington	107,500	12,155	3,465	123,120
Watonwan	107,500	40,084	3,281	150,865
Wilkin	107,500	22,750	4,984	135,234
Winona	107,500	18,000	4,553	130,053
Wright	107,500	13,500	5,610	126,610
Yellow Medicine	107,500	15,600	5,766	128,866
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9,675,000</b>	<b>1,495,308</b>	<b>499,999</b>	<b>11,670,307</b>

\* 1,290 from FY20



Board Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_

**Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Riparian Programs Authorization: OHF Riparian Buffer Conservation Easement Program and CWF Pilot Working Lands Floodplain Program**

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota State Legislature has appropriated Outdoor Heritage Fund and Clean Water Funds to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to acquire and restore Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) conservation easements under Minnesota Statutes, Section 103F.515; and,

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of the OHF Riparian Buffer Conservation Easement Program as provided in Laws of Minnesota 2021, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 2(g) is to purchase and restore conservation easements on riparian land buffers of at least 50 feet in width to protect, restore and enhance habitat, including by expanding the riparian buffer and floodplain program under the clean water fund for wildlife benefits from buffers on private land; and,

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of the CWF Pilot Working Lands Floodplain Program as provided in Laws of Minnesota 2021, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 1, Article 2, Section 6(f) is to develop a pilot working lands floodplain program and to purchase, restore, or preserve riparian land and floodplains adjacent to lakes, rivers, streams, and tributaries, by conservation easements or contracts to keep water on the land, to decrease sediment, pollutant, and nutrient transport; reduce hydrologic impacts to surface waters; and increase infiltration for groundwater recharge; and,

**WHEREAS**, the source of funds for easements enrolled into either the OHF Riparian Buffer Conservation Easement Program or CWF Pilot Working Lands Floodplain Program will determine the length of protection (e.g., limited duration or permanent) and allowable activities (e.g., working lands) after enrollment; and,

**WHEREAS**, the OHF Riparian Buffer Conservation Easement Program and CWF Pilot Working Lands Floodplain Program are administered by BWSR in cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs); and,

**WHEREAS**, SWCDs will be reimbursed for their services using the most current RIM Reserve service rates; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Board, by separate resolution, has established the process for determining RIM easement rates; and,

**WHEREAS**, limited duration and/or working lands easements will utilize a modified RIM easement rate; and,

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

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Water and Soil Resources RIM Reserve Committee met on September 08, 2021 and unanimously recommends the following provisions.

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

1. Utilize appropriated funds to implement the OHF Riparian Buffer Conservation Easement Program and the CWF Pilot Working Lands Floodplain Program.
2. Work with partners to develop program guidelines and outreach efforts focused in priority areas.
3. Utilize RIM easement payment rates as established for permanent easements.
4. Utilize a modified RIM easement payment rate structure for limited duration and/or working lands easements.
5. Conduct landowner sign-ups and select applications using available funding for the OHF Riparian Buffer Conservation Easement Program and the CWF Pilot Working Lands Floodplain Program.

Dated at Saint Paul, Minnesota this 22nd day of September 2021.

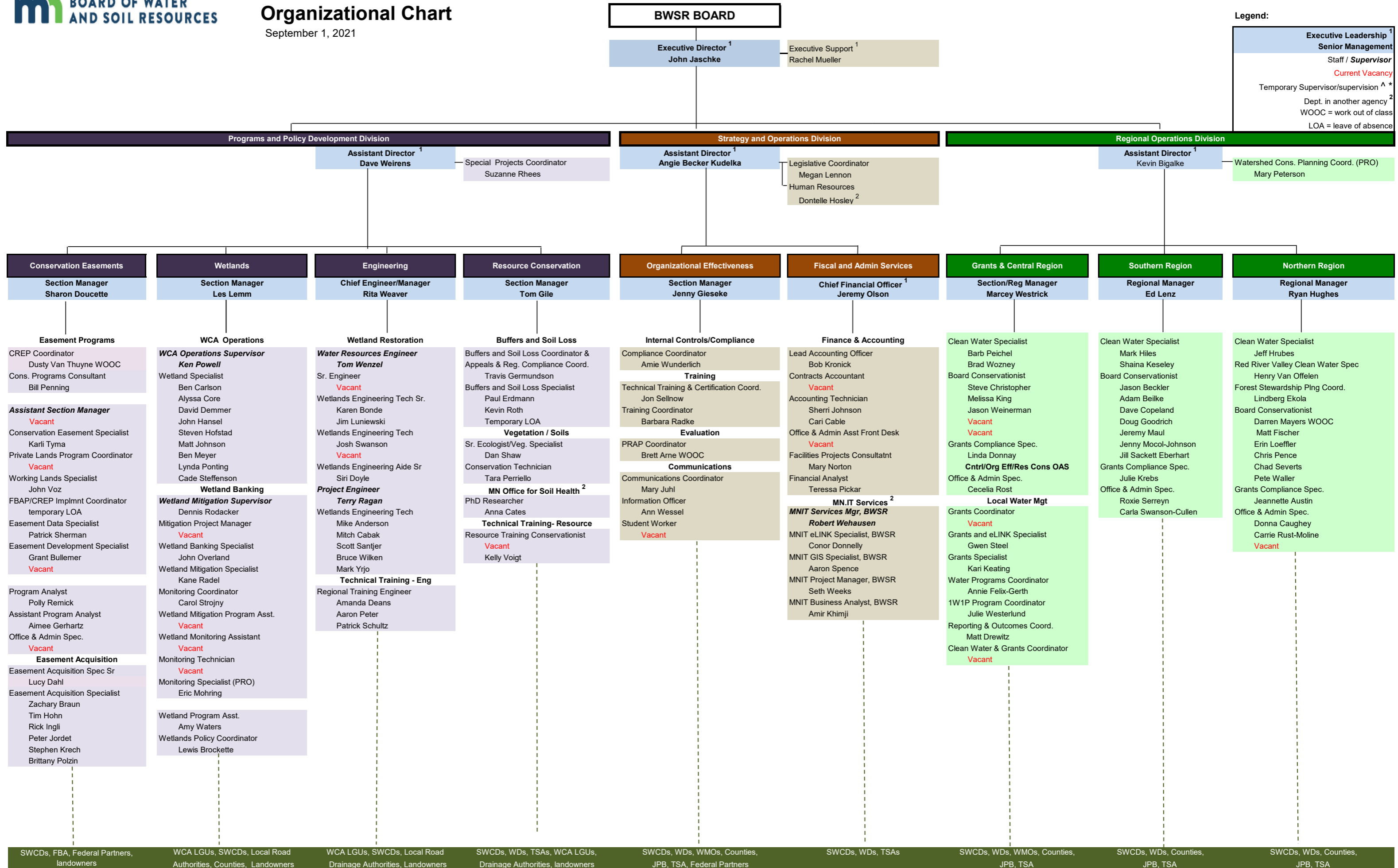
**MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES**

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Gerald Van Amburg, Chair  
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Date: September 22, 2021

Executive Leadership <sup>1</sup>
Senior Management
Staff / Supervisor
Current Vacancy
Temporary Supervisor/supervision <sup>^ *</sup>
Dept. in another agency <sup>2</sup>
WOOC = work out of class
LOA = leave of absence



<input type="checkbox"/> IN-STATE	<input type="checkbox"/> SHORT TERM ADVANCE	SEMA4 EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REPORT	<input type="checkbox"/> Check if advance was issued for these expenses
<input type="checkbox"/> OUT-OF-STATE	<input type="checkbox"/> RECURRING ADVANCE		<input type="checkbox"/> FINAL EXPENSE(S) FOR THIS TRIP?

Employee Name	Home Address (Include City and State)	Permanent Work Station (Include City and State)	Agency	1-Way Commute Miles	Job Title
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Employee ID	Rcd #	Trip Start Date	Trip End Date	Reason for Travel/Advance (30 Char. Max) [example: XYZ Conference, Dallas, TX]	Barg. Unit	Expense Group ID (Agency Use)
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Chart String(s)	A	Accounting Date	Fund	Fin DeptID	AppropID	SW Cost	Sub Acct	Agncy Cost 1	Agncy Cost 2	PC BU	Project	Activity	Srce Type	Category	Sub-Cat	Distrib %
		A. Description:														
B. Description:																

Date	Daily Description	Itinerary		Trip Miles	Total Trip & Local Miles	Mileage Rate	Meals ✓	Total Meals (overnight stay)	Total Meals (no overnight stay) taxable	Lodging	Personal Telephone	Parking	Total
		Time	Location										
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Depart				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
			Arrive				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				0.00
VEHICLE CONTROL #				Total Miles		0	Total MWI/MWO 0.00    Total MEI/MEO 0.00    Total LGI/LGO 0.00    Total PHI/PHO 0.00    Total PKI/PKC 0.00						Subtotal (A) 0.00

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT CALCULATION	OTHER EXPENSES – See reverse for list of Earn Codes.
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Enter the rates, miles, and total amounts for the mileage listed above. Get the IRS rate from your agency business expense contact.	Rate	Total Miles	Total Mileage Amt.	Date	Earn Code	Comments	Total
1. Enter rate, miles, and amount being claimed at <b>equal to the IRS rate</b> .			0.00				
2. Enter rate, miles, and amount being claimed at <b>less than the IRS rate</b> .			0.00				
3. Enter rate, miles, and amount being claimed at <b>greater than the IRS rate</b> .			0.00				
4. Add the total mileage amounts from lines 1 through 3.			0.00				
5. Enter IRS mileage rate in place at the time of travel.							
6. Subtract line 5 from line 3.	0.000						
7. Enter total miles from line 3.		0				Subtotal Other Expenses: (B)	0.00
8. Multiply line 6 by line 7. This is <b>taxable</b> mileage.			0.00 (Copy to Box C)			Total taxable mileage greater than IRS rate to be reimbursed: (C)	0.00 MIT or MOT
9. Subtract line 8 from line 4. If line 8 is zero, enter mileage amount from line 4. This is <b>non-taxable</b> mileage.			0.00 (Copy to Box D)			Total nontaxable mileage less than or equal to IRS rate to be reimbursed: (D)	0.00 MLI or MLO

If using private vehicle for out-of-state travel: What is the lowest airfare to the destination? \_\_\_\_\_ Total Expenses for this trip must not exceed this amount.

I declare, under penalty of perjury, that this claim is just, correct and that no part of it has been paid or reimbursed by the state of Minnesota or by another party except with respect to any advance amount paid for this trip. I AUTHORIZE PAYROLL DEDUCTION OF ANY SUCH ADVANCE. I have not accepted personal travel benefits.

Less Advance issued for this trip:	
Total amount to be reimbursed to the employee:	0.00
Amount of Advance to be returned by the employee by deduction from paycheck:	0.00
<b>Grand Total (A + B + C + D)</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Employee Signature _____ Date _____ Work Phone: _____	Appointing Authority Designee (Needed for Recurring Advance and Special Expenses) _____ Date _____
Approved: Based on knowledge of necessity for travel and expense and on compliance with all provisions of applicable travel regulations.	Signature _____ Date _____
Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____ Work Phone: _____	Signature _____ Date _____

## EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REPORT (Instructions)

**DO NOT PAY RELOCATION EXPENSES ON THIS FORM.**

See form FI-00568 Relocation Expense Report. Relocation expenses must be sent to Minnesota Management & Budget, Statewide Payroll Services, for payment.

**USE OF FORM:** Use the form for the following purposes:

1. To reimburse employees for authorized travel expenses.
2. To request and pay all travel advances.
3. To request reimbursement for small cash purchases paid for by employees.

**COMPLETION OF THE FORM: Employee:** Complete, in ink, all parts of this form. If claiming reimbursement, enter actual amounts you paid, not to exceed the limits set in your bargaining agreement or compensation plan. If you do not know these limits, contact your agency's business expense contact. Employees must submit an expense report within 60 days of incurring any expense(s) or the reimbursement comes taxable.

All of the data you provide on this form is public information, except for your home address. You are not legally required to provide your home address, but the state of Minnesota cannot process certain mileage payments without it.

**Supervisor:** Approve the correctness and necessity of this request in compliance with existing bargaining agreements or compensation plans and all other applicable rules and policies. Forward to the agency business expense contact person, who will then process the payments. Note: The expense report form must include original signatures.

**Final Expense For This Trip?:** Check this box if there will be no further expenses submitted for this trip. By doing this, any outstanding advance balance associated with this trip will be deducted from the next paycheck that is issued.

**1-Way Commute Miles:** Enter the number of miles from your home to your permanent workstation.

**Expense Group ID:** Entered by accounting or payroll office at the time of entering expenses. The Expense Group ID is a unique number that is system-assigned. It will be used to reference any advance payment or expense reimbursement associated with this trip.

**Earn Code:** Select an Earn Code from the list that describes the expenses for which you are requesting reimbursement. Be sure to select the code that correctly reflects whether the trip is in state or out-of-state. **Note:** Some expense reimbursements may be taxable.

**Travel Advances, Short-Term and Recurring:** An employee can only have one outstanding advance at a time. An advance must be settled before another advance can be issued.

**Travel Advance Settlement:** When the total expenses submitted are less than the advance amount or if the trip is cancelled, the employee will owe money to the state. Except for rare situations, personal checks will not be accepted for settlement of advances; a deduction will be taken from the employee's paycheck.

**FMS ChartStrings:** Funding source(s) for advance or expense(s)

**Mileage:** Use the **Mileage Reimbursement Calculation** table to figure your mileage reimbursement. Mileage may be authorized for reimbursement to the employee at one of three rates (referred to as the equal to, less than, or greater than rate). The rates are specified in the applicable bargaining agreement/compensation plan. Note: If the mileage rate you are using is above the IRS rate at the time of travel (this is not common), part of the mileage reimbursement will be taxed.

**Vehicle Control #:** If your agency assigns vehicle control numbers follow your agency's internal policy and procedure. Contact your agency's business expense contact for more information on the vehicle control number procedure.

**Personal Travel Benefits:** State employees and other officials cannot accept personal benefits resulting from travel on state business as their own. These benefits include frequent flyer miles/points and other benefits (i.e. discounts issued by lodging facilities.) Employees must certify that they have not accepted personal travel benefits when they apply for travel reimbursement.

**Receipts:** Attach itemized receipts for all expenses except meals, taxi services, baggage handling, and parking meters, to this reimbursement claim. The Agency Designee may, at its option, require attachment of meal receipts as well. Credit card receipts, bank drafts, or cancelled checks are not allowable receipts.

**Copies and Distribution:** Submit the original document for payment and retain a copy for your employee records.

Description	Earn Code		Description	Earn Code	
	In State	Out of State		In State	Out of State
Advance	ADI	ADO	Membership	MEM	
Airfare	ARI	ARO	Mileage > IRS Rate	MIT*	MOT*
Baggage Handling	BGI	BGO	Mileage < or = IRS Rate	MLI	MLO
Car Rental	CRI	CRO	Network Services	NWK	
Clothing Allowance	CLA		Other Expenses	OEI	OEO
Clothing-Non Contract	CLN		Parking	PKI	PKO
Communications - Other	COM		Photocopies	CPI	CPO
Conference/Registration Fee	CFI	CFO	Postal, Mail & Shipping Svcs.(outbound)	PMS	
Department Head Expense	DHE		Storage of State Property	STO	
Fax	FXI	FXO	Supplies/Materials/Parts	SMP	
Freight & Delivery (inbound)	FDS		Telephone, Business Use	BPI	BPO
Hosting	HST		Telephone, Personal Use	PHI	PHO
Laundry	LDI	LDO	Training/Tuition Fee	TRG	
Lodging	LGI	LGO	Taxi/Airport Shuttle	TXI	TXO
Meals With Lodging	MWI	MWO	Vest Reimbursement	VST	
Meals Without Lodging	MEI*	MEO*	Note: * = taxable, taxed at supplemental rates		

# Watershed protects Lake McCarrons



CRWD's underground stormwater treatment system at Parkview Center School, a \$1.42 million project backed by a \$1.76 million targeted watershed Clean Water Fund grant from BWSR, is designed to protect Lake McCarrons' water quality. The system includes five rows of corrugated metal pipes 10 feet in diameter. Estimates show it will treat 12.5 million gallons of polluted runoff a year.

**Photo Credits:** Capitol Region Watershed District

**VIDEO:** [See contractors in action and catch an aerial view of Lake McCarrons.](#)

In Roseville, the Capitol Region Watershed District drew from targeted watershed Clean Water Funds to protect a popular swimming and fishing lake, collaborating with the school district, city and Ramsey County at a land-locked site to construct a stormwater treatment solution under a sledding hill at Parkview Center School



**The \$1.42 million Parkview project matched \$679,150 in Clean Water Funds with \$150,000 from Ramsey County and \$30,000 from the Roseville school district.**

ROSEVILLE — Buried under a sledding hill and nearly invisible except for the manhole covers, Capitol Region Watershed District's (CRWD) massive underground stormwater treatment system at Parkview Center School is meant to be most apparent downstream in Lake McCarrons.

The \$1.42 million project is designed to protect water quality of the 75-acre lake.

"(Lake McCarrons) is a deep-lake system, and it's unimpaired. So there's a few things about it that make it unique for the Twin Cities area," said Nate Zwonitzer, CRWD water resource project manager. "It's a great recreational lake for fishing and swimming. It has really good



**Zwonitzer**

water quality."

An in-lake alum treatment in 2004 plus watershed-focused work helped McCarrons bounce back after the 1990s, when it failed to meet state standards for chlorophyll-a and phosphorus.

Installed in 2019 and connected to the storm sewer in 2020, the Parkview project includes five rows of corrugated metal pipes 10 feet in diameter. Laid out in a 136-by-62-foot area, the pipes can hold about 414,000 gallons of water — the equivalent of an 0.8 inch rainfall in the 46-acre watershed.

**GRANT WORK:** A 2016 Clean Water Fund award, the \$1.76 million targeted watershed grant expires Dec. 31, 2021. Other grant-funded work includes an underground infiltration system at Como Park Senior High School; Como Park Golf Course best management practices featuring an iron-enhanced sand filter at an existing stormwater pond, an expanded bioretention basin and new underground infiltration; 35 rain gardens; and activities promoting clean-streets initiatives.



**Above:** Stormwater from a 46-acre watershed drains to the Ramsey County Road B storm sewer adjacent to Parkview Center School in Roseville. Now cleaned water treated at the site discharges through the storm sewer and runs through wetlands at Villa Park before entering Lake McCarrons. **Below:** Original plans called for siting the project under school athletic fields. But groundwater was too close to the surface there, so it was worked into a hillside.

“Unless there was a sign there, you wouldn’t even know,” said Todd Lieser, Roseville Area Schools supervisor of buildings and grounds, who was involved from design through completion. The temporary signs installed during construction were to be replaced by permanent educational signs.

The watershed drains to the Ramsey County Road B storm sewer adjacent to Parkview Center School. Now, a diversion channels runoff north, through a manhole to a pretreatment sump. Large debris is removed and sediment settles out before it reaches the pipe gallery. Stored water is released within 48 hours by passing through an innovative filtration system: a concrete tank with 53 filter cartridges containing volcanic rock (perlite) modified to chemically remove dissolved phosphorus.

“The cool thing is it’s all



gravity,” Lieser said.

Cleaned water is discharged through the storm sewer system and runs through wetlands at Villa Park before entering Lake McCarrons.

Estimates show the system will treat 12.5 million gallons of polluted runoff a year, keeping more than 45 pounds of phosphorus out of the lake. One pound of phosphorus can produce 500 pounds of algae.

The Parkview project is one element of a \$1.76 million targeted watershed Clean

Water Fund grant from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) that has resulted in more than \$4.5 million in projects centered on preserving Lake McCarrons and improving nutrient-impaired Como Lake.

The grant runs through Dec. 31, 2021.

“What it allowed us to do,” Zwonitzer said, “was expedite some projects that were on our list. And it helped us to leverage funding from our partners because we were able to bring additional

## Leveraged Funds

CRWD parlayed the \$1.76 million targeted watershed grant into more than \$4.5 million in projects completed with its partners from 2016 through 2021, including:

- \$1.85 million:** Como Regional Park best management practices
- \$1.42 million:** Parkview Center School stormwater treatment project
- \$850,000:** Como Park Senior High School stormwater treatment project
- \$380,000:** Boulevard rain gardens
- \$10,000:** Promotion and program support

**RAIN GARDENS:** In the Lake McCarrons subwatershed, 14 grant-funded, curb-cut rain gardens were built in 2018 and 2019. Three more benefiting Lake McCarrons and 18 benefiting Como Lake were built in 2021. Combined, they’ll treat an estimated 2.2 million gallons of water and reduce phosphorus by 14 pounds a year.



Water stored in the underground pipes is released within 48 hours by passing through an innovative filtration system: a concrete tank with 53 filter cartridges containing volcanic rock modified to chemically remove dissolved phosphorus.

## Lake Como Work

In addition to Clean Water Fund-backed targeted watershed work, recent alum treatments and aggressive curly leaf pondweed management are paying off, CRWD water resource project manager Nate Zwonitzer said. “The significant improvements that we’re seeing in Lake Como are without a doubt the result of the activities that we’ve been doing over the past few years,” he said, adding that the water quality is better than any time since CRWD has been monitoring it. Details: [CRWD article](#).

Lake Como projects spawned two other firsts:

The underground stormwater treatment project at Como Park Senior High School was the first time Saint Paul storm sewers were diverted for treatment on property the city didn’t own. Zwonitzer said the right combination of projects, funding and incentives made it possible. “This was like a case study for us, and we had the funding to help us try something new. It kind of laid the groundwork for future projects. It allowed us to demonstrate to the city that this can be done,” he said. With the targeted grant, CRWC could say, “We have funds to help with design and construction, and we can create incentives that help all of the partners to meet their goals individually but also support this larger effort to improve Como Lake.”

The Adopt-A-Drain program — originally focused on the Como Lake watershed, now used across the metro, in other parts of Minnesota and in other states — grew from a partnership among CRWD, Hamline University and community members.

money to the table. It allowed us to do projects that may have taken years of budgeting.”

CRWD will own the Parkview stormwater treatment system, coordinate maintenance, and cover 50% of annual maintenance costs. The city and Ramsey County will split the balance.

Initial plans would have buried the project under the school athletic fields, but groundwater was too close to the surface for the filtration system to work there.

“We almost abandoned the project completely until this concept came up,” Lieser said.

The completed project is situated in the 30-foot slope between the school’s parking lot and the athletic fields below. It allowed land-locked Roseville to treat stormwater on school property, and, by raising the grade to bury the system, it gave the school district an affordable option to one day expand parking at a congested site. With

**“(I)t helped us to leverage funding from our partners because we were able to bring additional money to the table. It allowed us to do projects that may have taken years of budgeting.”**

— Nate Zwonitzer,  
Capitol Region Watershed District

modification, the water could be stored longer, and then used to irrigate the athletic fields. That need does not currently exist.

Another challenge: Sampling showed existing soils weren’t sufficient to bear the weight of the system without sinking. That solution lay 1.5 miles away at a Roseville High School construction site.

Hauling soil from the high school property saved the school district about \$29,000 in disposal costs. It saved CRWD about \$380,000 — money it would have spent to import soil. To ensure sufficient compaction, that additional soil settled at the Parkview site for one year

before it was removed to install the project, and then reused in 2019 to bury it.

“By coordinating closely with the school district, we were able to take waste from their high school project and turn it into a resource for the project at Parkview,” Zwonitzer said.

Lieser said the CRWD collaboration not only saved money but also produced educational benefits. CRWD staff has worked closely with the school to explain how filters remove phosphates from the water. A final piece of the project involved installing permanent educational signs that explain the project in four languages.



# Mississippi WMO collaboration



Previously untreated runoff from 612 acres now flows from east to west through Columbia Golf Course and Columbia Park, where it is diverted to a treatment pond, a dry basin, and then an infiltration basin before it re-enters the stormwater sewer system and continues on for 1.2 miles to the Mississippi River. The Clean Water Fund-supported project is slated to wrap up this month. **Photo Credits:** Mississippi WMO

Minneapolis’ public works, parks play vital roles in a \$7.4 million project designed to produce cleaner stormwater; create habitat with native plants and trees; curb flooding in Columbia Golf Course, surrounding neighborhood



MINNEAPOLIS — The Mississippi Watershed Management Organization’s (MWMO) \$7.4 million stormwater improvement project set to wrap up by mid-October will reduce residential flooding, curb pollutant-loading to the Mississippi River, enhance 19 acres of habitat, and create more reliable playing conditions at Columbia Golf Course and Columbia Park.

“ How can we think creatively about this and put together a plan on a pipeshed scale, where we could reduce localized flooding stress, and then move that water effectively down in the watershed without negatively impacting properties? ”

— Stephanie Johnson, Minneapolis Public Works, on project partners’ considerations

An \$800,000 Clean Water Fund grant from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) supports the work, necessitated in part because of failing infrastructure built in the 1960s.

The project is a first-time

collaboration among the MWMO, Minneapolis Public Works Department and Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board.

“Everyone really worked to achieve this vision,” said Andy Schilling, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board design project manager. “With climate change, we’re only going to have more of these infrastructure (challenges).”

The storm sewer was deteriorating and too small to handle the increased volume of runoff. A hard rain or spring snowmelt would flood city streets, restrict play on the 18-hole public golf course and render the park’s athletic fields unusable. The city’s storm sewer project in the neighborhood and the grant-funded project in the golf course and park were parallel but separate endeavors.

Work started in October 2020. Storm sewer replacement and initial grading finished by February. The second phase — final grading, golf course and park restoration and planting — started in April 2021 and ran through

## Details

**MAINTENANCE:** Under the maintenance agreement, the city will own and operate the stormwater infrastructure; MWMO will hire contractors to establish and maintain the vegetation for four years; the park and recreation board will then be responsible for the plantings.

**SPECIES TALLY:** The mix of Minnesota native plants installed includes 11 tree species, five shrub species, and 26 grass and wildflower species. The seed mix added more native species.

**PERMITS REQUIRED:** Canadian Pacific Railway utility license, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency construction stormwater permit, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board construction permit; Minneapolis/park board burning permits.



Work started in October 2020. Construction was coordinated with planned street improvements to save money and minimize traffic disruptions in the neighborhood. Restoration and planting followed storm sewer replacement and grading.

the summer. Coordinating construction with planned street improvements cut costs and minimized traffic disruptions.

The MWMO contributed \$3.6 million in levy-generated capital improvement funds. The city of Minneapolis contributed \$2.9 million. A \$100,000 Hennepin County Natural Resources Opportunity grant covered the balance. The park and recreation board allowed the project to be constructed on its property.

“We’re really excited about how the project has been going, and I think it’s a good example of strong partnerships,” said Alicia Beattie, MWMO’s capital projects and stewardship specialist. “It’s a very complex project with a lot of different components.”

Previously untreated runoff from 612 acres is now diverted through the golf course and park, where it flows from east to west through a treatment pond, dry basin and an infiltration basin before re-entering the stormwater sewer system. From there, it flows 1.2 miles to the Mississippi River.

“In this watershed (the land is) so developed that all the water eventually goes through pipes, and then into the river. That’s why it’s so important to treat that water,” Beattie said. “The only way we can treat it is by naturally treating it through different practices on the landscape.”

The project will keep an estimated 100 pounds of phosphorus out of the river each year. One pound of phosphorus can produce 500 pounds of algae.

“I think the partnership really helped us as a city to take the pipeshed view. In the city of Minneapolis, we have limited space to implement stormwater management solutions. We’ve got a fully built-out city. There’s just not a lot of open land available,” said Stephanie Johnson, Minneapolis Public Works Department’s director of surface water and sewers, who wrote the Clean Water Fund grant when she worked at MWMO.



Beattie



Johnson

Some of the challenges, such as tunneling under the Canadian Pacific Railway and dealing with contaminated soils, were no surprise. Impossible to predict was the drought, which required contractors to spend more time to establish this season’s newly planted trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses.

On land totaling 19 acres across the golf course and park, 128 species of native Minnesota trees, shrubs and perennials now grow. Contractors planted 98 trees, 155 shrubs and more than 4,300 grasses and wildflowers. Schilling said species native to Minnesota woodlands, oak savannas and prairies replaced some golf course roughs and degraded woodlands.

Golfers and park visitors are most likely to notice the plantings and related habitat benefits.

“It was soggy conditions in areas, and if we had a big

rain event, the stormwater would not drain correctly in those portions of the golf course and we would have wet fairways,” Schilling said. “It reduced playability from a recreational standpoint, including in the park’s multi-use athletic field.”

Lost play meant lost revenue for parks.

In the event of a once-every-100-years rainfall, the project is projected to reduce golf course flooding from three days to less than 12 hours.

“It’s reducing that burden of localized flooding,” Johnson said. What residents will see, she said, is that they can travel safely on the road.

The last element of the project, a pretreatment system to remove sediment and trash, was expected to be installed by mid-October. The grant expires on Dec. 31.

“I think the excitement around it has been fun,” Johnson said. “With our infrastructure being buried, it’s not as often a topic of conversation or appreciation of what the infrastructure has done for us.”

# Wetland project benefits Buffalo River



A wetland banking project in Becker County restored 80 acres of wetlands and more than 63 acres of upland habitat. The wet meadow shown above is one of three wetlands restored during construction, which began in October 2020 and concluded in November. **Photo Credits:** BWSR

## Becker County restoration adjacent to WMA designed to enhance habitat, curb nutrient-loading

A 175-acre restoration project in Becker County will reduce the amount of nutrients entering the Buffalo River, create habitat and generate 87.5 wetland banking credits.

Located about 16 miles north of Detroit Lakes within the White Earth Reservation, the wetland banking site includes 80 acres of restored wetlands and more than 63 acres of upland habitat. The project also involved enrolling most of the site — 173 acres — into a permanent conservation easement. Construction began in October 2020 and finished in late November.

Minnesota wetlands that are filled or drained must be replaced under state and federal wetland laws, including the Wetland Conservation Act.

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) paid for the \$1.12 million project construction in Becker County through the Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program (LGRWRP). The LGRWRP is one of several BWSR-administered programs that restore wetlands to generate wetland banking credits. Local road authorities can use credits deposited into the state wetland bank to obtain state and

federal wetland permits for qualifying road improvement projects.

In 2020, the state Legislature appropriated \$23 million for the program, expanding opportunities for wetland restorations throughout Minnesota.

“The Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program is an important tool because it allows infrastructure projects to move forward while still ensuring wetlands are restored, offsetting the loss of these valuable natural resources,” said Dennis Rodacker, BWSR wetland mitigation



*A contractor installs a ditch plug, which blocks the ditch, allowing water to fill the once-drained wetland. The wetland restoration project in Becker County required several ditch plugs.*

supervisor, who oversees the program.

BWSR Conservation Engineering Technician Jim Luniewski designed the Becker County restoration, which is adjacent to the Ogema Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Luniewski said this site is unique because it involves wetlands located on gentle slopes — unlike the more common depressional wetlands known as “prairie potholes.” The site was previously farmed. Natural wetlands were filled in or

altered, but wet conditions often prevented planting.

“Taking the land out of crop production and putting it into a restored shallow wetland is going to reduce nutrient loads downstream to the Buffalo River,” Luniewski said. “The more we can reduce nutrients entering these tributaries, the better.”

Three wetlands were restored by blocking and filling several ditches using shallow ditch plugs. The fill material came from

areas onsite where upland sediment had accumulated along wetland edges. The goal, Luniewski said, was to remove shallow deposits of sediment to expose the original wetland basin. A local contractor did the work.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) authorized a small amount of construction work related to the restoration on the adjacent Ogema Springs WMA. Habitat benefits created by the restoration project align with the DNR’s

management goal for the WMA to enhance waterfowl habitat for species such as yellow-headed blackbirds, rails, mallards and blue-winged teal.

“You’re going to have both water quality and habitat benefits,” Luniewski said. “The more land we can set aside and restore, while keeping the prime farmland farmable, that’s a good goal for every conservationist to strive for whether you’re a farmer or an outdoor enthusiast.”

# Next stop: Easements, water storage



Board tour attendees visit a property in Mower County's Dexter Township to view a water control structure. The dam was the third stop on the Aug. 25 tour, which featured 13 conservation projects in Mower and Freeborn counties. **Photo Credit:** Adam Beilke, BWSR

## Annual BWSR Board tour showcases conservation work led by three watershed districts, two SWCDs, other Freeborn, Mower county partners

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Board members, staff and partners visited 13 conservation projects Aug. 25 in Mower and Freeborn counties during the agency's annual board tour.

Approximately 35 people attended the tour, which featured water storage structures, conservation easements, and a collaborative 8-acre farm in Mower County used to study best management practices for soil health.

BWSR Board Conservationist David Copeland, who along with BWSR Clean Water Specialist Shaina Keseley helped organize the tour, said local government partners helped select tour stops and presented information throughout the nine-hour event. Featured projects

were implemented by the Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD), Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD), Turtle Creek Watershed District (TCWD), Freeborn Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Mower SWCD.

"You need partnerships to make conservation work," Copeland said. "Here we had three watershed districts plus SWCDs working well together and communicating across those lines."

The tour included stops at three water storage structures, which slow down and temporarily hold back water from re-entering nearby waterways after significant rainfall



events. In recent years, Minnesota has experienced larger and more frequent and intense rains, which have damaged crops and infrastructure, significantly eroded riverbanks, and degraded water quality. BWSR received \$2 million in general fund dollars from the state Legislature this year to develop a water storage and treatment program as part of a statewide effort to mitigate the negative impacts of severe weather events spurred by climate change.

The importance of conservation easements also emerged as a theme during the tour. Voluntary conservation easements take land out of production. The conservation practices that are part of restoration can benefit water quality, reduce soil erosion and create habitat. Common practices implemented on conservation easements include wetland restorations, native vegetation establishment and drainage improvements.

Five easements on the tour route were funded by programs including the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP), the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program and the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

“We’re putting these easements on properties that are not the most productive, but they are environmentally sensitive,”



Board tour attendees view an outlet structure at Geneva Lake in Freeborn County. **Photo Credit:** Adam Beilke, BWSR



BWSR Board tour attendees visited a water storage structure in Mower County's Dexter Township (shown under construction above). The completed project (below) is estimated to reduce phosphorus by 194 pounds per year and total suspended solids by 126 tons.

**Photo Credits:** Mower SWCD



said Ed Lenz, BWSR Southern Region manager, who attended and helped plan the tour. “We aren’t seeking opportunities to take the best cropland out of production.”

To mitigate risks associated with COVID-19, masks and hand sanitizer were provided, and attendees were asked to socially distance throughout the day.

The tour concluded with a visit to the Sustainable Answer Acre (SAA) Research Farm in Mower County’s Lansing Township. Created in spring 2018 by a collaborative partnership of local, public and private organizations, the SAA’s mission is to test current agronomic practices that affect nitrate movement in the soil profile and groundwater while maintaining crop productivity and improving soil health.

A collaborative that includes three local farmers operates the 8-acre farm. Northern Country Cooperative, a farmer-owned local organization, plays a leading role in operations. The farm’s current goal is to test commonly used agricultural practices that enhance profitability and environmental sustainability in local agricultural systems. Funding for the SAA is provided by local supporters, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association, and The Nature Conservancy.