

# Lower Minnesota River West

*Policy Committee*  
January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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# Priority Issues and Plan Expectations

What's Included Within:

- **Process**
- **Plan Content**
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  - Nonpoint Priority Funding Plan (NPFP)
  - Drainage
  - Wetlands
  - Conservation Easements
  - GRAPS
  - WRAPS
  - Lakes
  - Landscape Resiliency and Climate Adaptation
  - Local Controls
  - Soil Erosion/Soil Health
  - Surface and Groundwater Quality
  - Altered Hydrology/Flooding/Water Quantity
  - Protecting Pollinator Populations
  - Aquatic/Terrestrial Invasive Species
  - Urban Stormwater
  - Data Collection and Monitoring
  - Minnesota Department of Ag

# Process and Plan Content

## Process

Partnership must follow: [One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures \(Version 2.0\)](#)

- Involve a broad range of stakeholders
- Reassess the agreement for planning purposes when finalizing the implementation schedule and programs in the plan
- Follow the revised and agreed upon planning boundary (per Oct 4, 2019 letter)
  - Bevens/Silver Creek to the Sibley County line
    - Specifically called out in the plan for implementation
  - Invite Carver SWCD, Carver WMO and Carver County

## Plan Content

Partners must follow: [One Watershed, One Plan – Plan Content Requirements \(Version 2.1\)](#)

- Analysis of issues, using available science
- Sufficient measurable goals indicating a pace of progress for addressing issues
- A thorough analysis of issues, using available science and data, in the selection of priority resource concerns.
- Description of programs, activities, decision making and evaluation

# Specific Priority Issues

## The Nonpoint Priority Funding Plan (NPFP)

- Emphasizes prioritizing Clean Water Investments
- Clarifies high level state priorities
- Requirement of the Clean Water Accountability Act

### ***Resource***

[NPFP](#)

### **Drainage**

- Engage Chapter 103E drainage authorities in the planning process
- Include identification of Chapter 103E drainage systems and drainage area-prioritization
- Include multipurpose drainage management in the approach for targeting best management practices within drainage area
- Measurable outcomes for nutrient/sediment reduction, detention storage, etc. should correlated with 103E drainage systems.
- Lay out a coordinated approach for implementing the plan coordinates 103E processes/proceedings





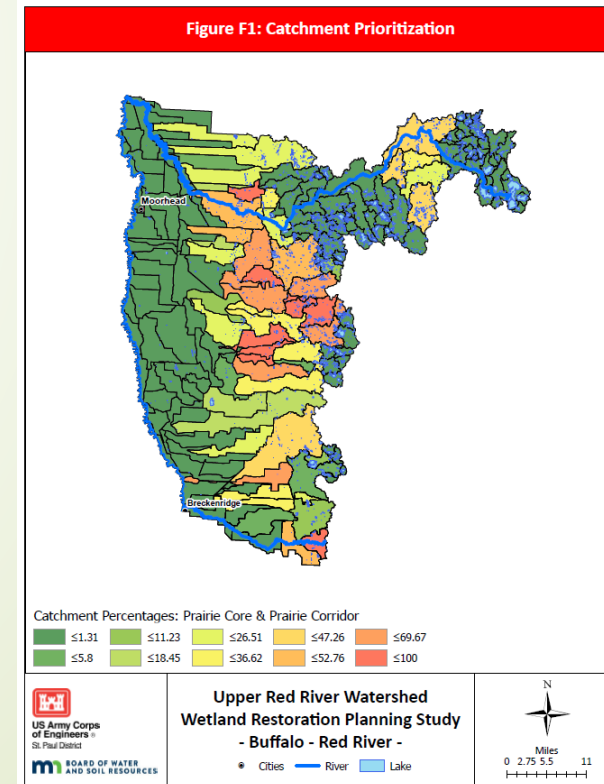
# Specific Priority Issues

## Wetlands

- Benefit water quality, flood damage reduction, wildlife habitat
- Plan should support implementation of WCA
- Identify high priority areas for wetland restoration and target projects

## **Resource**

- [Restorable Wetland Prioritization Tool](#)
- “Lower Minnesota River West 1W1P Wetland Section Comments”
  - Wetland restorations focus on restoring pre-disturbance conditions
  - BSA 9 low supply of wetland bank credits and high demand
    - Compensation Planning Framework



# Specific Priority Issues

## Conservation Easements

- The state considers local prioritization of areas for easement enrollment
- Consider areas with higher risk of surface/subsurface degradation
  - Ex. highly erosive or wellhead protection areas
- 2020-2022 nearly 3,400 acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) practices are scheduled to expire within partnership counties.
- Plan should recognize impact of expiring contracts
  - Management of those areas (prioritize)

## ***Resource***

[Conservation Reserve Program](#)

[Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#)

[Reinvest In Minnesota](#)



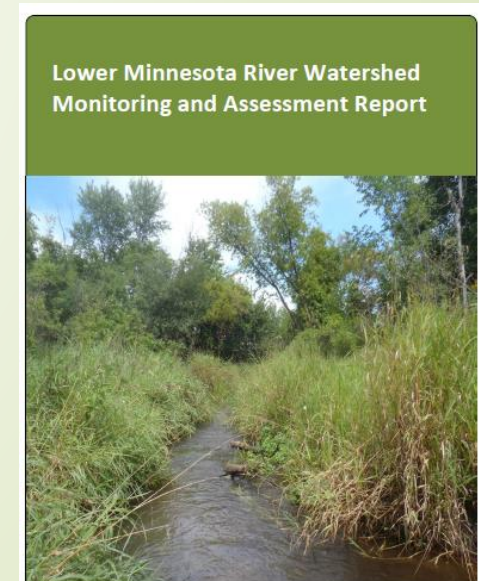
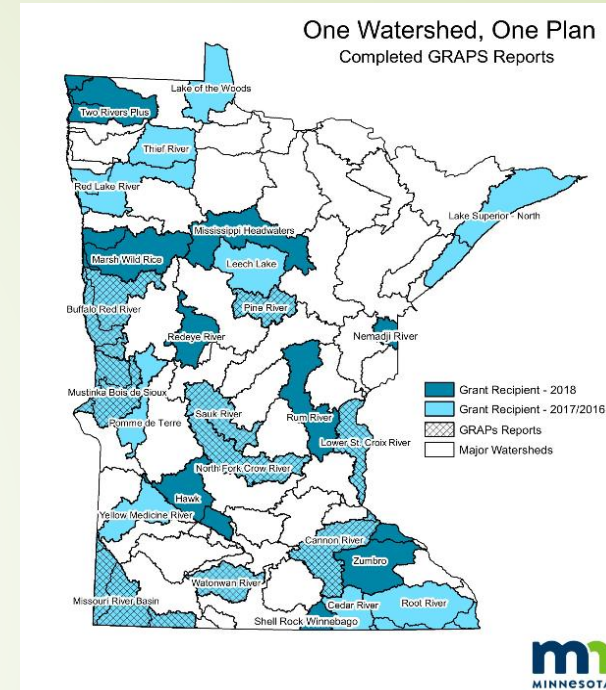
# Specific Priority Issues

## Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies (GRAPS)

- [Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies \(GRAPS\)](#)
- Report coordinated through the MDH
- Contains maps and data describing groundwater conditions
- Identifies local groundwater concerns and issues
- Helps guide/assist goal setting and implementation activities
- Lower MN West- currently under development, available in near future

## Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS)

- [Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies \(WRAPS\)](#)
- Report completed by MPCA in 2019
- Outlines water quality reduction goals for excess sediment, phosphorus, nitrogen and E. coli Bacteria.
- Identifies areas for protection and goals to address degraded stream habitat
- Provides strategies to meet restoration goals and protection targets
- BWSR Guidance document: [Using WRAPS Reports in Local Water Planning](#)





# Specific Priority Issues

## Lakes

- Not a major component to the land area
- Several lakes listed as impaired
  - Eutrophication impairments: Clear, Silver, Titlow and High Island (Main)
  - Bakers is an important local resource
- Important to quality of life, local economies
- Sensitive to nutrient enrichment and runoff
- Consider prioritizing practice listed in WRAPs and NPFP

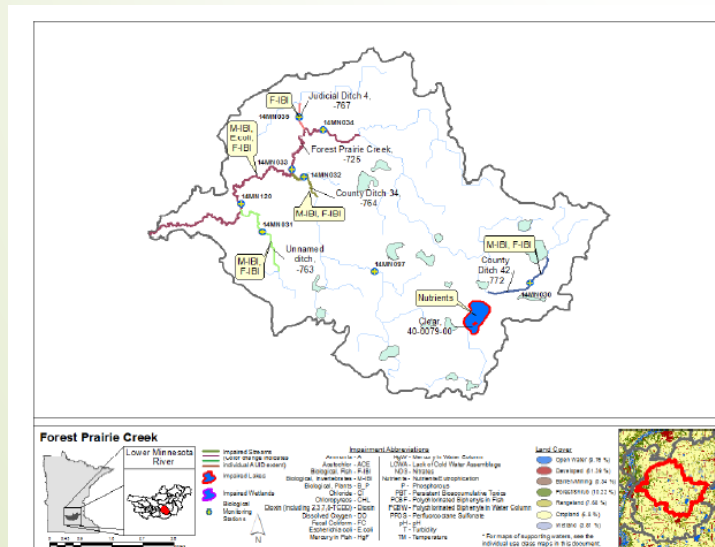


Figure 16. Currently listed impaired waters by parameter and land use characteristics in the Forest Prairie Creek Aggregated 12-HUC.

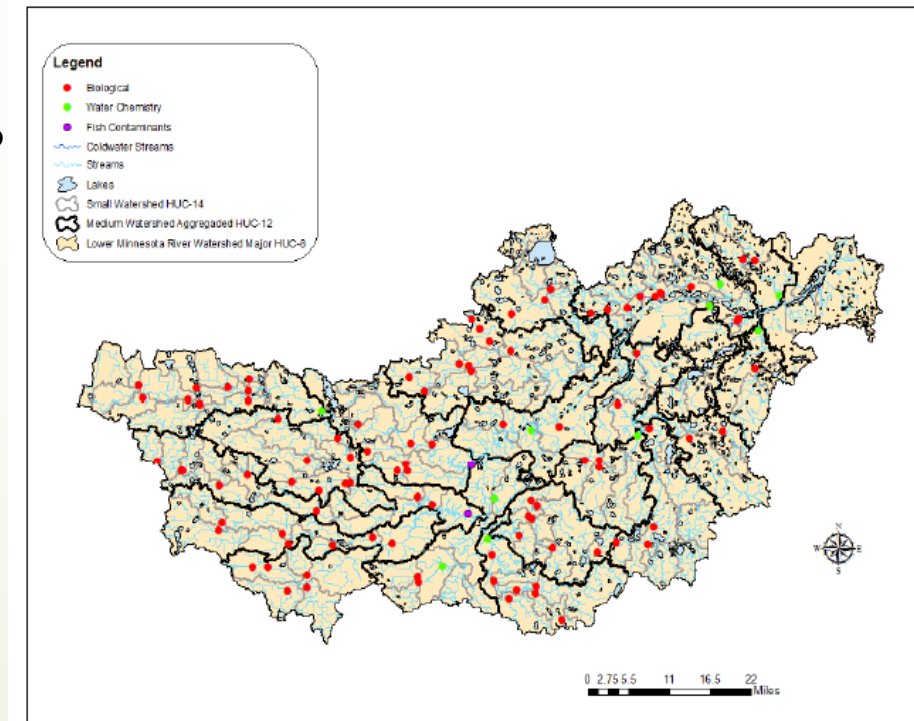


Figure 2. Intensive watershed monitoring sites for streams in the Lower Minnesota River Watershed.



# Specific Priority Issues

## Landscape Resiliency and Climate Adaption

- Increased frequency/severity of extreme weather events
- Consider extreme weather events and their impacts to water and land resources in the prioritization process
- Utilize (update frequency charts) [NOAA Atlas 14](#) when designing projects

## *Available Resources*

- [BWSR Landscape Resiliency Toolbox](#)
- White Paper from Minnesota Interagency Climate Adaptation Team: [“Building Resiliency to Extreme Precipitation in Minnesota”](#) provides resiliency strategies



# Specific Priority Issues

## Local Controls

- Review of inconsistencies, gaps, commonalities, differences
  - Local ordinances, policies, enforcement
  - Examples: Redetermination of ditches, SSTS compliance inspection requirements (property transfer, variances, etc.), shoreland regulations, level III feedlot inventories
- Can impact success of plan implementation
- Allows for conversation on opportunities for coordination of actions/goals

Table 5-6. Existing Public Participation and Engagement Programs

Program	Big Stone		Douglas		Grant		Otter Tail		Stevens		Swift		PDTRA
	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	
Aquatic Invasive Species Plan	X		X		x		X	X		X	X		
MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP)		X		X	X		X		X		X		
Awards Program				X		X		X		X		X	
K-12 Education (e.g. Envirothon, field trips)	X		X	X		X		X		X		X	X
Nitrate Testing		X		X		X		X		X		X	
Household Waste Management Program (e.g. Take it to the Box, Waste Pesticide Collection Program)	X		X		x		X		X		X		
Outdoor Education Days (e.g. Conservation Tours, Field Days)		X		X		X		X		X		X	X
Social Media Program		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tours and Demonstrations				X		X		X		X		X	X
Newsletter		X		X				X		X		X	
Shoreland Protection and Restoration		X	X	X		X		X		X		X	

Note: C stands for County and S stands for SWCD

Table 5-1. Existing Incentive Programs

		Big Stone		Douglas		Grant		Otter Tail		Stevens		Swift		PDTRA
Program	Funding Entity	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	
Agricultural Nonstructural Practices - Cover Crops, Conservation Tillage, Soil Health Practices, Buffers & Filter Strips														
Nonstructural Land Management Practices (NLMP)	BWSR, NRCS		X		X			X		X		X		
Working Lands	DNR				X		X			X				
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	FSA		X		X		X		X		X		X	
Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)	FSA		X		X		X		X		X		X	
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	NRCS		X		X		X		X		X		X	
Agriculture BMP Loan Program	MDA				X		X		X	X			X	
Agricultural Structural Practices – Water and Sediment Control Basins, Alternative, Tile Intakes, Cattle Exclusions, Waste Pit Closures, Grade Stabilization, Terraces, Grassed Waterways, Wetland Restoration														
State Cost-Share	BWSR		X		X		X		X		X		X	

Table 5-5. Existing Regulatory and Enforcement Programs.

Program	Big Stone		Douglas		Grant		Otter Tail		Stevens		Swift	
	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S
Riparian Buffer Ordinance (Buffer Initiative)	X		X		X		X	X	X		X	
Erosion Control & Stormwater Management	X		X		X						X	
Feedlot Ordinance	X		X						X		X	
Floodplain Management	X		X		X				X			
Noxious Weed Law			X		X		X	X		X	X	X
Shoreland Management	X		X		X		X		X		X	
Soil Loss Ordinance												
Subsurface Sewage Treatment System Program	X		X		X		X		X		X	
Wetland Conservation Act Authority	X			X	X		X			X	X	
Zoning Ordinance	X		X						X		X	
Right-of-Way Ordinance/Policy	X						X		X			

Note: C stands for County and S stands for SWCD

# Specific Priority Issues

## Soil Erosion

- Near-channel erosion (e.g. ravine/streambank) is the dominant loading source for TSS in the watershed
- Accelerated soil erosion is a significant issue
  - Ex higher slopes adjacent to the river

## Soil Health

- 498,715 acre Lower Minnesota River West planning area is agriculture
- Soil Health practices = positive impacts
- Decrease soil erosion, increase water infiltration, nutrient scavenging, increase soil organic matter, etc.
- Examples include reduce/no tillage, cover crops, continuous living cover, extended crop rotations.
- Important to prioritize for implementation





# Specific Priority Issues

## Surface and Groundwater Quality

- Degraded water quality are significant issues
- Examine current efforts to address issues
- Focus on efforts to reduce pollutants before they reach water resource
- Examine listed impairments and locations (Prioritizing Impairments-WRAPs)



## Altered Hydrology/Flooding/Water Quantity

- Hydrologic conditions have changed over time
  - More precipitation, more runoff, more frequently low flows, high flows, etc.
- Creates instability of watercourses, degraded wetland habitat, loss of agricultural productivity, bank sluffing, increased flooding.
- Recognize the significance as a priority issue in the plan
- Focus on opportunities to store water in the upper reaches of the watershed
  - Flooding issue ex. Henderson





# Specific Priority Issues

## Protecting Pollinator Populations

- Identify projects that benefit pollinator populations
- Multi-benefit

### **Resource**

[BWSR Pollinator Toolbox](#)



## Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species

- Recommend cooperative approach
- Prioritize based on risk to ecosystem, agriculture, recreation and human health
- Focus on emerging weeds such as Palmer amaranth (threat to ag production)
- Utilize adaptive management strategies
  - Maintain ecological function



# Specific Priority Issues

## Urban Stormwater

- Urban stormwater contains pesticides, fertilizers, sediment, salt and debris
- Contributes to degradation, alters natural flow and infiltration, harms or eliminates aquatic organisms/ecosystems
- Provide this consideration

## Data Collection and Monitoring

- Data collection and monitoring activities necessary to support implementation
- Assess and evaluate progress
- Evaluate existing and potential future efforts



# Specific Priority Issues

## Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)

Did not submit an individual letter, provided comments/resources

### ***Resources***

- [Ag BMP handbook](#) – provides suitability information on BMPs
- [Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan \(NFMP\)](#)- blueprint for addressing nitrate in groundwater and nitrogen management
- Groundwater Protection Rule-  
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/chemicals/fertilizers/nutrient-mgmt/nitrogenplan/mitigation/wrpr/wrprpart1/vulnerableareamap>
- Nitrogen fertilizer/pesticide use or monitoring surveys and information- [National Agricultural Statistics Service \(NASS\)](#) and [Annual Monitoring and Assessment Results](#)
- [Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality and Certification Program \(MAWQCP\)](#) –
  - 13 certified farmers operating 3,745 acres,
  - 12 producers in process with 11,973 acres assessed.

Any questions contact Jeff Berg





# **Any Questions**