

**Clean Water Council  
Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) Meeting Agenda  
Friday, August 2, 2024 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**Hybrid Meeting: In person at 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155 & on Webex**

*2023 BOC Members: Steve Besser (BOC Chair), Dick Brainerd (BOC Vice-Chair), Gary Burdorf, Steve Christensen, Warren Formo, Brad Gausman, Holly Hatlewick, Annie Knight*

**9:30 Regular Business**

- Introductions
- Approve agenda & most recent minutes
- Chair and Staff update

**9:45 Review/Discussion on Interagency Coordination Team (ICT) Clean Water Fund Proposals**

**10:45 Break**

**11:00 Continued Review and Discussion**

- Rationale for contingency planning after November and February forecasts
- Process for accounting selected unspent funds in recommendations
- What additional investments should be considered over time?

**11:30 Finalize Comments for August 19<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting and ICT**

**11:45 Public Comment [Full Council on 8/19 will have most of the meeting time for this also]**

**12:00 Adjourn and Lunch**

## Budget and Outcomes Committee Meeting Summary

### Clean Water Council (Council)

July 12, 2024, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Committee Members present:** Steve Besser (Committee Chair), Dick Brainerd (Committee Vice Chair), Gary Burdorf, Steve Christenson, Brad Gausman, Holly Hatlewick

**Others present:** John Barten, Justin Hanson (BWSR), Jen Kader (Met Council), Tannie Eshenaur (MDH), Margaret Wagner (MDA), Annie Felix-Gerth (BWSR), Glenn Skuta (MPCA), Jeff Anderson (Voyageurs Project), Trevor Russell (Friends of the Mississippi River), Lee Helgen (Minnesota Crop Production Retailers), Jason Moeckel (DNR), Angelica Anderson (Nature Conservancy), Alex Trunnell (MN Corn Growers), Jeff Peterson (University of MN), Sheila Vanney (MASWCD), Paul Gardner (Clean Water Council), Judy Sventek (Met Council)

**Members absent:** Annie Knight and Warren Formo

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

### Regular Business

- Introductions
- Approval of the July 12, 2024 meeting agenda, and June 7, 2024 meeting summary, motion by Steve Christenson seconded by Holly Hatlewick. Motion carries.
- Chair and Staff update
  - Monthly sales taxes have been above expectations for the sales tax except June was down by 0.4%.
  - Received a question from Vice Chair Biske about prevailing wage. The prevailing wage statute was changed this year to apply to not just buildings but any work on land or any public work, and that could encompass more things that are covered by the Clean Water Fund (CWF). The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), and the Heritage Council are discussing.
  - Don Wyse passed away and he was a longtime director/co-director of the Forever Green initiative. The Celebration of Life for Don Wyse will be at the UMN McNamara Alumni Center on July 26<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

### Update on Unspent Clean Water Funds through FY23 (Webex 00:08:46)

Paul Gardner: We received a request from council members to look at unspent CWFs. The spreadsheet in the spreadsheet tracks this by program except FY24-25.

### Questions/Comments:

- Steve Christenson: Do unspent funds expire and go back into the CWFs? *Answer:* Yes and no. In legislative appropriations there has usually been an expiration date, and it's usually three to four years. Leftover funds revert to the CWF to appropriate for other things. There are some appropriations that last until fully spent.
- Steve Christenson: So, we don't really know how much of this has expired? *Answer:* None of these line items have expired. Some will soon.

### BWSR's Unspent Clean Water Funds

- Steve Besser: How much of these funds have been encumbered? *Answer from BWSR:* We have some funding that's set aside but on the implementation side we don't know what the exact costs are going to be. We carry over a balance in case we have more applications that we are going to bring forward. Some programs take three to four years to complete.
- Tannie Eshenaur: Paul, the funds that are encumbered in the state process were not included in these amounts, right? *Answer:* I was told that unspent is unencumbered.
- Tannie Eshenaur: So, funds that are encumbered to go out are not included? *Answer:* Correct.
- Steve Christenson: If you have \$38 million of unspent funds. Is there any of that that you can use and redeploy to help solve our \$15 million budget challenge? *Answer:* I suppose there could be, it would probably mean pulling back projects, like the wellhead protection funding.
- Steve Christenson: So the \$38 million is committed? *Answer:* Yes, in most of these programs we have funding that is moving. Some could be returned: 154,598 for SWCD capacity; Performance Based Watershed program at \$85,361; and CWF Conservation Partners for \$86,440.



- Steve Besser: At what point do the funds become encumbered? *Answer:* With real estate, there's an agreement step and then there's the final agreement where they sign off and the money is encumbered.
- Steve Besser: Paul, have we ever had funds come back? And to what extent? *Answer:* I don't know the answer to that question. I do know that it has happened where the money has come back.
- Steve Besser: A wellhead protection easement can take valuable land off the market and it's almost like a condemnation where you have to offer a fair market value. I don't know if market value is necessarily a bad thing on wellhead protection. What is the state authorized to pay? *Answer:* It doesn't give specificity on what the price per acre should be.
- John Barten: Who sets the easement rates? Is it the same entity for each one of the programs? *Answer:* The BWSR board sets the rates, and it is generally the same rates for all programs.
- Glenn Skuta: The one called CWF Assistance at \$1.3 million, is that money that could be returned to the full pot? *Answer:* That one would be a projects and practices (PNP) type program. The aim for that one was to get repurposed back into a competitive grant program.
- Tannie Eshenaur: Can you do that under the appropriation language? *Answer:* I don't know the specific language on these. That's what we're aiming to do is to take those and repurpose them for what they were originally used for, which would be projects and practices.
- Paul Gardner: Does that require a submitted change, or can you just recirculate it? *Answer:* We would add it into an existing grant program.
- Jason Moeckel: Under DNR you can cancel the \$25,000 for Buffer Map Maintenance. The rest of the funds will be used. If there are other BWSR programs that have significant balances in them due to its ongoing work, can that program reduce its request in the next biennium, and then be first in line for supplemental? *Answer:* I would have to follow up on this one regarding easements.
- Dick Brainerd: If BWSR had to make some cuts, what would it be? *Answer:* There are scalable programs that could be lowered like projects and practices and One Watershed One Plan (1W1P).
- Dick Brainerd: What are the \$300,000 in reductions? *Answer:* The three programs are \$326,399.
- John Barten: There is a sizable amount of money that is sitting out there for easement and if we would reduce some of those dollars in the next biennium, we still have a big pot of money and could move forward with applications. If we get enough people moving through that pipeline, we could then add the money in the following biennium as a top priority or supplemental funding. We could reduce the easement program, balance the budget, and keep these programs viable. *Answer:* Yes, I agree that there are some easement programs that are scalable, but we don't want to do that with our leveraged funded easement programs. We would need to be strategic and fulfill promises we have made.

#### **MDH Unspent Funds (Tannie Eshenauer) (Webex: 00:55:30)**

- MDH fiscal management staff don't want big balances. Our Future of Drinking Water is for staff that we will be hiring. We do have \$22,107 for Water Reuse that will be cancelled after June 30, 2024.

#### **MDA Unspent Funds (Margaret Wagner)**

- We don't unspent funds to cancel. We may reduce our "ask" in the next biennium.

#### **MPCA Unspent Funds (Glenn Skuta)**

- This money is all going to be used. The TMDL Development and WRAPS funds are carry over from COVID delays. We didn't ask for more with older money to use. The money is planned for but not encumbered.

#### **Review of Interagency Coordination Team (ICT) Deliberations on Funding Requests (Webex: 01:03:49)**

The ICT is pulling program requests together for the \$307 million targeted amount.

#### **Questions/Comments:**

- Brad Gausman: Paul can you describe the difference between the CWC and the Outdoor Heritage Council (OHC) process? *Answer:* Statutes requires some things for the OHC, LCCMR, and CWC. CWC recommendations must be very two years. The CWC must pick a chair, and members must be from certain constituencies. The funding deliberation process is not specified in the statute.
- John Barten: It has always been a challenge as to whether we use our current process or whether we go project by project. OHC does their process project by project for their large projects and in order to do this you almost have to use an annual process. They also do smaller project grants. The DNR would apply for the grants through OHC and then local agencies would apply to the DNR. So OHC follows the CWF model for a lot of these projects.

- Tannie Eshenaur: The CWF has a Plan Do Study Act model with various activity budgets. The council has looked at this in a 25-year plan. Funding goes into those buckets and the balance of funding in those buckets has changed over time. In the beginning it was important to have a baseline and so monitoring was important and highly funded. The funding has scaled back a lot since then and these activities are going to fluctuate up and down over the life of the amendment.

#### **Clean Water Council Member Proposals for Discussion and Potential Use by the ICT (Webex 01:22:12)**

Steve Christensen put together a framework towards development budget recommendations. Steve considered the following three points when developing the plan.

1. Ground all our recommendations in the statutory framework and the strategic plan, and lessons learned from the performance report and the biannual impaired waters list.
2. We reviewed 65 programs this year. All 65 programs are delivering good outcomes for Minnesota and the water protection goals that the CWC is shooting for.
3. There are some things that we are going to have to cut to achieve the \$307 million target and some things we are going to need to invest in to help sustain beyond 2034 when the program potentially expires. Those long-term programs weigh heavily.

This is a thought starter that we'll adjust this as we get feedback on July 19 from the ICT.

#### **AgBMP Loan Program (MDA)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: I propose cutting \$3.4 million since FY25 supplementary funding can serve as a bridge. Since this is a loan program, when do these loans get paid back and so this will turn into a revolving loan? *Answer, Margaret Wagner:* The loan is paid up to 10 years so there is money always coming back into the program that's made available for additional loans. Currently, that revolving principal of just the AgBMP dollars is \$18.9 million, but the need is about \$60-\$70 million. We think there's a lot of value in these loans, but it is scalable and we would reduce our ask as other agencies are.
- John Barten: What projects do AgBMP Loans fund that other cost share programs don't? *Answer:* Often there's an overlap between what a grant can fund and what a loan can fund. They're often used as a match and two pots of money support the same practice, such as manure storage, building out livestock facilities, conservation tillage, septic system upgrades, etc.

#### **Forever Green Agricultural Initiative (U of MN) (MDA)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: Proposed reduction from \$6 million to \$4 million. They are receiving funding from other appropriations and other sources.
- Steve Besser: I'm concerned in cutting as it is the way forward for the future because it ties into tillage practices, dual cropping systems, and farmers having two yields per year of two different sources.
- Margaret Wagner: This reflects the perennial and winter annual incorporation of those into our cropping systems and is one of our key water protection strategies. Their ask is higher than what we've ever been able to maintain. We ask for \$10 million to balance out the other investments. We know we can leverage \$5.00 for every \$1.00 invested in Forever Green. This will be 40% of the ask that we have for the program that will be 100% passed through to the University.
- Dick Brainerd: What would not happen if reduced? *Answer:* There are three pillars of Forever Green: crop development research, implementation, and partnership development. It may take longer to get new varieties of the crops, we would have less acres of those commercially viable crops, and we'd have less of an investment in the partnership.
- Dick Brainerd: If we cut this, do we lose financial support from the outside like matching funds? *Answer:* We would leave it on the table because of the leveraging potential of this but we would not forfeit or cancel existing funds.
- Brad Gausman: I support the program and I think we should fund it and look to save \$2 million elsewhere.
- Steve Christensen: I will mark this as lack of agreement on this program reduction.

#### **Conservation Equipment Assistance/Expand MN Ag Weather Station Network (MDA) (Webex 001:38:29)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Brad Gausman: I was hoping to get individuals opinions on the funding for the weather station network and the conservation equipment assistance. Those two programs are a total of \$6.5 million and wondering if those would be wise areas to cut. How do these programs encompass CWF goals?

- Steve Besser: How is this tied to stream monitoring? *Answer:* It doesn't affect the DNR stream monitoring.
- Margaret Wagner: The council made the initial investment and we started installing the monitoring stations. This is a last time we bring this proposal forward but there will be some maintenance.
- Steve Christensen: I would be in favor of the weather stations. It gives people the data they need to better manage their own activities to protect water. I like that it leverages from investments North Dakota and Iowa State University. I can see the possibly cutting the conservation equipment.
- Brad Gausman: What is the weather station timeline? *Answer:* The project was presented in phase one and phase two. The first phase of 40 stations and to finalize it with an additional 40 stations. We did scale back as we don't need a total of 80 stations. There will be one FTE to maintain the stations.
- Brad Gausman: Do you anticipate the FTE hire as phase 3, or after phase 2 you will internalize the cost from other sources? *Answer:* I'm not prepared to talk entirely on this but through the discussion through partnerships we've realized that there's other funding available once it's complete.
- Steve Christensen: I will classify this programs as "in debate" at this time.

#### **St. Louis River AOC (MPCA) (Webex 01:52:59)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: I assume MPCA is OK with cutting this since the project is done. *Answer:* Yes.

#### **NPDES Wastewater/Stormwater Point Source Implementation (MPCA)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: Can we raise NPDES fees to cover this? *Answer:* We have to use a rule making process that in the past has started and stopped for political reasons. Rulemaking couldn't get done by the next biennium start date. We are looking at alternatives for our fees in general and that's an ongoing battle.
- Steve Christensen: I propose that the BOC reject this cut and keep this funded a \$3 million base.
- Dick Brainerd: I agree with not cutting. Can MPCA fund this from another sources? *Answer:* Not right now.
- Dick Brainerd: In the future years, could this be something that could be included in your discussion to be funded by fees? *Answer:* I can carry forward that conversations to consider rolling this into a bigger fix.
- Steve Christensen: In general, I think the philosophy of permit fees funding permit programs is a good philosophy. With 9% inflation last year, a 9% permit fee increase would be very reasonable.
- Steve Besser: Why isn't wastewater and stormwater point source implementation part of local government aid (LGA) through the Legislature instead of the CWF? *Answer:* Not all municipalities get LGA. This helps local governments meet the requirements from TMDLs and other clean water fund activities.
- Steve Christensen: We will reject a reduction but possibly propose looking into increasing permit fees.

#### **Clean Water Council (MPCA)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Tannie: I think this is important. This is a big piece of the 4<sup>th</sup> goal for the council that Minnesotans value water and act to protect it. We have to get beyond paying people to do the right thing so that we build a system that reinforces them taking the right actions and a communicator is a good step in that direction.
- Margaret Wagner: What would this position specifically do that grant recipients aren't already doing? Aren't the agencies already at a level required to do this differently than recipients as well? Is it something that could be potentially contracted out if we're trying to cut and now, we're proposing to add? *Answer:* The agencies already have an inter-agency communication team under the ICT. Health has invested a lot of time in leading that team, but agencies don't have the time to build out and implement a communications team. MPCA communications group is overburdened with activities, and can't give Paul the support that he needs. We are fulfilling the minimum requirements of the statute.
- Brad Gausman: I think increased communication is important around outcomes of CWF and Legacy in general. What is the intended audience? Is it the general public? Is it folks involved in the programs that are funded and what are the intended channels of communication? Is this going to result in an email newsletter that folks have to sign up for, is it going to involve an increased presence on different social media channels? I think we need to be specific in picking a communicator and trusting them to communicate. There are specific audiences that should be targeted in specific ways about the awesome work that CWF and Legacy are doing, and we should be thoughtful of how we want to communicate. *Answer:* The channels of communication would be the communications specialist's job to answer, and the audience would be legislature and the public.

- Dick Brainerd: I support the additional position. How would Paul and the council describe this job? Who are we looking for? What are Paul's thoughts and needs of a full-time position? *Answer:* We do have a communications plan that you approved in the last year and a contract is being prepared for a contractor for \$30,000 worth of work. There are some things that I'd be happy if other people did, and I could focus on some higher-level things. I would be happy to put something together. If you wanted to add \$175,000, I could use it either for FTEs or contractors or a mixed based on the outcomes you want in FY26-27.
- Steve Christensen: I am going to mark this one as BOC supports.

#### **Non-point Source Restoration & Implementation (DNR) (Webex 02:19:45)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Jason Moeckel: The implications of cutting this program by \$700,000 is that we wouldn't be able to do the forest stewardship plan plans at \$250,000 per year, so \$500,000 for the biennium. We would have to cut some positions that provide technical support on project implementation largely river oriented type of positions (i.e., stream, culvert).
- Steve Besser: I would reject it and keep it the same. It's not a big sum of money that we'd be saving.
- Steve Christensen: I am going to mark this one as we reject this cut.

#### **Water Storage/Culvert Replacement Cost Share (DNR)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: I propose that we reject these two proposed cuts.
- Jason Moeckel: DNR doesn't have the capacity to take on more water storage projects so we are going to zero this out. We have more culvert replacement requests for the FY24 than funds available. We're already receiving requests that are going to use up for FY25.
- Steve Christensen: We will reject the cut for Culvert Replacement Cost Share, but cut Water Storage.

#### **National Park Water Quality Protection Program (MPCA)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- This is good for water quality but are we promoting economic development? *Answer:* This is not an MPCA initiative, this is money that must flow through an agency. I don't really want to speak what it exactly is being proposed. I heard exactly what you did when the proposers presented on it.
- Steve Christensen: We will log this proposal as in debate.

#### **Accelerated Implementation (BWSR) (Webex 02:33:14)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Justin Hanson: This isn't scalable programs because grants go to local governments and BWSR to provide technical training, which leverages federal funding to accelerate implementation and capacity grants for technical service areas. There are other BWSR program targets to reduce more closely than this.
- Steve Christensen: I'll put down that the BOC will reject this cut.

#### **WBIF/Projects and Practices/Accelerated Implementation/Soil Health-Cover Crops (BWSR)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: These programs have a \$40 million increase so we're proposing cuts.
- Justin Hanson: All WBIF is a pass through to local governments. The increase is funding the watershed plans as more come online to keep at a trajectory. Projects and Practices could take a \$5 million cut and also One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) at \$1.5 million.
- Steve Christensen: I propose that we come back to these programs.

#### **One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) (BWSR)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Holly Hatlewick: We are close to all plans being done this year. Justin, recommendations?
- Justin Hanson: Yes, all plans have started. We hope to maintain a budget of \$2 million.
- Steve Christensen: The proposal is to support the 1W1P with a \$1.5 million cut.

#### **Wetland Restoration Easements (BWSR) (Webex 02:46:27)**

##### *Questions/Comments*

- Justin Hanson: This program is not specifically tied to the federal match and this program could take the cut, but it just won't be funded to the level that it is today.
- Tannie Eshenaur: Is this tied to CREP or CRP? *Answer:* Neither.

- Tannie Eshenaur: There has been past discussion that CREP shouldn't come from CWF. *Answer:* CREP has been funded through multiple sources. Some of it has been CWF for priority practices for water quality purposes. Some of it has come from LSOHC for habitat improvement projects.
- Holly Hatlewick: I agree that we could cut this a little, but a good example where we use this program is on a floodplain where it doesn't have the crop industry for CRP so it doesn't qualify. A portion of it then could be used for the CREP program and a portion of it could be used for this program.
- Steve Christensen: The proposal is to support the \$5 million cut.

### **Enhancing Soil Health & Cover Crops (BWSR)**

#### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: Can we cut from the \$12 million base as funds are coming from other sources?
- Justin Hanson: We received a one-time appropriation from general fund. We then doubled the money coming back to the state through federal funding. We don't know if the state will fund this program through the general fund. If the feds see effectiveness, they are more likely to continue funding programs. We are reasonably confident that we can continue to leverage those funds.
- John Barten: Are all the CWF, general funds, and federal dollars being spent in this biennium or are they going to be carried over into the next biennium? Could this program be shrunk down to sustain itself?  
*Answer:* The CWF will end this biennium, but the federal dollars could be extended.
- Steve Christensen: If we had to balance between Projects and Practices (line item 37) and Enhancing Soil Health & Cover Crops (line item 50) which one delivers the most water quality benefits for the state and which one should be cut? *Answer:* We've made a huge investment in these plans so maintaining the implementation side of that project funding would have more of a long-term impact on the land and it's more representative of the folks that are informing us and delivering on the program. We are leveraging investments, data, information, and energy that's been built to make these local plans successful. It's impossible for me to answer it directly. It's difficult to say if WBIF (36) could be cut.
- Steve Christensen: We are talking about 37 (Projects and Practices).
- Justin Hansen: Projects and Practices (37) can take the hit and needs to be offset to maintaining.
- Steve Christensen: The proposal is to not take a cut on Enhancing Soil Health & Cover Crops (line item 50). The proposal for WBIF (line 36) is going to be logged as in debate and. The proposal for Projects and Practices (line item 37) is proposed to be cut by \$5 million.

### **County Geological Atlas Part A (UMN)**

#### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: The CWF is more flexible about multi-year project funding compared to the Environment of Natural Resources Trust Fund that is a predominant funder of this program. I propose that we cut 100% of our funding and ask Paul to have a conversation with staff at the trust fund to figure out how they can do a better job at funding this.
- Steve Besser: The problem is if we don't have Part A, we will not be able to support Part B. I fully support Part A; I would reject any cut to the County Geologic Atlas Part A plus we're approaching the end.
- Holly Hatlewick: I would also support not cutting it as we use it as supporting documentation for a lot of other projects and we use it as a resource tool.
- Steve Christensen: I am going to log this as rejecting the cut.

### **Unspent Appropriations/Inflation Adjustments (Webex 03:28:21)**

#### *Questions/Comments*

- Steve Christensen: These items were general catch all topics. I feel like we have covered the unspent appropriations and would propose to add in the \$348,500 from the four programs that people said were canceled and as a separate line for discussion for Monday stating these funds are part of a workplan. Inflation adjustments assumes everything else is held flat and that is not true because of 9% inflation this year. I propose that we leave this line item on there to address this somehow. Priorities for additional investments will be discussed at Full Council.

### **Finalize Comments for July 15<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting and ICT**

- Paul Gardner: How would you like to present what we discussed to the Full Council? Steve Christensen discussed during the break about redoing a spreadsheet, adding a column, and noting comments which would help speed up the discussions. *Answer Steve Besser:* Yes, that is what I am going to recommend as Chair.

**Public Comment - Trevor Russell, Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR)**

- We are requesting that the CWC recommend \$10 million for the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative. This is an important investment in addressing nitrate contamination in groundwater. Preliminary data from the university shows that Kernza can get us 97% to 99% reduction in nitrate contamination. Winter oilseeds like camelina and pennycress can reduce groundwater nitrate contamination by around 95% to 97%. On average, this is about a five to one return on investment. \$10 million dollars is about 3% of the total fund that could be a third to half of the total solution. Here is some information in regards to winter annual oilseeds in the low carbon sustainable aviation fuel market in the Star Tribune and MPR News:  
<https://www.startribune.com/camelina-sustainable-jet-fuel-water-farm-minnesota/600379667/?refresh=true>, and <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2024/07/10/cargill-and-u-of-m-team-up-on-oil-seed-crop-expansion-effort>.

**Questions/Comments**

- Steve Christensen: Can you comment on sustainable aviation fuel and whether Forever Green has any linkage to that and whether the sustainable aviation fuel is a good thing for Minnesota's water? Answer: I don't have permission to share much on this but if done well, sustainable aviation fuel market could be very good for water quality, soil health, habitat, and continuous living covered cropping systems because it has the potential to create a huge market for winter annual oilseeds and perennial oilseeds that are very low carbon fuel standards. Yes, Forever Green has specific crops designed exactly for this market. Conversely, if this is done poorly, we see the potential for a sustainability fuel market to be problematic for our natural resources.

**Public Comment – Sheila Vanney, Association of SWCDs**

- Watershed based implementation funds are of a very high priority for the hundreds of SWCD and county employees across the state who have put in a considerable amount of time and energy and mindfulness into identifying resource concerns in the SWCD plans.

**Adjournment** Webex 03:46:45

## Clean Water Fund Appropriations

as of 7/31/2024

leg order	#	Agency	Program Title	ICT FY26-27 recs	Change vs FY24-25	FY24-25 supple- mental 5/24	FY24-25 appropriat ion 5/23	FY22-23	FY20-21	FY18-19	FY16-17	FY14-15	FY12-13	FY10-11
1	4	MDA	Monitoring for Pesticides in Surface Water and Groundwater	740	40	-	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	675
2	15	MDA	Nitrate in Groundwater	6,200	(800)	1,000	6,000	5,170	5,170	4,171	5,171	5,000	1,700	1,125
3	34	MDA	AgBMP Loan Program	4,000	(9,000)	3,402	9,598	150	150	150	150	400	9,000	4,500
4	32	MDA	Technical Assistance	3,200	200		3,000	3,000	3,000	2,250	2,250	3,000	1,550	2,665
5	56	MDA	MN Water Research Digital Library [aka Research Inventory Database]	100	20		80	80	100	100	100	250	350	-
6	33	MDA	MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program	7,000	-		7,000	6,000	6,000	5,000	5,000	3,000	-	-
7	17	MDA	Irrigation Water Quality Protection	310	10		300	270	300	220	220	220		
8	81	MDA	Forever Green Agricultural Initiative (U of MN)	4,000	(2,000)		6,000	4,000	4,300	1,500	1,000	-	-	-
9	307	MDA	Pesticide Testing in Private Wells	1,000	-		1,000	870	2,000	2,000	-	-	-	-
10	NEW	MDA	Conservation Equipment Assistance	3,500	-		3,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	NEW	MDA	Expand MN Ag Weather Station Network	2,500	(500)		3,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	56	MDA	Agricultural Research/Evaluation	-	(1,500)		1,500	-	-	1,325	1,575	2,100	2,100	-
13	10	MPCA	River and Lake Monitoring and Assessment	18,900	474	326	18,100	14,832	16,300	16,550	16,700	15,200	15,000	15,000
14	9	MPCA	Watershed Restoration & Protection Strategies (includes TMDL development)	14,500	1,800		12,700	13,451	15,100	19,000	20,200	18,800	18,800	18,000
15	11	MPCA	Groundwater Monitoring and Assessment	2,000	-		2,000	1,900	2,364	2,363	2,364	2,250	2,250	2,250
16		MPCA	St. Louis River AOC	-	(1,500)		1,500							
17	37	MPCA	NPDES wastewater/stormwater point-source implementation (combined from 2 previous programs)	3,200	200		3,000	2,200	2,200	2,250	2,350	1,800	-	-
18	43	MPCA	Enhanced County inspections/SSTS corrective actions	7,081	(1,969)	1,950	7,100	5,824	6,750	6,870	7,245	6,900	-	-
19	38	MPCA	Chloride Reduction	1,300	(1,000)	1,000	1,300	520	500	-	-	-	-	-
20	62	MPCA	Clean Water Council	922	247		675	600	220	100	100	73	-	-
21	92A	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	-	(2,000)		2,000	1,400	1,550	2,000	-	3,500	-	-
22	NEW	MPCA	Nitrate Sensors	-	(2,000)	2,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23		MPCA	River Watch for Friends of the MN Valley	-	(50)	50	-							
24	5	DNR	Stream Flow Monitoring Program	5,650	550		5,100	4,000	4,000	3,900	4,000	4,000	3,700	1,500
25	6	DNR	Lake Index of Biological Integrity	3,050	150		2,900	2,000	2,500	2,500	2,600	2,600	2,300	1,320
26	6	DNR	Fish Contamination Assessment	1,100	100	90	910	350	270	270	270	270	270	270

## Clean Water Fund Appropriations

as of 7/31/2024

27	10	DNR	Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies-DNR Portion	5,000	700		4,300	3,800	3,800	3,772	3,880	3,700	3,500	2,100
28	18	DNR	Aquifer Monitoring for Water Supply Planning	4,700	700		4,000	3,700	4,150	2,750	2,750	2,750	3,000	1,100
29	34	DNR	Non-point Source Restoration and Implementation	4,500	1,300		3,200	2,500	2,000	1,900	2,000	2,000	2,400	500
30	57	DNR	Tool Development and Evaluation [Formerly Applied Research and Tools]	1,400	100		1,300	1,065	1,400	1,350	1,350	1,350	790	550
31	76	DNR	Buffer Map Maintenance	-	(50)		50	50	200	200	650	-	-	-
32	59	DNR	County Geologic Atlas Part B	800	600		200	-	300	250	500	1,200	-	1,000
33	NEW	DNR	Freshwater Mussel Restoration	700	100		600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
34	NEW	DNR	Water Storage	-	(1,000)		1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	NEW	DNR	Culvert Replacement Cost Share	3,000	1,000		2,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36	17	BWSR	Grants to Watersheds with Approved Comprehensive Watershed Plans (Watershed-based Implementation Funding)	90,000	11,000		79,000	43,564	26,966	9,750	-	-	-	-
37	26	BWSR	Surface and Drinking Water Protection/Restoration Grants: (Projects and Practices)	6,000	(11,000)		17,000	22,266	32,000	19,500	20,380	21,400	29,100	6,000
38	18	BWSR	Accelerated Implementation	8,700	(2,300)		11,000	9,682	8,000	7,600	12,000	8,000	6,600	-
39	23	BWSR	Measures, Results and Accountability	2,500	-		2,500	2,500	2,000	1,900	1,900	1,900	2,100	590
40	24	BWSR	Buffer Law Implementation	4,000	-		4,000	3,872	5,000	5,000	5,000	-	-	-
41	25	BWSR	Working Lands Floodplain Easements [formerly Riparian Buffer-Permanent Conservation Easements]	2,000	(6,434)	3,434	5,000	3,872	9,500	9,750	9,750	13,000	12,000	6,900
42	37	BWSR	Targeted Wellhead/Drinking Water Source Protection	5,000	(1,000)	1,000	5,000	5,000	4,000	3,500	3,500	2,600	3,600	2,300
43	43	BWSR	Technical Evaluation [restoration evaluation]	200	-		200	84	168	168	168	168	168	-
44	16	BWSR	Watershed Management Transition (One Watershed, One Plan)	1,000	(2,500)		3,500	5,808	4,000	3,990	4,200	900	-	-
45	19	BWSR	Conservation Drainage Management and Assistance	2,000	-		2,000	1,700	1,700	1,500	1,500	-	-	-
46	21	BWSR	Critical Shoreland Protection-Permanent Conservation Easements	1,000	(6,000)	4,000	3,000	2,468	2,550	2,000	2,000	-	-	-
47	80	BWSR	Tillage, Cover Crop and Erosion Evaluation	850	-		850	723	850	850	1,000			
48	27	BWSR	Watershed Partners Legacy (WPL) Grants	1,000	(2,000)	2,000	1,000	1,000	-	-	1,500	3,000	3,000	-
49	NEW	BWSR	Wetland Restoration Easements	5,000	(5,000)		10,000	5,660	-	-	-	-	-	-
50	28	BWSR	Enhancing Soil Health and Landowner Adoption of Cover Crops for Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection	12,000	(77)		12,077	4,200	-	-	-	-	-	-
51	NEW	BWSR	Great Lakes Restoration LAMP	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



## Clean Water Fund Appropriations

as of 7/31/2024

52	NEW	BWSR	MN & IA Conservation Corps	1,500	1,500									
53	23	MDH	Contaminants of Emerging Concern	11,850	1,366	384	10,100	2,400	3,400	2,200	2,200	2,300	2,040	1,300
54	9	MDH	Private Well Initiative	6,000	3,000		3,000	-	1,500	800	650	650	-	-
55	24	MDH	Source Water Protection	7,790	290		7,500	7,884	5,494	5,470	3,800	3,230	2,830	2,400
56	74	MDH	Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies	3,500	2,000		1,500	1,126	1,100	400	250	300	-	-
57	40	MDH	Future of Drinking Water (formerly Drinking Water Protection)	500	-		500	500	500	300	-	-	-	-
58	NEW	MDH	Recreational Water Portal	600	-		600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
59	new	MDH	Nitrate response in SE Minnesota**	-	(2,790)	2,790	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
60	42	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Sustainability Support Program	2,750	500		2,250	1,838	2,000	1,900	1,950	2,000	1,000	800
61	35	MC	Water Demand Reduction- Efficiency - Grant Program	1,500	-		1,500	1,250	750	-	500	-	-	-
62	61	UMN	County Geologic Atlas Part A	200	(800)		1,000	900	500	250	-	1,230	-	305
63	82B	UMN	Stormwater Research and Technology Transfer Program	1,600	(1,400)	1,000	2,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	550	-	-	-
64	63	LCC	Legislative Coordinating Commission Website	7	1		6	8	9	15	-	30	13	25
65	7	PFA	Point Source Implementation Grant (PSIG) Program	16,500	-		16,500	15,936	18,000	15,750	18,000	18,000	30,920	30,200
66	41	PFA	Small Community Wastewater Treatment Program	100	(100)		200	200	250	250	500	4,000	2,500	2,500
				\$ 307,000		\$ 25,426	\$ 318,396							

FY24-25 base budget	318,396
plus supplemental FY24-25 that has tails (in red above)	4,590
minus completed St. Louis River AOC (in blue above)	(1,500)
FY24-25 base budget (revised)	321,486
MMB revenue estimate for FY26-27	307,422
Difference between FY24-25 revised base and FY26-27 estimate	14,064

4.4%

\* in 1st column = order of programs in appropriations bills

\*\* SE MN Nitrate Response to be combined in FY26-27 with Private Well Initiative



**Date:** July 24, 2024

**To:** John Barton, Clean Water Council Chair  
Steve Besser, Budget and Outcomes Committee Chair, Clean Water Council  
Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator

**From:** Dana Vanderbosch, Assistant Commissioner, MPCA  
Jess Richards, Assistant Commissioner, DNR  
John Jaschke, Executive Director, BSWR  
Myra Kunas, Assistant Commissioner, MDH  
Peder Kjeseth, Assistant Commissioner, MDA  
Sam Paske, Assistant General Manager, Metropolitan Council Env. Services Division  
Jeff Freeman, Executive Director, Public Facilities Authority  
Jeff Peterson, Director of the Water Resources Center, University of Minnesota

**RE: Interagency Recommendations for FY2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Budget**

The Clean Water Fund Interagency Coordinating Team (ICT) appreciates the opportunity to provide these initial FY26-27 Clean Water Fund budget recommendations for consideration by the Clean Water Council (CWC). We are committed to collaborating with the CWC to develop shared recommendations for Governor Tim Walz to consider for the FY26-27 biennium. The attached spreadsheet outlines the ICT's recommendations with consideration given to the priorities of the CWC. This memo provides context for those recommendations. Because the funding MMB anticipates will be available to appropriate for FY26/27 is less than was appropriated in FY24/25, we were not able to invest in all areas as we would have liked, but we strived to create a budget that supports all elements of Minnesota's water management framework. These recommendations reflect:

- a strong commitment to foundational work that supports Minnesota's water management system as a whole and ensures a base of solid science and data on which to effectively target implementation funds and measure progress.
- a strong commitment to addressing growing drinking water concerns.
- a sustained commitment to funding implementation.
- a concerted effort to shift nonpoint source implementation funds from competitive grants to watershed-based implementation funding (WBIF), in recognition of more approved One Watershed One Plans than in FY24/25.
- a substantial increase in WBIF, despite having less anticipated funding for FY26/27 than in FY24/25, and noting that much of what allowed us to fund WBIF so high in FY24/25 was one-time funding.

## **I. Budget Recommendations by Agency**

---

Collectively the budget recommendations are grounded in the watershed approach to protect and restore the state's abundant and diverse water resources. As you know, the watershed approach is a systematic, data-driven, iterative process that allows state agencies and local partners to coordinate to maximize Clean Water Fund investments. It requires and supports local and state partnerships and includes consideration of water quality, quantity, groundwater, drinking water, habitat, and recreation. The following paragraphs summarize the proposed FY26-27 budget for activities led by each of the ICT member agencies.

## **II. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

---

### **Lake, River, and Stream Chemical, Biological and Trend Monitoring (i.e., Water Quality Assessment)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$18,426,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental) FY26-27 Proposal: \$18,900,000**

#### **Groundwater Trend Monitoring**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,000,000 FY26-27 Proposal: \$2,000,000**

**Rationale:** Surface water and groundwater monitoring is foundational to assessing water quality, the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS), 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 monitoring data are the means to ascertain if clean water goals are being met and waters can be removed from the Impaired Waters List. The FY26-27 recommended budgets for both surface water and groundwater monitoring assures work can remain steady (including high priority PFAS sampling). Some of this funding moves to local partners who participate in watershed sampling.

#### **Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) (including TMDL Development)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$12,700,000 FY26-27 Proposal: \$14,500,000**

**Rationale:** The WRAPS appropriation has been reduced each biennium since FY16-17. A great deal of WRAPS work was suspended during COVID, so remaining funds allowed us to keep the FY24/25 budget request low. That funding has now been used and so the FY26/27 recommended budget request is higher to ensure we can keep the WRAPS updates and watershed modeling efforts steady. The current request is lower than all appropriations made before the FY22-23 biennium. Still, this recommended budget will mean reducing program staffing by 3 FTEs. Some of this program's funding moves to local partners who participate in WRAPS updates.

#### **Chloride Reduction Grants**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,300,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental) FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,300,000**

**Rationale:** This program provides critical support to communities by providing chloride training coordination and grants to communities so they can implement their chloride management plans. The FY26/27 recommended budget will ensure the work effort remains steady.

#### **Subsurface Treatment System Grants (septic systems)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$9,050,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental) FY26-27 Proposal: \$7,081,000**

**Rationale:** This appropriation provides critical funding to local units of government to operate their respective SSTS programs. The appropriation also provides funding to homeowners with low incomes to replace noncomplying septic systems. Both county SSTS programs and grants for SSTS replacement protect groundwater and connected surface water. The FY26-27 recommended budget is a reduction from FY24/25 but will ensure counties have resources to meet high priority needs.

### **Wastewater and Stormwater Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$3,200,000**

**Rationale:** 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 stormwater and wastewater permitting programs that protect lakes and streams. The FY26/27 recommended budget will ensure the work effort remains steady.

### **Clean Water Council (CWC) Support**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$675,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$922,000**

**Rationale:** The FY26/27 recommended budget will fund the equivalent of 2 FTEs within the MPCA to provide administrative, communications and planning support to the CWC. It also allows funding to support a contractor to provide communication services to the CWC.

## **III. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

---

### **Stream Flow Monitoring**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$5,100,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$5,650,000**

**Rationale:** Stream flow monitoring is foundational to assessing water quality, the development of TMDLs, WRAPS, and developing and implementing One Watershed One Plans (1W1P). As more WRAPS and 1W1P are implemented, monitoring remains critical to measure progress. The recommended budget will maintain the current gage network, replace aging equipment, and continue to ensure data is readily available to inform decision making and assess progress toward clean water goals.

### **Lake Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) Assessment**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,900,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$3,050,000**

**Rationale:** Lake IBI assessments are foundational to assessing water quality, the development of TMDLs, WRAPS, developing and implementing 1W1Ps. Lake IBI assessments started later than stream IBIs and there are still many lakes that need to be completed. The recommended budget maintains most of the DNR's core capacity to assess lakes for fish and associated stressor ID.

### **Fish Contamination Assessment**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,100,000**

**Rationale:** 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 recommended budget that increased in FY24-25 will advance the statewide assessment of PFAS compounds in fish tissue.

### **Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$4,300,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$5,000,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Aquifer Monitoring for Water Supply Planning**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$4,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$4,700,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Riparian Buffer Information**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$50,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$0**

**Rationale:** The DNR is required to update and maintain maps of public waters and ditch systems that require permanent vegetation buffers. The amount of effort and time needed has stabilized to a low level of effort over the past several years. Therefore, the DNR is no longer requesting a separate line item to sustain the effort and will absorb the costs in its overall operating budget.

### **Nonpoint Source Restoration and Protection**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,200,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$4,500,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Tool Development and Evaluation**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,300,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,400,000**

**Rationale:** 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, best management practices applications, and water quality in forested watersheds. The proposed amount will maintain effort on LiDAR related support, maintain effort in forest best management practices monitoring.

### **County Geologic Atlases**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$200,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$200,000**

**Rationale:** The clean water fund 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 Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources 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.

### **Mussel Restoration Pilot Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$600,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$700,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Culvert Replacement Incentive Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$3,000,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Water Storage Pilot Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$0**

**Rationale:** The DNR manages public lands throughout the state, including Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's), many of which have altered streams that can no longer access their floodplain and are unstable. This instability results in the release of high amounts of sediment and nutrients. This program provides the funding necessary to design and implement projects in WMA's that increase water storage, while also stabilizing streambanks in impaired watersheds where WRAPS or 1W1Ps have identified the need for water storage and water quality improvements. The DNR is not requesting funds this biennium due to a lack of staff capacity to implement new projects in a timely fashion.

## **IV. Board of Water and Soil Resources**

---

### **Water Management Transition (One Watershed One Plan)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,000,000**

**Rationale:** As the number of completed comprehensive watershed management plans developed through 1W1P increase, there is an increasing need for non-competitive, performance-based funding for local governments to implement projects on a watershed scale. While moving at a slower rate than the implementation trajectory calls for, this recommendation assures that funding for local on-the ground clean water improvements is not taking a backwards step (as more plans are approved).

### **Grants to Watersheds with Approved Comprehensive Watershed Plans (Watershed-based Implementation Funding)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$79,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$90,000,000**

**Rationale:** While moving at a slower rate than the implementation trajectory calls for, this recommendation assures that local on-the ground clean water improvements are not taking a backwards step (as more plans are approved).

### **Accelerated Implementation**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$11,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$8,700,000**

**Rationale:** While this doesn't bring us back to the CWC FY20-21 recommendation of \$12M, it brings us closer to the goal for: 1) increasing technical assistance through regional technical service areas (TSAs), 2) technical training and certification, 3) identifying and inventorying potential sites for restoration, and 4) using analytical targeting tools to fill identified gaps.

**Conservation Drainage Management and Assistance****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$2,000,000**

**Rationale:** Continued implementation of a conservation drainage/multipurpose drainage water management program in consultation with the Drainage Work Group to improve surface water quality by providing funding to supplement projects undertaken per the provisions of M.S.103E.015.

**Critical Shoreland Protection-Permanent Conservation Easements****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$7,000,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,000,000**

**Rationale:** To purchase permanent conservation easements to protect lands adjacent to public waters with good water quality but threatened with degradation. Easement focus is in the headwaters of the Mississippi Basin for protection of tributaries and the Mississippi River, to provide source water protection for numerous Twin Cities and rural communities along the Mississippi River.

**Measures, Results, and Accountability****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$2,500,000**

**Rationale:** Provides the ability to provide oversight and accountability, evaluate and communicate results, support program and outcomes development, provide reporting tools, measure conservation program implementation of local governments, support programs, and measure the value of conservation program implementation by local governments, including submission to the legislature a report from the board. This amount brings us closer to the current need of \$1.5M per year.

**Buffer Law Implementation****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$4,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$4,000,000**

**Rationale:** Provides program oversight and grants to support local governments in their implementation and related compliance work for the statewide riparian buffer law.

**Working Lands Floodplain Easements****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$8,343,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$2,000,000**

**Rationale:** Based on partners' recommendations to develop a water quality working lands program, this easements program sets aside sensitive land in riverine and riparian corridors to address water quality concerns, and climate adaptation and mitigation goals. Participating landowners will have options to establish flood hardy understory, establish trees, haying/grazing, silviculture, silvopasture, and agroforestry with payment structure based on the proposed use. This replaces the Clean Water Fund riparian buffer easement implementation appropriation (although at a much smaller scale for FY22-23).

**Surface and Drinking Water Protection/Restoration Grants (Projects and Practices)****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$17,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$6,000,000**

**Rationale:** Competitive grant program and incentive funding to protect, enhance, and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams and to protect groundwater and drinking water by implementing priority actions in local water management plans. Up to 20% of funds dedicated to drinking water protection activities. As the Watershed-based Implementation Funding increases, implementation partners will have less reliance on this competitive fund.

**Watershed Partners Legacy (WPL) Grants****FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,000,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,000,000**

**Rationale:** Based on the priority of the CWC, the program is for a program to provide matching grants to local, regional, state, and national nonprofit organizations and tribal governments. Projects will be evaluated and prioritized based on alignment with state-approved and locally-adopted comprehensive watershed management plans or related scientific information.



**Enhancing Soil Health and Landowner Adoption of Cover Crops for Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection**  
**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$12,077,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$12,000,000**

**Rationale:** Based on several factors, including cover crops as a key working lands strategy, broad partner interest, and a decrease in project and practice funds, the program provides both applied research by the Minnesota Office for Soil Health and implementation of conservation cover practices and reduced tillage to achieve water quality benefits as prioritized in comprehensive watershed management plans.

**Targeted Wellhead/Drinking Water Protection**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$6,000,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$5,000,000**

**Rationale:** For conservation easements on wellhead protection areas or for grants to local units of government to ensure long-term protection of groundwater supply sources in wellhead protection areas. Priority to be placed on land that is located where the vulnerability of the drinking water supply is designated as high or very high by the commissioner of health, where the drinking water supply is identified as Mitigation Level 1 or 2 by the Minnesota Groundwater Rule, where monitoring has shown elevated nitrate levels, where drinking water protection plans have identified specific activities that will achieve long-term protection, and/or on lands with expiring Conservation Reserve Program contracts.

**Tillage, Cover Crop, and Erosion Evaluation**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$850,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$850,000**

**Rationale:** Program to systematically collect data and produce statically valid estimates of the rate of soil erosion state-wide and tracking the adoption of high residue cropping systems in the 67 counties with greater than 30% of land in agricultural row crop production.

**Technical Evaluation**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$200,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$200,000**

**Rationale:** For a technical evaluation panel to conduct restoration evaluations under Minnesota Statutes, section 114D.50, subdivision 6. This program was reduced in FY22-23. The proposed FY24-25 amount restores past funding levels and provides an increase to support the number of evaluations and continual engagement and communication with local implementers.

**Wetland Restoration Easements**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$10,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$5,000,000**

**Rationale:** This program specifically targets wetland restoration easements: Funds will acquire permanent conservation easements and restore wetlands in priority areas statewide. Will hold water in upper watershed areas for de-nitrification, rate, and volume control. This work may be done in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture or U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or other agencies to leverage federal funding.

**Lake Superior leveraging of Great Lakes federal funding**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,000,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,000,000**

**Rationale:** This appropriation would provide support to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in the Lake Superior Basin to maximize the potential to leverage the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in implementing local prioritized projects.

**Minnesota and Iowa Conservation Corps**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$0      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,500,000**

**Rationale:** This represents funding to contract with Conservation Corps to conduct restoration and maintenance on projects, and to train their staff. In the past, this funding has been woven into other appropriations as pass-through. BWSR recommends making it a stand-alone appropriation for FY26/27.



## V. Minnesota Department of Health

---

### **Future of Drinking Water**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$500,000**

**Rationale:** Current federal and state regulations no longer provide adequate protection for customers of public water systems and users of private wells. This initiative support MDH's implementation of the Minnesota **State 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 recommendations from the University of Minnesota's Future of Drinking Water Report that will prepare both public and private well supplies to adapt to an uncertain future.

### **Source Water Protection**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$7,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$7,790,000**

**Rationale:** 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. Additionally, program assets are being directed towards 1) enhancing the characterization of source water quality conditions using rigorous screening, monitoring, and analysis, and 2) fulfilling MDH and Clean Water Council strategic objectives of securing long-term protection for the most vulnerable lands in DWSMAs statewide and protection plans for community systems that use surface waters as their source of drinking water.

### **Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$3,500,000**

**Rationale:** GRAPS is an interagency effort to coordinate the delivery of state agency groundwater 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) accelerating GRAPS work to catch up with local comprehensive watershed planning (1W1P) so that local partners have groundwater information resources for implementation planning, and 3) building local capacity through education, outreach, and financial assistance.

### **Private Well Initiative**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$5,790,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$6,000,000**

**Rationale:** 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 testing and income-based mitigation for private well users.

### **Contaminants of Emerging Concern**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$10,484,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$11,850,000**

**Rationale:** 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 drinking water mean for human health. This initiative also maintains laboratory capacity to address emerging contaminants in the Public Health Laboratory and supports private labs across the state.

### **Recreational Water Quality Online Portal**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$600,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$600,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

## **VI. Minnesota Department of Agriculture**

---

### **Monitoring for Pesticides in Surface Water and Groundwater**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$700,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$740,000**

**Rationale:** 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; evaluate contaminants of emerging concern (CECs); 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.

### **Pesticide Testing of Private Wells**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,000,000**

**Rationale:** 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. Testing focuses on pesticides that have been detected at concentrations near or above the drinking water standard including the breakdown chemicals of the herbicide cyanazine which is no longer used.

### **AgBMP Loan Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$13,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$4,000,000**

**Rationale:** 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 clean water fund. The demand for Ag BMP loans greatly exceeds available funding.

### **Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$7,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$7,000,000**

**Rationale:** The proposed budget maintains steady appropriation to meet expanding demand and associate needs for program delivery including implementation grants, growing audit (participating farm) commitments, and overall labor demands to serve increasing participation. This funding provides for MAWQCP to meet seven goals in the Clean Water Council's 2024 Strategic Plan. A large percentage of funding is pass through for soil and water conservation districts and supports implementation. The funding is required as match to leverage a federal USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant (RCPP) and support a federal EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG).

### **Technical Assistance**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$3,200,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Irrigation Water Quality Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$300,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$310,000**

**Rationale:** Funding supports an irrigation water quality specialist who develops guidance and provides education on irrigation and nitrogen best management practices and supports the development of irrigation scheduling guidance for Minnesota irrigators. Adoption of these practices will help to reduce nitrate-nitrogen leaching in irrigated agricultural fields. The irrigation specialist is located at the University of Minnesota Extension and all funding is pass through to the University of Minnesota.

### **Nitrate in Groundwater**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$7,000,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)      FY26-27 Proposal: \$6,200,000**

**Rationale:** Funding to implement Minnesota's Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan and Groundwater Protection Rule for preventing and responding to nitrate contamination of groundwater. Includes support for: promotion, demonstration, and adoption of best management practices for nitrogen fertilizer and to promote vegetative cover in vulnerable areas; staffing at Minnesota Extension to educate on and promote fertilizer best management practices; support for conducting local advisory teams to work with farmers and crop advisors to reduce nitrate in areas with elevated nitrate in groundwater; conducting computer modeling to evaluate the impacts of specific agricultural and land management practices in local areas; and, support for demonstration projects such as Rosholt Farm.

### **Agricultural Research and Evaluation**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$0**

**Rationale:** Applied research will focus on evaluating, developing and demonstrating regional and animal-specific recommendations for manure crediting, and to develop or revise manure best management practices. Water quality benefits (and greenhouse gas emission reductions) can be achieved by proper crediting for the nutrient value of various types of manure. Many of the current recommendations for manure are based on research that is more than 20 years old and, in some cases, may not represent current technology and livestock management practices. Increased research and demonstration activities will increase farmers confidence in the recommendations and result in reduced manure and commercial fertilizer inputs. Clean Water Council members expressed support for increasing manure management efforts.

### **Research Inventory Database (MnWRL)**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$80,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$100,000**

**Rationale:** The Minnesota Water Research Digital Library (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.

### **Forever Green Initiative**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$6,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$4,000,000**

**Rationale:** The Forever Green Initiative develops new perennial and winter annual crops and associated cropping systems that preserve and enhance water quality and supports the development of new supply chains

that provide profitable markets for these crops. Forever Green activities are critical to increasing vegetative cover in Minnesota and address many of the strategies outlined in the Clean Water Council's Strategic Plan. Funding will support the Forever Green Initiative in areas related to crop research, implementation and supply chains, and partnership development.

#### **Conservation Equipment Assistance**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$3,500,000**

**Rationale:** Individual farmers, agricultural organizations, conservation interests, and major food corporations all seek greater emphasis on soil health to improve water quality. These groups have identified that a primary obstacle to soil health is access to the specialized equipment and machinery necessary for successful adoption of soil health practices. This new program has been met with tremendous demand-the first two rounds saw funding able to meet only 7% and 27% of applications respectively before expanded. It provides grants to individuals, soil and water conservation districts, other local public entities, and collaborations for costs of specialized equipment and materials to install and sustain practices, including equipment sharing programs.

#### **Expand Ag Weather Station Network**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,000,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$2,500,000**

**Rationale:** This funding will expand the existing state weather station and soil temperature network to provide accurate local weather data across the farming areas of the Minnesota. Accurate and timely weather data will help farmers optimize the timing of irrigation, fertilizer and pesticide applications, and other inputs; reduce pesticide drift which can impact water quality; and help reduce the risk from adopting new environmentally friendly practices to promote soil health and vegetative cover. This will result in improved surface water and groundwater quality. Other beneficial uses of the data include timing pesticide applications, reducing pesticide drift to protect pollinators and use of precipitation data by the National Weather Service and municipalities to better predict flood conditions.

### **VII. Metropolitan Council**

---

#### **Water Demand Reduction Grant Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,500,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,500,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

#### **Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$2,250,000      FY26-27 Proposal: \$2,750,000**

**Rationale:** This program helps municipalities and industries in the Twin Cities metro area as they plan and implement projects that address drinking water supply threats. It supports the exploration of cost-effective regional and sub-regional solutions, leveraging inter-jurisdictional coordination, and prevents overuse and degradation of groundwater resources. Activities in this program provide metro communities with:

- Potential solutions to balance regional water use through utilization of surface water, stormwater, wastewater and groundwater
- Planning-level analyses of infrastructure requirements for various water supply alternatives
- Planning-level cost estimates (capital investments and operation)

- Identification of funding mechanisms and equitable cost-sharing structures for regionally beneficial water supply projects.

The proposed budget supports ongoing high value collaborative work through regional community and agency partnerships to forecast and mitigate short/long term local water supply challenges and to meet sustainable water use goals. The budget increase will support new work related to stormwater reuse.

## **VIII. Public Facilities Authority (PFA)**

---

### **Point Source Implementation Grant (PSIG) Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$16,500,000    FY26-27 Proposal: \$16,500,000**

**Rationale:** 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, and the lack of a 2022 bonding bill emphasizes the need for continued Clean Water Fund appropriations.

### **Small Community Wastewater Treatment Program**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$200,000    FY26-27 Proposal: \$100,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

## **IX. University of Minnesota**

---

### **Stormwater BMP Performance Evaluation & Technology Transfer**

**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$3,000,000 (incl. FY25 supplemental)    FY26-27 Proposal: \$1,600,000**

**Rationale:** 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.

### **Geologic Atlas with Department of Natural Resources**

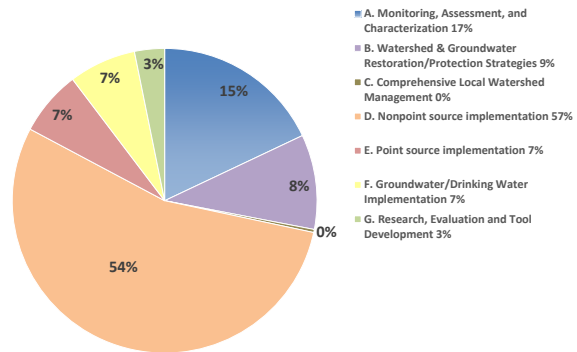
**FY24-25 Appropriation: \$1,000,000    FY26-27 Proposal: \$800,000**

**Rationale:** This funding 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.

**Clean Water Fund Appropriations - Summary  
FY2026-27 Proposed CWF Budget**

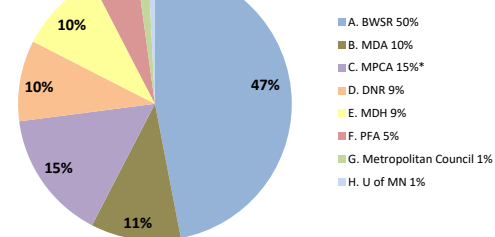
FY26-27 Proposed CWF budget by functional category	Proposed CWF budget by category FY2026-27 (000)	Percent of total
A. Monitoring, Assessment, and Characterization 17%	\$ 54,990	18%
B. Watershed & Groundwater Restoration/Protection Strategies 9%	\$ 30,790	10%
C. Comprehensive Local Watershed Management 0%	\$ 1,000	0%
D. Nonpoint source implementation 57%	\$ 166,600	54%
E. Point source implementation 7%	\$ 21,100	7%
F. Groundwater/Drinking Water Implementation 7%	\$ 21,841	7%
G. Research, Evaluation and Tool Development 3%	\$ 9,750	3%
Clean Water Council Budget	\$ 922	0%
Legislative Coordinating Commission	\$ 7	0%
<b>Total State Agency CWF budget</b>	<b>\$ 307,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Implementation (NPS, PS, GW/DW)</b>	<b>\$ 209,541</b>	<b>68%</b>

**Proposed CWF budget by category  
FY2026-27**



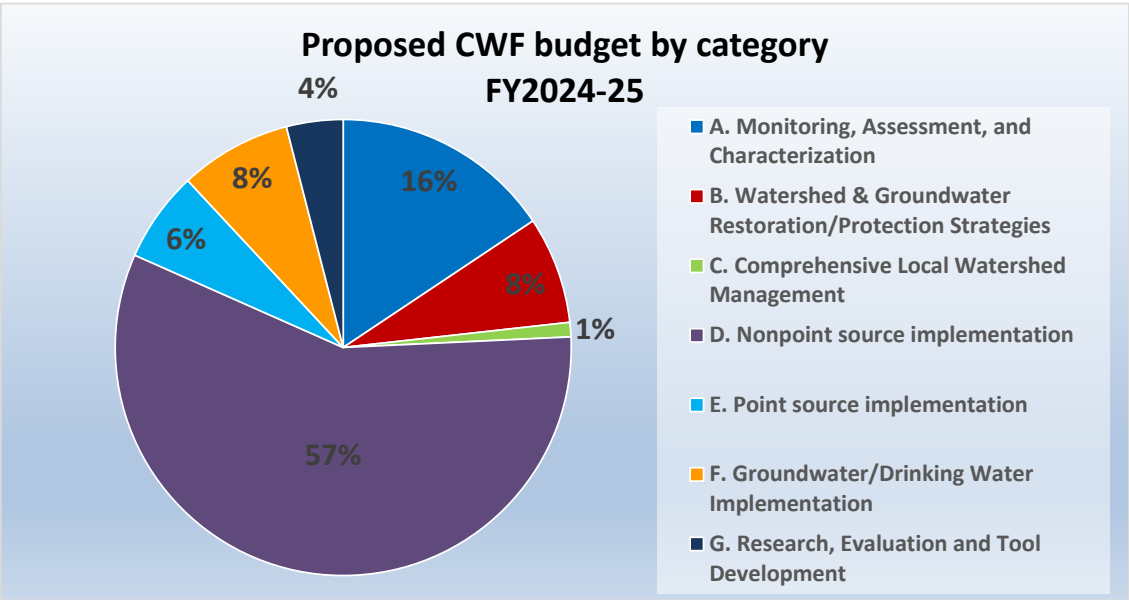
FY26-27 Proposed CWF budget by Agency	Proposed CWF budget by Agency FY2026-27 (000)	Percent of total
A. BWSR 50%	\$ 143,750	47%
B. MDA 10%	\$ 32,550	11%
C. MPCA 15%*	\$ 46,981	15%
D. DNR 9%	\$ 29,300	10%
E. MDH 9%	\$ 30,240	10%
F. PFA 5%	\$ 16,600	5%
G. Metropolitan Council 1%	\$ 4,250	1%
H. U of MN 1%	\$ 2,400	1%
LCC	\$ 7	0%
Clean Water Council Budget	\$ 922	0%
<b>Total Clean Water Fund budget</b>	<b>\$ 307,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Proposed CWF budget by Agency  
FY2026-27**



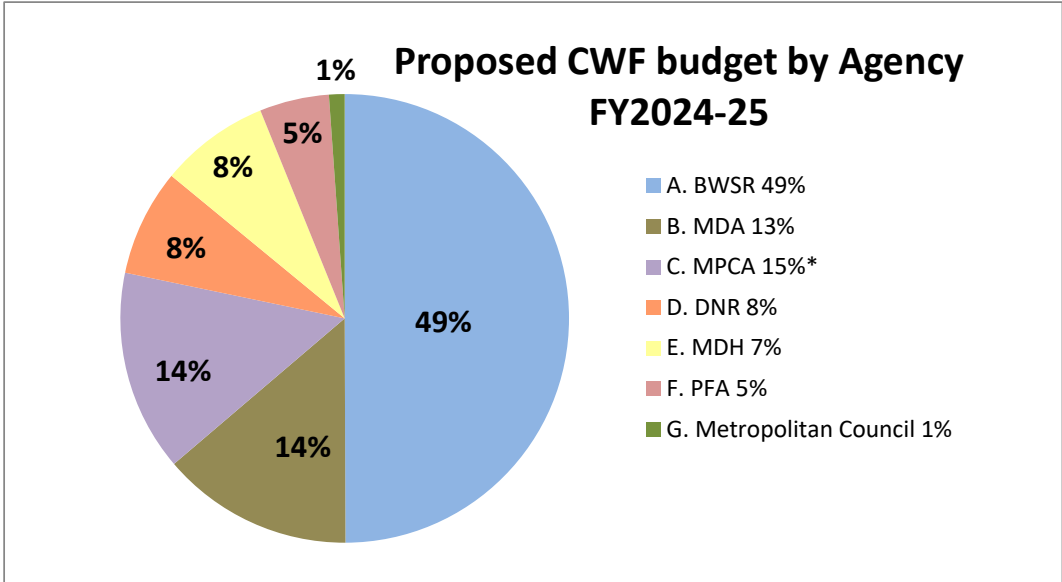
Clean Water Fund Appropriations - Summary  
FY2024-25 Proposed CWF Budget

FY24-25 Proposed CWF budget by functional category	Proposed CWF budget by category FY2024-25 (000)	Percent of total
A. Monitoring, Assessment, and Characterization	\$ 53,500	16%
B. Watershed & Groundwater Restoration/Protection Strategies	\$ 26,000	8%
C. Comprehensive Local Watershed Management	\$ 3,500	1%
D. Nonpoint source implementation	\$ 196,311	57%
E. Point source implementation	\$ 22,000	6%
F. Groundwater/Drinking Water Implementation	\$ 27,100	8%
G. Research, Evaluation and Tool Development	\$ 13,730	4%
<b>Total State Agency CWF budget</b>	<b>\$ 342,141</b>	<b>100%</b>
Clean Water Council Budget	\$ 675	
Legislative Coordinating Commission	\$ 6	
<b>Total Clean Water Fund budget</b>	<b>\$ 342,822</b>	
<b>Total Implementation (NPS, PS, GW/DW)</b>	<b>\$ 245,411</b>	<b>72%</b>



FY24-25 Proposed CWF budget by Agency	Proposed CWF budget by Agency FY2024-25 (000)	Percent of total
A. BWSR 49%	\$ 166,561	49%
B. MDA 13%	\$ 46,080	14%
C. MPCA 15%*	\$ 48,375	14%
D. DNR 8%	\$ 25,650	8%
E. MDH 7%	\$ 26,374	8%
F. PFA 5%	\$ 16,700	5%
G. Metropolitan Council 1%	\$ 3,750	1%
H. U of MN 1%	\$ 3,000	1%
LCC	\$ 6	0%
<b>Total Clean Water Fund budget</b>	<b>\$ 336,496</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*MPCA's budget includes \$2M for Voyageurs and \$360k pass through to RRWMB



## **Framework For Comparing FY26-27 Clean Water Fund Budget Options - Prepared by Steve Christenson for August 2 BOC Meeting**

To foster discussion of budget options, this framework summarizes proposed budget cuts supported at the Clean Water Council's July 15 meeting and in the Clean Water Fund Interagency Coordinating Team (ICT) recommendations dated July 24, 2024. Both proposals aimed at developing a budget recommendation that aligns with the **\$307M** forecasted revenues for FY26-27. As listed in more detail in ICT's recommendations, all other programs would generally be held "flat" for FY26-27 compared to FY24-25, subject to inflation adjustments for various programs.

From a strategic perspective, a few issues warrant material discussion:

- Reducing funds for easement programs (-\$17M from #41, 46, 49)
- Increasing investments in Watershed Based Implementation Funding (+\$11M in #37)
- Reducing funds for Voyageurs National Park Water Quality Protection Program (-\$2M from #21)
- Designating funds for MN & IA Conservation Corps (+\$1.5M in #52)

Item #	Title	July 15 CWC Proposed Cut or Increase	July 24 ICT Recommendation	Outcome of August 2 BOC Meeting
3	AgBMP Loan Program	-\$3M from \$9.5M base (+\$3.4M supplemental appropriation)	-\$9M from \$12.9M total base (\$9.5M base + \$3.4M supplemental appropriation)	
8	Forever Green	In debate	-\$2M from \$6M base	
11	Expand MN Ag Weather Station Network	Reject cut	-\$0.5M from \$3M base	
12	Agricultural Research/Evaluation	~	-\$1.5M from \$1.5M base	
14	Watershed Restoration &	~	+\$1.8M from \$12.7M base	



	Protection Strategies (includes TMDL development)			
16	St. Louis River AOC	-\$1.5M from \$1.5M base	Project is done	
18	Enhanced county Inspections/SSTS Corrective Actions	~	-\$1.9M from \$9.05M total base (\$7.1 base + \$1.95 supplemental appropriation)	
19	Chloride Reduction	~	-\$1M from \$2.3M total base (\$1.3M base + \$1M supplemental appropriation)	
20	Clean Water Council	+\$0.175M (per year) to support Strat Plan Vision #4: All Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it, per Minn. Stat. 114D.35, subd. 3: "The Clean Water Council must develop strategies for informing, educating, and encouraging the participation of citizens, stakeholders, and others regarding this chapter."	+\$0.247M from \$0.675M base to fund equivalent of 2 FTEs and consulting support for communications	
21	Voyageurs National Park Water Quality Protection Program	In debate	-\$2M from \$2M base	

29	Non-point Source Restoration & Implementation	Reject cut	+\$1.3M from \$3.2M base	
31	Buffer Map Maintenance	~	-\$50K from \$50K base	
34	Water Storage	-\$1.0M from \$1M base	-\$1.0M from \$1M base	
35	Culvert Replacement Cost Share	Reject cut	+\$1M from \$2M base	
36	Grants to Watersheds with Approved Comprehensive Watershed Plans (Watershed based Implementation Funding)	In debate	+\$11M from \$79M base	
37	Surface & Drinking Water Protection/Restoration Grants (Projects & Practices)	-\$5M from \$17M base	-\$11M from \$17M base	
38	Accelerated Implementation	Reject cut	-\$2.3M from \$11M base	
41	Working Lands Flodplain Easements (formerly Riparian Buffer-Permanent Conservation Easements)	~	-\$6.3M from \$8.343M total base (\$5M base + \$3.434 supplemental appropriation)	
44	Watershed Management Transition (1W1P)	-\$1.5M from \$3.5M base	-\$2.5M from \$3.5M base	

46	Critical Shoreland Protection-Permanent Conservation Easements	~	-\$6M from \$7M total base (\$3M base + \$4M supplemental appropriation)	
49	Wetland Restoration Easements	-\$5M from \$10M base	-\$5M from \$10M base	
52 - New BWSR Item	MN & IA Conservation Corps	~	+\$1.5M	Funding previously woven into other appropriations
56	Groundwater Restoration & Protection Strategies	~	+\$2M from \$1.5M base	
62	County Geologic Atlas Part A	Reject cut: Could ENRTF adjust multi-year funding practices to better fund this program?	-\$0.8M from \$1M base	
63	Stormwater Research & Tech Transfer Program	~	-\$1.4M from \$3M total base (\$2M base + \$1M supplemental appropriation)	
66	Small Community Wastewater Treatment Program	~	-\$0.1M from \$0.2M base	
	Unspent appropriations for: BWSR Conservation Partners (\$86K), Perf Based Watershed (\$85K), SWCD Capacity (\$154K),	\$348,506 - Support return of these unspent or cancelled funds to CWF		

	MDH Water Reuse (\$22K)			

If available funds exceed \$307M, the following options would be high priorities for additional investments.

Item #	Title/Topic	Increase	Rationale
	Chloride reduction & mitigation	TBD	Largest cause of newly impaired waters in urban areas of Minnesota. Investment in chloride prevention could avoid \$MM in problems by 2034.
	Mercury in fish	TBD	Largest cause of existing impaired waters across Minnesota. MN invested \$1B+ to reduce mercury emissions to air, with little impact on fish. What could be done to break the mercury cycle in MN lakes?
	Water quantity supply & irrigation alternatives	TBD	Water shortages are growing. Investment in long-term better management of water supply could avoid \$MM in problems by 2034.
	CECs (including pharmaceuticals in ground & surface water)	TBD	Increased measurement of chemicals in groundwater and surface water is identifying more issues. Investment to get ahead of these drinking water supply concerns could avoid \$MM in problems by 2034.
36	Grants to Watersheds with Approved Comprehensive Watershed Plans (Watershed based	TBD from \$79M base	Additional 1W1P may warrant additional funding

	Implementation Funding)		
41	Working Lands Floodplain Easements	TBD	Investments deliver water quantity and quality benefits durable beyond 2034. Yet, BWSR easement programs appear to have \$10M+ in unspent appropriations from prior years?
46	Critical Shoreland Protection-Permanent Conservation Easements	TBD	Support CWF Strat Plan Goal to protect 100,000 acres and restore 100,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin by 2034.
49	Wetland Restoration Easements	TBD	
	See programs cut above		
	University of Minnesota: 50-Year Water Plan	~\$8M	Proposed in 2024 Legislative Session. University of Minnesota is not requesting CWF funding for this initiative.
	Forever Green	+\$4M over \$6M base	Citizen comments supported additional investment
	Ag Water Quality Certification Program	TBD	Develop monitoring program to measure and verify effectiveness of MN AWQCP certified acres
	Agricultural tile policy and assessment	TBD	Drainage tile expansion has implications for nitrate discharges to MN and MS river basins, aquifer recharge, and stream degradation

# Summary of Public Comment to Clean Water Council Proposals for the Clean Water Fund FY26-27

As of 30 July 2024

Entity	Agency	Program Name	Comments
Nature Conservancy	BWSR	Working Lands Floodplain Easements	Support
Nature Conservancy	BWSR	Critical Shoreland Protection Easements	Support
Nature Conservancy	BWSR	Watershed Partners Legacy Grants	Support significant increase and appreciate greater outreach esp. tribes
Nature Conservancy	DNR	Water Storage	Support additional investment
Nature Conservancy	DNR	Culvert Replacement	Support additional investment
Nature Conservancy	DNR	Mussel Restoration	Support additional investment
Nature Conservancy	DNR	Non-point Source Implementation	Support additional investment
Nature Conservancy	MPCA	Chloride Reduction	Support
Nature Conservancy	MPCA	Clean Water Council	Support additional staffing
Nature Conservancy	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Support more communication about outcomes
Nature Conservancy		General	Find more efficiencies to reduce duplication
South Washington Watershed District	UMN	Stormwater Research and Technology Transfer Program	Support current level or increase
Simple Harvest Farm Organics	MDA	MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program	Support investment in more monitoring for outcomes
Minnesota Department of Transportation, Erosion and Stormwater Management Unit	UMN	Stormwater Research and Technology Transfer Program	Support

## Summary of Public Comment to Clean Water Council Proposals for the Clean Water Fund FY26-27

David Craig	MPCA	River and Lake Monitoring and Assessment	Monitor all lakes and streams; fine polluters
Ash River Sewer District	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	Support @ \$4 million
Kabetogama Township	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	Support @ \$4 million
Senator Grant Hauschild	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	Support @ \$4 million
Lyon County	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Goodhue County	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Carver County	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Mower County	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Oakwood Bank	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
John Rud	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
AgCountry Bank	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Cook County	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Rock County	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program	Support; waiting list
Crane Lake Water & Sanitary District	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	Support @ \$4 million
Sen. Jen McEwen	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	Support @ \$4 million
Koochiching County	MPCA	National Park Water Quality Protection Program	Support @ \$4 million
Rum River Watershed Partnership	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Support and fully fund
Tom Lynch			Concerned about microplastics in water
Scott County Water Management Organization (WMO)	BWSR	One Watershed One Plan Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Don't spend 1W1P funding in the metro; it is redundant and wasteful; give it to Greater Minnesota
Anoka Conservation District	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Support and prioritize
Coon Creek Watershed District	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Support and fully fund
Roseau River Watershed District	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Support
City of Woodbury	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Woodbury	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of New Brighton	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of New Brighton	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of North St. Paul	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support

## Summary of Public Comment to Clean Water Council Proposals for the Clean Water Fund FY26-27

City of North St. Paul	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Prior Lake	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Prior Lake	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Shoreview	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Shoreview	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of St. Louis Park	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of St. Louis Park	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Robbinsdale	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Robbinsdale	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Chanhassen	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Chanhassen	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Bayport	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Bayport	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Eden Prairie	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Eden Prairie	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Lake Elmo	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Lake Elmo	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
City of Minnetonka	MC	Metropolitan Area Water Supply Sustainability Support Program	Support
City of Minnetonka	MC	Water Demand Reduction Efficiency Grant Program	Support
Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Support
Minnesota Crop Production Retailers	MDA	Suggests new a targeted financial incentive program that would incentivize crop advisors to promote conservation instead of promoting more fertilizer	Thanks for supporting comprehensive SE MN response
Minnesota Corn Growers Association	MDA	Conservation Equipment Assistance	Support at \$7M; support for ownership of equipment not rental and for custom work
Minnesota Corn Growers Association	MDA	Agricultural Best Management Practices Program	Support increase
Minnesota Corn Growers Association	MDA	Technical Assistance	Support
Minnesota Corn Growers Association	MDA	Nitrate in Groundwater	Support



## Summary of Public Comment to Clean Water Council Proposals for the Clean Water Fund FY26-27

Minnesota Corn Growers Association	MDA	Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program	Support; use as conduit for more soil health BMPs
Minnesota Corn Growers Association	MDA	Expand MN Weather Station Network	Support
Minnesota Corn Growers Association	BWSR	Conservation Drainage and Management	Support
Friends of the Mississippi River	MDA	Forever Green Initiative	Support @ \$10M; market opportunity for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)
Dakota County	MDH	Source Water Protection	Support; PFAS a major issue in drinking water
Dakota County		Funding needed for water reuse, esp. capital improvement funds, statewide policy and guidelines, incentivizing better irrigation	
Bois de Sioux Watershed District	DNR	Water Storage (could also include any water storage like wetland easements)	Red River not getting CWFs for this--going to less organized parts of MN; make it statewide
Bois de Sioux Watershed District	DNR	Culvert Replacement	Recognize conflict between connectivity and flood control
Bois de Sioux Watershed District	DNR MDA	Nonpoint Source Implementation Technical Assistance	Permit delays in Red River; encourage state agencies to standardize and streamline process
Bois de Sioux Watershed District	BWSR	Watershed Based Implementation Funding	Make CWFs available for flood control since they impact water quality; drainage management can reduce TSS and P at lower cost than cover crops; evaluate grant

## Summary of Public Comment to Clean Water Council Proposals for the Clean Water Fund FY26-27

			portfolio by problem scale



8301 Valley Creek Road • Woodbury, MN 55125-3330 • woodburymn.gov  
651-714-3500 • TYY 651-714-3568 • FAX 651-714-3501

March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

The City of Woodbury has been a recipient of the Metropolitan Council Water Efficiency Grant for the last three grant cycles. In the 2020 and 2022 grant cycles, the City of Woodbury received \$50,300 and \$60,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation programming. This program exists to increase water efficiency through replacing old toilets with EPA WaterSense low-flow toilets. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of an estimated 11.6 million gallons of water saved annually through the program.

Many communities, including the City of Woodbury, have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,

Chris Hartzell, PE  
Engineering Director, City of Woodbury

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council



Paul Gardner  
Council Administrator  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

As a local unit of government representing a watershed partnership that uses Clean Water Funds for implementation, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as the Clean Water Council (Council) begins to develop their FY26-FY27 recommendations.

Our watershed partnership, consisting of the Coon Creek Watershed District, Anoka Conservation District, and the Cities of Andover, Blaine, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Ham Lake, and Spring Lake Park counts on long-term, stable funding from the Clean Water Fund (CWF) to ensure that we are able to implement projects for clean water consistent with our Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

Over the past five years, our watershed partnership has implemented the following projects with CWFs via the Watershed Based Implementation Funding program:

- Pleasure Creek Biochar and Iron-Enhanced Sand Filter:  
<https://www.cooncreekwd.org/pcfilter/>
- Aurelia Park Pond: <https://www.cooncreekwd.org/aureliapond/>
- Coon Creek Watershed Districtwide Street Sweeping Study:  
[https://www.cooncreekwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CCWD\\_StreetSweeping\\_PhaseII\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.cooncreekwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CCWD_StreetSweeping_PhaseII_Report_Final.pdf)
- Ongoing planning and modeling efforts to identify cost effective water quality improvement practices to address impairments in high priority subwatersheds

We would like to invite the Council to visit our constructed projects to provide a better understanding of their importance and the role they play in clean water efforts. In the next biennium, we are planning to use CWFs to implement the enhanced street sweeping recommendations resulting from our Districtwide study.

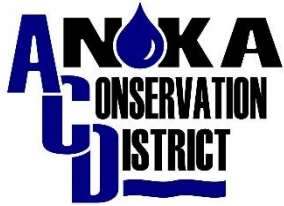
Without long-term, stable funding from the CWF, none of these efforts would have been possible. We respectfully request that the Council continue to fully fund the Watershed-based Implementation Fund so that local governments can fulfill their responsibilities in carrying out the work for clean water on behalf of the state of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Kelly", is written over a large, stylized blue checkmark.

Tim Kelly  
District Administrator





**Anoka Conservation District**  
1318 McKay Drive NE, Suite 300  
Ham Lake, Minnesota 55304  
Ph: 763-434-2030  
[www.AnokaSWCD.org](http://www.AnokaSWCD.org)

---

Paul Gardner  
Council Administrator  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

July 29, 2024

Mr. Gardner and the Clean Water Council,

The Anoka Conservation District uses Clean Water Funds for implementation, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as the Clean Water Council (Council) begins to develop their FY26-FY27 recommendations. We strongly encourage the Council to prioritize maintaining Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF).

We are members of the Lower St. Croix and Rum River Watershed Partnerships and participate in several metro watershed WBIF allocation areas. In each of these groups, many local units of governments collaborate to vet projects carefully to select the best across the watershed.

The predictability of WBIF funding improves the process in two ways: 1) members readily postpone their own projects in favor of moving ahead quickly on partner projects of equivalent return on investment without the fear of being left empty-handed, and 2) partners tend to invest more on project feasibility analysis, planning and design before submitting them for consideration.

Additionally, the best endeavors often come in the form of installing many small practices distributed across the landscape as opposed to single large-scale capital improvements. WBIF has been especially effective to install many smaller projects that would individually rank poorly in a competitive grant process due to scale, even though they provide an excellent return on investment.

WBIF has also been effective for shared services, such as agricultural conservation practice experts that serve multiple counties. Finally, we've found that WBIF is well suited for incentive programs spanning multiple counties such as shoreline stabilization or cover crop programs.

WBIF was developed to provide reliable, consistent funding to implement locally developed, state-approved watershed plans. It has become just that. We recognize the Council will be confronting difficult budget decisions, and encourage you to prioritize WBIF.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Lord", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Chris Lord  
District Manager



July 24, 2024

Paul Gardner  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

As a local unit of government that uses both Clean Water Fund Competitive Grants (CWF) and Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) for implementation of efforts that address a broad variety of water resource issues, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as the Clean Water Council begins to develop their FY26-FY27 recommendations.


The Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) consists of 4 counties, 28 cities and townships, over 80 lakes, and a land mass of over 180 sq. miles. To address our water resource needs we rely on funding from both CWF and WBIF to accomplish our 2020-2029 Watershed Management Plan goals. These funding sources have been vital to the implementation of many impactful projects.

In recent years, the following projects have been completed in the RCWD with CWFs and WBIF:

- Centerville Lake Alum Treatment and Phosphorous Reduction Project- CWF
  - <https://www.ricecreek.org/project/centerville-lake-alum-treatment/>
- Johanna Creek Carp Barrier- WBIF
  - <https://www.ricecreek.org/project/johanna-creek-carp-barrier/>
- Lower Rice Creek Stabilization Project- CWF
  - <https://www.ricecreek.org/project/lower-rice-creek-stabilization/>
- Hansen Park Enhancement Project- CWF
  - <https://www.ricecreek.org/project/johanna-creek-carp-barrier/>
- Moore Lake Iron Enhanced Sand Filter- CWF
  - <https://www.ricecreek.org/project/moore-lake-iron-enhanced-sand-filter/>

In the next few years, we are planning to implement various stormwater management projects and stream stabilizations with CWFs. Without these funds these projects will not be possible. We respectfully request that the Council continue to fully fund the WBIF and the CWF so that watershed districts can fulfill their responsibilities in carrying out the work for clean water on behalf of their communities and partners.

Sincerely,

  
Michael Bradley  
Rice Creek Watershed District Board President

4325 Pheasant Ridge Drive NE #611 | Blaine, MN 55449 | T: 763-398-3070 | F: 763-398-3088 | [www.ricecreek.org](http://www.ricecreek.org)

BOARD OF  
MANAGERS

Jess Robertson  
Anoka County

Steven P. Wagamon  
Anoka County

Michael J. Bradley  
Ramsey County

Marcie Weinandt  
Ramsey County

John J. Waller  
Washington County



704 Highway 75 South | Wheaton, MN 56296

To: Clean Water Council

From: Jamie Beyer, Bois de Sioux Watershed District

RE: Comments on the FY26-27 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Reports

Date: July 26, 2024

Thank you for requesting public comment in advance of the August 19th Council Meeting regarding Biennial Recommendations on the Use of Clean Water Fund for Fiscals years 2026-2027. Some of the comments included below are specific to the reference materials for this comment period; it is my hope that these comments can be used to influence the upcoming policy documents, if it is the intention of the Council to carry these programs and policies forward from FY24-25 to FY26-27.

FY24-25 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Report Page 4: *"Increase water storage."*

**Comment 1:** The Red River Valley, in partnership with the Minnesota DNR, is a clear leader to establish and coordinate coordinated, basinwide flood storage goals and projects, yet our projects have been systematically disqualified from Clean Water Funding in order to prioritize less organized areas of the state. The BWSR Storage Program has served to increase awareness of the tight connection between uncontrolled floods and degraded water quality, but it restricts grant opportunities to Minnesota and Mississippi River basins. We recommend that Clean Water Council communicate a clear priority to increase water storage capacity statewide.

FY24-25 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Report Page 5: *"Culvert replacement incentive program."*

**Comment 2:** Uncontrolled flooding is directly correlated to degrading water quality. Culvert sizing is an important tool to slow waterflow velocities, and force floodwaters to utilize temporary storage instead of adding to overwhelmed downstream watercourses. Incorrect and/or inconsistent culvert sizing can exacerbate erosion and damage public and private infrastructure (most directly, roads). [We strongly recommend that the Clean Water Council and DNR recognize the direct, competing interest inherent in his recommendation. This conflict should be acknowledge, and potential water quality damage should be minimized if culvert sizing projects are designed with an added, intentional consideration for flood control.](#)

FY24-25 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Report Page 10: *"The DNR, MDA, and MDH provide technical assistance to landowners and local governments to ensure project success."*

**Comment 3:** I cannot overemphasize how desperately this technical assistance is needed and how frequently it is found inadequate. Currently, there is little transparency for how a project can successfully achieve required permits, with the landowner or LGU on the hook for discovering in real-time, cumulatively over the course of many months or years, what might be necessary. A project design is required for permitting, but the permitting process ultimately changes the project design, making it impossible to predict how expensive permit conditions may be – and the permitting process itself is expensive (maybe that is the only known factor!). With application fees set to increase exponentially, more than ever, landowners and LGU's need to know in advance of a permit application what qualifications can lead to a successful project. Currently, these standards are not known, and we have not been successful in receiving discrete pre-permit technical assistance. [We strongly recommend that the Clean Water Council consider opportunities to encourage state agencies to collaboratively standardize and streamline government processes.](#)

FY24-25 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Report Page 12: *"The BWSR provides non-competitive grants to watersheds to fulfill priority activities in comprehensive watershed management plans (One watershed*

*One Plan*).

**Comment 4:** A distinction is being muddled between “watersheds” meaning a physical location with a corresponding boundary, and “watersheds” meaning a M.S. 103D.205 Watershed District local government unit. Non-competitive funds are not being sent to watersheds, the funds are being allocated by watershed and sent to a fiscal agent (which, because of their dominance in the program, is likely a soil and water conservation district). This phrase was repeated in dozens of instances throughout the document – and I wish it was true, that funding was sent to watersheds, and that watersheds did receive the non-competitive funding. Shockingly, for as much responsibility as we have for most of the activities described, M.S. 103D.205 Watershed Districts can only be found twice in the 39-page FY24-25 report – as a voting member and as a “local funding source.” [To accurately describe One watershed One plan, we recommend that “to watersheds” text be replaced with “by watershed” text.](#)

FY24-25 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Report Page 14: *Funding Recommendations*

**Comment 5:** Again, for as much responsibility as we have for most of the activities described, I sincerely hope that M.S. 103D.205 Watershed Districts/Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, and, if not, [we recommend that watershed districts and the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts be solicited both for the next biennium.](#)

FY24-25 Clean Water Fund and Policy Recommendations Report Page 19 & 28: *Conservation Drainage Management and Assistance*

**Comment 6:** I believe this is the BWSR program “Multipurpose Drainage Management,” and M.S. 103D.205 Watershed Districts are also recipients. [Please update the text to include watershed districts.](#)

FY24-25 Funding Recommendations, Page 19: *“One Watershed, One Plan.”*

**Comment 7:** Currently, watershed based implementation funds cannot be used for flood control projects. Many of us will find it hard to forget this June visual reminder of the damage that can ensue when a floodwater event overwhelms infrastructure design/condition:



No amount of cover crop or no-till acres in the month of June can match the force of the precipitation experienced during this flood event. This picture demonstrates clearly the volume of sediment, and associated nutrients, that can be conveyed during one flood event.



The Red River Valley has experienced recent snowmelt floods in 2019, 2022, and 2023; two of these events were declared national disasters, one qualified for state disaster aid. In 2024, excess precipitation resulted in widespread planting interruptions, with a very rough estimate of 20% or more of untilled ground was not able to be planted with an agricultural crop in our District. Although flooding on our flatland isn't as attention-grabbing as the recent images we have seen from southern Minnesota, the destruction and environmental effects are similar. The failure of the Ripidan Dam demonstrates clearly the power of floodwater to transport sediment, nutrients, and pollutants; it also speaks to the scale of these events – Rapidan Dam's damaging rain event was part of an extremely large weather pattern that spanned and affected South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The generational environmental and biological changes (both at flood sites and downstream) that occurred within a 7-day timeframe in June 2024 are unimaginable; now aggregate this thought for our May 2024 flood event and past events.

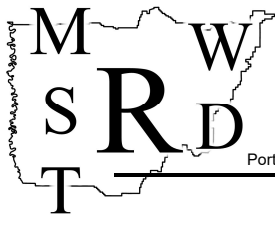
In the waterworld, we think of events such as: a 3-year precipitation event; a 5-year precipitation event; a 10-year precipitation event; a 25-year precipitation event; a 100-year precipitation event; a 500-year precipitation event. There is an inordinate amount of time spent in local government units and state agencies planning and implementing small-scale, small-impact solutions, while the largest (and most impactful) projects wait undeveloped and unfunded. In both the Bois de Sioux River and Mustinka River watershed districts, we have implemented One Watershed One Plan. Despite prioritizing impactful, large-scale projects that can be designed to match future climatic conditions, there is little financial and permitting support to construct, improve, or repair public infrastructure. Statewide, plan participants and regulating state agencies continue to deny the effects of climate change *that state agencies say have been happening for several years*, instead promoting and implementing projects that deliver little or minor sediment reductions, whose benefits are intended for inconsequential precipitation events. For example, under the first grant to the Bois de Sioux River and Mustinka River Joint Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan:

Practice	Cost to reduce 1 lb Phosph/Yr	Cost to reduce 1 ton Sediment/Yr	Life Span
Cover Crop	\$488	\$285	3 years
Drainage Water Management	\$230	\$58	25 years minimum

Doubly, state agencies are amplifying their efforts to make construction of critical infrastructure needed more expensive, if not impossible, to permit and fund. We continue to be subject to new barriers to improve and repair current systems which include the proposed rapid expansion of state authorities over expanded public water and wetland definitions, and areas that only temporarily convey precipitation. These 2024 legislative changes mean that even the most rudimentary and private means of flood control will be subject to complete government control, permitting, questionable water quality standards, testing, and desktop bureaucratic activities. Efforts are made to block repairs to current systems. Environmental reviews seem to have an insatiable and endless appetite for model after model..... We know that Drainage Water Management projects can deliver permanent water quality improvements, yet they receive very little support administratively or via program funding. [We strongly recommend Clean Water Council members and staff evaluate their grant portfolio by problem scale, and purposefully incentivize projects that address a fuller diversity of climatic conditions.](#)

FINAL Clean Water council Strategic Plan for 2024-2028 Page 7: *“Action: Quantify water storage needs and opportunities within each HUC 8 watershed.”*

**Comment 8:** Some areas of the state have completed needs assessments, with their own funds. [We recommend this program offer dual purpose, to be used by LGU's to further to develop storage project designs following establishment of a needs assessment report.](#)



Portions of Marshall, Kittson, Polk, Pennington and Roseau Counties

# MIDDLE-SNAKE-TAMARAC RIVERS WATERSHED DISTRICT

OF-24-109  
July 23, 2024

453 N McKinley St  
Warren, MN 56762  
Phone 218-745-4741  
Fax 218-745-5300  
[info@mstrwd.org](mailto:info@mstrwd.org)  
[www.mstrwd.org](http://www.mstrwd.org)

Paul Gardner  
Council Administrator  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Letter of Support on Watershed Based Implementation Funding

Dear Mr. Gardner,

Please accept my apologies for the length of this letter, but I believe it is important and worth sharing with the Council members.

As the Council works on the 2026-2027 budget and considering the proposed \$14 million cut to the CWF budget compared to 2024-2025, the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District (MSTRWD) would like to respectfully submit this letter in support of the Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) program.

Our Watershed District, located in the northwest of the state, serves over 1,400 square miles of primarily agricultural lands, as well as citizens in small yet valuable communities.

Our One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) program began in May 2020 in partnership with four other local government units. This plan was reviewed and approved by BWSR in August 2022.

Change is always challenging, particularly when it involves altering people's mindsets. This was one of our biggest challenges during the 1W1P planning process. Our strategy was to highlight the mutual benefits of the Clean Water Projects to address local concerns, primarily drainage and flooding issues, and to emphasize that this program would provide a more reliable funding source for implementation. For us in the Red River Valley, this was beneficial, as the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) has a similar program but with a limited budget

BILL PETERSEN  
MIDDLE RIVER  
PRESIDENT  
MARSHALL COUNTY

ROBERT KOVAR  
EAST GRAND FORKS  
VICE PRESIDENT  
POLK COUNTY

KEITH SZCZEPANSKI  
STEPHEN  
TREASURER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

BRADLEY BLAWAT  
VIKING  
SECRETARY  
MARSHALL COUNTY

LEIN SCHILLER  
ARGYLE  
AST SEC/TREASURER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

JOEY MCGREGOR  
WARREN  
MANAGER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

JARED SANDS  
ALVARADO  
MANAGER  
MARSHALL COUNTY



# MIDDLE-SNAKE-TAMARAC RIVERS WATERSHED DISTRICT

Portions of Marshall, Kittson, Polk, Pennington and Roseau Counties

derived from local taxes. The combination of these two funding sources has enabled us to implement larger-scale projects that had been on the waiting list for years.

Please refer to the following pages for the Clean Water projects report presented to the RRWMB in December 2023.

Like many other startup programs, 1W1P (essentially the WBIF) has gone through a steep part of it's curve, with significant time and resources invested by local governments. Any budget reduction will have a severe negative impact on our progress and, perhaps more importantly, on the social momentum and trust that has been built over the past few years.

Therefore, we encourage the Council to maintain the WBIF funding at the requested amount, allowing us, the front-liners, to deliver sustainable returns on Clean Water funds invested in our area, with increased GDP and immeasurable environmental benefits.

As always, the Council members and staff are welcome to visit and see firsthand our accomplishments using the Clean Water funds through the WBIF program.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,

*Mori Maher*

Morteza Maher PMP, PE  
Administrator  
MSTRWD

BILL PETERSEN  
MIDDLE RIVER  
PRESIDENT  
MARSHALL COUNTY

ROBERT KOVAR  
EAST GRAND FORKS  
VICE PRESIDENT  
POLK COUNTY

KEITH SZCZEPANSKI  
STEPHEN  
TREASURER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

BRADLEY BLAWAT  
VIKING  
SECRETARY  
MARSHALL COUNTY

LEIN SCHILLER  
ARGYLE  
AST SEC/TREASURER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

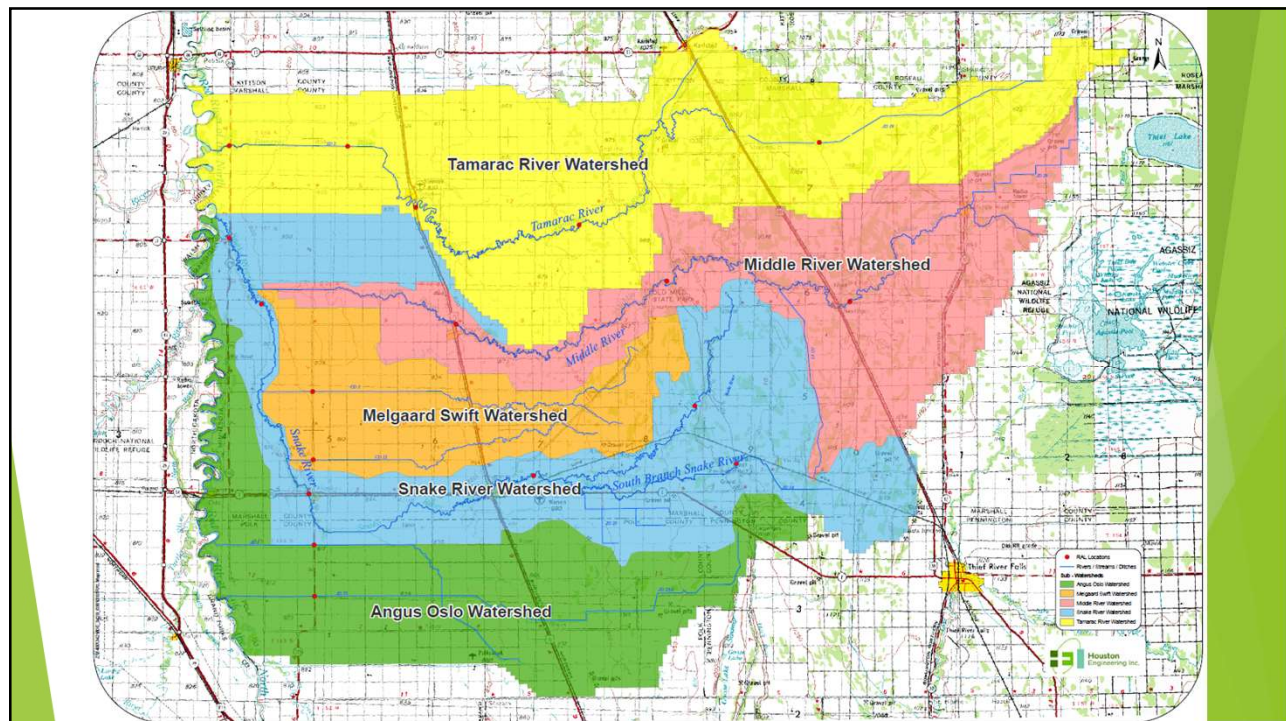
JOEY MCGREGOR  
WARREN  
MANAGER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

JARED SANDS  
ALVARADO  
MANAGER  
MARSHALL COUNTY

# Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers Watershed District

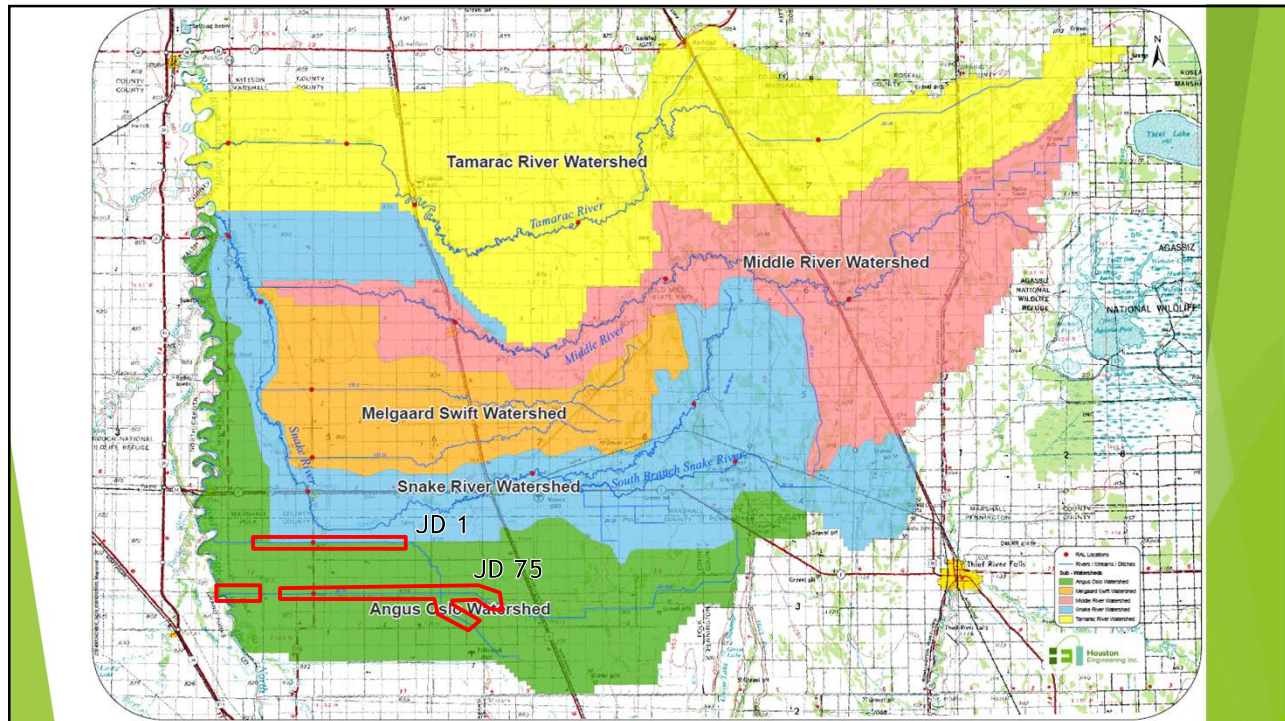
RRWMB Clean Water Base/Competitive Funding - Project Update

1



2





3

## Clean Water Projects in the Sub-Watershed Prior to RRWMB Contributions

<i>Year</i>	<i>Ditch System</i>	<i>Cost</i>
2012	JD 75	\$ 170,378.40
2015	JD 75	\$ 140,886.60
2017	JD 75	\$ 227,351.40
2018	JD 1	\$ 205,867.40
2019	PCD 43	\$ 137,062.05

4



5

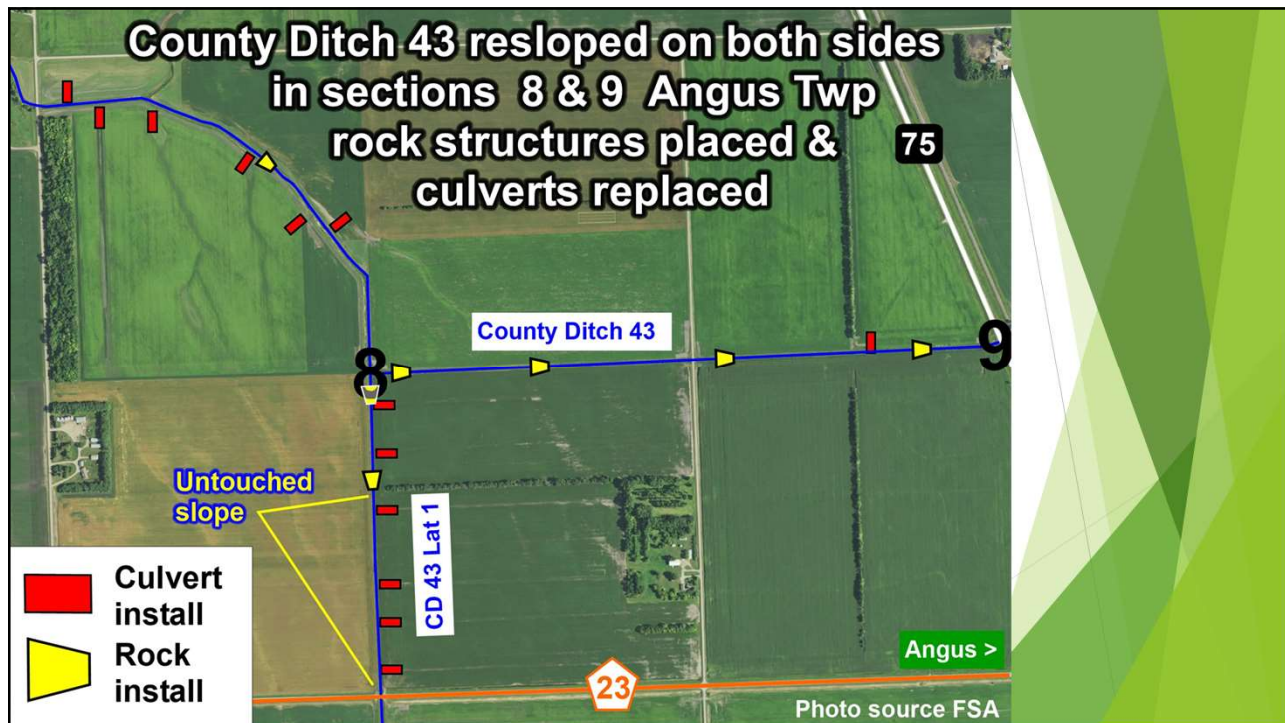


6





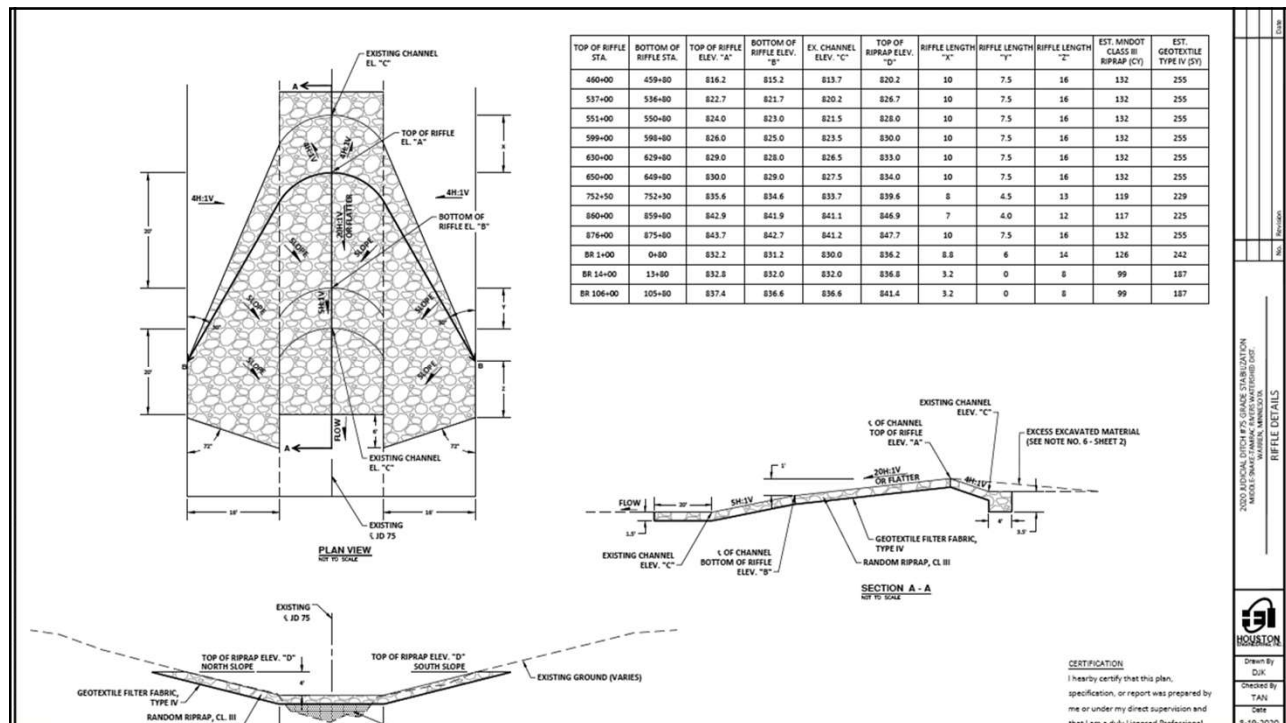
7



8

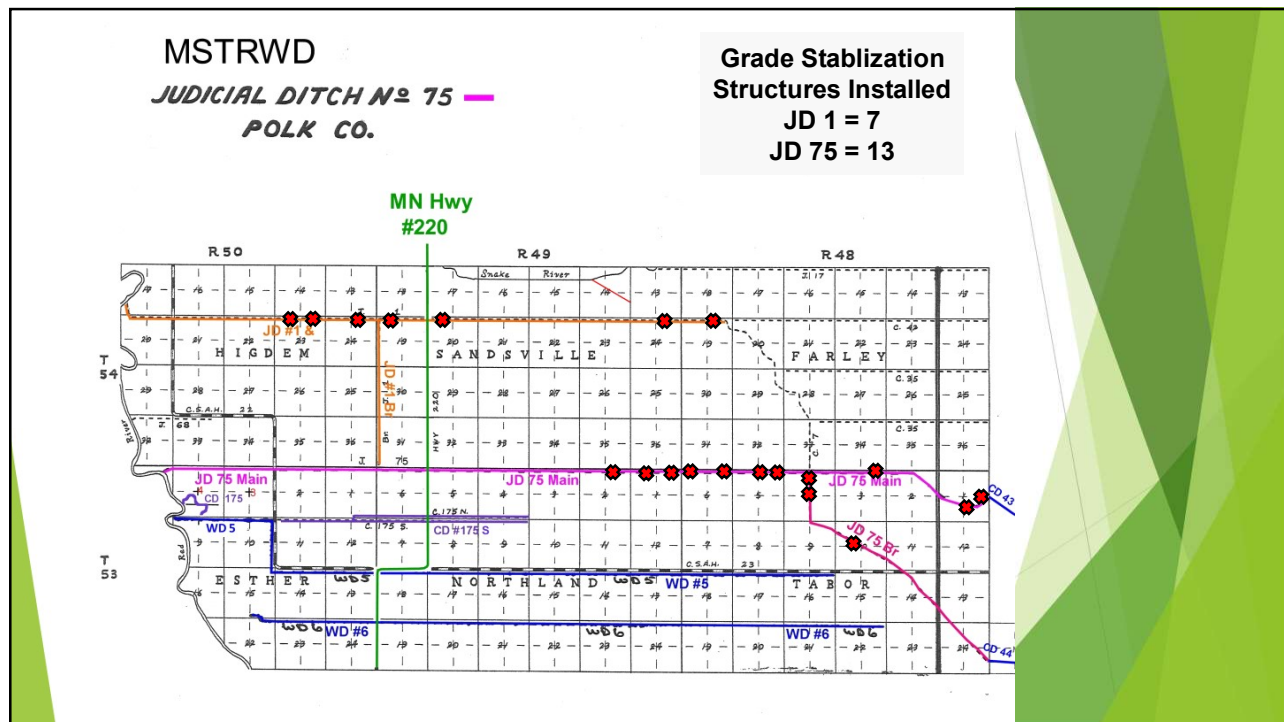
# 2020 - JD 1 and JD 75 Grade Stabilization

9



10





11



12





13



14



15

## 2023 -JD 75 Outlet Grade Stabilization

16





17



18





19

### 2020 and 2023 Grade Stabilization Funding Sources

BWSR - Stream Restoration (31%)	\$	258,700
RRWMB - Base/Comp (36.6%)	\$	306,700
Local Ditch fund (32.3%)	\$	270,907

20

## NOTE!!

1. These Projects **were not** Landowners' Petitioned,
2. Through these projects and according to BWSR's Calculator, we reduced :

**a. 377 tons of sediment per year = 15 - 18 SIDE DUMPS per YEAR**

**b. 377 lbs of Ph per year**

To the Red River of the North



21

No Questions?! ....

Thank you for the  
Funds and your Support!

22

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Tom Lynch <tomjlynchr3535@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 25, 2024 8:55 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Subject:** Funding

You don't often get email from tomjlynchr3535@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

The state of Minnesota has progressed by 43 percent in attempting to reduce its plastic since 2010 we are not failing this state failed and every single year for more than a decade we have put 93 percent of plastics into our landfills while spending hundreds of millions of dollars we actually made the problem worse

This is not acceptable

This is criminal behavior by any means

Every single grant award is given to big corporations that don't want to take responsibility and now legislation has decided that a short term solution is to increase the size of our landfills further polluting our environment

No low income no new start ups ever get awarded a grant I've 35000 and wm gets millions to do nothing now the new start ups can't buy a piece of equipment with that kind of money being a tractor nowadays costs more than twice that

These grant laws are written specifically for the special interest they are intended to receive the money

I could do more to recycle plastic with 2 million dollars than this entire state has in more than a decade and they spent approximately a half billion

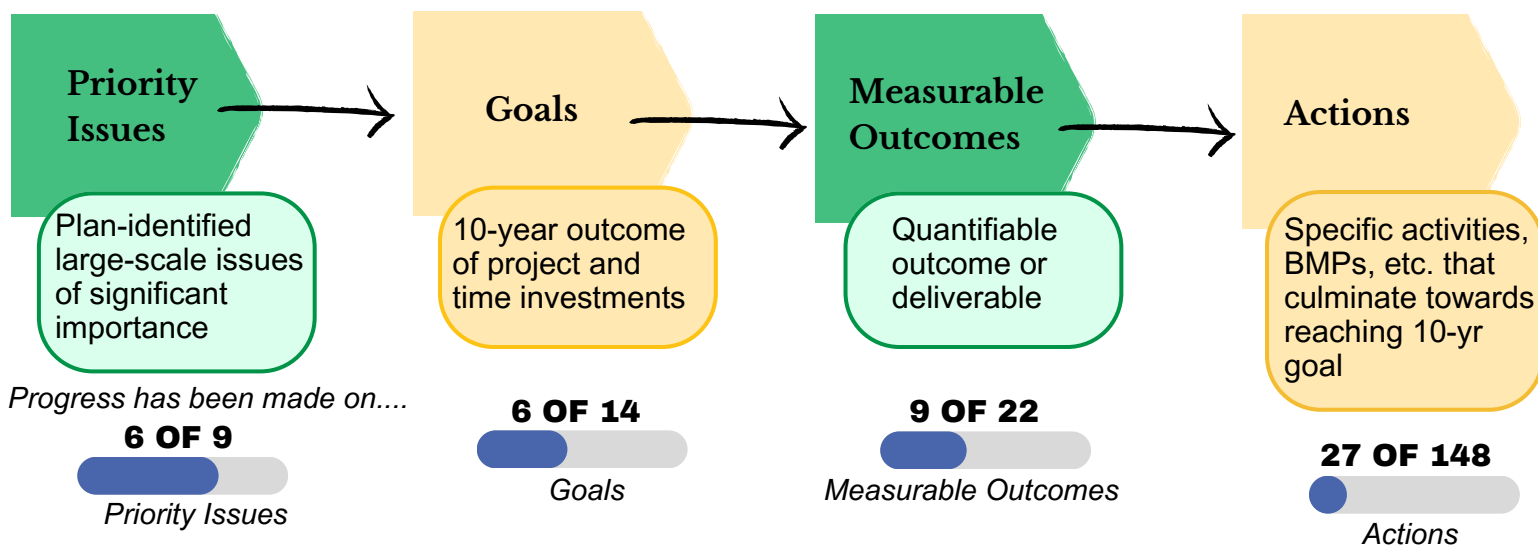
# 2023 Rum River Watershed Partnership Annual Report



The Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) is a joint powers entity formed by 5 counties, 8 SWCDs, and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The group's purpose is to implement a state-approved Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Any work partners complete using WBIF or other funding sources make progress towards plan goals. This report details all the progress made in 2023, which marks the first year of implementation!



## GOAL PROGRESS



## WE ARE ON TRACK

We are 10% into the life of the plan. We would like to see close to 10% of progress being made.

15% of Action IDs have at least 10% of progress made

8.8% of Action IDs are nearly complete.

Wells Sealed



Wetland Restorations



Conservation Easements



## POLLUTANT REDUCTIONS

PHOSPHORUS	NITROGEN	SEDIMENT	WATER STORAGE
817 lbs/yr	582 lb/yr	363.5 tons/yr	0.67 acre-feet
<div><div></div></div> 33%			<div><div></div></div> 1%



# Progress by Management Zone

MILACA		
TP	TN	SEDIMENT
24 lbs/yr	0 lb/yr	22 tons/yr

Activities have been done on Bogus Brook.

W. BRANCH RUM RIVER		
TP	TN	SEDIMENT
267 lbs/yr	476 lb/yr	147 tons/yr

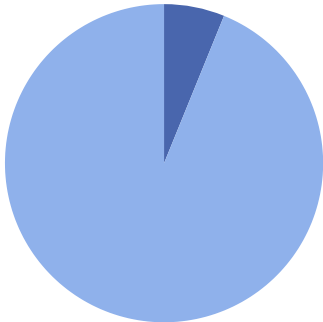
Activities have been done on Estes Brook and the West Branch of the Rum River.

## Funding

Funding is sourced from Watershed-Based Implementation Funds (WBIF) and other local, state, and federal funding sources. In 2023, the RRWP received \$1.1M of Watershed Based Implementation Funds (WBIF), sourced from the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment, to implement the plan.

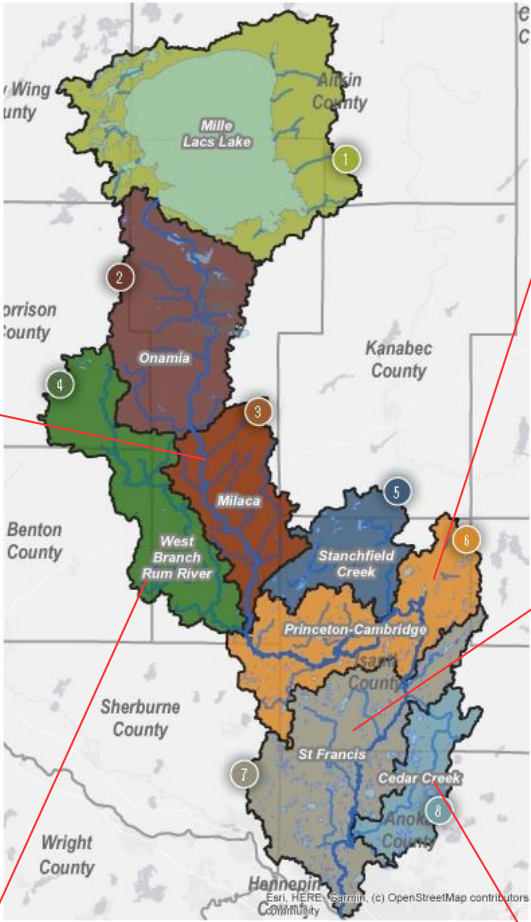
Project expenses from all sources have totaled....

**\$1,299,935**



4 project have been funded using WBIF

61 projects were funded form 19 other funding sources.



In many parts of the watershed work has been done that benefits groundwater, the Rum River, and watershed-wide resources.

## PRINCETON-CAMBRIDGE

TP	TN	SEDIMENT
400 lbs/yr	0 lb/yr	60 tons/yr

Activities have been done on Blue Lake, Green Lake, and Spectacle Lake.

## ST. FRANCIS

TP	TN	SEDIMENT
121 lbs/yr	8.0 lb/yr	131 tons/yr

Activities have been done on George Lake and Skogman Lake.

## CEDAR CREEK

TP	TN	SEDIMENT
4.7 lbs/yr	98 lb/yr	3.0 tons/yr

Activities have been done on Cedar Creek.

# Project Gallery

65 projects and activities were completed in the watershed in 2023. Here are a few examples of projects that were completed to accomplish plan goals.



Shoreline Restoration  
on Blue Lake  
Isanti SWCD



Drone Study of Mille  
Lacs Lake  
Aitkin SWCD



Prairie planting south  
of Princeton  
Sherburne SWCD



Riverbank stabilization  
on the Rum River  
Anoka CD



Well Sealing  
Mille Lacs SWCD

## Watershed Wide Outreach



Outreach activities are detailed in the FY23 RRWP Outreach Plan and led by staff at Isanti SWCD, Anoka SWCD, and Mille Lacs SWCD. This first year had a focus on increasing communication, collaboration, and utilizing resources among partners.

**COMPLETED**  
**IN PROGRESS**

**Goal:** 10 outreach efforts every biennium

**Goal:** 25 new groups engaged over 10 yrs



14/10



2/25

### Outreach completed includes:



Produced 8 handouts and template letters.



Increased partner communication by hosting monthly meetings and email updates



Hired Watershed Community Organizer



Promoted 4 field days hosted by partners  
A total of 220 attended



Added 31 educational materials to shared resources folder





Paul Gardner  
Council Administrator  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

July 23, 2024

Mr. Gardner and the Clean Water Council,

As members of the Rum River Watershed Partnership which uses Clean Water Funds for implementation, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as the Clean Water Council (Council) begins to develop their FY26-FY27 recommendations. We strongly encourage the Council to prioritize maintaining Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF).

The Rum River Watershed Partnership consists of eight soil and water conservation districts, five counties, and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Together, we spent approximately three years developing a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) which was state-approved in 2022. In 2023 we formed a joint powers entity to implement the plan. Since that time we have implemented many projects using WBIF including wetland restorations, shoreline practices, agricultural practices, and urban stormwater treatment. Together, we have shared resources, completed multi-jurisdictional work, and vetted the best projects on a watershed scale.

WBIF has been our primary funding source. Members of our partnership have secured competitive Clean Water Fund grants for individual projects. The Partnership has served as a hub for WBIF funds. The predictability of WBIF and selection of projects by the watershed partnership is key to our success. Our local units of government have found this collaborative and comprehensive approach to watershed management to be highly effective.

We respectfully request that the Council continue to fully fund the Watershed-based Implementation Fund so that local governments, in partnership, can fulfill their responsibilities in carrying out the work for clean water on behalf of the state of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jake Janski".

Jake Janski  
Rum River Watershed Partnership Chair  
Mille Lacs Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor

Add other signatures for all RRWP partners who are willing to sign. Then route it to all for DocuSign.

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Strong, Vanessa <vstrong@co.scott.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 19, 2024 6:15 PM  
**To:** Jan Voit  
**Cc:** MWeinandt; Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Barten, John; Richard Biske  
**Subject:** RE: URGENT - CLEAN WATER FUND CALL TO ACTION

You don't often get email from vstrong@co.scott.mn.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Hi Jan,

Thank you for reaching out. Unfortunately Scott County and Scott WMO's experience with One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) has been quite disappointing. It has resulted in government redundancy and duplication, confusion in roles and responsibilities, misalignment of State Priorities within the County, and definitely resulted in wasteful government spending that does nothing to improve the water resources within the County or SWMO. My conversation with some of the other 1W1P WD/WMO and County staff within the Metro is that they have had similar experiences. In my 15 years working in MN water resource management from cities, WMOs, to the County, I have never seen such a poor program and terrible waste of State funds.

My personal recommendation would be to remove One Watershed One Plan programming and funding where it overlaps with the Metro. 1W1P funds should not be spent within the 7 County Metro. For example: within our 1W1P Lower MN River East Planning Area Clean Water Funds were allocated for the areas outside the Metro (Rice/LeSuer Counties), however, there are several 1W1P activities within the metro (Scott County) that use up a significant amount of those allocated funds. That is wasteful planning and spending. There are already effective and efficient WD and WMOs covering this jurisdiction far more efficiently and effectively than 1W1P. The Metro is also already eligible for its own WBIF funding which is put to much better targeted use than 1W1P funds.

The path I'm recommending could allow the CWF funds to be reduced, and all the remaining 1W1P funds to go towards greater MN 1W1P partnerships where it is needed most. It's a simple and easy solution. That's a win for the State, the people, and the waters of Minnesota.

Kind regards,  
Vanessa



**Vanessa Strong**  
*Administrator SWMO*  
*Scott County Water Resources Supervisor*  
200 4th Avenue W  
Shakopee, MN 55379  
952.496.8345  
vstrong@co.scott.mn.us





July 18, 2024



Paul Gardner  
Council Administrator  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

As a local unit of government representing a watershed partnership that uses Clean Water Funds for implementation, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as the Clean Water Council (Council) begins to develop their FY26-FY27 recommendations.

The Roseau River Joint Powers Board, consisting of Roseau County, Roseau SWCD, and Roseau River Watershed District (RRWD), was one of the last plans completed in the state. Our Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) was approved in 2023. Now that the CWMP has been approved, we count on long-term, stable funding from the Clean Water Fund (CWF) to assure that we are able to implement projects for clean water on behalf of the state of Minnesota.

Even though we've only received our initial allocation (plus supplemental funding), our watershed partnership is in the construction phase of our first major project and in the process of developing several others. We have formed a Project Team to work with landowners and regulatory agencies to address issues in our priority sub-watershed effectively and efficiently.

June of 2025 our watershed is hosting the Minnesota Watersheds Summer Tour. This would be an excellent opportunity for the Council visit these sites to provide a better understanding of their importance and the role they play in clean water efforts.

Without long-term, stable funding from the CWF, none of these efforts would be possible. We respectfully request that the Council continue to fully fund the Watershed-based Implementation Fund so that local governments can fulfill their responsibilities in carrying out the work for clean water on behalf of the state of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

*Tracy Halstensgard*

Tracy Halstensgard  
Administrator

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Tuel, Warren (DOT)  
**Sent:** Monday, July 15, 2024 8:28 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Subject:** Clean Water Council Public Input

Good afternoon. My name is Warren Tuel and I am with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) – Office of Environmental Stewardship (Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Unit). I am also a member of the Minnesota Stormwater Research Council Advisory Board that reviews research projects that are funded in part by the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment Fund. I am also actively involved in research projects through MnDOT and the Local Road Research Board (LRRB). I would like to take the opportunity to express support for the Clean Water Councils research program and to emphasize the importance of stormwater research projects. I've seen the results of a number of projects that have benefited many individuals in both the public and private sectors on beneficial use of stormwater best management practices as well as new and emerging technologies. I'd also like to state that, in my role with the MSRC on the Advisory Board, we put a lot of effort into assessing the budgets of these projects and the potential return on investment in terms of improved water quality, improved environment and public health benefits. I look forward to continuing the mission of stormwater research in my part of the world and I also strongly support the work of the Minnesota Clean Water Council to provide interesting and beneficial research projects while also being good stewards of the Clean Water Fund. Thank you!

Warren Tuel, PSS

Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Office of Environmental Stewardship  
**Erosion and Stormwater Management Unit**  
395 John Ireland Blvd, Mail Stop 620  
St Paul, MN 55155  
Cell Phone: 952-378-5874  
[warren.tuel@state.mn.us](mailto:warren.tuel@state.mn.us)



July 10, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: **Biennial recommendations on use of the Clean Water Fund for fiscal years 2026-2027**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Dakota County staff provide the following recommendations on use of the Clean Water Fund for fiscal years 2026-2027:

- 1) Continue to prioritize use of the Clean Water Fund for drinking water source protection. Ensuring high-quality drinking water supplies for future generations is identified as priority in the [Dakota County Groundwater Plan](#) (Goal 1) and the [Dakota County Comprehensive Plan](#) (Goal 5.6). Currently, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and contamination from agricultural chemicals (such as nitrate and pesticides) are an ongoing concern in Dakota County. Dakota County has several municipal water systems impacted by elevated PFAS (City of South St. Paul and Hastings) and/or nitrates (City of Hastings and Rosemount); and multiple [drinking water studies](#) have identified elevated levels of these contaminants in private wells, especially in the south/southeastern portion of the county. The county's combination of porous, coarse textured soil and shallow, fractured bedrock (karst) make much of Dakota County vulnerable to groundwater contamination. Funding is needed to continue to address these groundwater/drinking water contamination sources through treatment, remediation, and continued voluntary actions and best management practices in collaboration with the community.
- 2) Request the Clean Water Council consider utilizing the Clean Water Fund to support water conservation and sustainability projects. Sufficient and sustainable water resources and drinking water supplies for both ecological and human health are identified as priorities in the [Dakota County Groundwater Plan](#) (Goal 2) and the [Dakota County Comprehensive Plan](#) (Goal 5.5 and 5.6). Increasing population growth, continued development, and unpredictable climate patterns are all contributing factors impacting our water resources. In order to combat unpredictable weather patterns and increasing water demand, cities and communities are starting to look for water conservation and reuse opportunities. However, there are multiple barriers to water

**Physical Development Division**

conservation implementation, including funding. While there is a Metropolitan Council grant program focused on improved [water efficiency](#) (i.e., installation of products or technologies that reduce or optimize water use), there are limited grant opportunities for water [quantity](#) focused capital projects. Funding is needed to help remove barriers to water reuse, including capital improvement grants and development of comprehensive statewide policies or guidelines. Additionally, funding focused on programs that incentivize the water-efficient design, installation, operation, and maintenance of irrigation systems will be critical to working toward groundwater sustainability. Findings from locally-conducted irrigation system audits indicate the bulk of irrigation systems on the landscape are not designed, installed, operated, or maintained in a manner that would be considered water-efficient.

Thank you for your consideration. Dakota County supports these efforts as these align with short- and long-term strategies identified in the [2020-2030 Dakota County Groundwater Plan](#).

For additional information, please contact Valerie Neppl, Groundwater Protection Unit Supervisor, at [valerie.neppl@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:valerie.neppl@co.dakota.mn.us) or 952-891-7019.

Sincerely,



**Georg T. Fischer**  
Director  
Physical Development Department  
P: 952-891-7007  
E: [Georg.Fischer@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US](mailto:Georg.Fischer@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US)

cc: Tom Novak, Interim Dakota County Manager  
Nikki Stewart, Environmental Resources Department Director  
Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency

**Physical Development Division**





July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Paul Gardner  
Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Clean Water Council Recommendations

Dear Mr. Gardner,

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Clean Water Council (CWC) project recommendations from the Clean Water Fund (CWF). MCGA advocates for nearly 7,000 corn farmer-members and works closely with the Minnesota Corn Research and Promotion Council and all of Minnesota's 24,000 corn farmers to implement best management practices for water quality and soil health.

MCGA first wants to thank the Council for their work last fall on the supplemental recommendations to the Legislature, which ultimately passed as a part of the Legacy bill. MCGA has made clear our commitment to the shared goal of protecting drinking water through partnerships, research, farm practices and policy. The proactive approach by the Council to respond to the EPA drinking water petition for southeast Minnesota will allow the agencies to implement their workplan in a timely manner and is greatly appreciated by MCGA's members, many of whom live in southeast Minnesota.

MCGA also wants to thank the Council for its continued direction of increasing recommendations for on the ground projects. As the Council considers funding recommendations for the FY 26-27 biennium, MCGA would support prioritization, and in some cases expansion, of the following projects because of the focus on implementation and are consistent with the CWC strategic plan priorities.

**Conservation Equipment Assistance (MDA)** - We greatly appreciate the Council adding this program recommendation two years ago. Since then, farmer interest in soil health practice implementation on has been proven out by the tremendous popularity of this program. Last year, MDA received over \$8.4 million in funding requests vs the \$2.3 million available. Total available funding included general funds. We expect a similar response from Minnesota farmers later this summer when the new round of funding becomes available.

MCGA would like to comment on questions that have been raised regarding the use of equipment by farmers to do "custom work" whereby they use their own equipment and are hired by fellow farmers - often neighbors - to do conservation tillage or cover crop applications on cropland that otherwise would not have been done because that farmer does not have the equipment to do so. Renting or trading labor

for use of equipment is a common practice among farmers, not just for conservation tillage systems or other conservation practices but is also done for other farming practices such as planting or harvesting. The ability of an individual farmer to do custom work for other farmers is an opportunity to keep farmers on the farm rather than having to look for off-farm work.

As the CWC considers its recommendations, MCGA would strongly encourage the Council to evaluate current funding for various programs that are designed to incentivize farmers to adopt soil health practices like strip-till, no-till, precision agriculture, nutrient management and cover crops where appropriate. The best way to expand adoption of these practices is by farmers owning their own equipment and working with other farmers to do custom work. The upfront cost of retrofitting or buying new equipment is often the biggest barrier to farmers as they look at ways to implement different tillage or cover cropping systems on their farms as well as the broader suite of practices that can enhance soil health and improve water quality. Prior to this program the only options available to farmers who were interested in trying a new practice and offsetting some of the risk, was either through a cost-share program and/or renting equipment through their local SWCD. These programs may have had farmer interest, but they were not designed for large scale adoption. A challenge with scaling-up the SWCD equipment rental model is the equipment may not be available to rent from their SWCD, due to high demand at a time of year when time is of the essence. Given the strong response to this program we would encourage the Council to look at funding this program at \$7 million for the FY 26-27 recommendations.

**AgBMP Loan Program (MDA)** - Expanding the AgBMP Loan Program complements the Conservation Equipment Assistance Program as well as multiple other programs that will allow Minnesota farmers to take advantage of low interest loans to implement soil health practices and other conservation measures to benefit clean water. MCGA has several members who have taken advantage of the AgBMP Loan Program to make conservation improvements to their own operations and have appreciated the financing option offered through low interest loans.

**Technical Assistance (MDA)** – We appreciate the Council’s long-term support for on-farm demonstrations like Discovery Farms that increase education and promotion of best management practices on the farm. MDA technical assistance funds help to support on-farm demonstrations in agricultural production areas to evaluate various conservation practices, implement edge-of-field monitoring and build peer-to-peer learning among farmer, local governments, and private service providers.

**Nitrate in Groundwater (MDA)** - We appreciate the Council recommending an additional \$1 million as a part of its supplemental recommendations last year. AS MDA continues to implement the Groundwater Protection Rule and as it works with MPCA and MDH to address the EPA petition related to nitrates in Southeast Minnesota, continued funding of this program is greatly needed as the state moves forward to address nitrates in vulnerable areas.

**MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MDA)** – Enrollment in the program continues to increase and it has been an effective program to leverage federal conservation program funding resources

for implementation. We think there are opportunities to further utilize the program as a conduit to implement soil health and water quality practices on farms by utilizing CWF dollars to help farmers implement practices as a part of the program.

**Expanding the Ag Weather Station Network (MDA)**- Continued expansion of these weather stations will give farmers the local information they need to make the best possible agronomic decisions regarding planting dates, crop protection timing, and more. This detailed local information will create opportunities to reduce chemical applications. Information on when weather conditions are favorable for effective crop protectant application means less unusable applications which has a benefit for water quality in Minnesota.

**Conservation Drainage Management and Assistance (BWSR)**-These grants are directed toward drainage authorities to target critical areas to reduce erosion and sedimentation, reduce peak flows and flooding, and improve water quality, while protecting drainage system efficiency and reducing drainage system maintenance.

Thank you for considering our input on the Clean Water Fund project recommendations and funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Allen-Tully". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dana Allen-Tully  
President  
Minnesota Corn Growers Association

July 11, 2024

Dear Members of the Minnesota Clean Water Council,

I am writing to express our support for the Minnesota Clean Water Council's goals and objectives, particularly in promoting sustainable agricultural practices that protect our state's invaluable water resources.

As stakeholders in the agricultural sector, we recognize the critical importance of balancing agricultural productivity with environmental stewardship. Therefore, we commend the Council's efforts to advance initiatives that enhance water quality and sustainability throughout Minnesota.

In line with your mission, we propose implementing a targeted financial incentive program. This program aims to assist agricultural retailers and cooperatives in adopting and promoting evidence-based 4R nutrient management strategies. Similar to electric rate decoupling initiatives incentivizing sustainability, this program would incentivize the adoption of precision agriculture techniques and sound nutrient management practices. By providing financial payment per acre to ag retailers, coupled with bonus payments for collaborating with Certified Crop Advisors, we can promote the widespread adoption of 4R practices across Minnesota's agricultural landscape.

This approach not only supports our agricultural community by optimizing resource use and reducing environmental impact but also aligns with the Council's vision of ensuring clean and sustainable water resources for all Minnesotans. It leverages proven strategies to mitigate nutrient runoff, enhance water quality, and promote long-term agricultural sustainability.

We believe that by working collaboratively with the Minnesota Clean Water Council on this initiative, we can achieve significant progress toward our shared goals. We are committed to contributing to the success of this program and to the broader efforts to safeguard Minnesota's water resources for future generations.

Thank you for your dedication to this vital cause. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss this proposal further and to contribute to a more sustainable future for Minnesota.

Sincerely,



Lee Helgen, Executive Director  
Minnesota Crop Production Retailers  
763-235-6472  
[lee@mcpr-cca.org](mailto:lee@mcpr-cca.org)



*Protecting, restoring and enhancing the metro  
Mississippi River and its watershed since 1993.*

106 W. Water St., Ste. 600 | St. Paul MN 55107-2032  
(651) 222-2193 | [fmr.org](http://fmr.org) | [info@fmr.org](mailto:info@fmr.org)

July 12th, 2024

**To:** The Minnesota Clean Water Council

**Re:** Support for the University of Minnesota Forever Green Initiative

Dear members,

Friends of the Mississippi River respectfully requests that the Clean Water Council recommend \$10 million in funding for the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative in your FY26-27 Clean Water Fund recommendations. We believe that this is the single most impactful investment the Clean Water Council can make to achieve Minnesota's long-term clean water goals.

### **The Forever Green Initiative**

The University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative is a nationally respected research effort designed to develop new, economically viable 'Continuous Living Cover' (CLC) cropping systems.

Integrating perennial and winter-annual crops into existing farming systems holds soil in place and stops pollutants from leaching into ground and surface water, while providing producers with new revenue streams that can bolster our agricultural economy through the development of high-value, commercially marketable food, feed and fuel products.

Specifically, Forever Green crops can:

- Improve water quality in surface waters and groundwater;
- Protect drinking water and improve public health;
- Enhance soil health and climate resilience;
- Enhance habitat for wildlife and pollinators;
- Provide ultra-low carbon feedstocks for sustainable fuels;
- Foster new economic opportunities for Minnesota family farmers;
- Diversify crop rotations and farm income streams;
- Attract new investment and employment in emerging agricultural industries; and
- Attract high-quality talent to the University of Minnesota to meet the future state workforce needs of the agriculture, food, energy and natural resource industries.

The recently published [Putting Down Roots](#) report, prepared by FMR and the University of Minnesota, found that under a moderate adoption scenario, Forever Green CLC cropping systems could reduce nitrogen loss by 23% and soil erosion by 35% in Minnesota by 2050 while enhancing on-farm profits by 20%. This is a win-win for all Minnesotans.

### **Addressing nitrate contamination in groundwater**

As you know, Minnesota needs new solutions to groundwater nitrate pollution, especially in [vulnerable areas](#) such as coarse-textured soils or karst topography. When it comes to protecting groundwater, few strategies are as effective or scalable as CLC cropping systems. For example:

- Kernza, a pioneering perennial grain, can reduce soil water nitrate concentration by up to 97% compared to corn.<sup>1</sup>
- Winter annual oilseeds crops like camelina and pennycress can reduce nitrate concentrations by up to 97% compared to no cover (standard practice).<sup>2</sup>
- Perennial crops can reduce nitrate losses through tile lines by over 95%.<sup>3</sup>

### **A five-to-one return**

State investment in Forever Green has historically been leveraged many times over in federal grants and other funding that supports this increasingly high-profile effort. Historically, for every one dollar of Clean Water Fund support, Forever Green has secured an additional five dollars in complementary funds.<sup>4</sup>

### **An emerging Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) market opportunity**

Winter annual oilseed are particularly well-positioned as a low-carbon aviation fuel feedstock. The emergence of the Minnesota SAF Hub, industrywide low-carbon fuel commitments and federal SAF production incentives have opened the door to rapid commercialization. Cargill hopes to [expand its pilot acreage](#) from 2,000 to 20,000 acres next year. With robust public investment, researchers estimate that statewide acreage could exceed [one million acres](#) within 10 years.

### **A deserving investment**

While we have strongly supported Clean Water Fund investments to date, we feel that the time has come for the Clean Water Council to take bold action in transforming Minnesota's approach to clean water. Traditional farmer education and BMP cost-share programs are important, but we must acknowledge that traditional BMPs can't do the job alone.

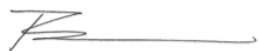
Getting to clean water is not just about 'how we grow' our crops. It is also about 'what we grow'. We must find ways to keep the soil covered year-round through economically viable CLC cropping systems that work for farmers and the environment.

As our friend Dr. Don Wyse liked to say: *"If you want to change the landscape, get farmers and economic opportunity to change the landscape."*

When fully funded, the Forever Green Initiative will make Minnesota the unquestioned leader in developing sustainable, profitable and diversified cropping systems that improve habitat, water quality, climate and soil health while boosting farm prosperity and rural economic development.

We urge you to support full funding of \$10M/biennium for Forever Green in your FY 26-27 Clean Water Fund recommendations.

Sincerely,



Trevor Russell  
Water Program Director  
Friends of the Mississippi River

---

<sup>1</sup> Jungers et al. 2019. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment.

<sup>2</sup> Weyers et al. 2019. Journal of Environmental Quality.

<sup>3</sup> Randall et al. 1997. Journal of Environmental Quality.

<sup>4</sup> Since 2016, FGI has received \$16.8M from the CWF and \$97.6M from other sources (federal, foundation, company, and other state funding).



**KOOCHICHING COUNTY  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Courthouse  
715 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
International Falls, MN 56649

Telephone: (218) 283-1157 Fax: (218) 283-1159

Mr. John Barten, Clean Water Council Chair  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[bbarten79@gmail.com](mailto:bbarten79@gmail.com)

Honorable Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us](mailto:Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us)

June 25, 2024

Dear Chair Barten, Executive Director Gardner, and Clean Water Council Members,

I write to you on behalf of Koochiching County in support of the National Park Water Quality Protection Program and the Voyageur's National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board's (VNPCWJPB) \$4 million dollar funding request within that program. This program and past funding to the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water project have had a very positive impact on the waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

As you are no doubt aware, Voyageurs National Park is the nation's only water based national park, and it is proudly acclaimed for its beauty and pristine nature. More than 13 years ago, counties, townships, and unorganized areas adjacent to the park came together and locally formed Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project Joint Powers Board. In coordination with the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. National Park Service, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, and the Minnesota Clean Water Council, this board has directed efforts to develop a comprehensive plan to take action on clean water initiatives that improve water quality throughout the watershed.

The board has had great success, establishing sanitary sewer districts and projects in three of the four main entrances to the park. They have worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Public Facilities Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Minnesota Clean Water Council, and many others to bring funding to this effort.



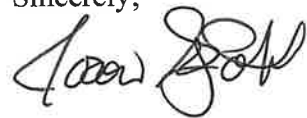
The Clean Water Council has been an important partner in providing the necessary funding to continue these clean water initiatives that improve and maintain water quality within the park. Your funding has helped leverage millions of dollars in other funding to further these efforts.

Your support in approving the \$4 million request from the Voyageur's National Park Joint Powers Board would allow us to continue this project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Let us protect these treasured waters, together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Sjoblom". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jason" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Sjoblom".

Jason Sjoblom  
Koochiching County  
Board of Commissioners, Chair

CC: State Senator Grant Hauschild  
State Representative Roger Skraba  
St. Louis County Board  
Governor Tim Walz  
Commissioner Katrina Kessler

July 9, 2024

Steve Besser, Chair  
Budget Outcomes Committee  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Paul Gardner  
Council Administrator  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Clean Water Council Funding Recommendations

Dear Chair Besser and Council Administrator Gardner:

We appreciate the opportunity for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to provide input as the Clean Water Council Budget Outcomes Committee begins to develop recommendations to the Clean Water Council after hearing from each agency on their FY26-FY27 recommendations. This year marks 15 years of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy amendment; because of this milestone and with roughly 10 years remaining of this dedicated fund, TNC encourages the Council to prioritize recommendations for existing and new programs that have demonstrated durable outcomes for protecting, restoring and enhancing clean water for people and nature. We further encourage the Council to consider programs and policy that ensure safe and reliable drinking water sources for all Minnesotans and prioritize timely water-related public health outcomes, even if it requires a change in focus from programs funded to-date, or reducing or eliminating those that are less effective at producing safe drinking water. Programs should measurably contribute to Council priorities and advancing the strategic plan that was developed with significant stakeholder input.

We submit the following feedback on critical programs that reflect TNC priorities for freshwater resilience as well as clean water priorities for Minnesota:

Board of Water and Soil Resources:

- **Working Lands Floodplain Easements:** While still a relatively new program, these easements give landowners in sensitive areas like floodplains, and who may be opposed to land retirement, an option to ensure land uses that are compatible with water resource protection. This program has great potential in areas of Minnesota like the southeast, where there are serious resource concerns and where protection potential has not been included in previous Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) programs. Because areas like southeastern Minnesota have not had RIM support, it will take time to build momentum.
- **Critical Shoreland Protection Easements:** This proven program is worthy of continued investment. It is unique among easement programs for the precision protection it provides, in addition to many benefits including protecting drinking water, habitat, carbon sequestration in

critical watersheds at risk of degradation, and ultimately preventing costlier cleanup if these waters were to become impaired. This program has a good return on investment for the Clean Water Fund.

- **Watershed Partners Legacy Grant Program:** As a pilot program to foster community-driven innovation for clean water outcomes, this has shown great promise, and the applications in the pilot have also demonstrated a high need. We recommend significantly increasing support for this program to continue to foster innovation and engagement in new communities. We also recommend the Clean Water Council and BWSR increase outreach and engagement efforts to Tribal Nations to encourage and support their participation in the program.

Department of Natural Resources:

- Water Storage
- Culvert Replacement
- Mussel Restoration
- Non-point Source Restoration and Implementation

With the exception of Non-point Source Restoration and Implementation, these DNR programs were new when included in the FY24-25 biennial recommendations from the Council. We commend the Council for including these previously to help get these programs off the ground, and the DNR for considering water storage opportunities on state lands. We recommend these programs be further considered for additional investment so they can continue to expand as these programs have multiple benefits for downstream aquatic habitat, water quality, and flood mitigation.

Pollution Control Agency:

- **Chloride Reduction:** Chloride is an increasing and irreversible threat to water and aquatic systems. This program has demonstrated results through innovation and adaptation to protect and restore surface and groundwater. The efficacy of the program is commendable and makes an outsized impact.
- **Clean Water Council Communication and Engagement Capacity:** The Clean Water Council is better served when interested parties and rights holders are informed of Clean Water Fund supported efforts and participate in the process and ensure the outcomes from CWF investments that Minnesotans expect. We support funding an additional staff person to focus on communication and community engagement to allow current staff to focus on council and council committee administration.

We offer additional reflections to inform Council deliberation on all programs being considered: In addition to emphasizing the importance of strong funding in the above programs, we also hope the



The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota,  
North Dakota, South Dakota  
1101 West River Parkway, Suite 200  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1291

**tel** (612) 331.0700  
**fax** (612) 331.0770  
**nature.org**

recommendation process will result in continued conversation about the outcomes for all Clean Water Fund investments, especially the important work that happens in Watershed Based Implementation. We also encourage the Council and agency partners to seek to understand and determine efficiencies within and between programs, limiting duplication.

All programs and projects receiving Clean Water Funding should meet or exceed the constitutional requirements to protect, enhance, and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams and to protect groundwater and drinking water from degradation. To demonstrate this, projects and programs should include measurable outcomes, beyond the stated activities, and report back to the Council on those accomplishments (per Minnesota Statutes 114D.50).

The Nature Conservancy continues to remain concerned about the rate of progress toward state water priorities since the Clean Water Fund was first created; however, the above-mentioned programs are a meaningful step toward advancing the pace and scale of the beneficial impact Clean Water Funds can have. While the Council faces difficult decisions in arriving at final recommendations this year, the urgency and opportunity to invest in implementation is clear.

Thank you again for considering our input. Please let us know if you would like more information on why The Nature Conservancy feels strongly that these programs advance clean water for Minnesota. We look forward to continuing to work with the Council in your recommendation development process and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ann Mulholland".

Ann Mulholland, Chapter Director

The Nature Conservancy, MN-ND-SD

**CRANE LAKE WATER & SANITARY DISTRICT**  
**P.O. BOX 306**  
**CRANE LAKE, MN 55725**  
**Phone: 218/993-1303 Email: [info@clwsd.org](mailto:info@clwsd.org)**

Robert Scott, Chair  
Bonnie Caughey, Vice-Chair

Mark Anderson, Manager  
Deena Congdon, Manager  
Darrell Scott, Manager

July 8, 2024

Mr. John Barten, Clean Water Council Chair  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[bbarten79@gmail.com](mailto:bbarten79@gmail.com)

Honorable Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us](mailto:Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us)

Dear Chair Barten, Executive Director Gardner, and Clean Water Council Members,

I write to you on behalf of the Crane Lake Water & Sanitary District in support of the National Park Water Quality Protection Program and the Voyageur's National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board's (VNPCWJPB) \$4 million dollar funding request within that program. This program and past funding to the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water project have had a very positive impact on the waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

As you are no doubt aware, Voyageurs National Park is the nation's only water based national park, and it is proudly acclaimed for its beauty and pristine nature. More than 13 years ago, counties, townships, and unorganized areas adjacent to the park came together and locally formed Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project Joint Powers Board. In coordination with the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. National Park Service, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, and the Minnesota Clean Water Council, this board has directed efforts to develop a comprehensive plan to clean up and protect the waters of the park at the four main public access points to the park.

The board has had great success, establishing sanitary sewer districts and projects in three of the four main entrances to the park. They have worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Public Facilities Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Minnesota Clean Water Council, and many others to bring funding to this effort.

The Clean Water Council has been an important partner in providing the necessary funding to continue these efforts to protect the park. Your funding has helped leverage millions of dollars in other funding to further these efforts.

Your support in approving the \$4 million request from the Voyageur's National Park Joint Powers Board would allow us to continue this project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Let us protect these treasured waters, together.

Sincerely,

Robert Scott,  
Chairman

CC: State Senator Grant Hauschild  
State Representative Roger Skraba  
St. Louis County Board  
Koochiching County Board  
Governor Tim Walz  
Commissioner Katrina Kessler

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Axtell, Kyle <kyle.axtell@woodburymn.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 3, 2024 1:51 PM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Subject:** Input on Clean Water Council FY26-27 Funding Recommendation

You don't often get email from kyle.axtell@woodburymn.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Greetings Paul,

As a new member of the MN Stormwater Research Council (MSRC) Advisory Board, I encourage the Clean Water Council to continue its strong financial support for the important work of the MSRC by maintaining or increasing existing funding levels. Research funded by the MSRC has helped to position Minnesota as a national leader in stormwater quality and quantity management while providing meaningful research to improve the effectiveness of practices and programs used by partners every year across the state. Funding allocations to MSRC have been effectively and efficiently managed by UMN Water Resources Center staff with direction from the Advisory Board – composed of a diverse team of researchers and practitioners from across the stormwater management industry, both private and public sector. State funding allocations to the MSRC also help to leverage continued contributions from local agencies and other partners to add value to the State's investment in stormwater research.

Continuing to support the research and technology transfer initiatives of the MSRC should be one of the easiest decisions the Clean Water Council can make. I look forward to serving on the MSRC Advisory Board in the future and helping to provide guidance as we support stormwater management and water resource improvement efforts on behalf of the State of Minnesota.

Thank you for your time,

**Kyle Axtell**

*Watershed Project Manager*

**South Washington Watershed District**

2302 Tower Drive, Woodbury MN 55125

(651) 714-3718

[www.swwdmn.org](http://www.swwdmn.org)



SOUTH WASHINGTON  
WATERSHED DISTRICT



Mr. John Barten, Clean Water Council Chair  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[bbarten79@gmail.com](mailto:bbarten79@gmail.com)

Honorable Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us](mailto:Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us)

July X, 2024

Dear Chair Barten, Executive Director Gardner, and Clean Water Council Members,

I write to you on behalf of Ash River Sewer District in support of the National Park Water Quality Protection Program and the Voyageur's National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board's (VNPCWJPB) \$4 million dollar funding request within that program. This program and past funding to the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water project have had a very positive impact on the waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

As you are no doubt aware, Voyageurs National Park is the nation's only water based national park, and it is proudly acclaimed for its beauty and pristine nature. More than 13 years ago, counties, townships, and unorganized areas adjacent to the park came together and locally formed Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project Joint Powers Board. In coordination with the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. National Park Service, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, and the Minnesota Clean Water Council, this board has directed efforts to develop a comprehensive plan to clean up and protect the waters of the park at the four main public access points to the park.


The board has had great success, establishing sanitary sewer districts and projects in three of the four main entrances to the park. They have worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Public Facilities Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Minnesota Clean Water Council, and many others to bring funding to this effort.

The Clean Water Council has been an important partner in providing the necessary funding to continue these efforts to protect the park. Your funding has helped leverage millions of dollars in other funding to further these efforts.

Your support in approving the \$4 million request from the Voyageur's National Park Joint Powers Board would allow us to continue this project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Let us protect these treasured waters, together.

Sincerely, 

Name Debra Sanders

Title 1<sup>st</sup> Chair ARSD

CC: State Senator Grant Hauschild  
State Representative Roger Skraba  
St. Louis County Board  
Koochiching County Board  
Governor Tim Walz  
Commissioner Katrina Kessler

SENATOR JENNIFER A. MCEWEN  
SENATE LABOR CHAIR  
DULUTH, District 08



*June 2, 2024*

Chair **John Barten**,  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Honorable **Paul Gardner**,  
Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Barten, Executive Director Gardner, and Clean Water Council Members,

I write to you in support of the Minnesota Clean Water Council's National Park Water Quality Protection Program and the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board's (VNPCWJPB) \$4 million dollar funding request within that program. This program and past funding to the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water project have had a very positive impact on the waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

**As you are no doubt aware, Voyageurs National Park is the nation's only water based national park, and it is proudly acclaimed for its beauty and pristine nature.** More than 13 years ago, counties, townships, and unorganized areas adjacent to the park came together and locally formed Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project Joint Powers Board. In coordination with the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. National Park Service, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, and the Minnesota Clean Water Council, this board has directed efforts to develop a comprehensive plan to clean up and protect the waters of the park at the four main public access points to the park.

The board has had great success, establishing sanitary sewer districts and projects in three of the four main entrances to the park. They have worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Public Facilities Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Minnesota Clean Water Council, and many others to bring funding to this effort.

The Clean Water Council has been an important partner in providing the necessary funding to continue these efforts to protect the park. Your funding has helped leverage millions of dollars in other funding to further these efforts.

Your support in approving the \$4 million request from the Voyageur's National Park Joint Powers Board would allow us to continue this project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support. **Let us protect these treasured waters, together.**

Sincerely,



Senator Jennifer A. McEwen  
*Chair, Labor Committee*  
*Senate District 08—Duluth*

CC:

*Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board*  
*St. Louis County Board*  
*Koochiching County Board*  
*Commissioner Katrina Kessler*  
*Governor Tim Walz*

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Kathy <simpleharvestfarmorganics@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2024 8:50 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Cc:** Kathy  
**Subject:** Input for MN Clean Water Council

You don't often get email from simpleharvestfarmorganics@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Paul - thanks for asking for input - I do have some.

My background: I am a former supervisor for the Rice County SWCD Board; and a farmer of all HE land, which is all in pasture to prevent soil & water erosion, so I graze livestock. Because of the way I solved my land's erosion problems that previous land owners created, I automatically received 3 of 4 endorsements in MDA's Ag Water Quality Certification program, without any tax incentives to accomplish that.

What I see missing from all the money being invested in commodity farmers to get them to reduce their water & soil problems, is any follow up to measure the efficacy of the public investment. While on the SWCD Board, I asked how many farmers continued to plant cover crops after their 3-year grant was over; in other words, did the grant money develop a behavior change in those farmers so they continued the cover crop practice after the grant money ran out. The answer: no one had any idea - because there was zero follow up.

As a MAWQCP farm, there were no measurements taken on my farm to assess the water entering my farm, nor exiting my farm; no measurements of soil erosion; no benchmark values to be able to compare with future tests. This year, I was "re-certified" by a phone call, but again, no measurements taken for water quality or soil erosion. I do hear of reports about the benefits of the MAWQCP program - but I am unsure if those benefits are based on actual tests / measurements, or extrapolations of a theoretical model, because as a MAWQCP farm - no measurements happened here.

My recommendation to the Council would be to invest in some continuous benchmark testing and then after-action investigation / testing to assess if the money being invested is actually truly accomplishing anything. And when water tests are done, to include testing for antibiotics in heavy livestock areas, and chemicals / pesticides in non-organic areas, plus generic e coli (using the FSMA PSR protocol). Just testing for N and sometimes P is inadequate.

Thanks for listening; hope this helps.

---

Always pastured, always organic.

Kathy Zeman  
She, her, hers  
Simple Harvest Farm Organics  
9800 155th Street East  
Nerstrand MN 55053  
(507) 664-9446  
[simpleharvestfarmorganics@gmail.com](mailto:simpleharvestfarmorganics@gmail.com)



## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** David Craig <dcraig13322@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2024 9:50 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Subject:** clean water

You don't often get email from dcraig13322@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

I think all lakes should be tested for chemicals and contaminants. Those should then be removed. Also, testing along different points of rivers and streams should be done and hunt down where chemicals and contaminants are getting into the water. Then the sources of those should be stopped and fined. I think I've suggested this before and I was told this was up to the DNR, which sounds stupid. Agencies should work together on this.

I think it would be good if a business was giving state help to dispose of harmful chemicals paid for by tax payers if they don't make more than a million dollars in profit a year.

Thanks,  
David Craig

**Senator Grant Hauschild**

Senate District 3

Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Ave West  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

Phone: 651-296-1789

Email: [sen.grant.hauschild@senate.mn](mailto:sen.grant.hauschild@senate.mn)



# Senate

State of Minnesota

Mr. John Barten, Clean Water Council Chair  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[bbarten79@gmail.com](mailto:bbarten79@gmail.com)

Honorable Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us](mailto:Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us)

July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Dear Chair Barten, Executive Director Gardner, and Clean Water Council Members,

I write to you in support of the Minnesota Clean Water Council's National Park Water Quality Protection Program and the Voyageur's National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board's (VNPCWJPB) \$4 million dollar funding request within that program. This program and past funding to the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water project have had a very positive impact on the waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in my Legislative District in Northern Minnesota.

As you are no doubt aware, Voyageurs National Park is the nation's only water based national park, and it is proudly acclaimed for its beauty and pristine nature. More than 13 years ago, counties, townships, and unorganized areas adjacent to the park came together and locally formed Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Project Joint Powers Board. In coordination with the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. National Park Service, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, and the Minnesota Clean Water Council, this board has directed efforts to develop a comprehensive plan to clean up and protect the waters of the park at the four main public access points to the park.

The board has had great success, establishing sanitary sewer districts and projects in three of the four main entrances to the park. They have worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Public Facilities Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Minnesota Clean Water Council, and many others to bring funding to this effort.

The Clean Water Council has been an important partner in providing the necessary funding to continue these efforts to protect the park. Your funding has helped leverage

millions of dollars in other funding to further these efforts.

Your support in approving the \$4 million request from the Voyageur's National Park Joint Powers Board would allow us to continue this project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Let us protect these treasured waters, together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Hauschild', written in a cursive style.

Grant Hauschild  
Senator – District 3

CC: Voyageurs National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board  
St. Louis County Board  
Koochiching County Board  
Governor Tim Walz  
Commissioner Katrina Kessler



**Kabetogama Township**  
**9707 Gamma Rd.**  
**Kabetogama, MN 56669**  
**[www.kabtowship.com](http://www.kabtowship.com)**

Mr. John Barten, Clean Water Council Chair  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[bbarten79@gmail.com](mailto:bbarten79@gmail.com)

Honorable Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
[Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us](mailto:Paul.Gardner@state.mn.us)

July 25, 2024

Dear Chair Barten, Executive Director Gardner, and Clean Water Council Members,

I write to you on behalf of Kabetogama Township in support of the National Park Water Quality Protection Program and the Voyageur's National Park Clean Water Joint Powers Board's (VNPCWJPB) \$4 million dollar funding request within that program. This program and past funding to the Voyageurs National Park Clean Water project have had a very positive impact on the waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Kabetogama Township is a recreation-based community with over 200 shoreland properties including 24 resorts, the Kabetogama Voyageurs National Park Visitor Center and Woodenfrog State Forest Campground. The waters of Voyageurs National Park are among our most prized resources, both economically and existentially. As a community, we recognized the need to replace the many failing and non-compliant individual sewer treatment systems on our lakeshore properties. Because of limitations such as lot size, soil and depth to the water table or rock, maintaining or constructing new individual treatment systems which meet county requirements is problematic or impossible for most shoreline property owners. The Township recognized that the development of community sewer systems was the only viable option to provide a solution to our long-term sewer infrastructure needs. Shoreland property owners have organized and petitioned The Township Board to form subordinate service districts for the purpose of constructing and managing community sewer systems. 70% said yes to clean water. Kabetogama Township's objective is to have the majority of our 9 miles of developed shoreline served by managed community sewer systems. Our goal is to do our part in enhancing and preserving our clean water legacy.

Under the comprehensive umbrella of the VNPCWJPB and significant funding from the Clean Water Council, we completed our first community sewer project serving 8 resorts and 11 private residences in 2017. In 2020-22, we formed 2 more subordinate service districts and with funding from the Clean Water Council in 2022, we completed work on



**Kabetogama Township**  
**9707 Gamma Rd.**  
**Kabetogama, MN 56669**  
**[www.kabtowship.com](http://www.kabtowship.com)**

Facility Plans and started design work for 2 more community sewer projects which will serve 8 resorts and 140 private residences.

The Joint Powers Board has had great success, establishing sanitary sewer districts and projects in three of the four main entrances to the park. They have worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Public Facilities Authority, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Minnesota Clean Water Council, and many others to bring funding to this effort.

The Clean Water Council has been an important partner in providing the necessary funding to continue these efforts to protect the park. Your funding has helped leverage millions of dollars in other funding to further these efforts.

Your support in approving the \$4 million request from the Voyageur's National Park Joint Powers Board would allow us to continue this project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Let us protect these treasured waters, together.

Sincerely,

John Stegmeir  
Representative of the Kabetogama Township Board

CC: State Senator Grant Hauschild  
State Representative Roger Skraba  
St. Louis County Board  
Koochiching County Board  
Governor Tim Walz  
Commissioner Katrina Kessler



## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Mary Thompson <mary.thompson@co.rock.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 10, 2024 5:52 PM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA)  
**Cc:** Gruenes, Richard (MDA)  
**Subject:** Ag BMP

You don't often get email from mary.thompson@co.rock.mn.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Hello Paul and Margaret –

I wanted to touch base with both of you regarding the Ag BMP program. Unfortunately, we do not have actual outcomes at this time but I thought I would at least share how much the Ag BMP program is used here in Rock County and continues to have a need for further funding.

We have been able to fund 13 loans thus far in 2024 with 9 of them being for Ag Waste, 1 Conservation Tillage, 1 Septic and 1 new well totaling \$1,054,065.00.

We currently have allocated funds for 10 more projects totaling \$590,000.00 and have a wait list of 12 that have applied for funding totaling \$740,000.00.

Needless to say, the high interest rates have driven the demand for funding in this program to an all time high in the 18 years I have worked with it.

This program is important to our producers in making upgrades to feedlots, manure management and conservation tillage more affordable with the 3% interest rate and we continue to receive more requests.

We did have a producer purchase a late season nitrogen application sprayer to help manage nitrogen applied on fields in the wellheads. They have also used this sprayer to custom apply for other producers wanting to better manage their nitrogen application.

Thank you for all your work with and for the Clean Water Funds – we appreciate it out here at the local level and the fact that it allows us to help our producers improve not only their operations but improve water quality for everyone in the process!!

Mary Thompson  
Rock SWCD

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

**From:** Anita M. Cauwels <AnitaCauwels@co.lyon.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 10, 2024 1:03 PM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA)  
**Cc:** Gruenes, Richard (MDA)  
**Subject:** Ag BMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

Good Afternoon!!

My name is Anita Cauwels and I work for the Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District and Lyon County Planning and Zoning Offices. I currently administer the Ag BMP Loan Program at our Local level. We work closely with area applicants and lenders to enhance their productivity and improve the land with their purchases. Typically some of our biggest purchases are for Ag Water Management and Conservation Tillage Equipment.

Since 2021, we have helped fund \$2,819,183.55 in purchases with the Ag BMP Loans. Many of the applicants that I have spoken with have begun doing reduced or no till acres, to improve their soil and preserve drinking water and reduce ground water contaminants. Most have noticed above average yields, surprisingly with the drought/excessive heat in the last few years, so we know their practices are working.

There is currently \$2,352,637.50 on our waiting list. Three projects this spring will potentially be funded, but the other 17 applicants on the list will be waiting for loan repayments. With these delays/lack of funding for the program, they either do not purchase the equipment or choose not to do certain practices as the interest rates for an average bank loan are too high. We are beginning to incorporate One Watershed One Plans in our county and are seeing nutrient reductions with the practices that are funded. Collaborating with Ag BMP Loans and others Cost Share opportunities, we are seeing more reductions than in years past. We are also starting to see an increase in continuous living cover.

Below is a measurable breakdown of all of our conservation tillage funds(Calculated using MPCA Watershed Pollutant Load Reduction Calculator).

Applicant	Conservation Tillage Acres	Year Purchased/Completed	N (lbs./yr) reductions achieved	P (lbs./yr) reductions achieved	TSS(tons/yr) reductions achieved
BP	210	2021	72.71	12.42	3.576
DL	1100	2021	1147	304.5	3.327
CS	400	2021	370.7	53.61	5.293
CS	1900	2021	1761	254.6	25.14
BT	680	2022	560.9	155.5	4.789
DW	1600	2022	1320	365.9	11.27
TW	1800	2022	3508	647.6	52.91
BF	1250 (Cover Crops)	2023	3831	91.27	34.61
JL	800	2023	446.1	88.86	6.699
VB	1800	2023	1764	245.8	34.99

As you can see by the table above, there is definitely a huge reduction factor on the practices that are being done. With the Ag BMP Loan program, securing funds for equipment and other practices, we will continue to see the program grow and flourish for years to come.

Thank you!

Anita Cauwels



Anita Cauwels  
Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District  
Lyon County Planning and Zoning  
Technical Assistant  
507-532-8207 x 3  
[anitacauwels@co.lyon.mn.us](mailto:anitacauwels@co.lyon.mn.us)

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Kennedy, Beau <bkennedy@goodhueswcd.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 10, 2024 11:51 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA); MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans  
**Cc:** Delane Krier; Ed McNamara; Mark Comstock; Don Schliep; John Beck; Christopher Hinck; cvrangus@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** RE: AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity - Goodhue

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Good Morning Richard

A note for public input on the AgBMP Loan Program for the Clean Water Council....

Over the past 13 years, the Goodhue SWCD has assisted over 120 landowners with funding through the MDA's AgBMP Loan Program. The primary use of these funds in Goodhue County have been used for assisting landowners with AgWaste and Septic improvement projects; both reduce the amount of Nitrogen leaching to our groundwater.

Goodhue SWCD AgBMP Loans (2011-2024)			
Project Type	Loans		Total Amt.
AgWaste	48	\$	5,297,980.91
Septic	30	\$	447,223.00

Bruce Waugh owns and operates the Canon Valley Ranch just west of Goodhue. They market top grade angus beef products to local markets and restaurants. <https://www.cannonvalleyranch.com/>  
The Waugh's have utilized various conservation programs with the USDA/SWCD in the past to help their grazing operation become more sustainable and environmental friendly. Bruce utilized the AgBMP Loan Program to help with their manure handling systems. He mentioned the AgBMP loan process was easy to use and a great way to make equipment, such as a manure spreader, more attainable for his operation at the time. Bruce is willing to chat with Clean Water Council folks if they are interested in his experience with the program. (cc'd to the email/#507-381-1570)

The Goodhue SWCD is likely not alone when stating that our county has a continual list of landowners interested in AgBMP Loan funds. We have wait periods from several months to years depending on the landowner's funding request. When funded at an adequate level, this program can help landowners implement the conservation practices that the we've been preaching for years at the federal, state and local levels. With increased awareness of Nitrates in SE MN additional funding for this program in NEEDED. Specifically, funding directed towards assisting with manure handling and septic system replacements which play a significant role in mitigating nitrate pollution in SE MN

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Beau Kennedy  
**Goodhue SWCD**  
651-923-5286

---

**From:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans <[AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us](mailto:AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us)>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 11:32 AM  
**To:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans <[AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us](mailto:AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** FW: AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity



April 9, 2024

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

Dear Paul Gardner and Margaret Wagner,

On behalf of the Carver County Public Services Division, I would like to express Carver County's support for the continuance of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Best Management Practices (AgBMP) Loan Program, funded by the Clean Water Council.

With the rising costs of septic system construction, the replacement of a septic system can cost as much as \$30,000. Carver County is committed to providing grants and affordable financing options to homeowners faced with this financial burden of upgrading or replacing their septic system. Since 2019, Carver County has provided 49 AgBMP loans for septic system replacement, totaling more than \$869,000.

The continued funding of this program by the Clean Water Council will ensure many more residents can afford the replacement costs for their non-compliant septic systems, while improving and protecting our water resources for future generations.

Please contact me at (952) 361-1805 if you have any questions about the support for this program.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Hanzel".

Brad Hanzel  
Environmental Services Interim Department Manager

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Cody Fox <cody@mowerdistrict.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 2:10 PM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA)  
**Cc:** Gruenes, Richard (MDA)  
**Subject:** Ag Bmp

You don't often get email from cody@mowerdistrict.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Paul and Margaret-

Richard Gruenes (cc'ed) asked any of us to follow up with you if we have farmers who are planning or have reduced their nitrogen usage due to the bmp funding.

We recently funded a strip till rig in Mower County. I'm very proud of this one because it took 3,000+ acres of conventional tillage and is now strip tilled. On top of that, I know they are reducing or will reduce their nitrogen application due to the banding.

I think these funds have a great place and can be a major benefit to surface and groundwater as we move ahead.

Thanks for your time.

--

Cody Fox  
Mower SWCD & Cedar River WD  
Direct #: 507-460-4582  
Cell: 507-276-8475

Check out the progress on our CIP for water quality improvement and flood reduction below!  
<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/news-and-stories/how-climate-resilience-grants-prevent-flooding>



## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** James Vrchota <jvrchota@oakwoodbank.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 10:48 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA)  
**Subject:** FW: AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jvrchota@oakwoodbank.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Dear Paul & Margaret,

I'm responding to your e-mail to encourage you to push for additional funding for the AgBMP program. I know down here in Winona County, our funds went fast, and some of the projects that were badly needed to fund projects that had to do with improving water quality were not funded. These customers are now waiting for the next funding availability, and their failing manure handling systems continue to impact water quality here in Winona County. Getting these projects funded is very important to the quality of life out here in rural Winona County.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to this request.

Best Regards,

Jim Vrchota



**Jim Vrchota | Market President**

Oakwood Bank

P.O. Box 125

140 Main Street

Rollingstone, MN 55969

Ph: 507-410-2220

Cell: 763-377-2658

Fax: 507-410-2525

E-mail: [jvrchota@oakwoodbank.net](mailto:jvrchota@oakwoodbank.net)

NMLS #1369212

**Confidentiality Notice:** This email contains confidential information of the sender which is legally privileged. The information is intended only for the use by the direct addresses of the original sender of this email. If you are not an intended recipient of the original sender, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please immediately notify the sender and delete any copies of this email in your possession. Since emails can be lost, intercepted, or corrupted, Oakwood Bank accepts no liability for damages caused by viruses transmitted via this email.

---

**From:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans <[AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us](mailto:AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us)>

**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 9:21 AM

**To:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans <[AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us](mailto:AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us)>

**Subject:** AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Scott Anderson <Scott.Anderson@AgCountry.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 9:58 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Subject:** AgBMP Public Input

You don't often get email from scott.anderson@agcountry.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Paul,

I want to give you success stories and request to increase funding to the AgBMP revolving fund from the Clean Water Council for the next Biennium.

I am a loan officer for AgCountry Farm Credit Services in the Marshall office. I have been very active promoting and utilizing the AgBMP loan program in my 20 year career.

I have utilized the program to replace old hog facilities on open lots with poor manure management to upgrading to a pit barn which provides better manure management, erosion, and overall improved water management.

I have utilized the program to assist a farmer in purchase a piece of vertical tillage equipment for better crop residue management, less soil disturbance, improved soil health, and improved water management with less runoff and better filtration.

Other projects include sprayers with reduced drift nozzles and automatic shutoffs, planters with trash whippers allowing for reduced tillage, feedlot cement/monoslope barn for water management and manure management, strip till machines, manure spreaders, hoop barns for manure management and storage, berms and erosion control land projects, and many more.

I have done hundreds of AgBMP loans in my career, but lack of funding has limited my ability to promote the programs leaving many farmers unable to make changes in their operation that would greatly improve water quality in my area. If adequate funding were available, I would be sending requests to the local soil and water district office weekly. I believe in the program, promote the program, and have used the program myself as a farmer.

This is a very important program, and the limited funds have turned away many projects. I hope more funds become available so projects can be done and purchases made to benefit water quality today and far into the future.

Thank you for your time.

**Scott D. Anderson**

**VP Loan Officer**

302 O'Connell St, Marshall, MN 56258

**Phone:** 507-532-5751 | **Mobile:** 507-828-1971

**Email:** [scott.anderson@agcountry.com](mailto:scott.anderson@agcountry.com)

**Web:** [www.AgCountry.com](http://www.AgCountry.com)

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Mason Bucher <mbucher@oakwoodbank.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 12:20 PM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA)  
**Subject:** AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mbucher@oakwoodbank.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Good afternoon,

I am emailing you today because I would like to see the AgBMP program get the funding it needs and deserves. Here at Oakwood Bank we service a multitude of agricultural customers in the southeastern section of Minnesota. With that area being an active karst region we feel strongly that this program is needed to provide affordable financing that helps maintain clean water and quality soils. Please consider this email as my support and call for the continued funding of the Ag BMP Loan Program.

Thank you,



**Mason Bucher | Loan Processor**

**Oakwood Bank**

2901 Mall Drive

Eau Claire, WI 54701

715.514.2327 Ext. 405

[mbucher@oakwoodbank.net](mailto:mbucher@oakwoodbank.net)

**Confidentiality Notice:** This email contains confidential information of the sender which is legally privileged. The information is intended only for the use by the direct addresses of the original sender of this email. If you are not an intended recipient of the original sender, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please immediately notify the sender and delete any copies of this email in your possession. Since emails can be lost, intercepted, or corrupted, Oakwood Bank accepts no liability for damages caused by viruses transmitted via this email.

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

**From:** Josh Rud <josh.rud@mykindofbank.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 5:03 PM  
**To:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans; Gardner, Paul (MPCA)  
**Subject:** RE: AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity

You don't often get email from josh.rud@mykindofbank.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

Hi Paul, Just wanted to state we have used the program many times for new septic and wells and also a few runoff programs for farms and other scenarios. We love the program at the banking level. Gives good rate and terms to borrowers that we can offer with some security in the loans. We need this program and hope to see it continue in the future.

Thanks,



**JOSH RUD**

MARKET PRESIDENT

NMLS #697484

Evansville

Address: 303 Kron St. • PO Box 100 • Evansville, MN 56326

Office: (320) 834.4659 • (218) 948.2259

Direct: (320) 391.0038

APPLY TODAY

MY KIND  
OF BANK

1<sup>ST</sup> NATIONAL  
BANK

GET SOCIAL WITH US!



*This email message (and any attachments) may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient, you cannot use, distribute, or copy the message or attachments. In such a case, please notify the sender by return email immediately and erase all copies of the message and attachments. Opinions, conclusions, and other information in this message and attachments that do not relate to official business are neither given, nor endorsed by The First National Bank of Henning. In order to help prevent identity theft and fraud, The First National Bank of Henning will never request you to provide personal or financial information via unsecured email. Please report to us any suspicious emails you receive claiming to be The First National Bank of Henning and requesting personal or financial information.*

**From:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans <AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 9:17 AM  
**To:** MN\_MDA\_ Ag BMP Loans <AgBMP.Loans@state.mn.us>  
**Subject:** AgBMP Loan Program Funding Opportunity

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As the AgBMP Loan Program is planning for the next Biennium we are requesting additional program funding for all AgBMP Loan Budgets across the state through the [Clean Water Council](#) this year for funding for 2025 and 2026. The AgBMP Loan Program is currently estimating an additional need for funding for the next biennium in the amount of \$73.3 million. Clean Water Funding is reviewed by the Clean Water Council and then our state legislators. The Clean

## Gardner, Paul (MPCA)

---

**From:** Ilena Hansel <ilena.hansel@co.cook.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 8:06 AM  
**To:** Gardner, Paul (MPCA); Wagner, Margaret (MDA)  
**Cc:** braidy.powers@co.cook.mn.us; stanley tull  
**Subject:** AgBMP Loan Budgets

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ilena.hansel@co.cook.mn.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

**This message may be from an external email source.**

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

---

Hello,

Cook County SWCD is in support of the additional funding for the AgBMP Loan Program. The program is beneficial to Cook County in assisting landowners with upgrading failing septic systems. Maintaining septic systems is identified in both the Lake Superior North Watershed Plan and Rainy River/Vermillion Watershed Plan, both adopted by the County and the SWCD.

Septic systems that are not in compliance are a threat to both surface and ground water. Due to a lack of resources for septic system materials, along with other factors, septic system costs have increased drastically over time, some reaching over \$40,000/system. The costs of the systems make it difficult for many landowners to fix their systems. The loan offers the landowners an option to improve their system and protect water quality. To reach the same number of current landowners and additional landowners, additional funding will be needed in the future.

Thank you for considering the need to increase funding for the AgBMP Loan Program.

I can be reached at 218-387-3648 if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Ilena Hansel

*District Manager*

Cook SWCD

411 West 2nd Street

Grand Marais, MN 55604

218-387-3648

March 21, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2022, the City of Bayport received \$8,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency through the purchase of SMART irrigation controllers. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 1,000,000 gallons saved through the program.

Many communities in the east Metro have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,



Matt Kline  
City Administrator  
294 3<sup>rd</sup> St No  
Bayport MN 55003

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council



March 29, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2022, the City of Chanhassen received \$34,440 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency by creating an incentive for residents to seek out and purchase devices that are either Water Sense Certified or Energy Star Certified. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 1,067,700 gallons saved so far through the program.

Many communities, including Chanhassen, have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,

Jamie Marsh  
7700 Market Blvd.  
Chanhassen, MN 55317

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council

March 26, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2022, the City of Eden Prairie received \$44,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency through smart irrigation practices. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 2 million gallons saved through the program.

Many communities, including ours, have benefitted from these programs. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Fierce*

Jennifer Fierce  
Sustainability Coordinator

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council



OFC 952 949 8300  
TDD 952 949 8399

8080 Mitchell Road  
Eden Prairie, MN  
55344-4485

[edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org)

March 26, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2022, the City of Lake Elmo received \$50,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency in our city to conserve precious ground water. Due to the White Bear Lake lawsuit and PFAS contamination, we need to conserve every drop of clean water we have. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 1,000,000 gallons saved through the program.

Many communities, including Lake Elmo, have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,

Clark Schroeder, Interim City Administrator.  
City of Lake Elmo MN.

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency, Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council



14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345 | 952-939-8200 | minnetonkamn.gov

March 25, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

Since 2012 the city of Minnetonka's population has increased by 3,850 residents (7.5%) while total annual water use has declined by 400 million gallons (-14.5%). The reduction in per-capita water use is the result of the programs and activities made possible by Clean Water Funds.

These programs have fostered partnerships between organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, the Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2019 and 2022, the City of Minnetonka received a total of \$52,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency through replacement of broken or inefficient water devices with new WaterSense certified devices.

Many communities, including Minnetonka, have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,



Will Manchester  
Public Works Director  
City of Minnetonka  
11522 Minnetonka Blvd  
Minnetonka, MN 55305



Mike Kuno  
Utility Operations Engineer  
City of Minnetonka  
11522 Minnetonka Blvd  
Minnetonka, MN 55305

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council





## Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request

March 22, 2024

**John Barten, Chair**

Clean Water Council

520 Lafayette Road North

St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2016, the City of New Brighton received \$50,000 from the Metropolitan Council's Water Efficiency Grant Program. The program allowed us to replace 202 inefficient toilets with US EPA Water Sense Compliant units and minor faucet repairs in naturally occurring affordable multi-family rental properties. In 2022, the City of New Brighton received \$28,000 from the Metropolitan Council's Water Efficiency Grant Program allowing us to replace an additional 90 toilets. The water savings has been tremendous. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of an estimated **40,720,470** gallons saved through the program.

Many communities including New Brighton have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,



Craig Schlichting

**Director of Community Assets and Development**

651.638.2056

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council

March 21, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2023 the City of North St. Paul received \$27,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency rebates for toilets, dishwashers and wash machines. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 366,075 gallons saved through the program.

Many communities, including North St. Paul have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely, Barb Huelsman

City of North St. Paul, Utility Billing Coordinator  
2400 Margaret St. No  
North St. Paul, MN 55109

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council



17073 Adelman Street SE  
Prior Lake, MN 55372

---

March 21, 2024

Mr. John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our regional community relies on water—commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture. Over the past 14 years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

- Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
- Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities in implementing projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats, providing cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leveraging inter-jurisdictional coordination, supporting local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and preventing degradation of groundwater resources in the region. These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, the Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

Over the past two years, the City of Prior Lake was awarded \$19,600 from the Metropolitan Council's Water Efficiency Grant Program. This program exists to increase water efficiency by encouraging residents to replace old, inefficient appliances with more efficient models. Without the grant support, the city would not be able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 500,000+ gallons that may be saved through the program.

Many communities in the metro area have benefited from these programs and will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the

region. The City of Prior Lake recommends the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew J. Brotzler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrew" being more prominent than the last name "Brotzler".

Andrew J. Brotzler, PE  
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

cc:

Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council



## City of Robbinsdale

4100 Lakeview Avenue North  
Robbinsdale Minnesota • 55422-2280  
Phone: (763) 537-4534  
Fax: (763) 537-7344  
Website [www.robbinsdalemn.com](http://www.robbinsdalemn.com)

March 28, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

The City of Robbinsdale has participated in two rounds of the Water Efficiency Grant Program, receiving a total of \$15,520.00 in grant funds.

Within our City, these grant funds have leveraged a total of \$ 70,200 expenditure to date of eligible improved efficiency fixtures by our water utility customers and has achieved estimated water savings of over 750,000 gallons per year.

Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate this achievement.

**Continued .../2**

Many communities, including ours, have benefitted from these programs, and will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 📞 763-531-1260 or by email at [rmccoy@ci.robbinsdale.mn.us](mailto:rmccoy@ci.robbinsdale.mn.us)

Yours sincerely,



Richard McCoy, P.E.

**Public Works Director / City Engineer**

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council





4600 VICTORIA STREET NORTH  
SHOREVIEW, MINNESOTA 55126  
651.490.4600 | shoreviewmn.gov

March 29, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

1. Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
2. Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2020, the City of Shoreview awarded approximately \$10,000 in rebates to residents from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency through upgrading irrigation systems to use a smart controller. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 1.5 million gallons per year saved through the program.

Many communities, including ours, have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wesolowski", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Tom Wesolowski  
Public Works Director  
4600 Victoria St N  
Shoreview, MN 55126

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council

March 21, 2024

John Barten, Chair  
Clean Water Council  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Metropolitan Council's 2026-2027 Clean Water Fund Request**

Dear Mr. Barten and Members of the Clean Water Council,

Water is fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of our Twin Cities region. Every sector of our community's development relies on water – commerce, manufacturing, construction, health care, recreation, and agriculture.

Over the past fourteen (14) years, the Metropolitan Council has received funding from Clean Water Fund (CWF) to support two programs that target water supply sustainability in the Twin Cities metro area:

- Metropolitan area water supply sustainability support program
- Water demand reduction (efficiency) grant program

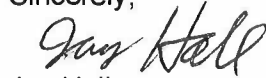
Through these two programs, the Clean Water Fund supports communities to implement projects that address emerging drinking water supply threats. The programs provide cost-effective regional solutions and tools, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of water supply reliability projects, and help prevent degradation of groundwater resources in the region.

These programs have fostered partnerships between and within organizations and shed additional light on greater water resource issues. Working together, Metropolitan Council and metro area cities are moving toward meeting our long-term goal of sustainable water supplies for current and future generations.

In 2022, the City of St Louis Park received \$35,000 from the Metropolitan Council's water demand reduction grant program to expand the city's water conservation program. This program exists to increase water efficiency through funding utility credit rebates for qualified WaterSense and Energy Star products. Without the grant support, the city would not have been able to accelerate the achievement of the estimated 500,000 gallons saved through the program.

Many communities including ours have benefitted from these programs. And we will continue to benefit from the expansion of these programs, as we strive to use water more efficiently in the region. I respectfully request that the Clean Water Council fully support the Metropolitan Council's FY 26-27 funding request.

Sincerely,



Jay Hall  
7305 Oxford Street  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Cc: Paul Gardner, Clean Water Council Administrator, MN Pollution Control Agency  
Judy Sventek, Manager, Water Resources, Metropolitan Council