

## Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP)

BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) was authorized by the legislature (Statute 103B.102) in 2007 to monitor and assess the performance of local units of government (counties, SWCDs, watershed districts, and watershed management organizations), responsible for the conservation of water and related land resources. In addition to conducting reviews, BWSR uses this program to provide organizational improvement or assistance grants to local government units (LGUs) in need and prepares an annual report to the legislature outlining the work conducted under the program.

### PRAP Review

The program includes an Annual Statewide Summary and three types of assessments.

The **Annual Statewide Summary** is an annual tabulation of required plans and reports for all LGUs. This information is included within the Annual Legislative Report.

**Organizational Assessments** are routine, interactive reviews intended to assess all LGUs at least once every 10 years. These reviews evaluate operational effectiveness, partner relationships, and whether the LGU has achieved county water plan, watershed management plan, and/or SWCD comprehensive plan implementation goals.\* Organizational reviews also assess compliance with performance standards and the Wetland Conservation Act, where applicable.

**Watershed-based Assessments** are routine reviews conducted with partnerships of local governments working together to implement comprehensive watershed management plans (CWMPs) developed through the One Watershed, One Plan Program. Assessment occurs when a CWMP has reached or passed the 5-year plan evaluation checkpoint. This type of review evaluates progress on plan implementation and analyzes partners working relationships.\*\*

**Special Assessments** are conducted with LGUs experiencing significant obstacles or performance deficiencies and may include BWSR Board action to assign penalties as authorized by statute.

\* Within an Organizational Assessment, the plan review may be omitted or waived depending on multiple factors, including plan expiration, status of water planning efforts by the LGU/within the jurisdiction, and status of approved comprehensive watershed management plans within the jurisdiction.

\*\* Within the watershed partnership, individual LGUs may be selected to complete an Organizational Assessment to coincide with the Watershed-based Assessment. Doing this simultaneously will reduce the time individual LGUs are involved in a PRAP assessment, resulting in a less time-consuming process for both BWSR and the LGUs.

### Program History

*Since 2008, BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) has assessed the performance of the units of government that constitute Minnesota's local delivery system for conservation of water and related land resources. The program goal is to assist these local government partners to be the best they can be in their management of Minnesota's land and water resources. Review of LGU compliance with the Wetland Conservation Act was added in 2017.*

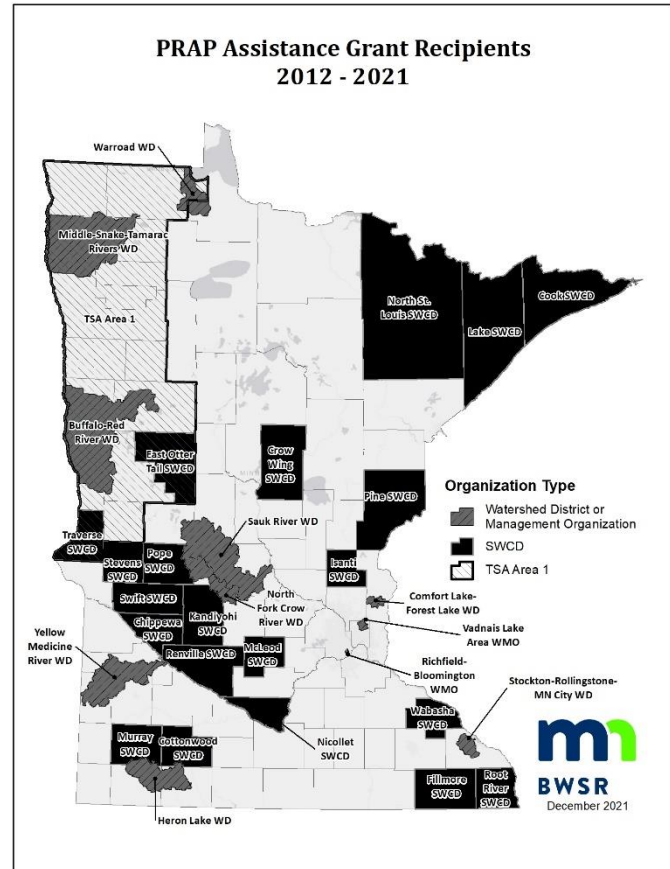
*In 2022, the program was redesigned, to accommodate for the ongoing transition from county-based local water management plans to watershed planning.*

## PRAP Assistance

The “assistance” part of the PRAP program comes through grants made to LGUs to improve operating performance and execute planned goals and objectives. Grant activities typically include facilitation, mediation or consulting services related to organizational improvement activities such as reorganizations/mergers, strategic planning, organizational development, benchmarking, audits, and staff and board capacity assessments. LGUs do not need to have been the subject of a PRAP performance review to apply for these grants, but funding priority is given to activities recommended to an LGU as part of a PRAP review.

Since the program began in 2012, more than \$125,000 has been awarded to LGUs around Minnesota.

In 2021, BWSR changed some of the application requirements for PRAP assistance funds and provided clarity about what types of activities and expenses are eligible. Additional changes include an increase to \$20,000 for partnerships that apply for assistance funding. A \$50,000 annual cap on PRAP assistance awards was also removed to accommodate the potential for more partnership applications.



## PRAP Reporting

BWSR prepares an annual PRAP report for the Minnesota legislature containing the results of the previous year’s program activities as well as a general assessment of the performance of LGUs that provide land and water conservation services and programs. These reports contain an Annual Statewide Summary or Tabulation of data regarding reporting and plan status for all LGUs, as well as summaries and findings from all Organizational Assessments, Watershed-based Assessments and Special Assessment PRAP reviews completed during the reporting year.

To learn more about the PRAP program, or to view past Legislative reports, visit the PRAP page of the BWSR website at <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP>