

Clean Water Council Meeting Agenda

Monday, September 28, 2026

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

IN PERSON at MPCA offices in St. Paul with Webex Available (Hybrid Meeting)

****Please allow at least 15 extra minutes to travel due to construction in the area****

9:00 Regular Clean Water Council Business

- **(INFORMATION ITEM)** Council member introductions—please declare any perceived or actual conflict of interest
- **(ACTION ITEM)** Agenda and Minutes - comments/additions and approve agenda and July meeting minutes
- **(INFORMATION ITEM)** Council updates
 - Council chair
 - Budget and Outcomes Committee chair
 - Policy Committee chair
 - Council staff

9:30 (INFORMATION ITEM) General public comment

Any member of the public wishing to address the Council regarding something not on the agenda is invited to do so as a part of this agenda item.

9:45 (INFORMATION ITEM) Overview of meeting, draft preliminary recommendations

By the end of the day, the Council will vote to adopt the preliminary budget recommendations for the FY28-29 biennium. Council staff will provide a brief review of the process undertaken to get to this point and then review the draft recommendations from the Budget and Outcomes Committee.

10:00 (INFORMATION ITEM) Budget-related comments from interested parties

Before discussing the draft recommendations from the Budget and Outcomes Committee, interested parties will be invited to provide comments for Council consideration. Those who would like to do so are asked to notify Council staff, and comments will be time-limited.

10:30 BREAK

10:45 (DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEM) Discussion and adoption of draft budget amounts

Included in the packet is a spreadsheet showing draft budget amounts for each program for which a proposal was submitted for FY28-29. Any final changes desired should be discussed at this time before the preliminary budget is adopted.

12:00 LUNCH

12:30 (DISCUSSION ITEM) Scenarios for adjustments

The November budget forecast will give us the number that will be used in the Council's biennial recommendations report. In short, the number will very likely be different than the one used to approve the budget today. The Council will begin discussions here for how to respond if the number is higher than \$342.912M, and how to respond if it is lower.

(Agenda continues on the next page)

1:00 (ACTION ITEM) Draft policy content for the biennial recommendations report

In addition to new and updated policies since the FY26-27 report, the Policy Committee has suggested the inclusion of a teaser section for topics on the horizon. In order to insert these into the Governor's process, a motion is requested to include this as additional draft content alongside the budget recommendations. A draft of what the Policy Committee will be reviewing at their September 25 meeting is included in this meeting packet, though what is discussed in the meeting may be different depending on the outcome of their discussion.

1:30 (INFORMATION ITEM) Upcoming meetings and 2027 Council calendar

With a huge milestone met, the Council needs to shift attention to the next topics and prepare for the next year. We will review a rough plan for the remaining meetings of 2026 and discuss the focus and schedule for 2027.

2:00 Adjourn (*Steering Committee meets directly after adjournment*)

Clean Water Council
July 20, 2026, Meeting Summary

Members present: John Barten (Chair), Steve Besser, Eunie Biel, Rich Biske (Vice Chair), Gail Cederberg, Steve Christenson, Tannie Eshenaur, Warren Formo, Brad Gausman, Justin Hanson, Bonnie Keeler, Peter Kjeseth (Margaret Wagner), Annie Knight, Chris Meyer, Fran Miron, Jason Moeckel, Ole Olmanson, Rep. Kristi Pursell, Peter Schwagerl, Glenn Skuta, and April Swenby.

Members absent: Dick Brainerd, Kelly Gribauval-Hite, Holly Hatlewick, Jessica Wilson, and Sen. Nathan Wesenberg.

To watch the Webex video recording of this meeting, please go to <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/clean-water-council/meetings>, or contact [Brianna Frisch](#).

Regular Clean Water Council Business

- Council member introductions
 - Bonnie Keeler, University of Minnesota (UMN): The [Minnesota Water Resources Conference](#) will be October 13th to 14th.
- Motion to approve the July 20th meeting agenda by Steve Besser, seconded by Brad Gausman. Motion carries unanimously.
- Motion to approve the June 15th meeting summary by Steve Besser, seconded by Steve Christenson. Motion carries unanimously.
- Council updates
 - Recognition for the great commitment and hard work of both Tannie Eshenaur, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and Jason Moeckel, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Council appreciates the advice and guidance to the Council over the years.
 - Chair update
 - Council members should review the Office of the Legislative Auditors report on the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP). The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) folks are here today to speak on the topic later in the meeting. They can answer questions any Council members may have at this time. The Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) has been approached with additional funds for the program, to provide additional monitoring. The additional monitoring is what the audit report suggested.
 - Staff update
 - The Council letter to the Minnesota Plumbing board is included in the meeting packet. This is regarding the water reuse. Verbal remarks at the meeting were provided as well as a few Council members attending the meeting. The Plumbing Board has opened the process for further discussion. The next meeting is tomorrow; Jen Kader and Chair John Barten plan to attend.
 - Regarding the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Program (MAWQCP) report by the Office of Legislative Auditors (OLA). We want to have a conversation about the results of this audit. The Council will talk more on this topic at the August meeting.
 - Please send in expense reimbursement forms, it helps with managing the Council's budget. The IRS has changed the mileage amount from .725 to .76 cents per mile starting after July 1, 2026. The electronic form is being updated and will be on our webpage and SharePoint in the next few days. Note, new for the electronic forms, there are only three acceptable electronic signatures for these forms. Brianna has the directions for you to follow and submit your forms following that requirement.
 - Policy Committee update
 - The committee also wants to thank Tannie Eshenaur (MDH) and Jason Moeckel (DNR) for your hard work and expertise regarding the Council's policy statements. The knowledge, professionalism, and assistance you have provided are appreciated.
 - At the next meeting, the committee will review the public comment lists and see if the committee needs to review the priorities. The next full Council meeting will include a review and approval of chloride deicer policy.

- Budget and Outcomes Committee update
 - The BOC would like to say thank you for all the work of Tannie Eshenaur (MDH) and Jason Moeckle (DNR) as well, and all your work with the committee over the years.
 - The BOC is continuing in the budget process. Next month will be reviewing actual funding. Additionally, we are looking at inflation impacts on the budget along with cuts for certain items.

No Public Comment (*Webex 00:40:30*)

Review of Public Input Outcomes (*Webex 00:41:00*)

Considerable effort has gone into soliciting and receiving public input over the last couple of months. This is a review of the outcomes from the June 15 meeting and subsequent survey to appropriately respond. The ad hoc engagement sub team will be reconvened to assist in responding to comments. The Public Input Workshop Summary and Outcomes document and summary of the public survey are included in the meeting packet. This is time to reflect on the input, looking for next steps.

Discussion on Public Input Meeting:

- Gail Cederberg: I was impressed with the process. It was a select group of people who wanted to comment. There is also a group that probably was not aware, to provide their comments as well. It is a new process we did this year. I think this was a success. More people were engaged. It is a good lesson, and we have to continue to ramp this up even more. *Response from Jen Kader:* The number of newsletters that I receive from various constituent groups all included this event as something they wanted groups to be doing, to engage with the Council. I can see members are getting information out to your constituent groups. Thank you to Council members for reaching out and passing this along.
- John Barten: The engagement process was really good. Different people have different priorities, and they sometimes conflict. The challenge is how to integrate conflicting advice into the path forward.
- April Swenby: I was online, and I want to be in-person for these discussions the next budget cycle. I heard really good feedback.
- Glenn Skuta, MPCA: The workshop was great, and interacting with all the people. This interaction is great to hear. It was good to see all the people here. Some of the beauty of it is you are interacting with each other; you cannot help but see all the myriad of ideas people have. They do not always align, but you can see similarities too. It was well done, thank you.
- Steve Besser: Looking through the comments, there was a lot of similarities. There are common threads. These priorities are all connected at some point, as you pull back from it, they connect. *Response from Jen Kader:* There are tensions because they are so inter-related. As we think about the public input, there is a challenge because we cannot say yes to everything. There will be discussions and trade-offs. The input is being weighed alongside many things. There are a lot of considerations for the budget. Use it to inform your opinion.

Final Meeting Outcomes - flip chart paper from meeting themes (*Webex 00:55:00*)

- Budget and funding
- Decision-making and prioritization
- Engagement and collaboration
- Governance and coordination
- Outcomes and accountability
- Considerations of how to set FY28-29 budget priorities
- FY27 and beyond (summarized statements bulleted)

Discussion/Questions/Comments:

- Jen Kader: There are a number of connections across these, while also relating to each other. An engagement report will be put together for the future, but these are being highlighted for this meeting, being brought forward today.
- John Barten: This captures what was discussed at my group from this public meeting.
- Steve Christenson: I think this captures what was discussed at my group too. How does the Council want to respond? Also, now there will be higher expectations moving forward, and how are we addressing that? *Answer:* Some of this is still evolving. In the last biennial budget process, there was an

ad hoc public engagement committee, which will be requested again for this budget process. This is support for responding to the process of these public comments. Previously, Paul had gone through for each of the comments had some sort of response. We have set ourselves up for that with the summary document with the reduced content and can make our way through to respond to them. Many responses can draw a direct line to the rationale for why different programs are being prioritized. Others can be more of an overall response, included for review. Jen will do a first run through to answer as many as possible. We do want to respond to each of them. As we continue this process we can see how this is shaping the preliminary recommendations, and final recommendations. It is a work in progress, and help is welcomed.

- Steve Besser: We are an oversight committee, we sought public input, and we have a spreadsheet that reveals all the letters received. If I had sent items in input, I think I would still be happy with a generic letter response to the request. We do not want to take up too much time here. We want to be thoughtful, but efficient. We are taking things into consideration. We do not want Jen Kader to be bogged down with responding. It is more than should be expected of the staff.
- John Barten: Yes, we need to respond, but some can be a form letter response. Some will take a little more time than others.
- Holly Hatlewick: I think hitting points in one letter (versus five or six letters), perhaps it is on the person sending in comments to understand there does need to be more research for items. We can even list our statutory requirements in the letter and general response to items brought forward. In general, I do not think it needs to be so personalized.
- Bonnie Keeler: You need people to feel heard, but not line by line. We need to be prepared now, and in the future. Individual responses would be beyond any public comment process I have been included in. I think you can provide it as a summarized response.
- Jen Kader: I support getting it down to as few individualized responses as I can. Are there any Council members looking to join this temporary ad hoc group to work on this area?
 - Steve Besser: I am happy to help edit a general response letter.
 - Rich Biske: I am happy to participate.
 - Anyone interested can connect with Jen Kader. Two more folks would be helpful.

Draft Priorities List (Webex 01:41:00)

At their July meeting, the BOC developed a list of priority programs to be considered for increases, protected from decreases, or as a candidate for a decrease.

- The BOC provided these recommendations but are looking for feedback from the full Council.
- The proposals and presentations, the public engagement meeting and survey, the Clean Water Fund Performance Report, past budget process, current budget process, and many meetings have accumulated to these decisions.
- As a Council, from the budget forecasts of sales tax revenue, we adopted \$340 million dollars as the FY28-29 budget target amount. There was \$303 million from the FY26-27 appropriation baseline. The MDA Ag Weather Station Network program was completed and frees up \$2.3 million. To hold steady funding for the programs, there has been an inflation rate estimate of about five to ten percent for existing programs, which is about \$15 million (at five percent) amounts of change. It is significant. This leaves about \$24.3 million. Additionally, there are new proposed programs: Olmstead County proposal which merged into the Board of Water and Soil (BWSR) proposal, the MDA Manure Land Application and Water Quality Specialist, and the River Watch and River of Dreams programs. The Interagency Coordination Team (ICT) will soon provide estimates of the programs, and it will help make more decisions. This discussion is more about abstract concepts.

Discussion on inflation:

- John Barten: Some of the programs that were held steadily were grant programs. They probably have an inflation increase, but only for staff, have you factored that? *Answer:* The programs average out, and did a rule of thumb assessment, and did a rough estimate at this time.
- Steve Besser: The last budget process, first out first in funding cuts, were what we did last time.

- Holly Hatlewick: At the last BOC we discussed this a lot. It will vary greatly by implementation. Some projects have really increased in costs, and implementation inflation will be more significant than staffing implementation.
- Brad Gausman: We have done a lot of public input at this point. We can make new decisions from the previous process. We have a new opportunity to get new information and put forward a great new recommendation. I do not feel beholden to restore the cuts made in the past. These dollars are important.
- Gail Cederberg: We will know more when we see the numbers.
- April Swenby: I am new and trust the BOC process at this point.
- Ole Olmanson: This is good.

Discussion on Outcomes from the July BOC meeting (Webex 01:56:30):

- Top priorities list is helpful to the state agencies. This is to review for those programs providing prioritization. Once real numbers are provided, it can change again. This is also taking into accounts of all the input provided (i.e., public comments, constituents, rubric scores, etc.). Note, everything listed as increased funding currently, through the process we have gone through for the past four months, is still listed as an increase. It is trying to say where there is emphasis on that increase to try to make it happen when the real funding numbers are brought to light.
- *Council members took five minutes to review these program priorities.*
- Ole Olmanson: Everything is a good program, so it is hard to choose. I was surprised to see private well initiative and groundwater assessment on tier two, otherwise I do not have any specific concerns.
- Gail Cederberg: If we are going to kick off a program that impacts so many Minnesotans, we would like to see the private well initiative on tier one. It has policy support. Every place I go, well water sampling is being talked about. Long term if we want the re-authorization, this program would be good to prioritize.
- Fran Miron: We talked about Clean Water Council administration, almost as an item on its own. Recognizing the need for it. Additionally, Forever Green Initiative should be a high-ranking program for funding. It should rank high. Also, WBIF with long range plans and as a priority for this Council, as more are coming on board, that we would continue to invest in those programs. We also talked about the private well initiative, and that it should be ranked higher, for additional funding.
- Bonnie Keeler: We have consistent data that suggests drinking water is the number one concern of Minnesotans when it comes to the water, to make sure we are elevating it in our communication, and reflected in the programs we are funding. Also, thinking about outcomes (many different types of outcomes), and which programs have clear connections to reflect outcomes. It is difficult to do, but it would be good to justify decisions of funding based on what is really leading to demonstratable impacts and water quality in the ways that matter most to Minnesotans.
- Steve Christenson: The items I thought needed another review included the Legacy Partners Grants and desire to support the Tribal programs, along with private well initiatives and drinking water and groundwater assessments.
- John Barten: Our discussion was about conservation drainage would move to tier two. Chloride and stormwater research would move into tier one.
- Brad Gausman: I support the Legacy Grant Partners to be moved to tier one. The Riverwatch programs are a good way to spread this information; perhaps growing the next generation of leadership to help with these problems.
 - Steve Christenson: I agree, we did talk about that impact at our BOC meeting as well.
 - April Swenby: I appreciate the support for the Riverwatch program and would love to see it as an example across the state.
 - Fran Miron: There is an equity here, to make sure the funding is spent statewide. So, we want to support these programs but want to see funding spread across the state. Geographic diversity is something to consider.
 - April Swenby: Could we include that geographic item in the application? *Response from Jen Kader:* A lot of programs are statewide. We can likely review and include something.
- Annie Knight: I support shifting the Legacy Grant Partners program to be to tier one as well.

- Chris Meyer: I would advocate that the County Geologic Atlas (Part B) move up as a priority. It is an important tool for counties, and for Council members.
- Peter Schwagerl: I think the private well initiative should be moved up. I think it is critical and impacts so many people across the state. Additionally, the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP), is a foundational program, in interacting with farmers across the state. If you have or are planning to read the auditor report, it mentions that this is the first exposure and interaction with conservation. It helps to develop those connections these farmers have with the local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and other local partners. It enhances every other program in the Ag space, and broadens them, making connections, especially around water. It is a higher priority. It is critical work.
- Warren Formo: A lot of great comments so far. I am comfortable with the tiers as they sit now, as we are in the early stages of the conversation. It is all in pencil currently.
- Summary of potential shifts in priority:
 - Suggested to move up to tier one: Private Well Initiative, Groundwater Assessments, Legacy Partners, Chloride Reduction Program, Native Mussels Restoration, Stormwater Research Program, Riverwatch programs (both), and MAWQCP.
 - Suggested move to tier two: merged Olmstead/BWSR program, County Geologic Atlas (Part A), and Conservation Drainage.
- Items shifted:
 - Items mentioned multiple times are shifted: Private Well Initiative, Groundwater Assessment, and Legacy Partners. No issues with this change from Council members.
 - Chloride Reduction Program reviewed and shifted to tier one.
 - Native Mussels Restoration program reviewed and shifted to tier one.
 - Stormwater Research program reviewed and shifted to tier one.
 - MAWQCP reviewed and will be held for the August BOC meeting discussion:
 - John Barten: We should ask the proposers to look at how we could propose a monitoring program as well, to provide data on the effectiveness of the program for water quality data.
 - Margaret Wagner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA): I don't think anything in the report would suggest an elimination of the program. There are recommendations to strengthen it, and some are statutory and language changes to be made by the Legislature. We will come up with a proposal based on costs on what can be done. I would encourage others to attend the BOC, especially those with experience.
 - Holly Hatlewick: We need to keep in mind a farm is a business. It is a multiyear process to change a business model.
 - Brad Gausman: With the description of the tiers, I think tier two is a good place for it, especially with some of the concerns.
 - Rich Biske: I would be concerned with adding money. Can we use existing programs and monitoring to support this program? Many of the programs can help work together.
 - Jen Kader: It seems fair to leave it in tier two, as there is an additional conversation to be had, which is planned with the BOC August meeting. Everything is still in pencil.
 - Riverwatch program (these are two separate programs, but one is partially modeled after the other):
 - Considerations for the future are needed for these types of programs. Ongoing conversations and research are needed before shifting tiers.
 - Leave them in tier two for now.
 - Merged Olmstead/BWSR program reviewed and will not be shifted from tier two.
 - County Geologic Atlas (Part A) reviewed and shifted from tier three to tier two.
 - Conservation Drainage reviewed and will not be shifted to tier two.
 - No other priority programs to review.
- Questions/Comments:
 - Jen Kader: Council members may also consider programs that need protection from cuts. There is space for people to hold these conversations.
 - Glenn Skuta, MPCA: There are three tiers. Within a tier, are they essentially equal, or is there a degradation? Should the ICT consider that? There are seventeen items in tier one. *Response:* You

should take into consideration the feedback you heard. I would not rank them in order, so use your best judgement. Increases can be in tier two.

- Margaret Wagner, MDA: Are there no increases in tier two until all increases are addressed in tier one? Or is there consideration there, and based on some agency's requests? Is there an absolute?
Response: We are open to the conversation, whether items are missing, or the Council does not know about. Tier two can have the inflation impacts as well.
- Margaret Wagner, MDA: I am hearing it is not an absolute hard line, and we need to take consideration for the items.
- Jen Kader: To have an ongoing conversation, it has been mentioned to have the ICT provide some notes for decisions made to help the Council understand their recommendations, as we move closer to something everyone feels good about.
- Steve Christenson: *Motion to approve the list summarized in the outcomes of the July BOC meeting as adjusted by today's discussion for forwarding to the ICT as the Clean Water Council's directional recommendations, seconded by Brad Gausman. No further discussion. Motion carries.*

Next Steps (Webex 03:46:45)

- The draft process calendar can be found in SharePoint for review.
- The ICT will have a meeting tomorrow, and Jen Kader will provide the list to them. They will have a few weeks for their discussions. The Council has requested a memo (to help understand what the agencies are looking for) for Monday, August 10th, so the BOC can be ready on Friday, August 14th. The BOC will review it and talk about the agency's recommendations, along with non-agency recommendations. The full Council will receive these recommendations ahead of Monday, August 24th meeting. As a full Council, the review of the draft proposal will occur. The September BOC meeting will be able to be reviewed, so that the final review of the preliminary budget recommendations can occur at the September 28th full Council meeting. Then, the agencies can provide the numbers to the Governor's Office, to develop their proposals. Then, the budget comes out in January. The goal is to be on the same page overall.

Questions/Concerns:

- John Barten: With a new Governor, are there any concerns we need to have about this? *Response:* The Governor has the option to change it. In many cases, they are not willing to make changes because they are just getting their feet wet. If there is a political party change, the change may be more likely.
- John Barten: With the number of legislators leaving, the committees will be significantly different as well. It will be another consideration in our recommendations. Having a unified recommendation will be best.

Motion to adjourn by Steve Besser, seconded by Holly Hatlewick. Motion carries.

Adjournment (Webex 03:53:51)

FY28-29 Preliminary Budget Recommendations

How we got here, what they include





How we got here

Input from
previous 2
years

- Last budget cycle
- Strategy year convos
- Field Tour
- Surveys

Proposal
& Rubric

- Values
- Priorities

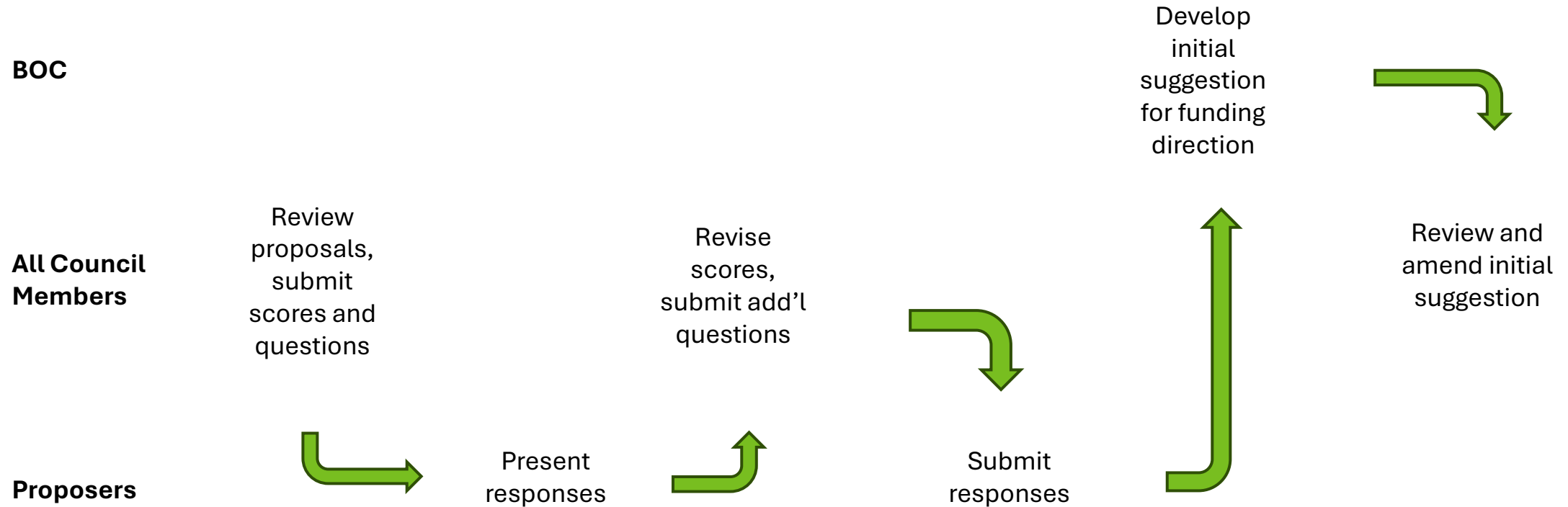
Proposal
review phase
(Feb – June)

Preliminary
Budget
Development
Phase
(June-Sep)

Final
budget
recs
(Jan)



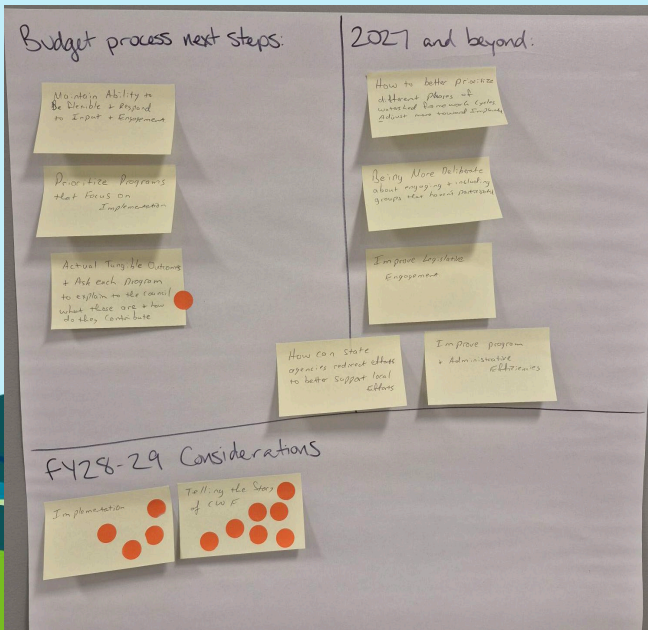
Proposal Review Phase (x4, Feb-June)





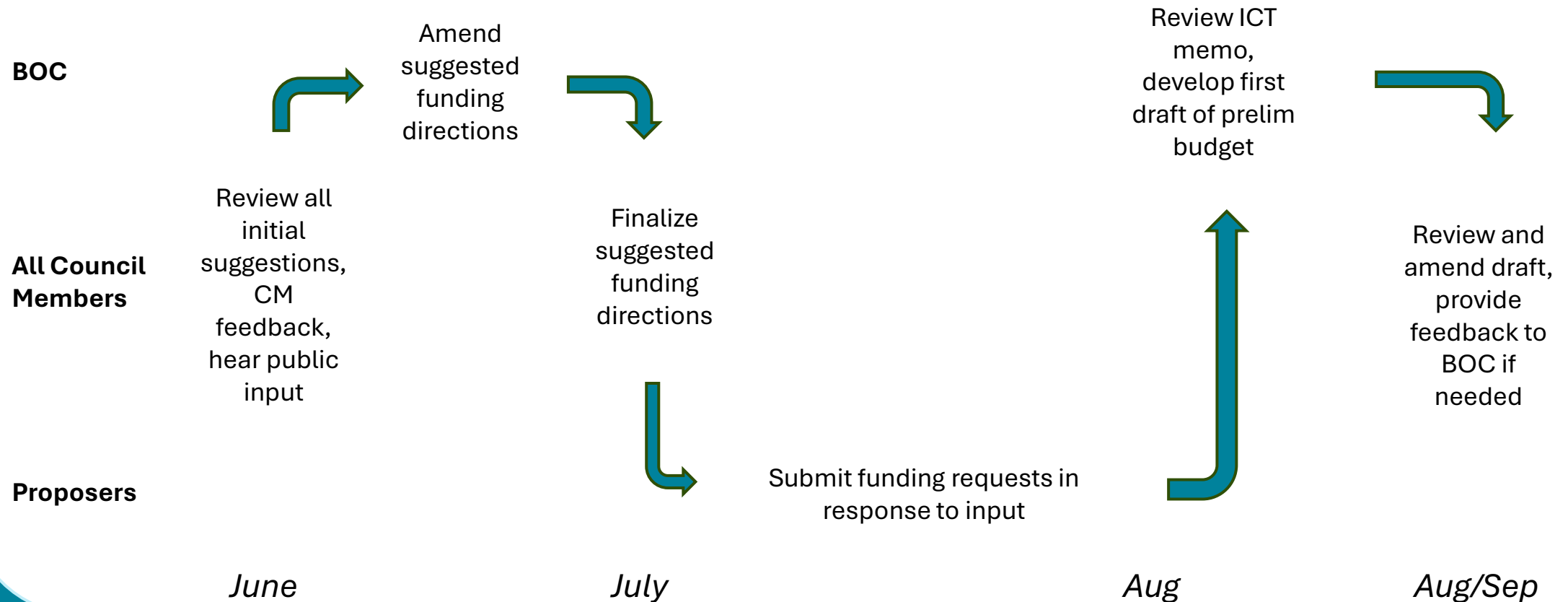
Budget recommendations overview

- \$342.912M from February forecast
- ~\$39M more than FY26-27
- 63 proposals across agencies and external proposers, Water Management Framework steps
 - 23 seeking increases
 - New programs seeking funding
 - Even programs listed as “hold steady” could include inflationary increases
- More demand than available funding

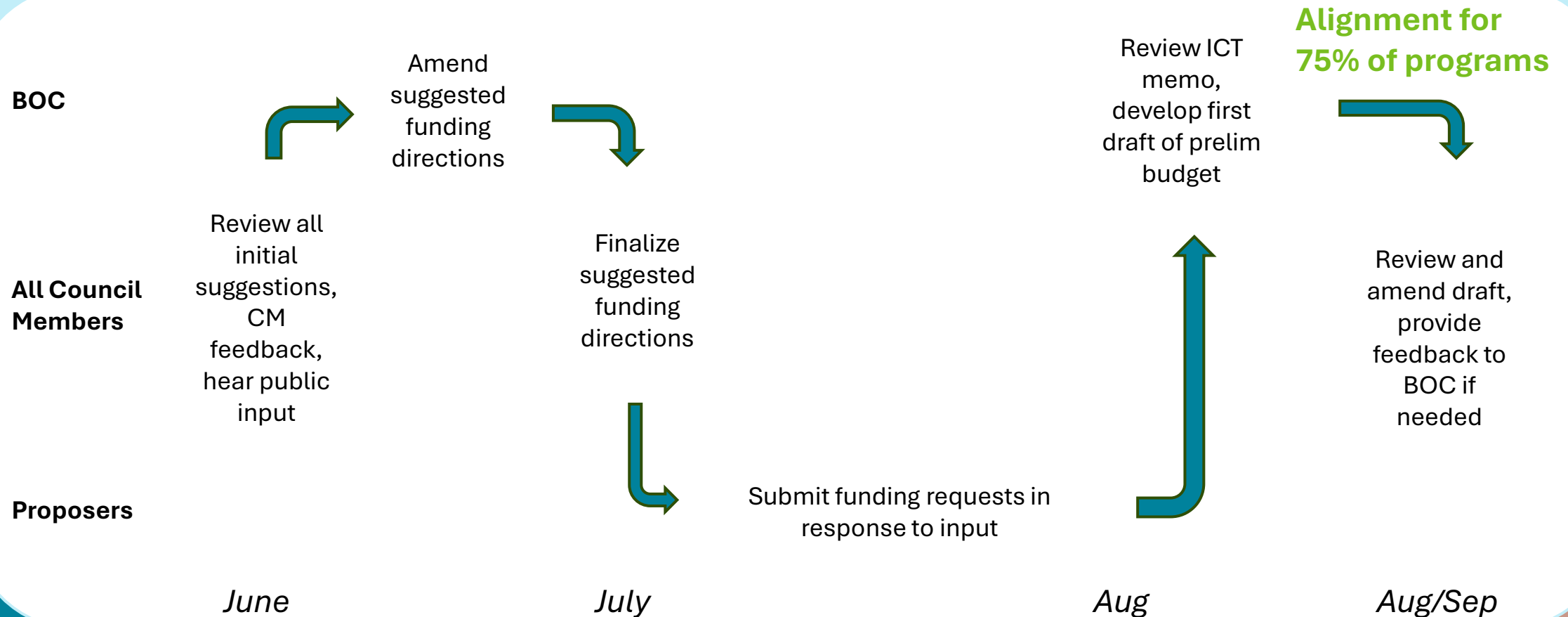


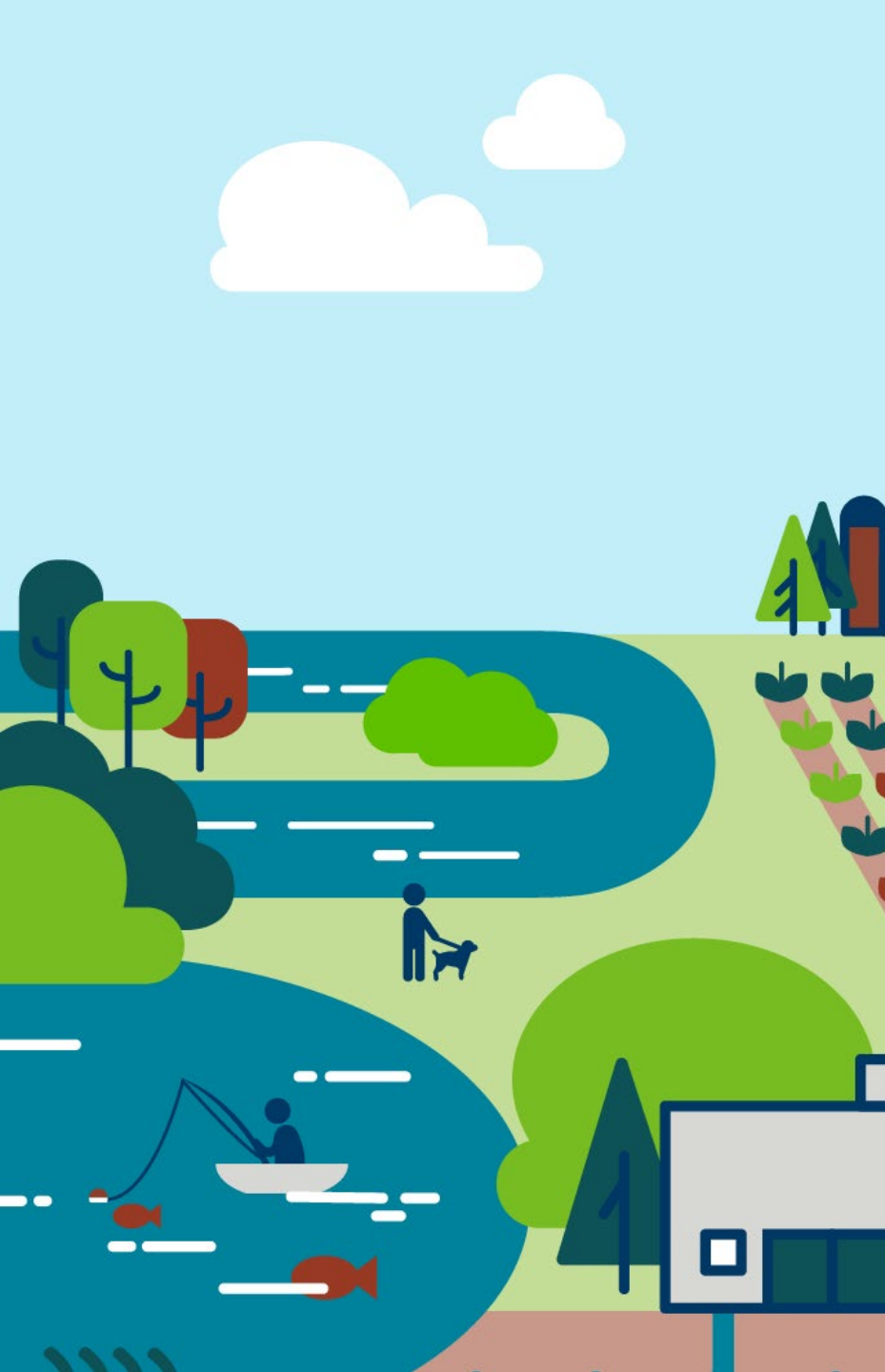
- Record number of comment letters received in advance
- ~30 participants in 4 hour workshop
- Another ~300 responses to survey ranking workshop outcomes
- Input valuable for this budget process and beyond

Preliminary Budget Development Phase



Preliminary Budget Development Phase





August BOC dug into CWC preferences, larger sticking points



Input from
previous 2
years

- Last budget cycle
- Strategy year convos
- Field Tour
- Surveys

Proposal
& Rubric

- Values
- Priorities

Proposal
review phase
(Feb – June)

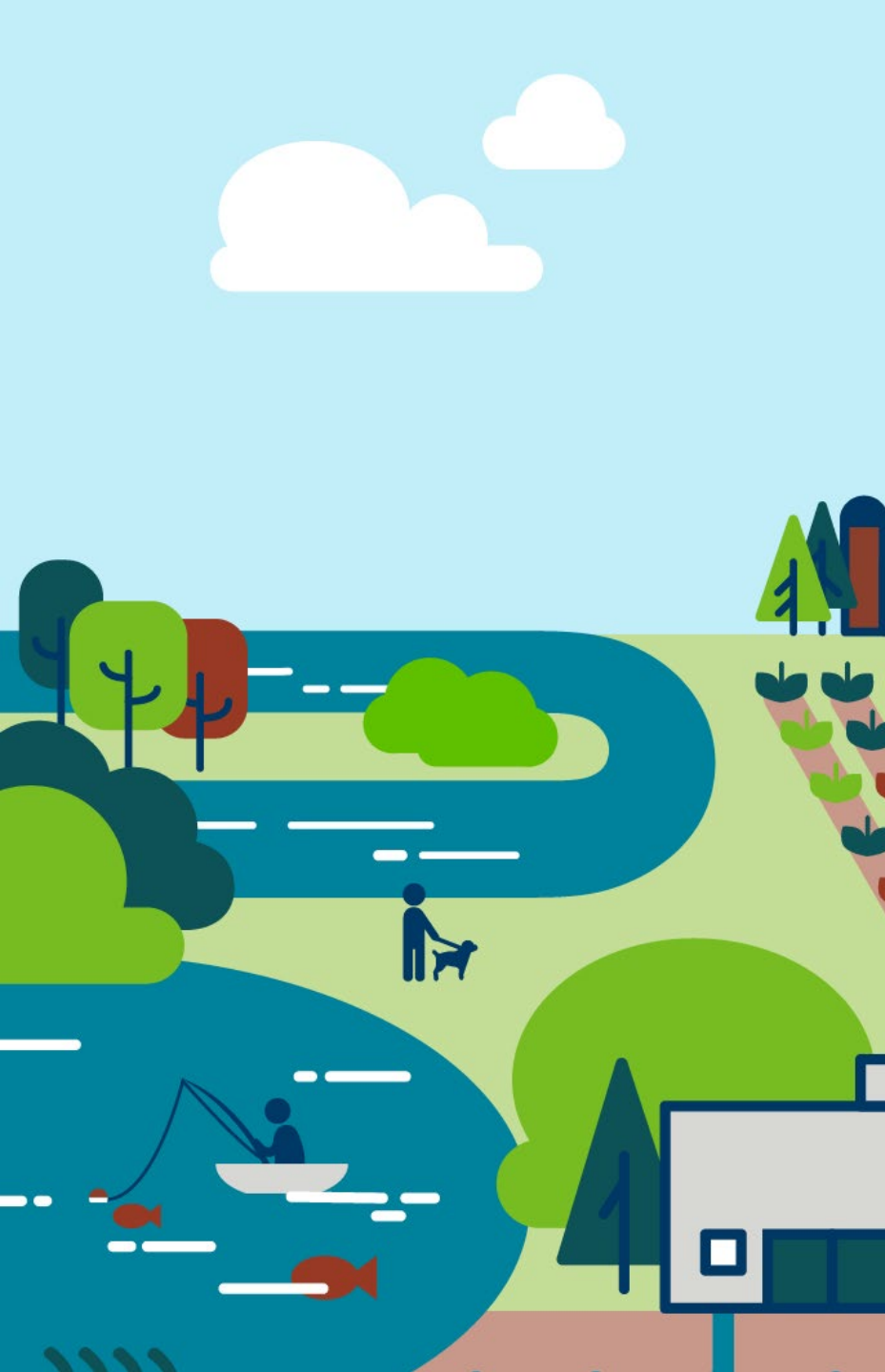
Preliminary
Budget
Development
Phase
(June-Sep)

Final
budget
recs
(Jan)





What the proposals include



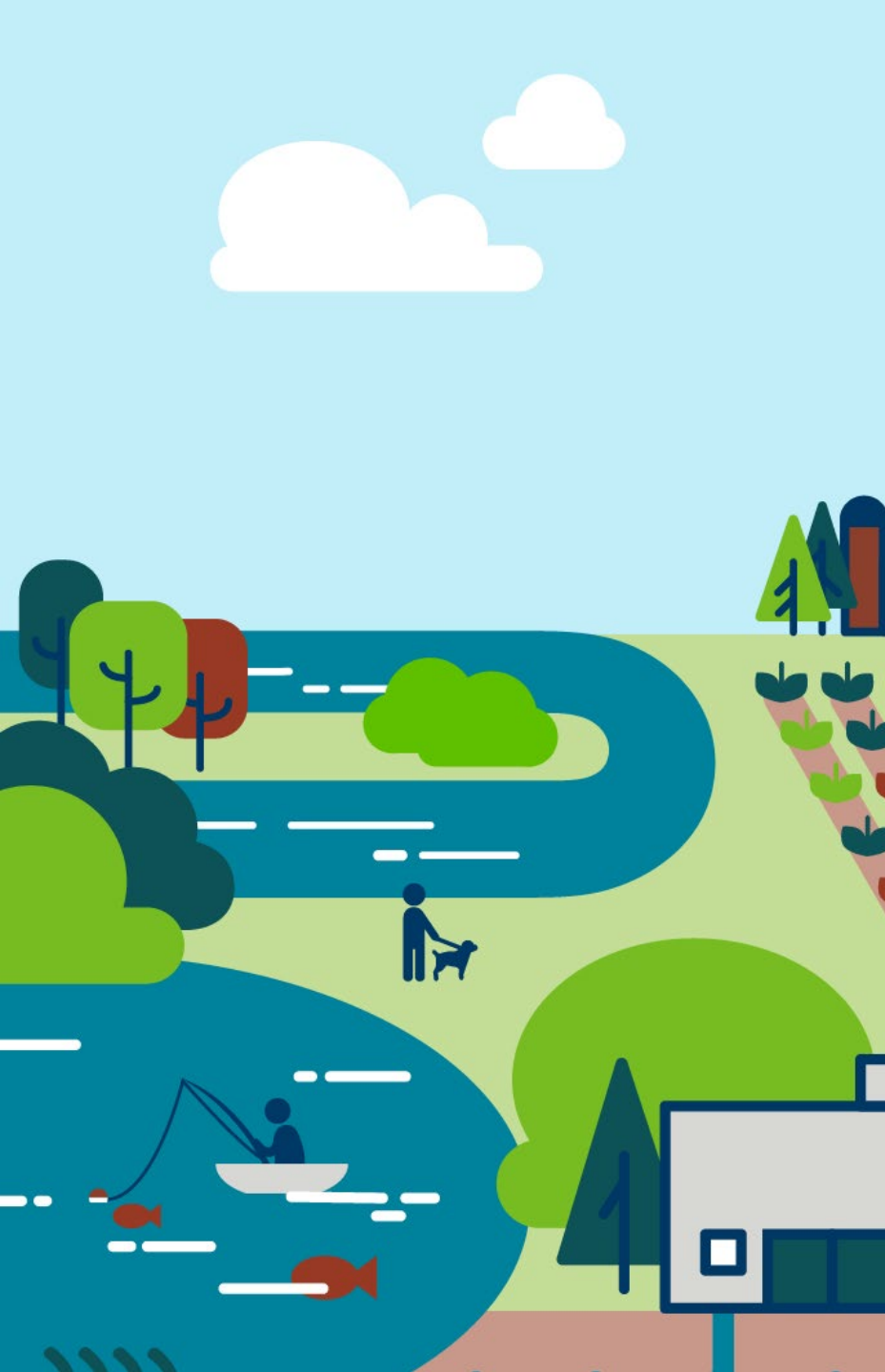
Summary of final changes since August Council meeting

- Opted to allow up to current MMB forecast
- Further increases for the following programs
 - BWSR's Critical Shoreland Easements
 - BWSR's Watershed Partners Legacy Grants
 - BWSR's Measures, Results, and Accountability
 - MDA's Forever Green program with UMN
- Increases above FY26-27 amounts but less than proposer requests for the following programs:
 - MDH's Private Well Initiative
 - BWSR's Wetland Restorations Easement
 - Friends of the Minnesota Valley's River Watch program

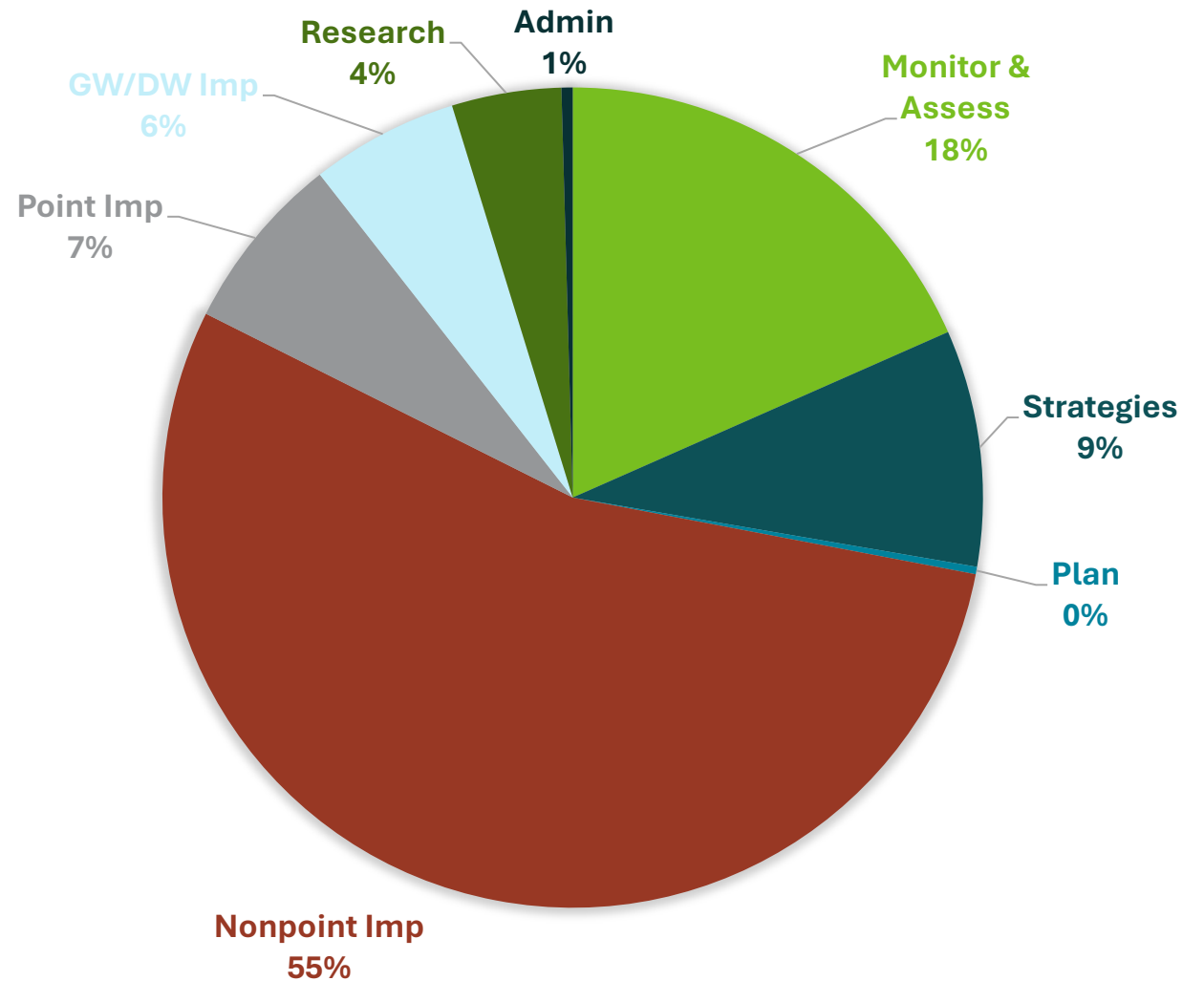


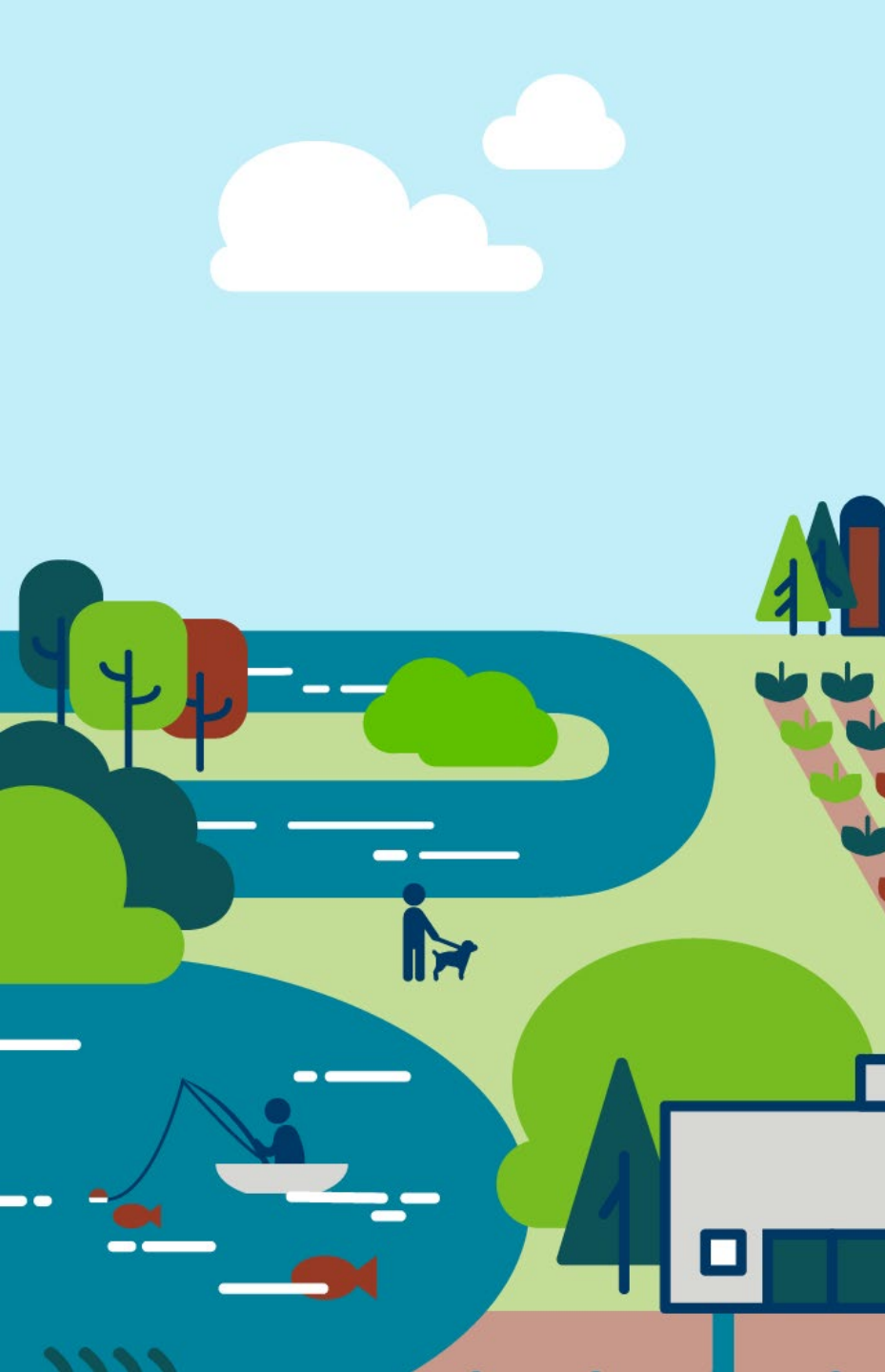
Summary of final changes since August Council meeting

- Funding consistent with FY26-27 amounts but less than proposer requests: Voyageur National Park Clean Water Project
- Slight reduction from FY26-27 amounts: Metropolitan Council's Demand Reduction and Water Efficiency Grants
- These changes and the overall recommendations were unanimously supported by BOC members

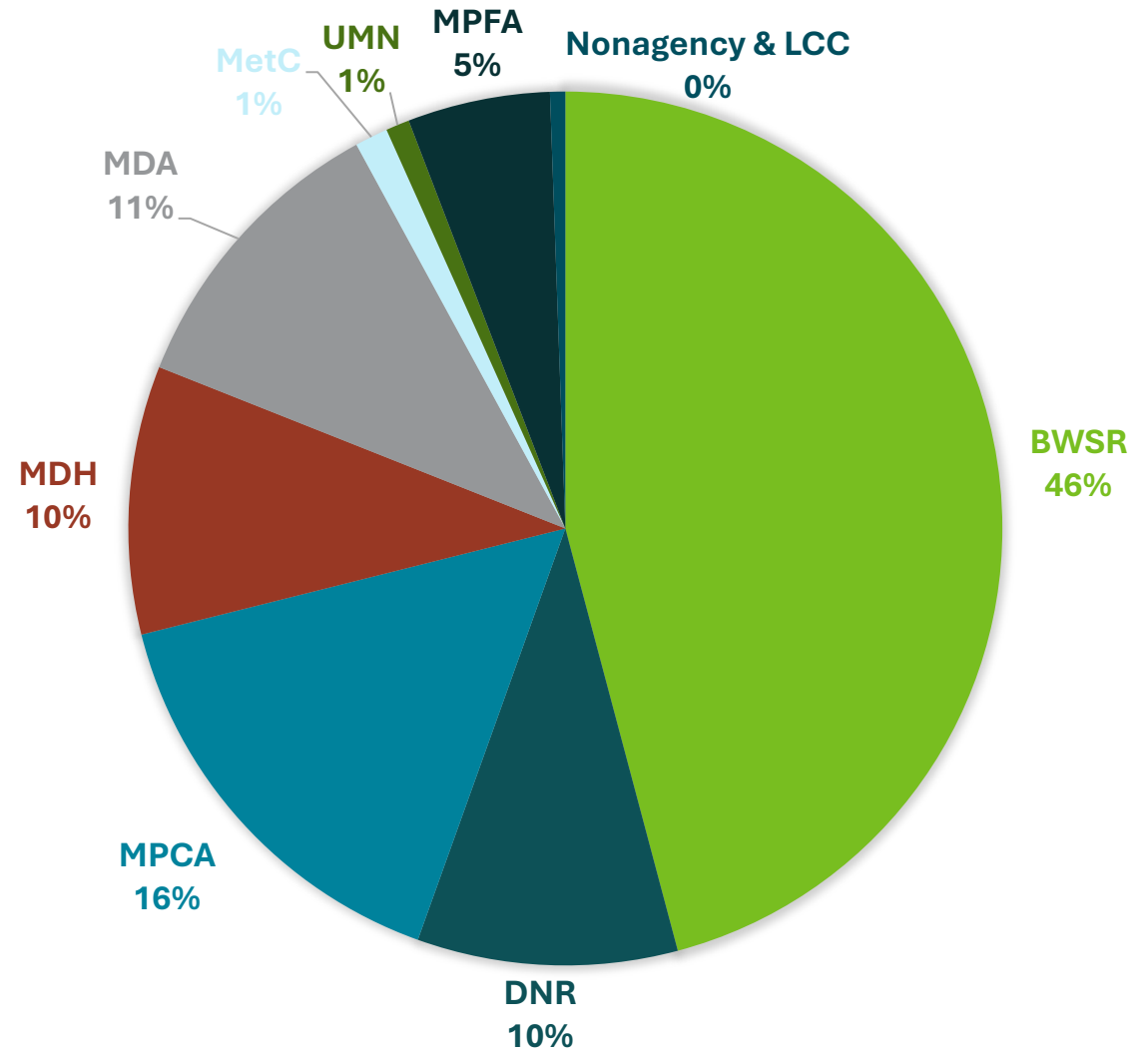


Recommendations by Water Management Framework step





Distribution across proposers



Finalizing the preliminary recommendations

- What changes, if any, do you feel are essential to make at this time?
- Consider:
 - Rubric scores
 - Public input
 - Balance of and interaction between programs
 - Context, including opportunities or challenges
 - Flexibility of programs
 - What is needed now, vs. what could be later

In order to submit one set of recommendations into the Governor's process, **we need to finalize today.**



A stylized, colorful illustration of a cityscape. The background features a light blue sky, green hills, and various buildings including houses with blue roofs and taller grey buildings. A network of blue lines, resembling pipes or roads, connects different parts of the city. In the foreground, there are more trees, a person riding a bicycle, and a small building with a red roof. The entire scene is overlaid with a white rectangular text box in the center.

Where we go from here



From preliminary to final

- These will be submitted to the Governor's office
- Scenario development, now thru November
 - What to do if more funds are available?
 - What to do if there is less?
- November budget forecast
- December BOC meeting: adjust per pre-determined scenarios
- December Council meeting: finalize
- January 15, 2027: Submit to legislature

FY28-29 Policy Recommendations

Current draft text for the biennial recommendations report



Current draft

- Explains why the Council has a policy committee
- Shares brief examples of outcomes from past statements
- Details the new or updated policies for this biennium
- Includes summaries of other existing platform items
- Highlights value of public input
- Overviews upcoming topics
- Invites ongoing public input

CWF alone will not achieve Minnesota's clean water goals.





Why look at this now?

- Historically, policy recommendations have been in just the report to the legislature.
- The “cone of silence” is applied to review of policies as well.
- Submitting this now can support agencies in pursuing relevant items within the policy recommendations.
- We will, more than likely, be tweaking the deicer policy statement, but vast majority of this is already Council-approved.



October and November: Outcomes!

Checking in on outcomes work: what we do, what we see

- October: background
 - Level-setting
 - Accessing the information
 - How it can be communicated
- November: examples
 - Recent studies
 - Discussion on next steps

Subject to change!



Agency	Program Activity	Enacted budget FY2026-27 (000s)	ICT or BOC Aug recs FY2028-29 (000s)	BOC September recs FY2028-29 (000s)
	Monitoring, Assessment, and Characterization			
MPCA	River and Lake Monitoring & Assessment: The Surface Water Monitoring program conducts water chemistry and biological monitoring on lakes, rivers, and streams to determine if waterbodies are impaired or meet standards, detects long-term trends over time at the basin, watershed and subwatershed scales, and identifies areas for protection and restoration. The primary output from the surface water monitoring activities is a large body of high-quality data, which is used in other steps within the Watershed Framework. A primary feature of the surface water monitoring activities is partnership between MPCA and local units of government, educational institutions, and Tribal nations who accomplish the work together. This recommendation ensures work will remain steady, and that two FTE can be hired to manage the large volume of data that is being generated from the new continuous nitrate monitoring network that the Legislature funded two years ago.	\$18,900	\$20,900	\$20,900
MPCA	Groundwater assessment: Groundwater monitoring data are foundational to understanding the condition of Minnesota’s groundwater quality. A long-standing Memorandum of Understanding divides groundwater monitoring responsibilities between the Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. These data are critical for the development of Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies (GRAPS), and the development and implementation of One Watershed One Plans (1W1P). As more WRAPS, GRAPS and 1W1P are implemented, monitoring remains critical as the means to determine if clean water goals are being met. This program’s budget has not been increased in many years. The recommendation ensures work can remain steady, and that high-priority PFAS sampling can be routinely conducted so we can detect contamination as quickly as possible.	\$2,000	\$3,300	\$3,300
DNR	Aquifer Monitoring for Water Supply Planning: The DNR is developing a robust groundwater level monitoring network that informs our understanding of groundwater level trends; the source of drinking water for 75% of Minnesotans. DNR applies these data in groundwater models, technical analysis, and water supply planning. The proposed amount will add up to 25 new monitoring wells, help maintain the current network of about 1,254 wells, and sustain the DNR’s capacity to manage and apply the data.	\$4,700	\$5,300	\$5,300
DNR	Fish Contamination Assessment: The DNR traditionally collected fish for mercury and PCB contamination assessment from 70 lake and stream sites using Game and Fish Funds. The Clean Water Fund has been supporting the laboratory costs for an additional 80 lake and stream sites per year. The recommendation maintains the core capacity for the statewide assessment of PFAS compounds in fish tissue.	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100
DNR	Lake IBI assessment: Lake IBI assessments are foundational to assessing water quality, the development of TMDLs, WRAPS, developing and implementing 1W1P. Lake IBI assessments started later than stream IBIs conducted by the MPCA and there are still many lakes that need to be completed. This recommendation maintains most of the DNR’s core capacity to assess lakes for fish and associated stressor identification.	\$3,050	\$3,300	\$3,300
DNR	Stream flow monitoring: Stream flow monitoring is foundational to assessing water quality, the development of TMDLs, WRAPS, and developing and implementing 1W1Ps. As more WRAPS and 1W1Ps are implemented, monitoring remains critical to measure progress. The recommendation will maintain the current gage network, replace aging equipment and continue to ensure data are readily available to inform decision making and assess progress toward clean water goals.	\$5,650	\$5,850	\$5,850
MDA	Monitoring for Pesticides in Surface Water and Groundwater: Pesticide monitoring is critical to assess water quality compared to environmental standards (assessing impaired waters); evaluate the risk to drinking water from both surface and groundwater sources; and, evaluate the need for and effectiveness of restrictions on product use or voluntary best management practices. Clean Water funding has allowed the MDA to increase the number of detectable pesticides, increase the sensitivity of detection of certain pesticides, and increase the overall number of samples that can be analyzed on an annual basis. The expansion has allowed the MDA to test additional public water supply wells, lakes, rivers/streams, wetlands including water samples collected on Tribal land.	\$740	\$800	\$800
MDA	Pesticide Testing of Private Wells: The primary goal of testing wells for pesticides is to provide information to homeowners and the public about the presence of pesticides in private drinking water wells and in groundwater. Funding is for free pesticide testing of private wells in areas where groundwater may be at risk for elevated pesticide concentrations. Earlier phases of the project analyzed up to 133 pesticide compounds in private wells across agricultural areas with vulnerable groundwater. Those results identified the herbicides cyanazine and atrazine—and their degradates— represented the greatest pesticide-related risk to private well users. Building on these findings, upcoming sampling will prioritize these compounds, along with nitrate and select insecticides and fungicides in vulnerable aquifers, to ensure continued monitoring of contaminants most likely to affect groundwater quality.	\$1,000	\$1,100	\$1,100
MDH	Drinking Water Contaminants of Emerging Concern Program: Maintain program capacity for evaluating contaminants of emerging concern (CEC). The health-based evaluation of known and new contaminants in drinking water is the starting point for assessing the threat to public health and potential public health burden. The values developed in this initiative are widely used by sister agencies. Technical assistance is given by the CEC program to citizens, companies, and other state agencies on interpreting and evaluating what CEC concentrations in water mean for human health. This initiative also develops analytical methods for laboratories to improve detection of emerging contaminants and ensures that accredited laboratories performing analytical water testing are accountable to standards that support defensible and accurate data.	\$11,850	\$11,850	\$11,850

Agency	Program Activity	Enacted budget FY2026-27 (000s)	ICT or BOC Aug recs FY2028-29 (000s)	BOC September recs FY2028-29 (000s)
MDH	Private Well Initiative: Unlike people who get their drinking water from public water system, people who get their drinking water from a private well (private well users) are largely on their own for ensuring that water from their well is safe for their household. As part of our commitment for equity, we are increasing education, technical support, and financial assistance for private well users so they can be confident in the safety and quality of their drinking water. This initiative continues to make progress towards the Council’s vision of offering free private well testing to 10% of private well users each year. By the end of FY29, the initiative is on track to have free private well testing available for 50% of Minnesota’s private well users and on track to meet the 2034 goal of offering free private well testing to all private well households.	\$6,000	\$10,000	\$9,500
	Monitoring, Assessment, and Characterization total	\$54,990	\$63,500	\$63,000
	Watershed & Groundwater Restoration/Protection Strategies			
MPCA	Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies: WRAPS reports, including Total Maximum Daily Load studies (TMDLs) for impaired waters, are updated with local partners to confirm strategies for impaired waters and unimpaired waters by setting reduction and protection goals, milestones and measures to guide targeted state and local government planning and implementation efforts. Funding also supports updating watershed models as new monitoring data become available. Some of this program’s funding moves to local partners who participate in WRAPS updates and supports the We Are Water public engagement traveling exhibit. This recommendation ensures that work remains steady.	\$14,500	\$15,000	\$15,000
DNR	Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies: The DNR employs experts in hydrology and geomorphology to support comprehensive assessments and strategy development as part of WRAPS. DNR staff complete targeted surveys and analysis and watershed reports that inform WRAPS and ultimately implementation projects. DNR staff make this information available in the Watershed Health Assessment Framework (WHAF) and other reports. The proposed amount will maintain DNR’s capacity to provide this core expertise as part of the interagency watershed approach.	\$4,750	\$5,300	\$5,300
MDH	Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies: GRAPS is an interagency effort to coordinate the delivery of state agency groundwater and drinking water data, information, and implementation strategies for use at the local level. The aim is to facilitate local efforts to benefit groundwater resource restoration and protection. Key efforts include the following: 1) migrating data and information to online tools, 2) completing a GRAPS report for every comprehensive watershed planning (1W1P) by end of FY28 so that local partners have groundwater information resources for implementation planning, and 3) building local capacity through education, outreach, and financial assistance.	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500
MDH	Source Water Protection: Protecting our sources of drinking water (groundwater, rivers, and lakes) is the most equitable and cost-effective approach to safeguarding our drinking water now and for future generations. This support facilitates planning and implementation specific to local needs for protecting drinking water sources and includes small grants for public water systems to implement actions identified in their Source Water Protection Plans. Additionally, program assets are being directed toward 1) enhancing the characterization of source water quality conditions using rigorous screening, monitoring, and analysis and 2) fulfilling MDH and CWC strategic objectives of securing long-term protection for the most vulnerable lands in drinking water system management areas statewide and protection plans for community systems that use surface waters as their source of drinking water.	\$7,690	\$8,120	\$8,120
	Watershed & Groundwater Restoration/Protection Strategies total	\$30,440	\$31,920	\$31,920
	Comprehensive Local Watershed Management			
BWSR	Water Management Transition (One Watershed One Plan): As more comprehensive watershed management plans mature, increased funding is needed to keep plans current through plan evaluations and updates that reflect new data, implementation experience, and emerging priorities. Maintaining current plans ensures implementation funding continues to be targeted to the highest-priority projects, strengthens local and Tribal partnerships, and preserves the effectiveness of Minnesota's watershed-based approach.	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Comprehensive Local Watershed Management total	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Nonpoint source implementation			
BWSR	Implementation Funding for Watersheds with Approved Comprehensive Watershed Plans (Watershed-based Implementation Funding): While moving at a slower rate than the implementation trajectory calls for, continued growth in WBIF is necessary to keep pace with rising projects costs and to meet the demand by partnerships to help fund the goals set out in their plans. Stable funding provides local governments and Tribal partners the certainty needed to invest in staff, leverage additional resources, and deliver measurable water quality improvements for priority resources identified in watershed plans.	\$88,100	\$96,000	\$96,000
BWSR	Accelerated Implementation: As we continue to hear a demand from local and Tribal government partners for more training and tools, this recommendation helps to maintain program capacity. Funding is needed to expand technical assistance through Technical Service Areas, technical training & certifications, and implementation support that directly increases the pace and quality of conservation project delivery. These investments leverage federal matching funds while building the local capacity required to move priority projects from planning to implementation.	\$8,700	\$9,000	\$9,000
BWSR	Conservation Drainage Management and Assistance: Demand for multipurpose drainage projects continues to exceed available funding. Increased investment will allow more high-impact drainage system improvements to incorporate conservation practices during infrequent system upgrades, producing long-term water quality benefits while expanding implementation of new conservation solutions identified by the Drainage Work Group.	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000

Agency	Program Activity	Enacted budget FY2026-27 (000s)	ICT or BOC Aug recs FY2028-29 (000s)	BOC September recs FY2028-29 (000s)
BWSR	Critical Shoreland Protection-Permanent Conservation Easements: Increased funding is needed to capitalize on time-sensitive land protection opportunities before development permanently alters high-quality shorelands. Strong demand from local partners, increasing development pressure, and aging landownership make consistent investment critical to protecting Minnesota's highest-quality waters. FY26-27 appropriation amount was suggested by BWSR as a budget solution for the biennium because of the additional funding this program received in FY24. This request is in line with historic appropriations for this easement program.	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
BWSR	Wetland restoration easements: Increased funding is needed to capitalize on high-priority restoration opportunities before they are permanently lost. Wetland restoration provides multiple public benefits from a single investment, and this program remains one of Minnesota's most effective tools for achieving large-scale water quality improvements while leveraging federal conservation funding. This is BWSR's top priority easement program and work may be done in cooperation with the USDA or other agencies to leverage federal funding.	\$5,000	\$8,000	\$7,000
BWSR	Measures, Results and Accountability: Continued investment ensures accountability for CWF expenditures by measuring, evaluating, and communicating program outcomes. Maintaining robust performance reporting and grant oversight improves program effectiveness, supports legislative accountability, and demonstrates the return on public investment.	\$2,500	\$2,780	\$3,880
BWSR	Riparian Protection and Soil Loss Assistance (Buffer Law Implementation): Stable funding is necessary to maintain statewide buffer compliance through continued monitoring, technical assistance, and local implementation support. Sustained investment protects previous gains in compliance and prevents increased enforcement costs by helping landowners remain in compliance. The FY28/29 recommendation reflects the Council's direction to decrease funding support, without compromising the integrity of the previous investments.	\$4,000	\$3,500	\$3,500
BWSR	Working Land and Floodplain Easements: Increased funding responds to growing demand for working lands easements that improve water quality while maintaining productive agricultural use and will keep the program at a sustainable level. This program sets aside sensitive land in riverine and riparian corridors to address water quality concerns, and climate adaptation and mitigation goals, and also creates opportunities to leverage additional conservation funding and achieve multiple watershed benefits through a single investment.	\$2,000	\$2,300	\$2,300
BWSR	Surface and Drinking Water Protection/Restoration Grants: Demand for project funding consistently exceeds available resources, with requests typically totaling twice the available funding. Conservation project costs have increased by 6%-15% statewide, year over year in the previous 2 years. The increase reflects a recovery from the cuts from the shortfall last biennium, and an increased investment to fund more high-priority, shovel-ready projects. An increase in funding will also allow local governments to capitalize on time-sensitive opportunities, including the protection of drinking water resources while avoiding higher future project costs.	\$6,000	\$7,500	\$7,500
BWSR	Watershed Partners Legacy (WPL) Grants: The proposal doubles the previous appropriation for the program. Based on the priority of the CWC, increased funding is needed to address demand from Tribal Nations and nonprofit conservation organizations and to expand participation through a more flexible funding approach for Tribes. Additional investment will build implementation capacity and allow more high-quality projects aligned with local watershed priorities to move forward.	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
BWSR	Enhancing Landowner Adoption of Soil Health Practices for Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection: Increased funding supports expansion of technical assistance and implementation needed to meet growing demand for soil health practices, including restoring funding to the FY24-25 level of \$12M, and adding a new, southeast Minnesota performance-based pilot program, all while leveraging available federal matching funds and aligned LCCMR funding (Olmsted County) to maximize conservation outcomes.	\$9,486	\$12,500	\$12,500
BWSR	Lake Superior leveraging of GLRI/federal funds: Continued funding enables soil and water conservation districts in the Lake Superior Basin to leverage significant federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative investments. State funding provides the local capacity and matching resources necessary to maximize federal dollars and accelerate implementation of priority watershed projects.	\$1,000	\$1,060	\$1,060
BWSR	MN & IA Conservation Corps. Continued investment maintains critical on-the-ground implementation capacity that many local governments and Tribal Nations rely on to complete conservation projects. The program also develops Minnesota's conservation workforce while accelerating delivery of CWF investments.	\$1,500	\$1,600	\$1,600
DNR	Nonpoint source restoration and protection activities: As the number of completed WRAPS and 1W1P increase, there is an increasing need for DNR experts to provide site-specific technical support for planning and implementing projects. DNR is actively involved in about 80 implementation projects each year, providing design expertise on dam removals, stream restoration and other stabilization projects. DNR staff often help during implementation and construction oversight, filling in critical gaps in local expertise. The proposed amount will maintain this core expertise and continue supporting local government partners.	\$4,350	\$4,930	\$4,930
DNR	Mussel Restoration: Of the 50 native freshwater mussel species in Minnesota, 61% are low in number, declining and their persistence is in jeopardy. Mussels are efficient natural filterers of water, including removal of sediment, nutrients and bacteria and they provide habitat for other aquatic species. The DNR has developed the expertise to grow and restore mussel populations and upgraded facilities to support an expansion and more rapid restoration of mussels throughout Minnesota. The amount requested will provide support to significantly maintain higher propagation, rearing and restoration efforts.	\$700	\$750	\$750

Agency	Program Activity	Enacted budget FY2026-27 (000s)	ICT or BOC Aug recs FY2028-29 (000s)	BOC September recs FY2028-29 (000s)
DNR	Culvert replacement Incentive Program: Minnesota’s public roads intersect the state’s natural perennial flowing watercourses at approximately 65,000 locations. Many of the culvert structures at these locations are failing and require replacement. A culvert replacement and incentive program would provide financial and technical assistance for counties and other local governments to modernize culvert systems to address climate resiliency, restore fish communities, and reduce sediment loads (two major sources of impairment). This proposal will accelerate the adoption of alternative culvert designs that improve biological connectivity, channel stability, reduce flood stage and lower long-term maintenance costs. This proposal will fund approximately 12 projects with a 25% cost share. Funds would need to be available until spent to allow for sufficient local planning and implementation.	\$2,900	\$3,000	\$3,000
DNR	(NEW) Natural Shorelines: Nearly 50% of Minnesota’s natural shorelines have vanished due to suburban-style development and lawn manicuring. This conversion allows up to nine times more pollutants into lakes and degrading critical fish and wildlife habitats. Protecting and restoring native plant buffers is essential to filter runoff and anchor soil. This program will enhance funding for the Lake Steward program, sponsored by Minnesota Lakes and Rivers, and provide funding for permanent lakeshore conservation easements to protect priority lakes by restoring natural shorelines and reducing pollutant loading.	\$0	\$1,800	\$1,800
MC	Water demand reduction/efficiency grant program: The program is a Metropolitan Council and local community cost share program that provides 100% pass-through water efficiency grants to metro municipalities. This popular, over-subscribed program provided critical support to address the drought of 2021. The proposed budget was set to continue to meet growing needs by communities implementing water demand reduction measures to use groundwater more wisely, particularly in areas with drinking water contamination or water availability issues. The funds protect drinking water supplies and support the reliability and resiliency of water suppliers to serve homes, businesses, and growth.	\$1,400	\$1,400	\$1,200
MDA	AgBMP Loan Program: AgBMP loans can be used for the implementation of any practice that reduces or mitigates the effects of water pollution. The purpose is to encourage agricultural best management practices and other practices that prevent or reduce runoff from feedlots, farm fields and for other pollution problems identified by the county in local water plans. Funding can also be used to replace or treat contaminated wells. The program is administered by local governments and local loaning institutions and has extremely low administration costs. AgBMP loans are frequently used to leverage additional funding. Loans are repaid into the corpus of the account and will be available for future clean water projects regardless of the renewal of the CWF. The demand for Ag BMP loans greatly exceeds available funding.	\$4,000	\$4,500	\$4,500
MDA	MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program: The proposed budget serves to meet expanding demand and associate needs for program delivery including implementation grants, growing number of participating farms to audit, and overall labor demands to serve increasing participation. This funding provides for MAWQCP to meet seven goals in the CWC’s 2024 Strategic Plan. Greater than 50% of funding is pass through for soil and water conservation districts and supports implementation. The funding is required as match to leverage and maintain a \$10,000,000 federal EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG).	\$7,000	\$7,470	\$7,470
MDA	Technical Assistance: Technical assistance is a primary vehicle to work with the agricultural community to promote best management practices. This funding is used to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation practices, demonstrate practices that protect water and enhance outreach and education of recommended agricultural practices to the agricultural community and local government partners. Technical assistance activities fill an important need for field demonstrations and validation of practices to protect water quality.	\$3,200	\$3,980	\$3,980
MDA	Conservation Equipment Assistance: Conservation Equipment Assistance supports the Minnesota Department of Agriculture’s Soil Health Financial Assistance Program (SHFAP), which provides grants to producers, producer groups, and local governments to purchase or retrofit equipment that implements soil-health practices. A primary obstacle to expanding soil health is access to the specialized equipment necessary for successful adoption of soil health practices. By expanding access to equipment for cover cropping, reduced tillage, managed grazing, and similar practices, the program improves soil structure, increases infiltration, and limits disturbance to directly protect water quality by reducing erosion and curbing sediment and nutrient runoff. The appropriation is required as match to leverage and maintain a federal EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) award.	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500
MDA	Ag Weather Station Network	\$2,300	\$0	\$0
	Nonpoint source implementation total	\$161,636	\$182,570	\$184,470
	Point source implementation			
MPCA	Chloride reduction efforts: This program provides critical support to communities by providing chloride reduction from road salt and water softening training, and grants to communities so they can implement their chloride management plans. This recommendation recognizes the CWC’s desire to see more training and more grants available for on-the-ground chloride reduction work, and it also meets the needs MPCA is hearing from partners. The MPCA is open to discussing additional work once the CWC finalizes its chloride reduction policy.	\$1,300	\$2,600	\$2,600
MPCA	Wastewater/stormwater TMDL implementation: With the completion of hundreds of TMDLs over the past decade and a half, the work to translate wasteload allocations into permit requirements has expanded enormously. Funding for these programs provides technical assistance tools to local units of government and supports staff to accelerate work in the stormwater and wastewater permitting programs that protect lakes and streams. The FY28/29 recommendation will ensure the work effort remains steady.	\$3,200	\$3,400	\$3,400
PFA	Point Source Implementation Grant (PSIG) Program: The PSIG program provides essential assistance to cities to upgrade water treatment facilities needed to meet required wasteload reductions to address impaired waters and protect threatened waterbodies. Program funding has been supplemented in the past with bonding appropriations; however, annual applications consistently exceed available funds. Currently the PSIG funding list has over \$160 million of projects outside that funding range and construction costs only continue to grow.	\$16,440	\$18,000	\$18,000

Agency	Program Activity	Enacted budget FY2026-27 (000s)	ICT or BOC Aug recs FY2028-29 (000s)	BOC September recs FY2028-29 (000s)
PFA	Small Community Wastewater Treatment Program: The Small Community Wastewater Treatment Program provides grants and loans to assist small unsewered communities with technical assistance and construction funding to replace non-complying septic systems with community subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS). These funds allow small communities to evaluate and implement lower cost decentralized treatment alternatives to address their wastewater needs.	\$100	\$100	\$100
	Point source implementation total	\$21,040	\$24,100	\$24,100
	Groundwater/Drinking Water Implementation			
BWSR	Targeted Wellhead/Drinking Water Protection: Continued investment is needed to protect additional high-priority drinking water supply areas. Rising land values and increasing development pressure make proactive land protection more cost-effective than delaying conservation investments or constructing costly drinking water treatment systems that many small water suppliers struggle to fund and maintain.	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
MC	Metropolitan Area Water Sustainability Support: This program helps municipalities and industries in the Twin Cities metro area as they plan and implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats and overall water sustainability, provide cost-effective regional solutions, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of wellhead protection plans, and prevent degradation of groundwater and surface water resources.	\$2,750	\$3,000	\$3,000
MDA	Nitrate in Groundwater: The MDA leads nitrate monitoring and reduction activities across Minnesota, with emphasis on areas with vulnerable groundwater. This work is done in partnership with the agricultural community and local governments. Funding supports activities that identify sources of nitrate contamination and evaluate and implement practices at the local level to reduce nitrate in groundwater. In addition to promoting, demonstrating, and encouraging adoption of nitrogen fertilizer BMPs, the program engages in strategic efforts to increase vegetative cover in vulnerable areas; works with farmers and crop advisors in local advisory teams; conducts computer modeling to evaluate practices; monitors groundwater, provides technical support and supports on-farm demonstration projects.	\$6,200	\$7,200	\$7,200
MDA	Irrigation Water Quality Protection: Funding supports an irrigation water quality specialist through a contract with the University of Minnesota Extension to address water quantity and water quality issues in Minnesota’s irrigated regions. The specialist conducts applied research, develops technical guidance and publications, provides education and outreach on irrigation and nitrogen best management practices (BMPs), and contributes to the development of irrigation scheduling tools for Minnesota irrigators.	\$310	\$330	\$330
MDH	Future of Drinking Water: Current federal and state regulations no longer provide adequate protection for customers of public water systems and users of private wells. This initiative supports MDH’s implementation of the Minnesota Drinking Water Action Plan to protect Minnesotans against new threats that endanger our vision of safe and sufficient drinking water for everyone, everywhere in Minnesota. In addition, this initiative will focus on implementation of select activities named in the Action Plan that will prepare both public and private well supplies to adapt to an uncertain future.	\$500	\$500	\$500
MPCA	Enhanced County inspections/SSTS corrective actions: This program provides critical funding to local units of government to operate their respective SSTS programs and also provides funding to homeowners with low income to replace or repair non-complying septic systems. Both county SSTS programs and grants for SSTS replacement protect groundwater and connected surface water. This recommendation ensures we can maintain the grant levels from the past biennium.	\$6,881	\$6,900	\$6,900
	Groundwater/Drinking Water Implementation total	\$21,641	\$19,930	\$19,930
	Local Implementation total (NPS, PS, GW/DW)	\$204,317	\$226,600	\$228,500
	Research, Evaluation and Tool Development			
BWSR	Tillage and Erosion Survey: Maintaining funding ensures continued collection of consistent, scientifically valid statewide data used to target conservation investments, improve watershed models, and evaluate conservation outcomes. Reliable long-term data are essential for informed water quality planning and decision-making.	\$850	\$850	\$850
BWSR	Technical Evaluation: Continued funding supports independent evaluation of restoration projects, improving accountability and ensuring future investments are informed by demonstrated project performance. Evaluation findings strengthen conservation effectiveness and provide legislators and partners with credible information on program outcomes. The increase reflects two biennia of inflation, as the appropriation has remained the same during that time period.	\$200	\$220	\$220
DNR	Tool development and evaluation: The DNR maintains and provides access to LiDAR-derived elevation data that is widely used for targeting and designing implementation projects and for watershed modeling. DNR also assesses relationships among disturbance patterns, BMP applications, and water quality in forested watersheds. The proposed amount will maintain effort on LiDAR related support, maintain effort in forest BMP monitoring. Over the past biennium the DNR has eliminated effort on fine-scale watershed models to evaluate the effects of drainage, soil health and other BMPs.	\$1,400	\$1,500	\$1,500
DNR	County geologic atlases: The CWF has enhanced data collection and analysis of the county geologic atlases by providing supplemental chemistry and geology data. The core funding of the atlas program continues to be the LCCMR and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, along with state general fund resources. The proposed amount restores capacity to supplement the atlas data collection efforts that have previously resulted in significant efforts to target nitrate reduction in southeastern Minnesota.	\$200	\$200	\$200
MDA	Research Inventory Database: The MnWRL is a user-friendly, searchable inventory of water research relevant to Minnesota. It provides “one-stop” access to all types of water research, including both peer-reviewed articles and white papers and reports. MnWRL provides access to water related information, enabling water managers, researchers, engaged citizens and others to easily find, share, and coordinate research to support their efforts to protect, conserve, manage and restore water in Minnesota.	\$100	\$80	\$80

Agency	Program Activity	Enacted budget FY2026-27 (000s)	ICT or BOC Aug recs FY2028-29 (000s)	BOC September recs FY2028-29 (000s)
MDA	Forever Green Agricultural Initiative (U of MN): The FGI develops Minnesota-specific winter annual and perennial crops that provide continuous living cover to protect and restore surface and groundwater quality. Through integrated research, farmer adoption support, and market-building efforts, the program accelerates adoption of cropping systems that reduce nutrient loss, enhance soil health, and support farm profitability. CWF support advances research, implementation, and partnerships that expand these crops across Minnesota’s agricultural landscape.	\$5,000	\$6,660	\$8,000
MDH	Recreational Water Quality Online Portal: While many people assume all beaches are monitored, beach testing is conducted at the discretion of the entity responsible for the beach (often a local public health agency). This initiative maintains the statewide recreational water testing portal that allows Minnesotans to go to one online location to access information on any recreational water testing conducted or beach closures currently in place. Additionally, the portal allows users to be made aware of any alerts currently in place at the beach of interest, such as the appearance of harmful algal blooms or major pollution events.	\$600	\$600	\$600
U of MN	Stormwater BMP Performance Evaluation & Technology Transfer: Provides research and technology transfer to address priority water resource needs for Minnesota communities. Research is completed through a competitive grant program to develop new stormwater practices and policies as well as improving the effectiveness of existing practices. Technology transfer is a crucial aspect of the program and translates emerging research results to Minnesota stormwater professionals and practitioners through training, outreach, and Extension.	\$1,600	\$2,000	\$2,000
U of MN	Geologic Atlas with Dept. of Natural Resources: Develops county Geologic Atlases, which include maps and databases essential for improved management of ground and surface water. This is foundational data that supports management of drinking water, domestic and industrial supply, irrigation, and aquatic habitat. The distribution of geologic materials defines aquifer boundaries and the connection of aquifers to the land surface and to surface water resources to enable a comprehensive water management effort.	\$800	\$1,000	\$1,000
MDA	(NEW) Manure BMP and Water Quality Specialist: Funding will support a manure land application and water quality specialist to develop and promote BMPs and update guidance, with a focus on regions at elevated environmental risk, including Southeast and Central Minnesota. Data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the MDA indicate that nutrients from manure are frequently under credited when farmers calculate the total amount of nitrogen applied to the crop, resulting in overapplication of commercial fertilizer. Improving manure crediting accuracy—and ensuring manure is applied at the right time, in the right place, in the right amount, and from the right source—will reduce nitrate leaching from manured fields to groundwater and decrease manure related runoff to surface water.	\$0	\$330	\$330
	Research, Evaluation and Tool Development total	\$10,750	\$13,440	\$14,780
	Administration			
MPCA	Clean Water Council budget: This program funds the operation of the Clean Water Council and related expenses, including reimbursements, per diem, communications and engagement expenses, overhead, and staff.	\$922	\$1,500	\$1,500
LCC	Legislative Coordinating Commission: The LCC has been tasked with developing and maintaining a website that shows how revenues generated by the Legacy Amendment and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund are utilized. It is required by law.	\$7	\$7	\$7
	Administration total	\$929	\$1,507	\$1,507
	Nonagency programs			
	Red River Valley River Watch and River of Dreams: The Red River Basin River Watch (RW) and River of Dreams (ROD) programs provide hands-on watershed education for K–12 students across the Red River of the North Basin. The programs connect youth to local rivers through field-based learning, water quality monitoring, and creative exploration. Their purpose is to build environmental literacy and stewardship by increasing understanding of non-point source pollution, its impacts, and key watershed health concepts. By engaging students, educators, and communities, the programs support improved water quality awareness, long-term protection of MN’s waters, and development of the next generation of informed watershed stewards.	\$0	\$350	\$350
	Minnesota Valley River Watch: River Watch is a hands-on learning program operated by Friends of the Minnesota Valley for students in 28 high schools and in some middle schools during the 2025-2026 school year. Beginning with an in-classroom lesson aligned with state Science standards, students make 2 trips per semester to a river or stream to conduct water quality monitoring using a multi-function electronic probe and other tools. Macroinvertebrate surveys are conducted during the stream visits. Data is reported through the MPCA Citizen Science Portal. Most work is in the Minnesota River Basin, two High Schools serving Latino and Indigenous students in Minneapolis participate.	\$0	\$75	\$75
	Cannon River River Watch: This proposal would be an offshoot of the Minnesota Valley River Watch program, creating a similar effort in the Cannon River Valley.	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Voyageurs National Park Water Quality Project: The Voyageurs National Park Clean Water projects protect and restore water quality at the primary public access points to Minnesota’s only national park and the nation’s only water-based national park. FY28–29 funding of \$7,400,000 will support implementation of sanitary sewer system expansions, system upgrades and planning efforts, and related water quality protection infrastructure in remaining high-risk areas adjacent to Voyageurs National Park and downstream waters connected to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The proposed projects reduce nutrient loading, pathogen contamination, and groundwater degradation while protecting drinking water, recreational waters, and nationally significant aquatic resources.	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
	Nonagency programs total	\$1,500	\$1,925	\$1,925
	Budget total	\$303,926	\$339,892	\$342,632

Summary from Council homework

September 4, 2026

At the August 24, 2026 Clean Water Council meeting several programs, which had been identified by Council members as ones that could be increased or decreased, were discussed. Council members who had suggested the changes had an opportunity to share their rationale, and program representatives then had an opportunity to respond and note the implications or feasibility of the change.

Following the meeting, Council members were invited to amend their suggestions for changes based on what they had heard at the meeting. 12 of 15 possible responses were submitted, with some suggesting no changes from previously proposed amounts, and others identifying multiple possible changes.

To aid in the discussion, statistical information (range, mean, median, mode) about responses for each of the 16 programs still being discussed is included in the table below. The table also includes information about whether programs are flexible (can handle adjustments without structural impacts), FY26-27 funding amounts, rubric score, Council direction, and FY28-29 proposed amounts. Some high level notes to consider before reviewing the table:

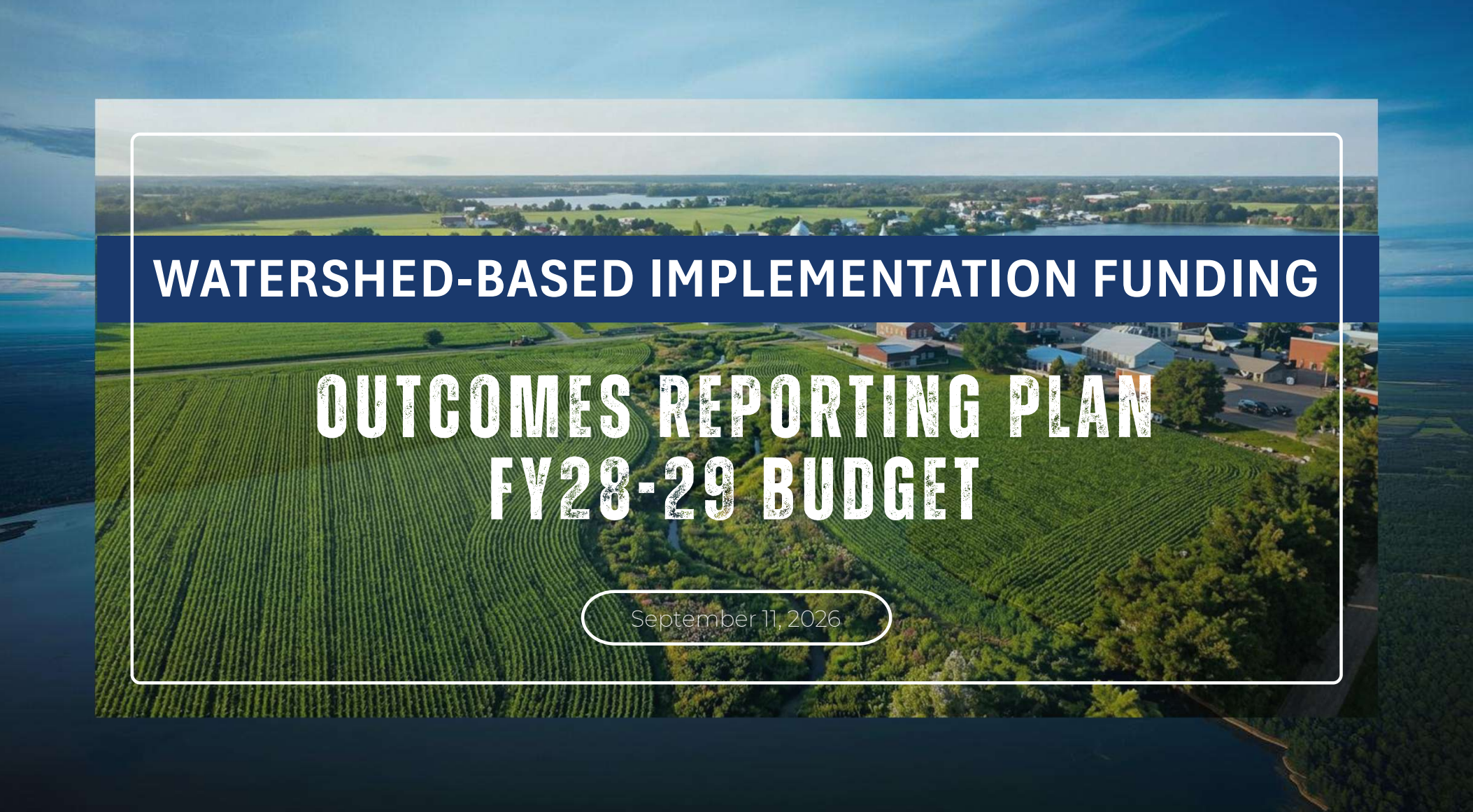
- **Amount of funding available:**
 - The Interagency Coordinating Team (ICT) put forward a budget for agency programs based on Council discussion and guidance since February that totaled \$337.967M. The Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) suggested \$1.925M for non-agency programs. Together, this equals \$339.892M.
 - While the BOC had suggested using \$340M as the target, follow-up conversations with Minnesota Management and Budget staff (who develop the budget forecasts) noted that sales tax revenues are still tracking with forecasts. While they can't confirm what the forecast will show, their information increased confidence that the Council could use the \$342M number as a target instead.
 - This means the Council could choose to increase from current recommendations by \$2.108M without making any cuts to current proposed amounts. If further increases are desired, reductions from proposed amounts would be needed.
- **How current suggested changes pan out**
 - If you use the mean averages, the overall total change is \$1.3M more than what is currently in the budget, which is within the available \$2.108M.
 - If you use the median averages, the overall total change is \$1.6M, still within the \$2.108.
 - If you use the mode averages, the overall total change is \$3.8M, which falls outside of the \$2.108.

This is not to suggest that the best course of action is to go with one of the averages, rather that the averages can help serve as a useful starting point for the discussion that will take place on Friday, September 11. Budget and Outcomes Committee members are encouraged to review the table to determine which final changes to propose to the Council for adoption.

Questions to ask yourself as you review could include:

- 1) What have we heard (through public input and in discussion with agencies) about programs for which changes have been suggested, and about the proposed changes?
- 2) Where does the homework suggest we could find quick agreement, and where does it suggest we focus our attention?
- 3) How *could* the \$2.108 additional funding be allocated without making any reductions to proposals?
- 4) Where is additional increase still meaningfully needed for this biennium (vs a future biennium), and by how much?
- 5) Where are reductions possible without causing structural or programmatic impacts to a line item?

Org	Program Name	Flexible?	FY26-27 Amount	Rubric score mean	Council direction	FY28-29 proposal	CWC HW Range	HW Mean (Diff)	HW Median (Diff)	HW Mode (Diff)
BWSR	Critical Shoreland Easements	Yes	\$1M	40.1	H, T1 increase	\$2M	\$2-4M	\$2.829M (+\$.829M)	\$2.6M (+\$0.6M)	\$2M (\$0)
BWSR	Watershed Partners Legacy Grants	Yes	\$1M	43.1	H, T1 increase	\$2M	\$1.5-4M	\$3.031M (+\$1.031M)	\$3.08M (+\$1.08M)	\$4M (+\$2M)
MDA	MAWQCP	No	\$7M	41.5	H, T2 increase	\$7.47M	\$7.250-7.5M	\$7.454M (-\$0.016M)	\$7.47M (\$0)	\$7.47M (\$0)
MPFA	PSIG	Yes	\$16.44 M	41	H, T2 increase	\$18M	\$18-20M	\$18.208M (+\$0.208M)	\$18M (\$0)	\$18M (\$0)
MDA	Forever Green	Yes	\$5M	43.3	H, T1 increase	\$6.66M	\$6.66-10M	\$8.015M (+\$1.355M)	\$8M (+\$1.34M)	\$8M (+\$1.34M)
UMN	Stormwater Research	Yes	\$1.6M	42.3	H, T1 increase	\$2M	\$2-2.5M	\$2.229M (+\$0.229M)	\$2.125M (+\$0.125M)	\$2M (\$0)
VNP	Voyageurs National Park	Yes	\$1.5M	36.6	H, T2 increase	\$1.5M	\$0-3M	\$2.208M (+\$0.208M)	\$2.750M (+\$0.75M)	\$3M (+\$1.5M)
MPCA	River & Lake Monitor & Assess	No	\$18.9M	42.3	H, T2 increase	\$20.9M	\$19.5-21.5M	\$20.442M (-\$0.458M)	\$20.45M (-\$0.45M)	\$20.9M (\$0)
MDH	Private Well Initiative	Yes	\$6M	42.6	H, T1 increase	\$10M	\$9-10M	\$9.542M (-\$0.458M)	\$9.5M (-\$0.5M)	\$10M (\$0)
BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Fund	Yes*	\$88.1M	43.6	H, T1 increase	\$96M	\$94.235-98M	\$95.445M (-\$0.555M)	\$95M (-\$1M)	\$95M (-\$1M)
BWSR	Conservation Drainage	Yes	\$2M	42.3	H, T1 increase	\$3M	\$2.4-3M	\$2.709M (-\$0.291M)	\$2.75M (-\$0.25M)	\$3M (\$0)
BWSR	Wetland Restoration Easements	Yes	\$5M	40.3	H, T1 increase	\$8M	\$7-8M	\$7.576M (-\$0.424M)	\$7.705 (-\$0.295M)	\$8M (\$0)
MDA	Nitrate in Groundwater	No	\$6.2M	41.9	H, T2 increase	\$7.2M	\$6.5-7.2M	\$7.027M (-\$0.173M)	\$7.2M (\$0)	\$7.2M (\$0)
BWSR	Riparian Aid	No	\$4M	38.4	M, reduce	\$3.5M	\$2.5-3.5M	\$3.108M (-\$0.392M)	\$3.275M (-\$0.225M)	\$3.5M (\$0)
Met C	Demand Reduction / Efficiency Grants	Yes	\$1.4M	36.7	M, hold steady	\$1.4M	\$0-1.4M	\$1.142M (-\$0.258M)	\$1.3M (-\$0.1M)	\$1.4M (\$0)
Fr.MN Valley	Minnesota Valley River Watch	No*	\$0	34.3	H, T1 increase	\$0.075M	\$0-0.15M	\$0.063M (-\$0.013M)	\$0.075M (\$0)	\$0.075M (\$0)

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there are green agricultural fields with distinct rows of crops. A small stream or ditch runs through the fields. In the middle ground, there is a small town or village with several buildings, including a large white barn-like structure. Beyond the town, a large body of water, likely a lake, is visible under a clear blue sky. The entire image is framed by a white border.

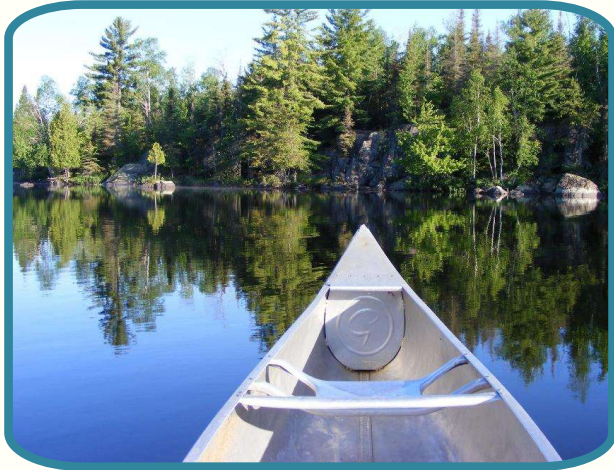
WATERSHED-BASED IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING

OUTCOMES REPORTING PLAN FY28-29 BUDGET

September 11, 2026

TWO-YEAR APPROACH

PROPOSED PLAN +
COUNCIL ACTION



YEAR ONE (2027)

- eLink updates
- Explore Output & Outcome Connections
- Draft Interactive Watersheds Map*
- Outcomes Reporting Plan*
- CWC BOC Presentation

Year TWO (2028)

- Launch Interactive Watersheds Map*
- Begin Implementing Outcomes Reporting Plan*
- CWC BOC Presentation

*May require additional resources & capacity.

OUTCOMES REPORTING BY SCALE

WATERSHED LEVEL

- Local data, goals & priorities
- Ground-level stories
- Interactive watershed maps
- Communication tools

STATEWIDE LEVEL

- Statewide synthesis
- Unified narrative on water quality trends
- Progress towards KPIs

REGIONAL LEVEL

- Larger regional aggregation
- Strides to reduce specific, regionally relevant pollutants



Connections to:

- **Fishable,**
- **Swimmable, and**
- **Drinkable waters**

WBIF → CWF

OUTCOMES REPORTING PLAN



MULTIPLE BMP SOURCES...

[U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service \(USDA-NRCS\)](#)

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Wetlands Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE)
Emergency Watershed Protection Program – Floodplain Easement (EWPP-FPE)
Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program (EWRP)
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

[Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources \(BWSR\)](#)

Easement programs:

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM)
Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)
Army Compatible Use Buffer program (ACUB)
Riparian buffer conservation easements

Grant programs:

Disaster Recovery Assistance Program
Clean Water Fund Grants
State Conservation Cost-Share
Native Buffer Grant Program
Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG)

Other programs as reported in the eLINK tracking system

[Minnesota Department of Agriculture \(MDA\)](#)

Agriculture Best Management Practices Loan Program (AgBMP)
Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP)

[Minnesota Pollution Control Agency \(MPCA\)](#)

Federal Clean Water Act Section 319 Program (Section 319)
Clean Water Partnership Program (CWP)



...AND MANY MORE!

RESOURCE NEEDS

1. TECHNICAL CAPACITY

- Staff + expertise
- Data preparation
- Plan coordination

~ \$345k



2. MEASURE & DEMONSTRATE

- Outcomes assessment
- Modeling tools
- Causal analysis

~ \$220k



3. CONNECT & VISUALIZE

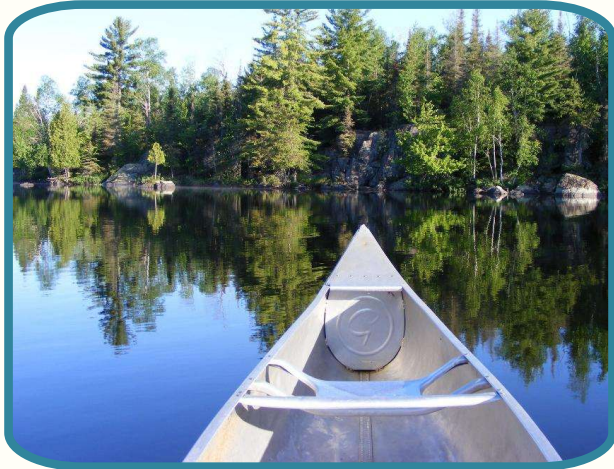
- Data integration
- Mapping dashboards
- Communication tools

~ \$587k

BUDGET

RECOMMENDATION

PROPOSED BUDGET +
COUNCIL ACTION



Proposed Investment Area	Estimated Budget
1. Technical Capacity	\$345,000
2. Measure & Demonstrate	\$220,000
3. Connect & Visualize	\$587,000
TOTAL	\$1,152,000

BWSR recommends that the \$1.15M of work be incorporated into the Measures, Results and Accountability Program.

This placement would better reflect the cross-program and cross-agency nature of the work and allow the resulting framework to support accountability and performance reporting for the Clean Water Fund as a whole.

THANK YOU

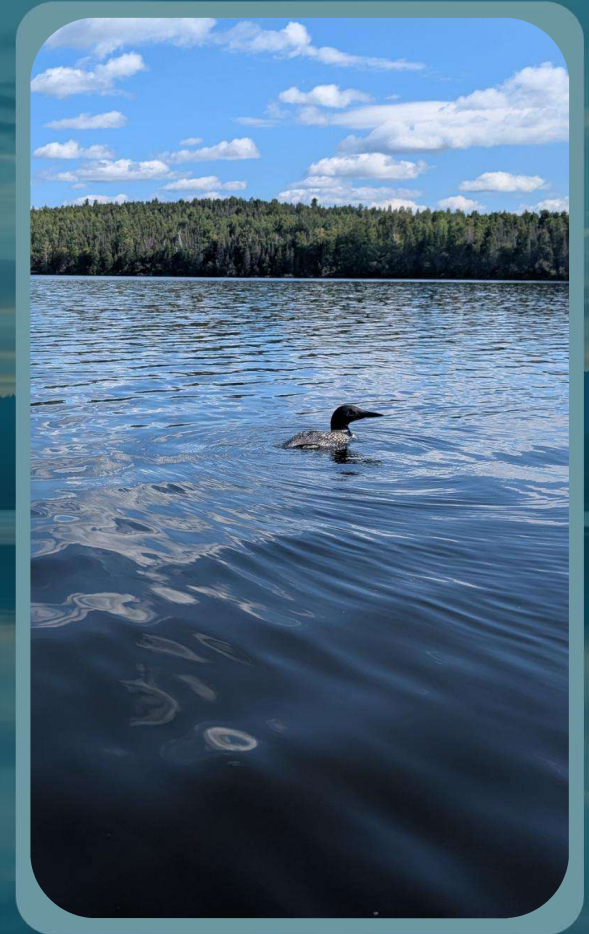
QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Thank you for your support in shaping this statewide story. Your input is essential to moving this program forward together.

For questions or follow-up, please reach out to:

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Org	Program Name	Flexible?	FY26-27 Amount (in 000s)	BOC 9/11/26 amount	Diff from ICT/BOC
BWSR	Critical Shoreland Easements	Yes	\$1,000	3,000	\$1,000
BWSR	Watershed Partners Legacy Grants	Yes	\$1,000	3,000	\$1,000
MDA	MAWQCP	No	\$7,000	7,470	\$0
MPFA	PSIG	Yes	\$16,440	18,000	\$0
MDA	Forever Green	Yes	\$5,000	8,000	\$1,340
UMN	Stormwater Research	Yes	\$1,600	2,000	\$0
VNP	Voyageurs National Park	Yes	\$1,500	1,500	\$0
BWSR	Measures, Results, and Accountability		\$2,500	3,880	\$1,100
MPCA	River & Lake Monitor & Assess	No	\$18,900	20900	\$0
MDH	Private Well Initiative	Yes	\$6,000	9500	(\$500)
BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Fu	Yes*	\$88,100	96000	\$0
BWSR	Conservation Drainage	Yes	\$2,000	3000	\$0
BWSR	Wetland Restoration Easements	Yes	\$5,000	7,000	(\$1,000)
MDA	Nitrate in Groundwater	No	\$6,200	7200	\$0
BWSR	Buffer Compliance/Riparian Aid	No	\$4,000	3500	\$0
Met C	Demand Reduction / Efficiency Grants	Yes	\$1,400	1200	(\$200)
Fr.MN Valle	Minnesota Valley River Watch	No*	\$0	75	\$0
				\$2,740	Overall change from ICT/BOC recs
				\$280	Amount remaining to get to balance

Notes for additional funding

Could increase here

Policy Recommendations

The Clean Water Council recognizes that CWF dollars alone will not meet the expectations of Minnesotans for clean water. To that end, in 2014 the Council created a Policy Committee to identify potential policies that could accelerate progress towards clean water goals. The Council has, since then, established and revised a standing policy platform for inclusion in these recommendation reports. The FY28-29 topics are listed below, with an * indicating new or updated policies since FY26-27:

- Advanced drinking water protection
- Chloride reduction (de-icer)*
- Chloride reduction (water softeners)
- Large volume water users*
- Multi-purpose drainage management
- Minnesota underground utilities mapping project
- PFAS
- Pharmaceutical product stewardship

Each of these are summarized below. For a full description of the policy statement, including problem descriptions and further-expanded recommendations, please visit the Council website.

Advanced drinking water protection

The state of Minnesota should ensure that private well users have safe, sufficient, and equitable access to drinking water. Priority contaminants are nitrate, bacteria, arsenic, manganese, lead, and pesticides. The Clean Water Fund combined with other funding sources (including fees), and appropriate policy should be used to support the following:

1. Completion of a private well inventory, starting in southeastern Minnesota, as well as timely updates to the Minnesota Well Index
2. Information to well users to reduce their risk, including well testing
3. Local and state capacity to manage testing, mapping, and education
4. Stable, reliable funding of cost-effective strategies for private well users to mitigate wells that do not meet Minnesota health-based guidance for five contaminants, with a particular focus on low-income households
5. Publication of aggregate and anonymized well data
6. Land use compatible with private well protection (e.g., forage, continuous living cover, working lands easements, etc.), including the prioritization of areas draining to vulnerable private wells

7. Adequate technical and financial assistance for fertilizer and pesticide management, irrigation education, and manure storage and use
8. Development and adoption of local government ordinances that require well testing and a disclosure of the testing at the time a property is transferred
9. Financial support for regulation of feedlots and the land application of manure
10. Evaluation of current programs for efficacy in meeting drinking water source protection goals
11. Consider designating acreage that drains to the most vulnerable private wells for protective practices like Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs).

Chloride reduction (de-icer)

The Clean Water Council recommends that the State of Minnesota implement the following actions to reduce chloride pollution from winter de-icing chemicals (salts) in Minnesota's surface water and groundwater. While all recommendations are important and interconnected, the Clean Water Council identified those with an * as especially critical near-term actions for the legislature to consider.

Incentives & Financial Sustainability

1. Implement a granular salt fee. *
2. Sustain and enhance funding for the MPCA's Chloride Reduction Program including the Smart Salting training and certification program. *Included here for the grant and technical assistance elements of the program.*

Research & Remediation

3. Investigate feasible approaches for restoration and remediation. *
4. Provide research funds to develop new technology, best management practices, and alternatives to chloride-containing de-icing chemicals.

Standards & Requirements

5. Incorporate low salt design standards into building and site development. *
6. Require Smart Salting for state contracts and facilities. *
7. Establish an occupational licensure program for winter maintenance professionals. *
8. Develop standardized labeling requirements for de-icing chemicals sold in Minnesota.

9. Expand requirements for proper storage of de-icing chemicals.

Data & Accountability

10. Expand and strengthen chloride monitoring statewide

Risk & Liability

11. Provide liability protection for certified applicators using best practices.

Awareness & Behavior Change

12. Establish a statewide community-based social marketing campaign.

(2.) Sustain and enhance funding for the MPCA's Chloride Reduction Program including the Smart Salting training and certification program. *Included again here for the training program contribution to behavior change.*

Chloride reduction (water softeners)

The Council recommends that the state of Minnesota implement the following actions to reduce chloride in Minnesota surface and groundwater:

1. Provide financial support and technical assistance to municipalities to reduce chloride discharges and allow flexibility for how municipalities achieve these reductions
2. Update the state plumbing code to effectively prohibit the installation of new water softeners in Minnesota that use timers rather than on-demand regeneration systems
3. Fund a program for activities, training, and grants that reduce chloride pollution. Grants should support upgrading, optimizing, or replacing water softener units management practices.

Large volume water users

In response to a recent increase in interest from prospective large-volume water users and demonstration of clear need for a coordinated response, the Clean Water Council recommends that the State of Minnesota implement the following actions to protect groundwater across jurisdictional boundaries and for future generations:

1. Enhance regional groundwater models.
2. Increase intention around siting and design of new facilities with respect to water supply.
3. Incorporate large-volume water users as considerations in existing state, regional, and local water plans.

Multi-purpose drainage management

The state of Minnesota should:

1. Identify more opportunities for multi-purpose drainage management and water storage that improve water quality and complement Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) and One Watershed One Plan (1W1P)
2. Request data to quantify the effectiveness of Multi- Purpose Drainage Management relative to nutrient transport and hydrologic changes compared to traditional drainage systems, and an estimate of the hydrologic impact of drainage projects on down- stream rivers and streams
3. Support opportunities for training of drainage engineers, drainage authorities, and other relevant professionals on the benefits of MDM and resources available, to encourage line-item estimates for conservation practices, and to encourage cost-benefit analysis of water storage and its resulting impact on drainage system and maintenance costs
4. Develop a drainage endorsement for the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) with the input of the Drainage Work Group and other stakeholders.

Minnesota underground utilities mapping project

To create an accurate inventory of Minnesota's underground utility infrastructure, the Council recommends that the state of Minnesota develop an accurate map of all underground utilities installed in the state and require Minnesota's public and private sectors to support sharing of necessary data in a secure and confidential manner.

The underground utility infrastructure mapping project supports the Council's efforts to reduce the risk to drinkable, fishable, and swimmable water.

PFAS

The Council recommends that the CWF be a partial source of funding to implement Minnesota's comprehensive PFAS Blueprint. Of the ten key issue areas prioritized in the Blueprint, there are three in which the CWF would fulfill both the Clean Water Legacy Act and the Blueprint:

1. Quantifying PFAS risk to human health
2. Limiting PFAS exposure from drinking water
3. Reducing PFAS exposure from fish and game consumption.

Pharmaceutical product stewardship

The Council recommends that the state establish the following to reduce the discharge of pharmaceuticals into the waters of Minnesota:

1. Fund research on the pathways of pharmaceuticals into surface water and groundwater, identify priority pharmaceuticals that pose the greatest risk to human health and aquatic life, identify and support practicable solutions to reduce their entry into Minnesota waters, and recoup reasonable costs through an industry-funded safe medication return program.
2. Adopt a “Safe Medication Return Program.” This legislation should provide flexibility by:
 - a. Utilizing the current collection infrastructure
 - b. Requiring manufacturers to support public education and outreach activities; and to cover all administrative and support costs including, but not limited to: collection, compensation to authorized collectors, transportation, secure receptacles, and environmentally sound disposal of covered pharmaceuticals
 - c. Allowing residents to take unused medications to drop-off locations or use a mailing envelope, both for free
 - d. Providing drop-off locations that are “equitable and reasonably convenient.”
3. Require the words or symbols for “do not flush” be printed on all prescription pharmaceutical labels and remove any existing instructions to flush unused portions.

Looking ahead

The Policy Committee has identified the topics it plans to take up next. While this can change as context changes and new issues or opportunities emerge, the current list of topics on the horizon include:

- **Mitigation support for private well users:** Private well users are responsible for all aspects of protecting their drinking water quality, but often lack the resources to be able to do so, especially when costly repairs or deeper wells are needed.
- **Shoreline protection and restoration:** Natural shorelines are diminishing at an astonishing rate, with implications for ecosystems and water quality. Shoreline loss can come from landowner alterations, impacts from water recreation activities, and other sources. Accelerating both protection and restoration efforts is needed.

- **De-risking agricultural transition:** Farmers are stewards of the land and partners in the work to protect water. However, even when a change that would benefit water quality is desired, making the shift can put businesses and livelihoods at risk. Finding ways to further reduce risk that relies on more than just incentives can help more farmers enhance conservation efforts on their fields and in their operations for the long haul.
- **Identifying other funding sources to transition some CWF-supported efforts to:** There are a handful of programs supported in part through existing fees that have not been increased for several years. Increasing those fees through legislative action can allow for Clean Water Funds to shift to other purposes.

As with other Council activities, members value and appreciate input from interested parties. It is important that the people who may be impacted by these statements are engaged in their creation. More voices will strengthen the outcome of Committee efforts. If these topics are of interest, please join the Council as it develops new policy statements in the coming years.

Draft Clean Water Council Meeting Calendar for 2027

Date	Body	Timing
1/8/2027	BOC	
1/22/2027	Policy	
1/25/2027	Full Council	
2/5/2027	BOC	
2/22/2027	Full Council	
2/26/2027	Policy	
3/5/2027	BOC	
3/15/2027	Full Council	
3/19/2027	Policy	One week early due to Good Friday
4/2/2027	BOC	
4/19/2027	Full Council	
4/23/2027	Policy	
5/7/2027	BOC	
5/21/2027	Policy	One week early due to Memorial Day Weekend
5/24/2027	Full Council	
6/4/2027	BOC	
6/21/2027	Full Council	
6/25/2027	Policy	
7/9/2027	BOC	
7/19/2027	Full Council	
7/23/2027	Policy	
8/6/2027	BOC	
8/16/2027	Full Council	
8/27/2027	Policy	
9/10/2027	BOC	
9/20-21/2027	Full Council	Two days for Field Tour
9/24/2027	Policy	
10/1/2027	BOC	
10/18/2027	Full Council	
10/29/2027	Policy	One week later due to Sukkot
11/5/2027	BOC	
11/19/2027	Policy	One week early due to Thanksgiving
11/22/2027	Full Council	
12/3/2027	BOC	
12/13/2027	Full Council	Scheduled early due to winter holidays
12/17/2027	Policy	Scheduled early due to winter holidays