#### Clean Water Council Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) Meeting Agenda Friday, April 4, 2025 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), Steve Christensen, Warren Formo, Brad Gausman, Holly Hatlewick, Annie Knight, Fran Miron

#### 9:30 Regular Business

- Introductions
- Approve agenda & most recent minutes
- Chair and Staff update
- 9:45 Continuation of Draft Evaluation Documents (aka Scoring Rubric)
- 10:30 BREAK
- 10:45 Public Participation Plan review from the Ad Hoc Committee
- 11:00 CWC Dashboard & Key Performance Indicators from Strategic Plan
- 11:30 Upper Mississippi Protection Goal
- 11:45 Public Comment
- 12:00 Adjourn and Lunch

#### Budget and Outcomes Committee Meeting Summary Clean Water Council (Council) March 7, 2025, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Committee Members present:** Steve Besser (Committee Chair), Dick Brainerd (Committee Vice Chair), Steve Christenson, Warren Formo, Brad Gausman, Holly Hatlewick, Fran Miron, and Annie Knight. **No members absent.** 

**Others present:** Paul Gardner (CWC), Brianna Frisch (MPCA), Jen Kader (Met Council), Judy Sventek (Met Council), Brad Jordahl Redlin (MDA), Margaret Wagner (MDA), Glenn Skuta (MPCA), Marcey Westrick (BWSR), Justin Hansen (BWSR), Tannie Eshenaur (MDH), Sharon Doucette (BWSR), Annie Felix (BWSR), Frieda VanQualen (MDH), Jeff Peterson (UMN), LeAnn Buck (MASWCD), Steve Walter (MPFA), Julie Westerlund (BWSR), Jason Moeckel (DNR), John Bilotta (UMN), Crystal Mathisrud (Hubbard SWCD), Jim Stark (LCC SWMP)

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

#### **Regular Business**

- Introductions
- Approval of the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda with an amendment to review the two scoring rubrics, moved by Steve Christenson, seconded by Fran Miron. Motion carries unanimously.
- Chair and Staff update
  - The township member has been appointed, and the official press release will be soon.
  - The Clean Water Council Administration position will be starting the interview process next week.
  - o Legislative update:
    - There were hearings on aid to SWCDs, a delay on the ban on PFAS in certain products, and nitrates.

#### Budget Forecast from Thursday, by Paul Gardner (Webex 00:08:30)

- Minnesota Management and Business (MMB) discovered an error in the distribution of lottery gross receipts tax revenue from FY2010 through FY2024. This error resulted in the four legacy funds receiving \$31.7 million in sale tax revenue that should have been distributed to the general fund over fifteen years. This means that MMB needs to deduct roughly one-third of \$31.7 million from the Clean Water Funds (CWFs), or about \$10,475,000. The CWFs have a \$3.6 million increase, but with the deduction it leaves \$6.826 million less than after the November forecast. The Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) will review this first, before the state agencies suggest changes.
- The forecast came out yesterday. Today we suggest the BOC can make preliminary reduction recommendations. Then the ICT can review and suggest changes. They must submit those to ICT by the 12<sup>th</sup> to MMB. Those should be preliminary. The full Council will review this information and finalize revised recommendations on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### Discussion:

- Steve Christenson created a document of options to close the \$6.826 million gap (included in meeting packet).
  - This thinking came from taking about taking a percentage off across the board but narrowed down to a handful of programs instead. Forever Green Initiative and Voyageurs Park funding are not included because they were debated previously. I would like to hear from the committee.
  - Steve Besser: I would like to go through it one program at a time with the committee, then hear agency feedback. We'll then provide our revised recommendations, with cuts, to the ICT.
  - Holly Hatlewick: I would like to see we also have the conversation about a 2.2 percent cut across the board, because everything is scalable on this list. We also want to be mindful of federal interactions.
- Expand MN Ag Weather Station Network (MDA)
  - Margaret Wagner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA): Our initial ask was \$3 million to complete the network. A cut would result in fewer stations at this time.
  - Steve Besser: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) is being impacted at the federal level, will this cut impact our farmers who need weather information? *Answer:* That is an important data set. It adds on to it. This is statewide and has local value.

- Warren Formo: The \$3 million would have completed the project. It was reduced to \$2.5 million. Was there going to be \$500 requested in the next biennium? *Answer:* No, MDA now has better cost estimates.
- o Dick Brainerd: If we have an opportunity to finish something, why would be cut it.
- Holly Hatlewick: We will see that in all the programs.
- Glenn Skuta, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA): The ICT on principle doesn't seek a uniform cut due to greater impacts on smaller budgets. We would prefer not to go there.
- Warren Formo: The good news, we are looking at 2.2 percent, and not 20 percent. This is not a heavy lift.
   Our task is to work with the ICT and be align with the Governor's Budget. We should figure out how to get to that cut. We will not agree completely but need to come up with something for an ICT response.
- Jason Moeckel, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR): My understanding is that this reduction will happen in the first year of the biennium. The second year will remain. The Council's recommendations are biennial, so it is less of a concern to the Council. The state agencies will mostly have the adjustment happen in the first year.
- Glenn Skuta, MPCA: The funds are typically going to two areas, staffing and projects. So, reductions in the first year will likely affect projects versus staff.
- Holly Hatlewick: Perhaps look at last increased, first decreased.
- Margaret Wagner, MDA: For MDA, we support staff, research grants, and implementation. The biggest is pass through is for implementation.
- Grouped together: River & Lake Monitoring & Assessment as well as the Watershed Restoration & Protection Strategies (Including TMDL) (MPCA):
  - Steve Christenson: These MPCA programs have large funds. You can find some funds to trim.
  - Glenn Skuta, MPCA: These are a combination of staffing and project funds. They are staff heavy. For the River & Lake Monitoring and Assessment, if there is a cut, less monitoring is going to get done. For example, there may be less for PFAS monitoring. There would have to be some decisions on what monitoring will not be happening. It would start to compromise some of the data we collect. For the WRAPS, it is staff heavy because we do fewer projects than we used to. I have cut two FTE in the last couple years. These were eliminated to help control costs. I am holding a third position. I am already struggling with the vacancy, to get some of our investigation monitoring. For project money, the staff have a great idea for a chloride management, and I keep holding it for lack of funding. Historically, this line item used to be \$20 million, and I have brought it down over time to make room for implementation, because we don't want more than we need. The MPCA would seek cuts elsewhere, like SSTS.
- Culvert Replacement Cost Share (DNR)
  - Jason Moeckel, DNR: This is funding passed through to local governments, with a little remaining for staff to assist them. There is a million in each year in the current biennium and was proposed to go up to \$1.5 million. Demand was high. It is scalable. This would be the first place I would look for a reduction at DNR.
  - Annie Knight: We should identify programs that we want to preserve. We leaned heavily on the ICT for the budget, so if we ask them a proposed cut at the end of the day on Monday, we can rely on them and our BOC leadership to make sure the BOC priorities are in line with the ICT's proposal. Then, they can be sent to MMB and reviewed by the full Council. It is really valuable to go through these programs one-byone, but we do not know the intricacies of the impacts funding may have on them.
- Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF)
  - Steve Besser: What was the cut before? Answer: It was \$1.9 before.
  - Holly Hatlewick: It is back to scaling. We need the ICT to weigh in on it. There are additional watersheds coming online, which means staff are needed. Priority projects will not be implemented if we cut further. It is hard if we have been building up to it and then there is less funding.
- Accelerated Implementation (BWSR)
  - Justin Hanson, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR): We have trainers to get staff up and running.
     We would get whiplash if we were to take decreased funding here.
  - Holly Hatlewick: This trains implementors of the comprehensive plans.
- Enhancing Soil Health & Landowner Adoption of Cover Crops (BWSR)
  - Justin Hanson, BWSR: We have talked about this over the last few months. We have an agreement with the federal government to accelerate soil health. This is the only funding to keep the program going.

- Steve Christenson: What do we lose by going from \$12 million to \$10 million? Answer: There is a staffing component tied to it. We have the short-term funding to do the work without federal partnership, but we need to make sure we can support folks moving forward.
- Source Water Protection (instead of WRAPS on the slide) (MDH)
  - Tannie Eshenaur, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH): This funds our source water protection plans and the hydrogeologists who delineate Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs). It also funds source water protection grants up to \$10,000 for community water systems. They often provide backup water generators or a backup well. There are 300 systems that only have one well. Those local community water systems would suffer without these funds.
- County Geologic Atlas Part A (UMN)
  - Jeff Peterson, UMN: The University of Minnesota (UMN) develops the county geologic atlases. The funding is leveraged for other sources, so a funding reduction would slow down progress. Previously, this was funded at \$1 million per biennium, and at one time there was a reduction to \$800,000. They think they can adjust at that level but reducing it to \$300,000 will impact staffing.
- Stormwater Research (UMN)
  - John Bilotta, UMN: A reduction would reduce the amount of applied research. About 78 percent goes directly into applied research. It might reduce some of the stormwater extension events, but it would not be the significant impact here.

• Steve Christenson: This is on the list because it was one of the three items we added funding back into. *Questions/Comments/Discussion:* 

- Dick Brainerd: Perhaps, we come up with a proposal, highlight the funding we want to preserve, and let the ICT play with the rest of it.
- Steve Besser: Staffing is going to be critical in today's work. We don't need to lose experienced people. Let's talk \$1 million from Forever Green, \$500,000 from Voyageurs, \$500,000 from culverts, maybe \$400,000 from Stormwater Research item. We may still need to look at other programs.
- Steve Christenson: Perhaps we give them this updated list, to give them the decision to cut \$6.8 million out of the \$9.7 million of cuts we selected.
- Brad Gausman: I like suggesting some funding for the ICT. Then, the ICT can provide cuts that are acceptable. If we can't match up with the ICT cuts, where do we go from there? I also don't want the ICT to cut too much. Perhaps, we have the menu for them to make their recommendations within that grouping.
- Glenn Skuta: We are under a time crunch, but signaling the bigger items would be good.
- Holly Hatlewick: I suggest reductions of \$1 million from Forever Green, \$500,000 form Voyageurs, \$500,000 from culverts. These were not in the original ICT recommendations.
- John Barten: I think we need to remove the Voyageurs. Some legislators are very supportive but we are doing problematic cuts. I agree that we should provide the ICT with preferred cuts, and they adjust.
- Steve Besser: I would move to leave Forever Green at \$5 million (still an increase of \$1 million), leave Voyageurs at \$1.5 million, decrease culverts by \$500,000, decrease Stormwater Research by \$400,000, and then ask the ICT to adjust to avoid staffing impact or slow implementation. Seconded by Holly Hatlewick.
  - Steve Christenson: This adds up to \$1.9 million, and we are then asking the ICT to complete the cuts to hit the \$6.8 final total. *Answer by Holly Hatlewick:* Yes.
  - Jason Moeckel: You have three you've identified. So you want the ICT to do some work to decide. Any programs are still available to cut? *Answer from Steve Besser:* Yes.
  - Dick Brainerd: I would rather cut more, so the ICT can decide what stays. That seems clearer to work with.
  - Steve Besser: We are not in consensus on those other items.
  - o Annie Knight: We could flip it. We want to preserve certain items, that the ICT doesn't cut
  - Holly Hatlewick: Do we have to have action on the next full Council? Answer: We should not leave CWFs unallocated for the Legislature.
  - Paul Gardner: The Council does its work in public, so let's not discuss by e-mail among Council members. You could if there is less than a quorum, but that is not good practice. There is a lot of trust built with the public and we want to keep it. The ICT would likely appreciate not having a blank page.
- Margaret Wagner, MDA: Can we talk about the "last in" projects viewed on the spreadsheet?
  - *Steve Christenson:* Yes, I would recommend those same cuts that the Council identified before the November forecast. Otherwise, we need to be able to explain why we did not do that move.

- Steve Besser: I will need to amend the motion to use the amount initially recommended in cuts, Forever Green, Culvert Replacements, and Stormwater Research.
- Steve Christenson: I will make the motion to amend with \$1.9 million cuts to WBIF (item 36) and \$1.852 million in cuts to Enhancing Soil Health (item 50).
- Steve Besser: Therefore, with the amendment, it would be \$1.9 million cut from WBIF, \$1.852 million cut from Enhancing Soil Health, \$1 million cut for Forever Green, \$500,000 cut for Culvert Replacement, \$400,000 cut for Stormwater Research. This total would be \$5.652 million, leaving \$1.2 million for the ICT to find.

Discussion:

- Annie Knight: Would it be helpful to have the restrictions? *Answer:* No. They are recommendations. The ICT can look at any cuts.
- Paul Gardner: There were \$1.3 million in BWSR funds that were unencumbered funds from three defunct grant programs. They could go back into the CWF.
- o Steve Besser: Should it be included?
  - Warren Formo: That is too speculative. That is something the state agencies can figure out, per MMB requirements. If not, those dollars get kicked down the road.
  - Steve Besser: The motion would be to also include the amendment that we ask the state agencies to review and consider unencumbered funding.
  - Holly Hatlewick: I agree to that amendment.
  - Warren Formo: I second that amendment.
  - Motion to approve the amendment. Motion carries unanimously.
  - Tannie Eshenaur, MDH: The state agencies would like to have the table sent as well for their review.
- Final amended motion by Steve Besser: I motion to approve \$1.9 cut from WBIF, \$1.852 cut from Enhancing Soil Health, \$1 million cut for Forever Green, \$500,000 cut for Culvert Replacement, \$400,000 for Stormwater Research. This total would be \$5.652 million, leaving \$1.2 million for the ICT to find, per the MMB required timeline. The Council recommends any unencumbered funds should be considered (an estimated \$1.3 million). The Council requests the ICT review both the proposed cuts and all of the programs for potential cuts, restricting cuts to those programs that are scalable, and cuts that will not impact staffing nor slow implementation activities.
  - Motion seconded by Holly Hatlewick.
  - Motion carries unanimously.
- Paul Gardner: Before anything is sent to MMB, we want to make sure that the Council is informed in a formal way so your own process is respected before anything goes to MMB. I think MMB would be okay with that before a full discussion on March 17. Therefore, there would be a tentative final budget recommendation sent to MMB, and a confirmed-on March 17 budget recommendations.

#### Change to the agenda (Webex 01:47:30)

Steve Besser motions to push back the *Continued Ideas for More Formalized Input to Interagency Coordination Team in 2025* to another future meeting. Motion seconded by Holly Hatlewick. Motion carries unanimously.

#### Note from Jason Moeckel, DNR on Data Centers (Webex 01:48:30)

• The Clean Water Council's Policy Committee met about concerns for water quality around data centers. The DNR has drafted some language, trying to capture the bigger projects. They sent this language to the Minnesota House of Representatives research, who had been inquiring about it as well to compel high water using industries to talk to the state agencies in terms of water supply concerns. They should be able to respond to it in an efficient manner. They do not want to discourage industry but rule out what places could be problematic. Therefore, a topic of interest to the Council has moved forward.

#### Upper Mississippi Protection/Restoration Goal Update, by Justin Hanson, BWSR (Webex 01:52:00)

This is to learn more about the Upper Mississippi Protection/Restoration. This can help provide more clarity for the Council's Strategic Plan goals. The measurement may be able to be simplified.

- Relevant Clean Water Council Strategic Plan text:
  - o Vision: All Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it.

- Goal 1: Build capacity of local communities to protect and sustain water resources.
- Action: Support local efforts to engage lakeshore property owners and private landowners.
- Measure: Protection of 100,000 acres and restoration of 100,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin by 2034.
- o Measurement challenges (and proposed solutions)
  - What is the geographic scope of the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin? Answer: HUC# 0701
  - When to begin measuring protection/restoration? *Answer:* Use 2018 as a baseline year.
  - Do we measure acres protected/restored by financial sources other than CWFs? *Answer:* Yes.
  - Do we measure protection and restoration separately? *Answer:* No, but we can combine these goals.
  - Proposed measure: change each 100,000 acres to be 200,000 acres together of the protected and restored acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2019 to 2024.
- Numbers of where we are at:
  - From 2008 to 2018, there were 290,151 acres protected and/or restored. This averages about 29,015 acres per year (protected and/or restored).
  - From 2019 to 2024, there were 75,310 acres protected and/or restored. This averages about 7,531 acres per year (protected and/or restored).
  - With the time we have left from now to 2034, for protect and restoration goals, it may be good to have a proposed measure timeframe that utilizes 2018 as a baseline year. This would be 12,500 acres per year (protected and/or restored) over 16 years, equals 200,000 acres. This would get us to the protection and restoration of 200,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2019-2034.
- Therefore, we think we can include restoration and protection together. So, the proposed measure would be for protection and restoration of 200,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi Rive headwaters basin during 2019-2034. The Council may want to bring this back to the Council to make that decision.
  - Steve Besser: We would likely need a motion to change this at the full Council level. We may want to review other parts of the Council's Strategic Plan, if there are any further changes as well.

Questions/Comments/Discussion:

- Annie Knight: The Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Funds (LSOHF) also funds restoration projects, are we looping in all this restoration? *Answer:* There are other sources out there doing restoration and we want to capture those, so we would want all the resources for it to be included.
- Crystal Mathisrud, Hubbard SWCD: We do stream restorations. There are many people looking to enroll in Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) or other easement programs, and they are looking to do some forestry restoration (i.e., increasing diversity or reforesting open lands on their properties). With the RIM easements, the SWCD staff connects with the landowners.
- Dick Brainerd: Why are you suggesting 2018 as a baseline? Answer: We needed a baseline, so we took the first ten years. The first ten years of the CWFs were 2008 to 2018.
  - Response from Dick Brainerd: The first ten years shows well over 200,000 acres of work. So, we don't want to lose that do we?
  - Response from Sharon Doucette, BWSR: It is the breadth of work that started with things that have changed since 2008, so it is tracked from there.
  - Response from Warren Formo: It is a measure of what the Legacy Amendment has done. We need to be clear that what we are saying.
  - o Justin Hanson: This is a very specific measurement we are capturing.
  - John Barten: The 200,000 acres number came from a presentation from Peter Jacobson and Dan Steward, who indicated that if we could preserve an additional 200,000 acres beyond what had already been done, we could help protect the water supply of the Mississippi River downstream. That is the context of where the 200,000 came from.
- Annie Knight: Two suggestions. Upping the number that will result in 200,000 acres additionally. As well as including the language of "as a part of the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment". Then, it is not just crediting the CWFs, but showing it is collaborative. Then, 2008 would be the baseline here (acknowledging the already collected acres).
- Steve Christenson: I think we should stew on this a little more. Next month revisit for review.
- Warren Formo: If we are going to propose a change to the Strategic Plan, there may be other pieces that need to be updated. So, other items to consider currently by a selected group of the Council would be good.

• Steve Christenson: As we move through other dashboard elements, we may find more of these potential changes to the Council's Strategic Plan, which would require changes.

Adjournment (Webex 02:26:43)

## Clean Water Council Dashboard Strategic Plan Pillar 1 Groundwater Vision: Groundwater is Clean and Available to All in Minnesota

Goal 1: Protect groundwater from degradation and support effective measures to restore degraded groundwater.						
Strategy: Develop baseline data on Minnesota's groundwater quality, including areas of high pollution sensitivity.						
Action: Complete gro	undwater atlases for a	II Minnesota counties	S			
Part A County Geologic Atlases completed by 2033						
	complete today	46	53%			
	in progress	26	30%			
	future start	8	9%			
Part B County Groun	dwater Atlases compl	eted by 2038				
	complete today	36	41%			
	in progress	12	14%			
	future start	39	45%			
Action: Monitor amb	ient groundwater qual	ity throughout the sta	ate.			
Updates from the M	PCA Groundwater Mo	nitoring Program				
	Wells in 2013	35				
	Wells in 2022	120				
	Chloride ↑ in 23% of v	vells				
Action: Characterize	nitrate and pesticide co	ontamination in vulne	erable aquifers.			
MDA Township	MDA Township	MDA Township	MDA Central Sands			
Testing Program	Testing Program	Testing Program	Private Well	MDA SE MN Vol N	l	
(Nitrate)	(Pesticides Phase I)	(Pesticides Phase 2)	Network	<b>Monitoring Network</b>	l	
2020	2014-2020	2021-2022	2022	2022	l	
32217 wells tested	1841 wells tested	1095 wells tested	282 wells tested	376 wells tested	l	
			90.4% < 3 mg/L	69.4% < 3 mg/L	l	
			7.4%>3 &<10 mg/L	22.3%>3 &<10 mg/L	l	
9.1% > 10 mg/L	3%> HRV cyanzine	62 > HRV cyanazine	2.1% > 10 mg/L	8.2% > 10 mg/L	l	
	tect groundwater from evelop baseline data Action: Complete gro Part A County Geolog Part B County Groun Part B County Groun Action: Monitor amb Updates from the Mi Updates from the Mi Action: Characterize MDA Township Testing Program (Nitrate) 2020 32217 wells tested 9.1% > 10 mg/L	tect groundwater from degradation and sup evelop baseline data on Minnesota's ground Action: Complete groundwater atlases for a Part A County Geologic Atlases completed complete today in progress future start Part B County Groundwater Atlases complet complete today in progress future start Action: Monitor ambient groundwater qual Updates from the MPCA Groundwater Mo Wells in 2013 Wells in 2022 Chloride ↑ in 23% of v Action: Characterize nitrate and pesticide co MDA Township Testing Program (Nitrate) 2020 2014-2020 32217 wells tested 9.1% > 10 mg/L 3%> HRV cyanzine	tect groundwater from degradation and support effective measu evelop baseline data on Minnesota's groundwater quality, includ Action: Complete groundwater atlases for all Minnesota countie Part A County Geologic Atlases completed by 2033 complete today 46 in progress 26 future start 8 Part B County Groundwater Atlases completed by 2038 complete today 36 in progress 12 future start 39 Action: Monitor ambient groundwater quality throughout the sta Updates from the MPCA Groundwater Monitoring Program Wells in 2013 35 Wells in 2022 120 Chloride ↑ in 23% of wells Action: Characterize nitrate and pesticide contamination in vulne MDA Township Testing Program (Nitrate) (Pesticides Phase I) 2020 2014-2020 2021-2022 32217 wells tested 1841 wells tested 1095 wells tested 9.1% > 10 mg/L 3%> HRV cyanzine 62 > HRV cyanazine	tect groundwater from degradation and support effective measures to restore degrade evelop baseline data on Minnesota's groundwater quality, including areas of high pollu Action: Complete groundwater atlases for all Minnesota counties Part A County Geologic Atlases completed by 2033 complete today 46 53% future start 8 9% Part B County Groundwater Atlases completed by 2038 complete today 36 41% in progress 12 14% future start 39 45% Action: Monitor ambient groundwater quality throughout the state. Updates from the MPCA Groundwater Monitoring Program Wells in 2013 35 Wells in 2022 120 Chloride ↑ in 23% of wells Action: Characterize nitrate and pesticide contamination in vulnerable aquifers. MDA Township Testing Program (Nitrate) (Pesticides Phase I) MDA Township Testing Program (Nitrate) 1841 wells tested 1095 wells tested 282 wells tested 90.4% < 3 mg/L 9.1% > 10 mg/L 3% > HRV cyanzine 62 > HRV cyanazine 2.1% > 10 mg/L	tect groundwater from degradation and support effective measures to restore degraded groundwater. evelop baseline data on Minnesota's groundwater quality, including areas of high pollution sensitivity. Action: Complete groundwater atlases for all Minnesota counties Part A County Geologic Atlases completed by 2033 complete today 46 53% in progress 26 30% future start 8 99% Part B County Groundwater Atlases completed by 2038 complete today 36 41% in progress 12 14% future start 39 45% Action: Monitor ambient groundwater quality throughout the state. Updates from the MPCA Groundwater Monitoring Program Wells in 2013 35 Wells in 2022 120 Chloride ↑ in 23% of wells Action: Characterize nitrate and pesticide contamination in vulnerable aquifers. MDA Township Testing Program (Nitrate) (Pesticides Phase 1) (Pesticides Phase 2) Network 2020 2014-2020 2021-2022 2022 2022 32217 wells tested 1841 wells tested 1095 wells tested 282 wells tested 376 wells tested 90.4% < 3 mg/L 9.1% > 10 mg/L 3% > HRV cyanzine 62 > HRV cyanazine 2.1% > 10 mg/L 8.2% > 10 mg/L	

Action: Characterize natural and synthetic contaminants in groundwater.

Locations with high concentrations of natural contaminants mapped.					
nitra	ates	See map for nitrate vulnerability			
arse	enic	See MDH map			
<mark>radi</mark>	ium	MDH report pending			
Groundwater monitoring performed as appropriate for contaminants of emerging co					ncern.
Nitrate Arsenic					
3% new wells with > 3 & < 10 mg/L 51% new wells have arsenic since 2008					
1% new wells > 10 mg/L 11% new wells > drinking water standard					
MDH seeks 0% w/ > 3 mg/L nitrate					



Strategy: Develop and carry out strategies that will protect and restore groundwater statewide.

Action: Complete plans and fund activities for protection and restoration of groundwater statewide using a major watershed scale. Groundwater Restoration and Protection Strategies completed as companions to 57 comprehensive watershed management plans (One Watershed One Plan



Action: Reduce risk of bacteria in groundwater	
SSTS inspection compliance goal	80%
SSTS inspection compliance rate (actual 2023)	82%
Grants for low-income households to replace SSTS (2010-2023)	881
Small Community WW Treatment grants made (2013-2023)	39
Small communities seeking SCWT grant	1
Action: Reduce nitrate contamination of groundwater	
Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan implementation status	
Acres in continuous living cover	
Last update of UMN nitrogen application guidelines	
Last update of UMN manure crediting guidelines	
Irrigation management outreach contacts	
Irrigators receiving federal funds after MN training	
MAWQCP irrigation water mgmt endorsements	15
Action: Reduce risk of pesticide contamination in groundwater.	
Ambient GW quality wells in MDA pest monitoring program	
Contacts made for recommended pesticide BMPs	
Pesticide lab	
Action: Reduce risk of stormwater contaminants entering ground	lwater.
Stormwater research grants @ UMN SRC (2010-2023)	
MPCA MS4 permittees eligible for compliance	
Priority groundwater wells sealed w/ CWF since 2010	1370

Goal 2: Ensure groundwater use is sustainable and avoid adverse impacts to surface water features due to groundwater use						
Strategy: S	Support ongoing monitoring of groundwater quality					
	Action: Maintain network of long-term groundwater monitoring	wells and add wells as	needed.			
	Goal for monitoring wells					
	Current number of wells 1234					
	New wells added annually 50					
	Action: Identify groundwater-dependent lakes; streams; calcareous fens; and wetland complexes					
	measure? Where is this info kept?					

Strategy: Develop a cumulative impact assessment and support planning efforts to achieve a sustainability standard for groundwater.

Action: Prioritize areas of high groundwater use intensity

Groundwater Management Areas (GWMA) designated to date

Highly sensitive areas designated?

Areas of high water use intensity from ag irrigation designated?

New legislation on mapping water availability?

Strategy: Develop and carry out strategies that promote sustainability of groundwater use.

Action: Implement water efficiency BMPs, water use reduction, and irrigation water management in areas of high water use intensity by agricultural irrigators, highly sensitive areas, Groundwater Management Areas (GWMAs), and highly vulnerable Drinking Water Source Management Areas (DWSMAs).

DNR has tools needed to address conflicts on use of groundwater for economic and ecological purposes.

Monitoring wells have upward trend or no change in all six groundwater provinces.



Strategy: Identify options that will accelerate progress to achieving a sustainable groundwater standard in line with circular water economy principles.

# CWC Strat Plan KPI Dashboard Framework

April 4, 2025 BOC Meeting

# **AGENDA**

- Why report on Strat Plan Key Performance Indicators (Outcomes)
- When? 2-3 times per year?
- Who is the audience?
- What are the Strat Plan KPIs

   proposed mock-ups of
   framework
- Next steps

## Mission

Protect and restore Minnesota's waters for generations to come.

## **Goals and objectives**









Drinking water is safe for everyone, everywhere in Minnesota

- Protect public water supplies
- Ensure private well users have safe water

### Groundwater is clean and available

- Improve and protect groundwater quality
- Ensure sustainable long-term trends in aquifer levels
- Avoid adverse impacts to surface water features due to groundwater use

## Surface waters are swimmable and fishable

- Prevent and reduce pollution of surface waters
- Maintain and improve the health of aquatic ecosystems
- Protect and restore hydrologic systems

## Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it

- Build capacity of local communities to protect and sustain water resources
- Encourage systems and approaches that support, protect, and improve water
- Provide education and outreach to inform Minnesotans' water choices
- Encourage citizen and community engagement on water issues

# Why report on Strat Plan KPIs? When? 2-3 times per year?

- Per Minn. Stat. 114D.30, CWC prepares a performance report every 2 years
- More frequent measurement & communication about Strat Plan key performance indicators could help:
  - <u>Outcomes</u>: Drive focus on key outcomes
  - <u>Funding</u>: Clarify CWC investment prioritization
  - <u>Communications</u>: Provide tool to facilitate stakeholder communications by CWC members and support preparation of bi-annual report



# Who is the audience?

Technical audience? General public? Both?



Why report on KPIs?	Key users of KPI report	Implications for KPI content & format
Outcomes: Drive focus on key outcomes	CWC & ICT members, Agency staff	More technical
<u>Funding</u> : Clarify CWC investment prioritization	CWC & ICT members	Mix of technical and high- level
Communications: Provide tool to facilitate stakeholder communications by CWC members and support preparation of bi-annual report	CWC members, Agency staff, Legislators, General public & stakeholders	More high-level

# Clean Water Council Strat Plan KPI Dashboard – Example of Dashboard Framework Using High-level Strat Plan Goals

Surface Water



## Groundwater





People Act to Protect Water



Insert KPI

# Clean Water Council Strat Plan KPI Dashboard – Example of Dashboard Framework Using Performance Report Metrics

## Surface Water

i deste	MEASURE	STATUS	TREND
	Rate of impairment/unimpairment of surface water statewide and by watershed: Stream aquatic life.		NEI
	Rate of impairment/unimpairment of surface water statewide and by watershed: Stream swimming		NEI
	Rate of impairment/unimpairment of surface water statewide and by watershed: Lake swimming		NEI

# — Drinking Water

MEASURE	STATUS	TREND
Changes over time in pesticides, nitrate-nitrogen, and other key water quality parameters in groundwater: Pesticides.		⇒
Changes over time in pesticides, nitrate-nitrogen, and other key water quality parameters in groundwater: Nitrate-nitrogen statewide.		NEI

## Groundwater

Changes over time in source water quality used for community water supplies.	
Nitrate concentrations in newly constructed wells.	-
Arsenic concentrations in newly constructed wells.	•
Changes over time in groundwater levels.	

# People Act to Protect Water





# Minnesotans will have fishable and swimmable waters throughout the state





#### Chloride trends in Twin Cities Metro Area (Met Council)





# All Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it

**Metric:** Number of farmers and acres enrolled in Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program, with a target of 5,100 farms and 6.5 million acres by 2030

**Metric:** Protection and restoration of 200,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2019-2034

Acres



MN AWQCP Participation



# Groundwater is clean and available to all in Minnesota

- Insert relevant metrics, e.g.:
  - Nitrate trends
  - Arsenic trends
  - SSTS compliance
  - Other



Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS

# Drinking water is safe for everyone, everywhere in Minnesota

- Insert relevant metrics, e.g.:
  - Lead pipe replacement metric?
  - Municipal/public water safety metric?
  - Water testing metric?
  - Other MDH metric?

# **Next Steps**

- Feedback on:
  - Why report on Strat Plan Key Performance Indicators (Outcomes)?
  - When? 2-3 times per year?
  - Who is the audience?
  - What are the Strat Plan KPIs?



 Assign sub-task force to propose dashboard format, KPIs, and report back to BOC?

## Mission

Protect and restore Minnesota's waters for generations to come.

## **Goals and objectives**



Drinking water is safe for everyone, everywhere in Minnesota

- Protect public water supplies
- Ensure private well users have safe water

## Groundwater is clean and available

- Improve and protect groundwater quality
- Ensure sustainable long-term trends in aquifer levels
- Avoid adverse impacts to surface water features due to groundwater use

## Surface waters are swimmable and fishable

- Prevent and reduce pollution of surface waters
- Maintain and improve the health of aquatic ecosystems
- Protect and restore hydrologic systems

## Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it

- Build capacity of local communities to protect and sustain water resources
- Encourage systems and approaches that support, protect, and improve water
- Provide education and outreach to inform Minnesotans' water choices
- Encourage citizen and community engagement on water issues



# Backup slides





# Metrics used in 2024 Performance Report

#### Outcome Status Legend **Action Status Legend Trend Legend** MEANING SYMBOL MEANING MEANING SYMBOL SYMBOL We are making good progress/ Water quality is high - we are on track to Improving trend meeting the target meet long-term water resource needs and citizen expectations We anticipate difficulty; it is No change Water quality needs improvement or it is too early to assess; or there too early to assess - it is unclear if we will is too much variability across Declining trend meet long-term water resource needs regions to assess and citizen expectations; and/or water Progress is slow/we are quality varies greatly between regions not meeting the target; or Not enough the activity or target is not information to Water quality is under intense pressure NEL commensurate with the scope determine trend at - long-term water resource needs and/ of the problems this time or citizen expectations exceed current efforts to meet them

# Additional indicators - Clean Water Fund Roadmap – Healthy Fish Stations



# **Clean Water Fund Strategic Plan**

Our Mission: To protect, enhance, and restore water quality for Minnesotans

# **Surface Water:**

Fishable and swimmable waters.

~ Monitor and assess surface water health statewide.

- ~ Prevent & reduce pollution of surface waters
- ~ Reach 70% swimmable and 67% fishable waters

through targeted and broad conservation efforts.

## **Groundwater:**

Clean and sustainable groundwater.

~ Protect and improve groundwater quality. ~ Ensure sustainable longterm trends in aquifer levels ~ Prevent impacts on surface waters



YOUR Clean Water Fund AT WORK

# **Drinking Water:** Safe drinking water for all.

~ Protect public water systems ~ Ensure **private well users** have **safe &** reliable water

> Water Legacy: All Minnesotans value & protect water resources

~ Build local capacity to protect & restore water resources.

# Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin Strat Plan Metric options



Do we measure acres protected &/or restored by financial sources other than CWF? YES

Project	# of Phases	Primary Geography	Protection Type	Project Start Year	Funding Source(s)	Total Funding Amount
Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Habitat Protection Program	12	Camp Ripley & vicinity	Easements	2010	OHF	\$23.2 Million
Camp Ripley ACUB Protection	2 cooperative agreements	Camp Ripley & vicinity	Easements	2006	DOD/NGB	\$47 Million
Wild Rice	8	10+ counties	Easements	2012	OHF	\$10.5 Million
Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project	7	First 400 miles of Miss. R. (incl. headwaters lakes & tributaries)	Easements, Acquisition	2016	OHF, CWF	\$25.7 Million
Clean Water Critical Habitat (Northern Waters Land Trust, MLT)	10	Cass, Hubbard, Crow Wing, Aitkin	Easements, Acquisition	2014	OHF	\$27.8 Million
Lakes of Biological Significance (Northern Waters Land Trust, MLT)	3	Crow Wing, Cass, Hubbard, Wadena, Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Beltrami, Koochiching, St. Louis, Lake, Cook	Easements	2021	OHF	\$8.4 Million
RIM Critical Shorelands (multiple rivers)	4	Pine R, Crow Wing R, Rum R.	Easements	2016	CWF, TNC	\$11 Million
Protecting North-Central Minnesota Lakes	1	Camp Ripley, Aitkin & Crow Wing Co.	Easements, BMPs	2017	ENRTF	\$0.75 Million
Targeted RIM Easement & Acquisition to the Parcel	3	Pine R. & Leech Lake R. Watersheds	Easements, Acquisition	2020	OHF	\$6.6 Million

Table 9. Protection Projects in North-central Minnesota by Year and Funding Amount

ACUB = Army Compatible Use Buffer, BMPs = Best Management Practices, CWF = Clean Water Fund (part of 2008 Legacy Amendment), DOD/NGB = United States Department of Defense/National Guard Bureau, ENRTF = Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, MHB = Mississippi Headwaters Board, MLT = Minnesota Land Trust, NRCS = United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service OHF = Outdoor Heritage Fund (part of 2008 Legacy Amendment), RIM = Reinvest in Minnesota, TNC = The Nature Conservancy

# CWC Strat Plan text – as updated in 2024

- Vision: All Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it.
- Goal 1: Build capacity of local communities to protect and sustain water resources.
- Action: Support local efforts to engage lakeshore property owners and private landowners
- Measure: Protection of 100,000 acres and restoration of 100,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin by 2034.

Current Metric language	Revision Option A – 2018 Baseline	Revision Option B – 2018 Baseline, acknowledging prior progress	Revision Option C – 2008 Baseline
Protection of 100,000 acres and restoration of 100,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin by 2034.	With partners, protect and restore of 200,000 100,000 acres and restoration of 100,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2019-2034 <del>by 2034</del> .	With partners, protect and restore of 200,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2019-2034 (in addition to the 290,151 acres protected during 2008- 2018).	With partners, protect and restore of 500,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2008-2034. With CWF easements, protect and restore 5,000 acres during 2019-2034.

# CWC Strat Plan KPI Dashboard metric comparisons

# All Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it

**Option B Metric:** With partners, protect and restore 200,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2019-2034 (in addition to 290,151 acres protected during 2008-2018).

Acres



**Option C Metric:** With partners, protect and restore 500,000 acres in the Upper Mississippi River headwaters basin during 2008-2034. With CWF easements, protect and restore 5,000 acres during 2019-2034.

Acres



# How the Clean Water Fund Protects, Enhances, and Restores Minnesota's Lakes, Rivers, and Streams

WATER LAND & LEGACY AMENDMENT

The Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment to the State Constitution ratified by the voters in 2008 supports the Clean Water Fund with part of a dedicated sales tax.

# Our state's strategy aims to achieve more fishable and swimmable water in Minnesota.

#### What we do with the Clean Water Fund

Unlike other states, Minnesota has the ability with the Clean Water Fund to look for more types of water quality problems in every corner of the state. That's more than 86,000 square miles! We also know which waters are healthy that require protection. This data helps us figure out where to spend our time and resources in the most cost-effective way.



Rock "riffles" on Sand Hill River stabilize erosion and allow fish safe passage.

Photo credit: Ann Wessel, Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources

## **Our strategy**



**Identify** what's wrong (or healthy) with our water.



**Find** the source of the problem, make a plan to fix it, and prioritize the most important problems first.



**Fund** projects and support the people who can fix the problem.



**Monitor** the project results to see if the fixes worked.

## How long does it take?

Every two years, Minnesota publishes a list of impaired waters that do not meet our state's water quality standards. (Our standards are often stronger than those in other states.)

Most of Minnesota's impairments are from "non-point" sources, or small amounts of contaminants that add up across an entire watershed. Since poor water quality has resulted from more than 150 years of altering our land and waters, it can take 10-15 years depending on the source of the problem for a restored body of water to make it off of the impaired waters list.

In some cases, a project can have an immediate effect on water quality. In others, land use changes have been so intense that removal from the Impaired Waters List is unlikely, but major improvements are possible. With waters that are in good shape, our objective is to protect enough land in a watershed to maintain that high quality.

## Spreading resources for maximum impact

The Clean Water Fund supports projects throughout Minnesota, from the Twin Cities metro area, farm country, small towns, to pristine northern lakes.

The projects on the map indicate activity from **three** of our largest programs.

### Selected projects supported by the Clean Water Fund

Projects supported between 2010–2024



Received source water protection grant from MN Department of Health

Farm certified
 in water quality
 by MN Agricultural Water
 Quality Certification Program

Received funding to protect or restore surface waters from MN Board of Water & Soil Resources Quality

**Certification Program** 

## A sampling of thousands of projects:



## WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR FARMERS

Over 1,500 certified farmers have significantly reduced the potential for pollutants to enter our groundwater, lakes, and streams compared to conventional practices.

#### PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE WITH THE FOREVER GREEN INITIATIVE

The Forever Green Initiative is developing and improving winterhardy annual and perennial crops that protect soil and water while driving new economic opportunities for growers, industry, and communities across Minnesota.



#### RICE CREEK STREAM RESTORATION

Each year, the Clean Water Fund is used for dozens of stream restorations. Restoring a stream's meandering course reduces the energy of water that can erode the streambank and provides better water quality downstream.

Published by the <u>Clean Water Council</u>





February 2025

# How the Clean Water Fund Protects Groundwater from Degradation

The Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment to the State Constitution ratified by the voters in 2008 supports the Clean Water Fund with part of a dedicated sales tax.

Our groundwater serves as a drinking water source for 75 percent of Minnesotans and provides ecological benefits for our surface waters and aquatic life. The state's strategy aims to protect groundwater from degradation in Minnesota.

#### What we do with the Clean Water Fund

Monitoring wells in locations from relatively clean water in northern Minnesota to heavily urbanized or agricultural lands provide information on aquifer levels and water quality. Agencies look for contaminants like nitrates, pesticides, and PFAS. Geologic and groundwater atlases help assess quantity, location, and movement of groundwater. Groundwater plans show where and how we should protect aquifers from future pollution. Then the Clean Water Fund and other funding sources provide technical assistance and grants to help keep contaminants out of our groundwater and to maintain aquifers at appropriate levels.



Clean Wateı Fund

An abandoned fuel storage tank is removed to protect the public water supply in Bovey, MN. Photo credit: MN Department of Health

## **Our strategy**

Identify what's wrong (or healthy) with our water.



**Find** the source of the problem, make a plan to fix it, and prioritize the most important problems first.



**Fund** projects and support the people who can fix the problem.



**Monitor** the project results to see if the fixes worked.

## How do we measure success?

We can't see our groundwater, but we can look at trends that give us an idea of groundwater health.

- Our large monitoring well network determines if groundwater level trends are moving upward, downward, or staying the same.
- Increased inspection of subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS)—or septic systems—and targeted grants protect groundwater from harmful pathogens. Compliance with regulations is well above 80 percent annually, and we're shooting for 90 percent.
- While agencies, local partners, and farmers work to reduce nitrate concentrations around public water supply wells in about three dozen communities, the goal is to have no additional communities with elevated nitrate, and we're getting there.
- We're monitoring for PFAS contamination statewide so that Minnesotans can protect themselves from these "forever chemicals."



Thousands of public and private wells help us know the quantity and quality of our groundwater. The state uses the data to advise or regulate certain land uses based on the science.

For example, monitoring wells may show that an irrigator with a permit may need to suspend operations temporarily so that a nearby private well or public water supply well doesn't go dry during a drought.

Knowing where soils are vulnerable to nitrate contamination (as shown on the right) led the state to restrict fall agricultural fertilizer application. This reduces the risk to drinking water.



## A sampling of thousands of projects:



#### WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR FARMERS

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Over 1,500 certified farmers have significantly reduced the potential for pollutants to enter our groundwater, lakes, and streams compared to conventional practices.



#### WATER EFFICIENT RESIDENTIAL IRRIGATION

Grants to municipalities in the seven-county metro area support more efficient residential irrigation. These and other water efficiency measures have reduced groundwater use by more than 150 million gallons annually.



#### GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

The DNR is building a statewide groundwater monitoring network that tracks water level changes over time and how our aquifers are responding to intensive water use. The DNR uses this information to inform local planning efforts and state permitting decisions for new or increased water uses for communities, agriculture, and industry.

Published by the <u>Clean Water Council</u>





March 2025

# How the Clean Water Fund Protects Minnesota's Drinking Water Sources



In 2008, Minnesota voters took a bold action to protect our drinking water resources, protect and enhance natural habitats, improve our parks and trails, and preserve our cultural heritage. The vote to confirm the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment affirms the cultural importance of water in our "Land of 10,000 Lakes" and the desire to provide safe and sufficient drinking water for all Minnesotans.

The Legacy Amendment requires that at least **five percent of the Clean Water Fund** must be spent only to protect drinking water sources.

## **Our strategy**



×1

**Identify** what's wrong (or healthy) with our water.



**Find** the source of the problem, make a plan to fix it, and prioritize the most important problems first.



**Fund** projects and support the people who can fix the problem.

**Monitor** the project results to see if the fixes worked.

#### **Projects supported by a source water protection grant** 2010-2024



## How do we help communities?

Healthy people in healthy communities depend on safe and reliable water for drinking and clean water for recreation. As Minnesota's lead public health agency, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is using the Clean Water Fund to expand existing drinking water protection successes and enhance water resource protection efforts for the future. They achieve this through a variety of initiatives.

- Gather and share important information about groundwater resources and drinking water wells
- Learn more about the health risks from chemicals, pathogens, and naturally occurring elements in water
- Assist communities to protect their drinking water



#### How do we measure success?

• MDH completes re-evaluations, full evaluations, and updates water guidance for nominated chemicals in Minnesota waters to see what health risks they pose through the Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CEC) program.

- The state's goal is to keep groundwater nitrate levels below the drinking water standard (10 parts per million) for all people who use it as a drinking water source.
- The Clean Water Fund is being used to provide private well tests for 10% of users every year for ten years, and all private well users are offered education on mitigation options.

## A sampling of thousands of projects:



#### SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PLANNING AND GRANTS

More than 920 community water suppliers use groundwater in Minnesota. The Clean Water Fund supports a source water protection plan for each that identifies risks to drinking water. Twenty-three water suppliers that use surface water like the Mississippi River have source water protection plans in progress.



#### PRIVATE WELL TESTING

There are over 469,000 private wells in Minnesota. The Clean Water Fund is used to offer all private well households a free well test for five contaminants (nitrate, bacteria, lead, arsenic, and manganese). Using other state funding sources, local government partners provide free mitigation for high nitrate in eight southeast Minnesota counties.



#### CONTAMINANTS OF EMERGING CONCERN (CECS)

The Health Department operates a nation-leading Public Health Lab. The lab monitors for contaminants found in Minnesota's surface and drinking waters. The Health Department evaluates and reviews contaminants, developing or updating water guidance as necessary using new methodologies to reduce health risks to Minnesotans.



#### GROUNDWATER PROTECTION RULE

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture administers a rule to keep nitrate in public drinking water sources below the federal standard. About three dozen communities have nitrate levels that are close to this limit. The Department of Agriculture works with local water suppliers to identify the sources of nitrate, and engages landowners to use best practices such as cover crops, planting perennials, or adjusting nitrogen application rates.

Published by the <u>Clean Water Council</u>

CLEAN WATER COUNCIL



March 2025