



JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	6	7	8	9	10	11
5			1	2	3	4
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

RCWD BOARD OF MANAGERS WORKSHOP

Monday, July 6, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

Rice Creek Watershed District Conference Room
4325 Pheasant Ridge Drive NE, Suite 611, Blaine, Minnesota
Virtual Monitoring via Zoom Webinar

Join Zoom Webinar:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81014986384?pwd=sFTRZXz0alkln0INtDarj865zer3ub.1>
Passcode: 803542
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Webinar ID: 810 1498 6384
Passcode: 803542

Agenda

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- Middle Rice Creek Repair and Feasibility
- White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan – Metropolitan Council
- RCWD Fund Balance – Project Anticipation Fund

Administrator Updates (If Any)

Middle Rice Creek Repair and Feasibility



MEMORANDUM

Rice Creek Watershed District

Date: June 29, 2026
To: RCWD Board of Managers
From: Matt Kocian, Lake and Stream Manager
Subject: Middle Rice Creek Repair and Feasibility

Introduction

This is an information item, alerting the Board to upcoming proposed repair and feasibility work on Middle Rice Creek.

Background

Middle Rice Creek runs from Baldwin Lake in Lino Lakes to Long Lake in New Brighton (Figure 1). The Creek was channelized in the early 1900's, presumably for agricultural purposes. The unnatural, straightened form, combined with increased flows from agricultural and stormwater runoff, led to channel instability and erosion. Eroded sediment has degraded the condition of the creek, leading to biological *impairment* listings by the State. Sediment and associated nutrients are eventually delivered to Long Lake in New Brighton, which is also listed as *impaired* for excess nutrients and associated algae blooms. In the early 1980's, in response to accelerated sediment delivery to Long Lake, the RCWD Board ordered the creation of the Long Lake Sedimentation Basin. The Basin has been cleaned out (dredged) several times since its creation. The most recent cleanout occurred in 2022 at a cost of \$1.2 million; costs for basin cleanout are expected to increase in the future (above and beyond inflation).

Beginning in the early 2000's, the District has worked to decrease the primary sediment *source* to Long Lake: eroding stream banks. In 2006, the District completed a meander restoration in Middle Rice Creek, upstream of County Road I in Shoreview. The project restored a more natural, meandering path. In 2016, the District completed a second meander restoration project, downstream of Co. Rd. I, in Arden Hills, adjacent to the former Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant. That project was completed as part of the *Long Lake Targeted Watershed Project*, supported by a \$4 million Clean Water Fund grant from the State. Both the 2006 and 2016 projects shared the same goal: To decrease downstream sediment delivery by creating a more stable channel and reducing erosion.

Proposed Maintenance Repair

To ensure that they continue to deliver the benefits for which they were constructed, both past meander restoration projects (2006 and 2016) are maintained as District Facilities. As such, they are periodically inspected. The 2006 project was inspected in 2022 by Emmons and Olivier Resources (EOR), the engineering firm that originally designed the project (report attached). Their inspection found: 1) erosion rates are relatively low, far less than nearby unstable sites, and near the 'natural background' level for stream erosion, and 2) one of the eight banks required maintenance repair. The EOR report (attached) included a cost estimate for the maintenance repair of approximately \$100,000. This cost is included in the 2026 approved RCWD budget (fund #60-04).

Proposed Feasibility

The 2006 and 2016 meander repair projects represented the #1 and #2 priority areas throughout Middle Rice Creek, in terms of sediment and nutrient reduction. The #3 priority area is between I35W and Long Lake, in New Brighton (represented by the yellow circle in Figure 1). To develop stabilization /

MEMORANDUM

Rice Creek Watershed District



restoration options, including cost-estimates, additional feasibility work is required. Having completed past stream feasibility and project work throughout Middle Rice Creek, EOR is well suited to complete feasibility work in this area.

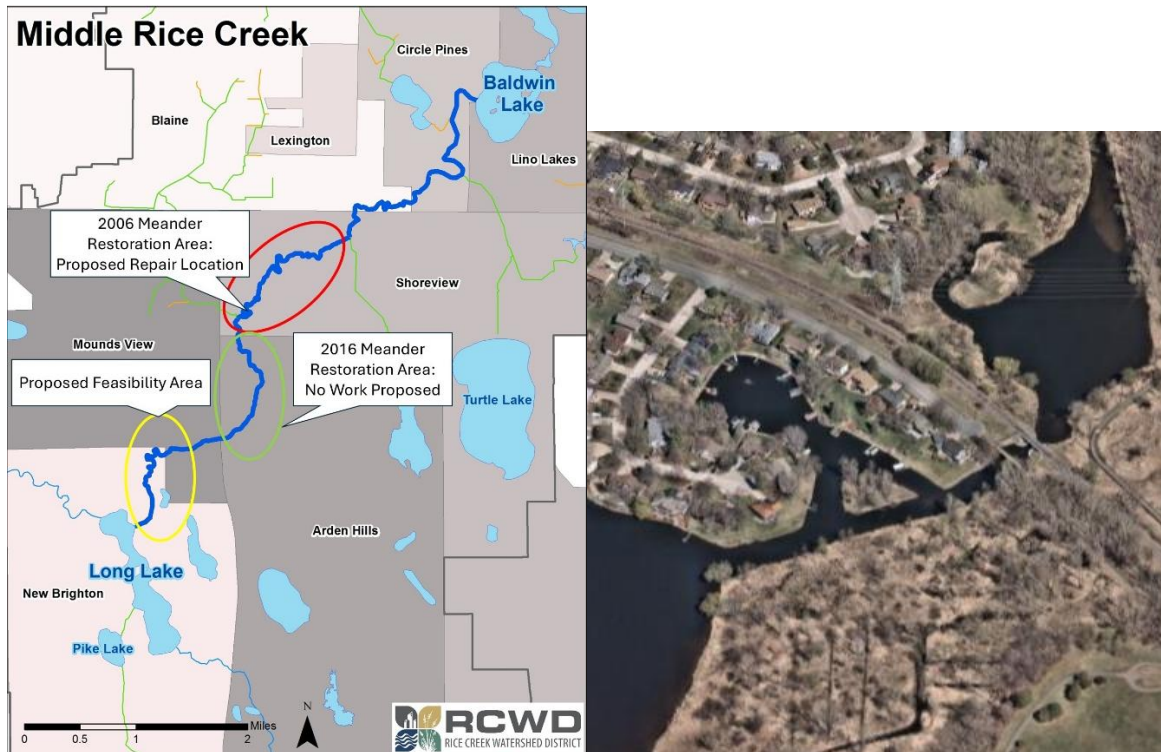


Figure 1. Left: Middle Rice Creek location. Red area: 2006 RCWD Meander Restoration Project. The marker indicates the location of the proposed bank repair. Yellow area: No past work has been completed. Staff propose feasibility work to identify restoration / stabilization options. Green area: 2016 RCWD Meander Restoration Project. No work needed / proposed. Right: Long Lake (lower left of photo) and the Long Lake Sedimentation Basin (upper right of photo).

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend proceeding with maintenance repair of the streambank upstream of County Road I, in Shoreview, associated with the 2002 meander restoration project. The project is a District Facility, and repair will ensure that the project continues to provide the intended benefit. Staff recommend proceeding using a “design-build” process, with EOR acting as the Project Engineer, and seeking at least two quotes from experienced stream contractors¹. EOR’s proposal for engineering services is attached. The expected construction cost is \$100,000 - \$120,000; funds are available in the approved 2026 RCWD budget.

Staff recommend proceeding with engineering feasibility work on Middle Rice Creek between I35W and Long Lake. Consistent with the District’s Outside Services Policy, Staff recommend utilizing EOR for this feasibility work. EOR has previously completed stream feasibility and project work throughout the Middle Rice Creek corridor; new feasibility work would be a continuation. A proposal from EOR for this work will be presented for Board consideration in the coming months.

¹ Given the expected construction cost, this process is consistent with MN Municipal Contracting Law

MEMORANDUM
Rice Creek Watershed District



Attachments

- 2006 Middle Rice Creek Meander Restoration, Project Assessment (EOR, Feb. 2023)
- Middle Rice Creek Repair, Scope of Services (EOR, June 2026)

Project Name | 2006 Middle Rice Creek Project

Date | 2/15/2023

To / Contact info | Matt Kocian – RCWD

Cc / Contact info | Kevin Biehn – EOR

From / Contact info | Mike Majeski – EOR

Regarding | 2022 Project Assessment

Project Background

The 2006 Middle Rice Creek project is located in Rice Creek Regional Park between Lexington Avenue and County Road I. The project aimed to restore historical sinuosity and wetland hydrology in a previously degraded reach of Rice Creek that was straightened in the early 1900's. The objectives of the Rice Creek Restoration Project were to improve the water quality of Rice Creek and enhance riparian habitat and aesthetic value within Rice Creek Regional Park. Construction of the Middle Rice Creek Restoration Project consisted of soil excavation and embankment, grading, stream bank stabilization, installation of rootwads, boulder toe, and boulder rock vanes, and vegetation restoration. To reconnect to old stream meanders located adjacent to the historic ditch, approximately 19,800 cubic yards of soil were excavated from the floodplain, of which an estimated 9,850 cubic yards were used to fill the straightened segments of channel to prevent bypass around the restored meanders.

The project was divided into two construction phases. During the first phase, the new meanders were excavated and stabilized with biodegradable erosion control blankets and planted with deep-rooted native vegetation. These meanders were constructed “offline”, or disconnected from Rice Creek, to allow the native vegetation to establish along the stream banks. Construction of the first phase was completed in February 2005. The second phase of the project was completed in February 2006 with the connection of the restored meanders to Rice Creek.

2022 Project Assessment

The goals of the 2022 project assessment were to document existing site conditions, measure changes from previous site surveys completed in the project reach, and to identify maintenance needs to ensure the project is fulfilling its designed goals. A baseline geomorphic survey of the project reach was completed in November 2014 and the replicate geomorphic survey was completed in November 2022. Both surveys were conducted by Mike Majeski of EOR. The surveys consisted of a channel thalweg surveyed between an established start and end point at a reference “control” reach and at an experimental “restored” reach (Figure 1). Channel cross sections were also surveyed at established riffle and pool locations. To aid in data comparisons, the profiles and cross sections were surveyed using the same georeferenced start and end points for each stream feature. All data were imported into a Mecklenburg database, and profiles and cross sections were plotted and overlaid to compare the data between the 2014 and 2022 surveys. In addition to the geomorphic surveys, Bank Erosion Hazard Index (BEHI) and Near-Bank Stress (NBS) data were collected to measure bank erosion rates along designated outside bends of meanders at the reference reach and the experimental reach (see red lines in Figure 1). Rice Creek Watershed District staff also measured instream habitat in both reaches using the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s Stream Habitat Assessment (MSHA) worksheet.



Figure 1. Location Map and Survey Extents for Middle Rice Creek 2022 Assessment

Results

Reference Reach

The thalweg profile slope (riffle to riffle slope) in 2014 was slightly steeper compared to the riffle slope measured in 2022 and is due to aggraded sediment in the channel since 2014 (Figure 2). Pool depths varied between the two surveys with some pools that maintained similar depths and others that filled in or scoured since 2014. Factors that likely influenced the channel bed elevations between the two surveys include stream flow and bank erosion. Extreme high and low flows have occurred since 2014, with record high flows in 2014 and 2019 and record low flows in 2021 and 2022 (Figure 3). The low flows during the 2021/2022 drought have resulted in less stream power and sediment carrying capacity within the channel and likely caused the accumulation of sediments that were surveyed in the channel in 2022.

Lateral bank migration was documented at two outside bends within the reference reach. Based on cross section data measured between 2014 and 2022, the outside banks have migrated on average 1.13 feet per year (BEHI and NBS estimate was 1.4 feet/year, see Appendix A). As a result, the overall channel length of the reference reach between the start and end points has increased by approximately 22 feet since 2014 (Figure 2, Figure 4). It should be noted that part of the increase in channel length may also be due to changes in the thalweg location between the surveys, with greater thalweg meandering from right bank to left bank in the low flow channel caused by very low streamflow during the November 2022 survey. Consequently, the end point of the 2022 profile survey extends past the 2014 end point in Figure 2 despite both surveys ending at the same location in the channel. The increase in stream length as surveyed in 2022 results in a slight shift in the locations of the riffles and pools compared to the 2014 profile and becomes exaggerated with an increase in stream station from upstream to downstream.

Three channel cross sections were surveyed in the reference reach including one riffle and two pool locations. The riffle cross section data indicated an increase in channel cross-sectional area by 16.3 square feet since 2014 (Figure 5). Conversely, the two pool cross sections indicated a decrease in channel cross-sectional area by 10.9 square feet at cross section 2 (Figure 6) and 2.7 square feet at cross section 3 (Figure 7). Although bank erosion has occurred along the outside bends of the surveyed pools (average of 9 feet of lateral migration since 2014), the point bars along the inside bends have built out at a similar rate such that the bankfull channel width of the reference pool between 2014 and 2022 was nearly the same (36.1 feet compared to 37.8 feet, respectively).

Middle Rice Creek Reference Profile Comparison

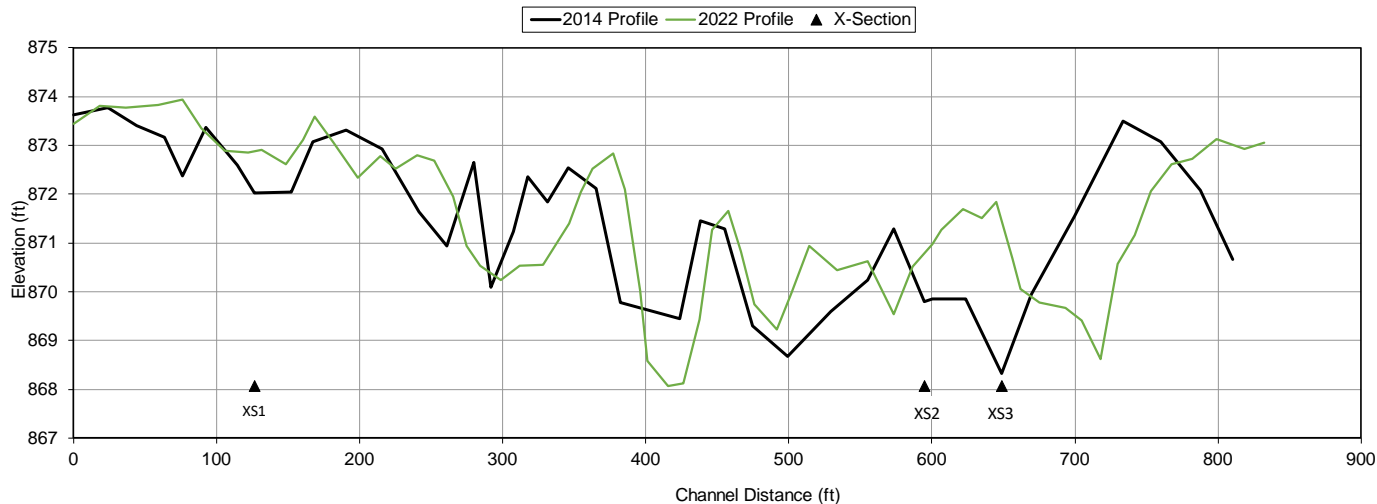


Figure 2. Middle Rice Creek Reference Reach Thalweg Profile Comparisons, 2014 & 2022

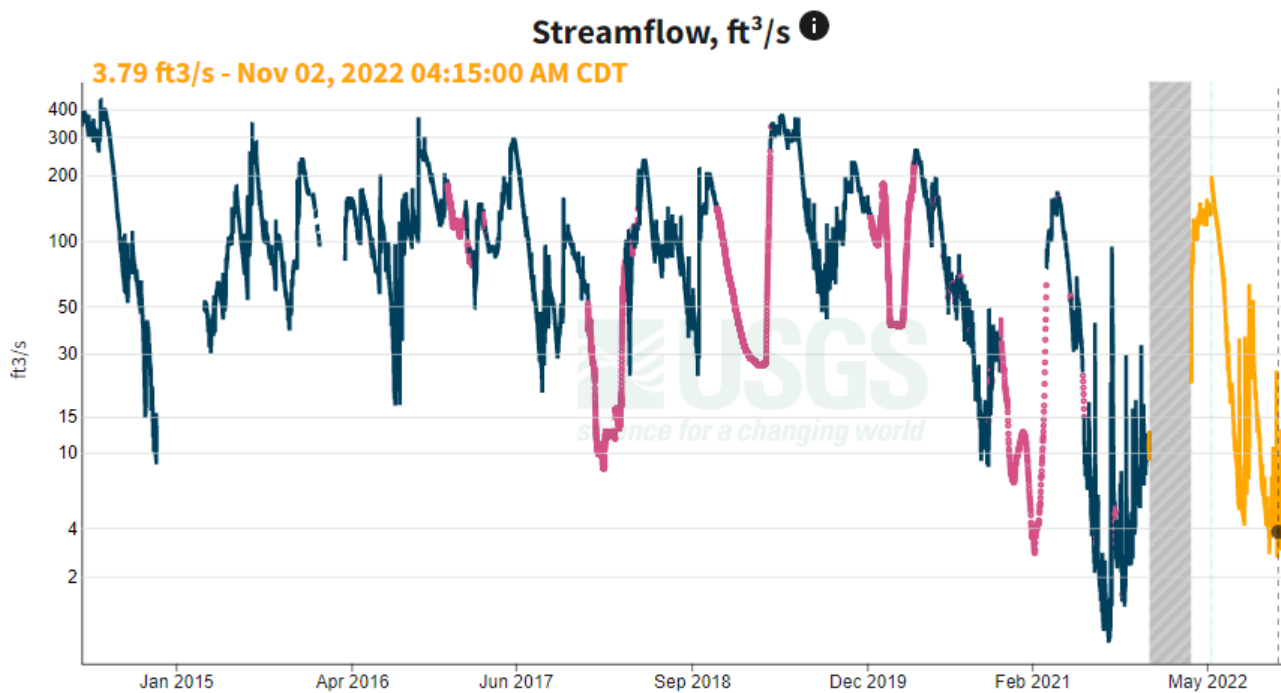


Figure 3. Rice Creek Streamflow Measured by the USGS at Old Highway 8

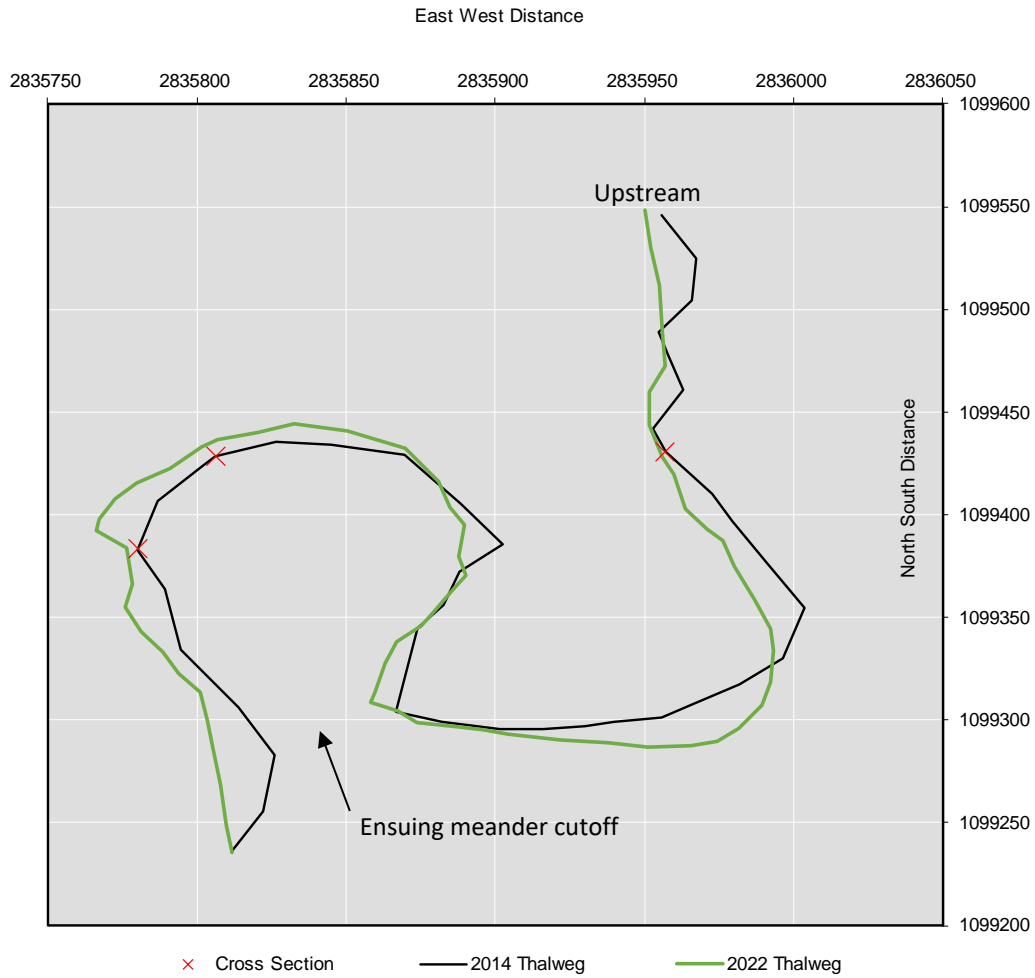


Figure 4. Middle Rice Creek Plan View of 2014 & 2022 Reference Reach Thalweg Profile Surveys

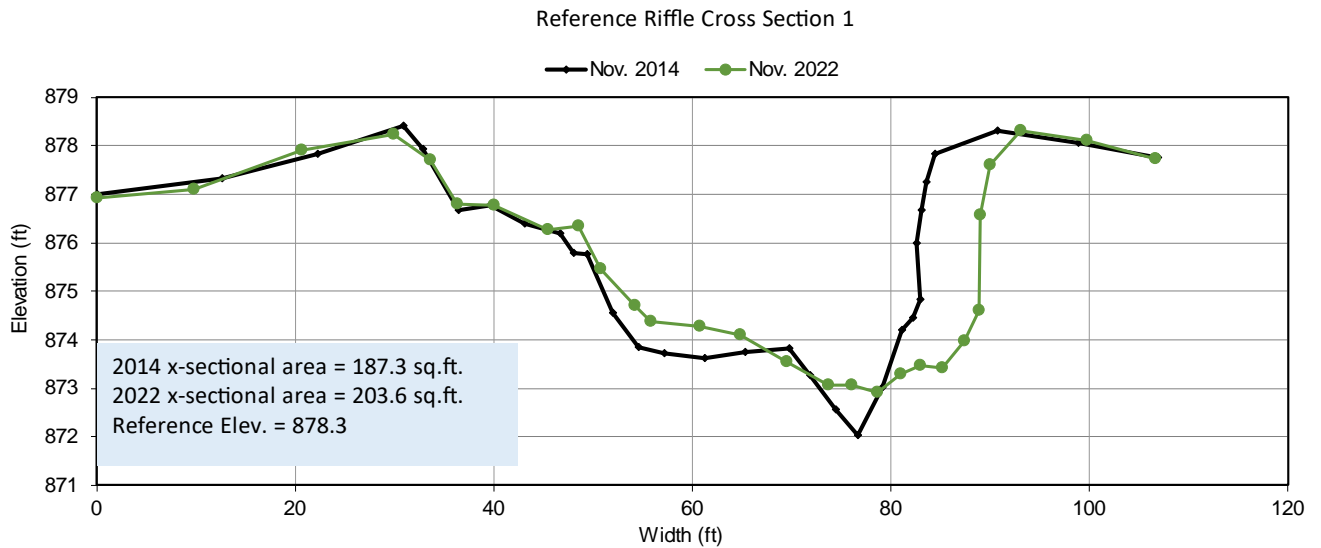


Figure 5. Reference Riffle Cross Section 1 (Looking Downstream)

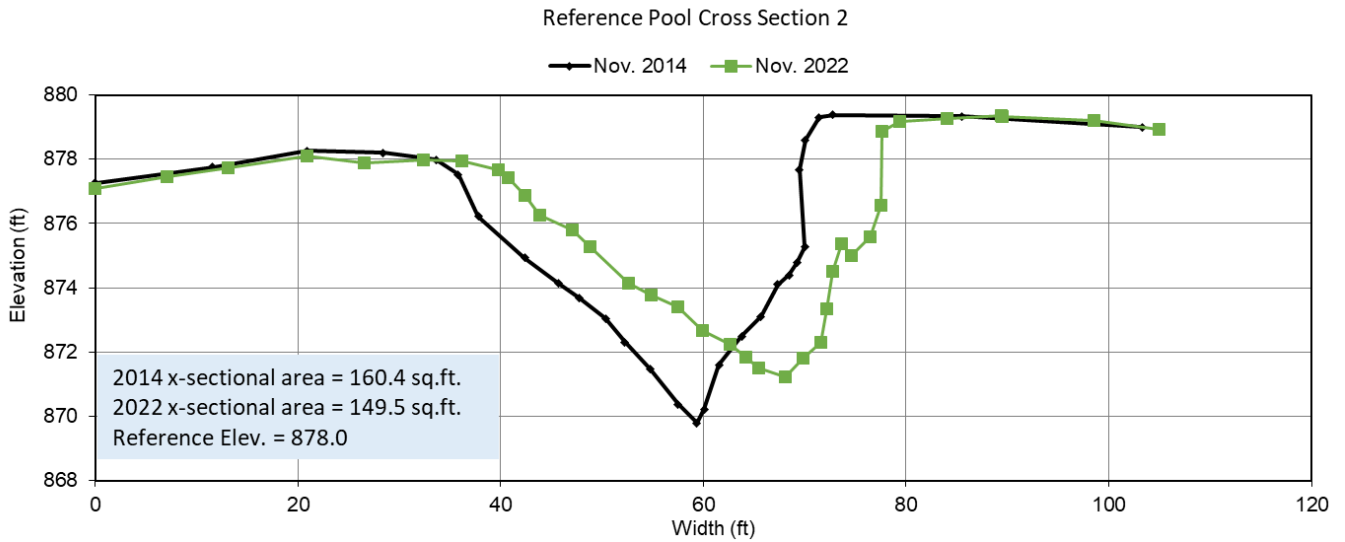


Figure 6. Reference Pool Cross Section 2 (Looking Downstream)

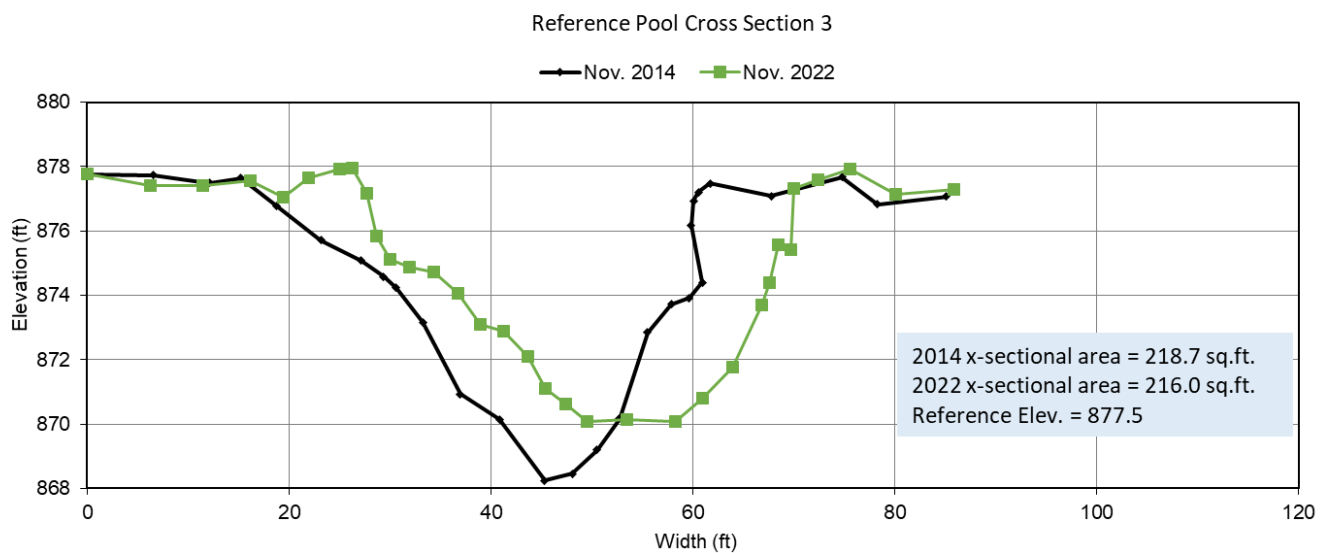


Figure 7. Reference Pool Cross Section 3 (Looking Downstream)

Experimental Reach

The overall thalweg profile slope (riffle to riffle slope) along the experimental reach remained relatively unchanged between 2014 and 2022, with riffle crest elevations varying only a few tenths of a foot between the two years (Figure 8). Pool depths varied between the two surveys with some pools that maintained similar depths and others that filled in or scoured since 2014. Persistent beaver dams occurred in the experimental reach and changed locations between the two years. The beaver dam in 2014 near station 1290 was not visible in 2022 and appeared to be buried in aggraded fine sand. The beaver dam observed in 2022 near station 1010 was not present in 2014. Although beaver dams have been present in this reach, sediment accumulations upstream of the dams have

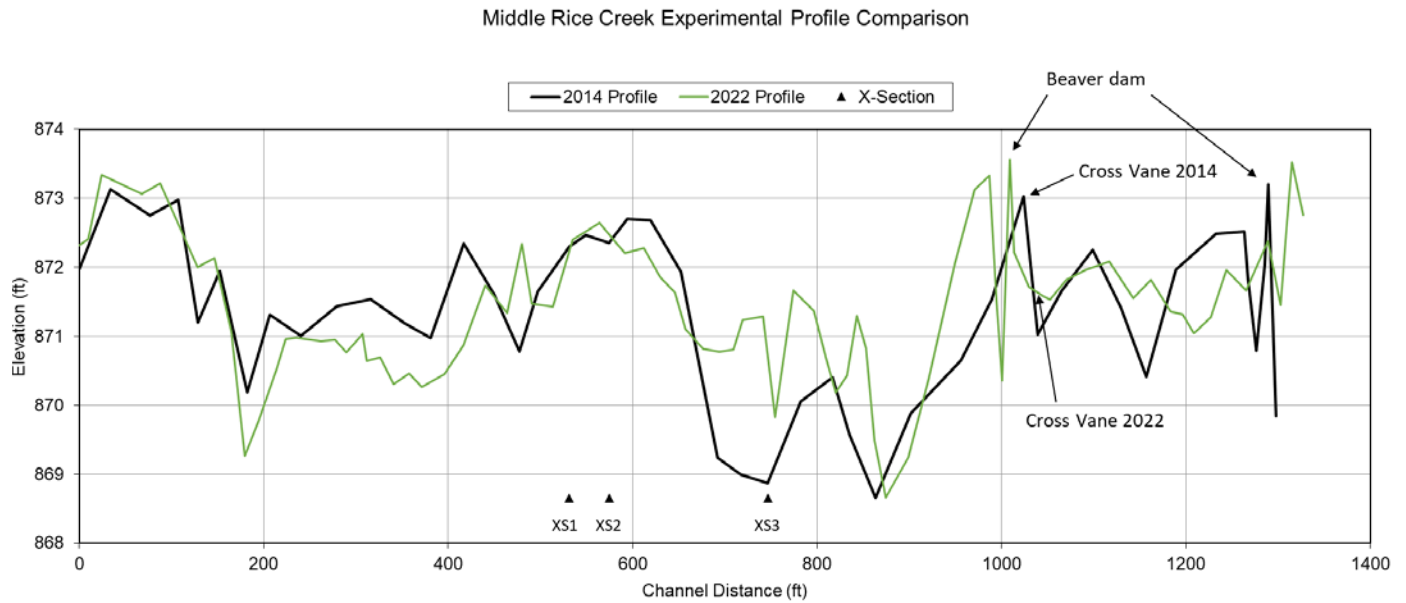


Figure 8. Middle Rice Creek Experimental Reach Thalweg Profile Comparisons, 2014 & 2022

been minimal and likely flush out during high flow events.

Lateral bank migration was documented at two outside bends within the experimental reach. Based on cross section data measured between 2014 and 2022, the outside banks have migrated on average 0.65 feet per year (BEHI and NBS estimate was 0.58 feet/year, see Appendix A). As a result, the overall channel length of the experimental reach between the start and end points has increased by approximately 30 feet since 2014 (Figure 8, Figure 9). As stated for reference reach, part of the increase in channel length may be due to changes in the thalweg location between the surveys, with greater thalweg meandering from right bank to left bank in the low flow channel caused by very low streamflow during the November 2022 survey. Similar to the reference reach, the end point of the 2022 profile survey extended past the 2014 end point in Figure 8 despite both surveys ending at the same location in the channel. The increase in stream length as surveyed in 2022 results in a slight shift in the locations of the riffles and pools compared to the 2014 profile and becomes exaggerated with an increase in stream station from upstream to downstream. This is the reason why the cross vane location plotted in Figure 8 does not line up on the graph between 2014 and 2022, even though the actual cross vane location has not moved between the two surveys. However, the cross vane elevation has decreased 1.45 feet since 2014 due to settling of the boulders in the fine sandy substrate.

Three channel cross sections were surveyed in the experimental reach including two riffles and one pool. The two riffle cross sections were surveyed at the same riffle location, with cross section 1 occurring at the upstream end of the riffle and cross section 2 occurring at the downstream end of the riffle. The cross-sectional areas of the two measured riffles were very similar between 2014 and 2022 despite 5.5 feet of lateral bank migration measured at cross section 1 since 2014 (Figure 10). Little cross-sectional change was measured at cross section 2 where channel flow transitions from right bank to left bank across the riffle (Figure 11). The pool cross section indicated channel filling has occurred since 2014 with a decrease in cross-sectional area by 22.6 square feet despite 5.0 feet of lateral bank migration since 2014 (Figure 12). The bankfull channel width measured in 2022 was 3.4 feet wider than 2014 (41.4 feet compared to 38.0 feet, respectively).

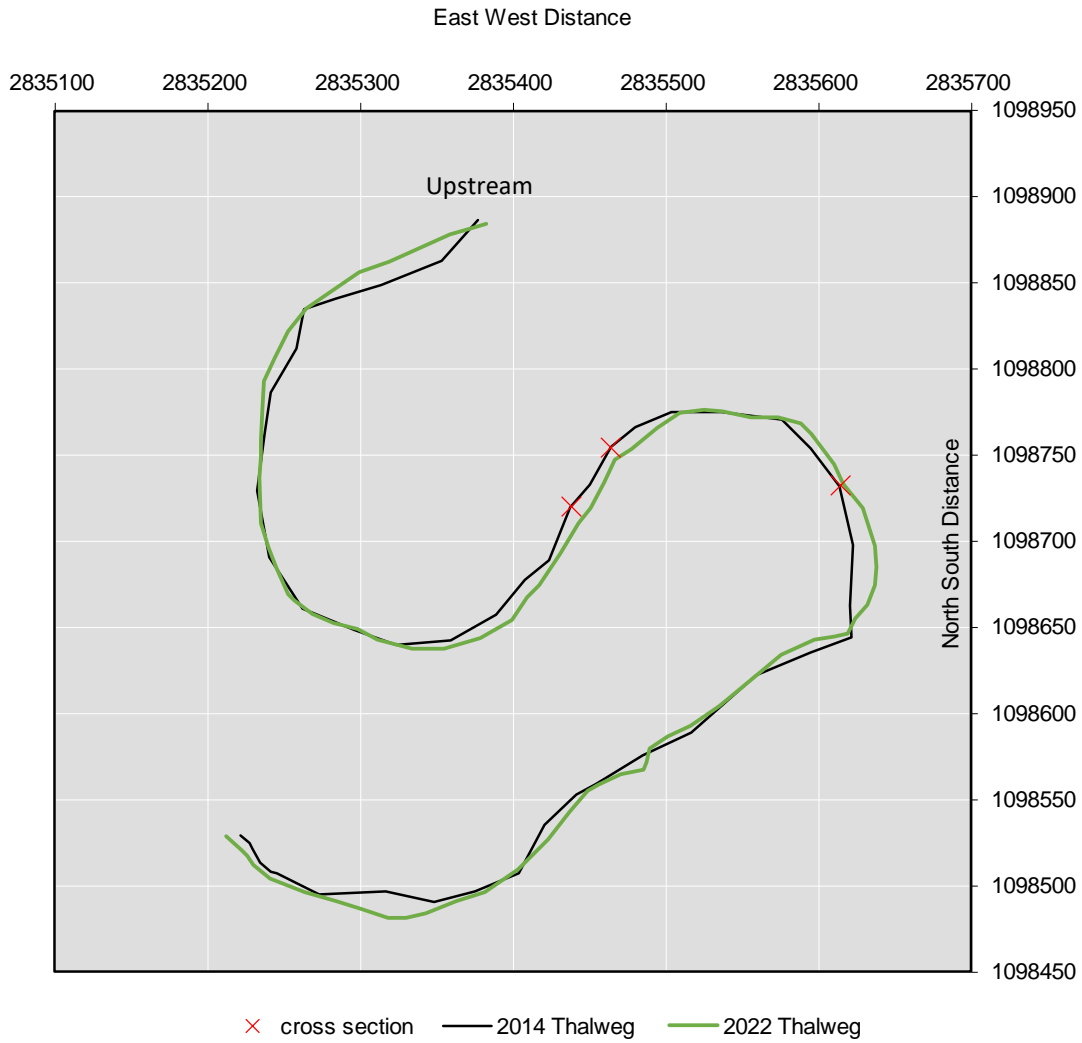


Figure 9. Middle Rice Creek Plan View of 2014 & 2022 Experimental Reach Thalweg Profile Surveys

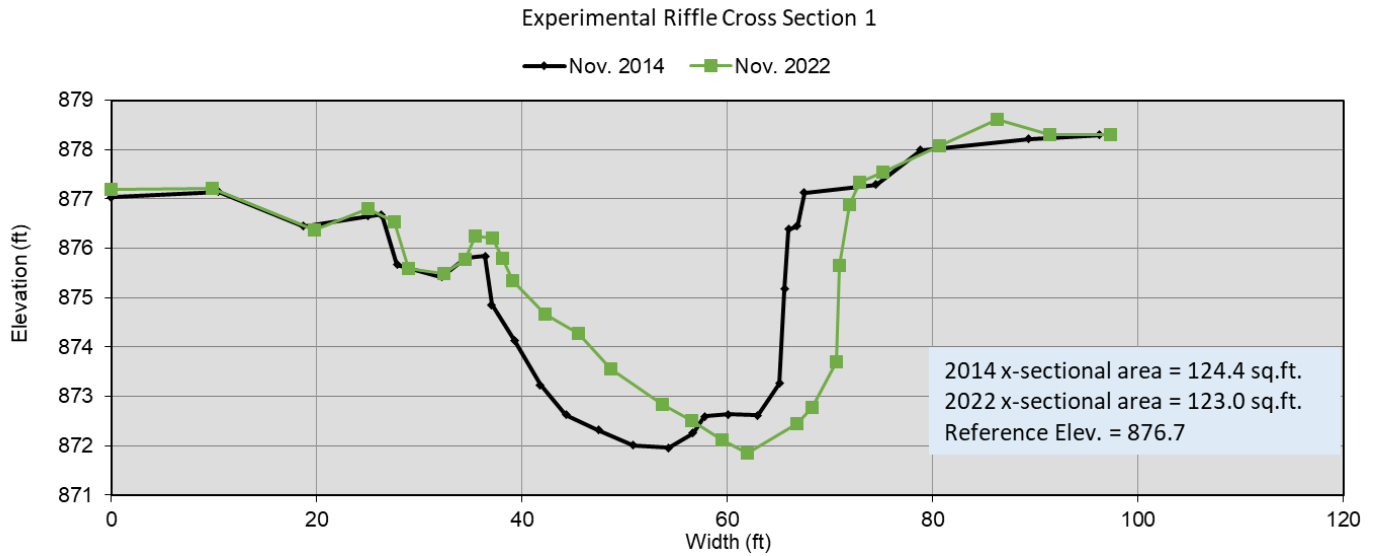


Figure 10. Experimental Riffle Cross Section 1 (Looking Downstream)

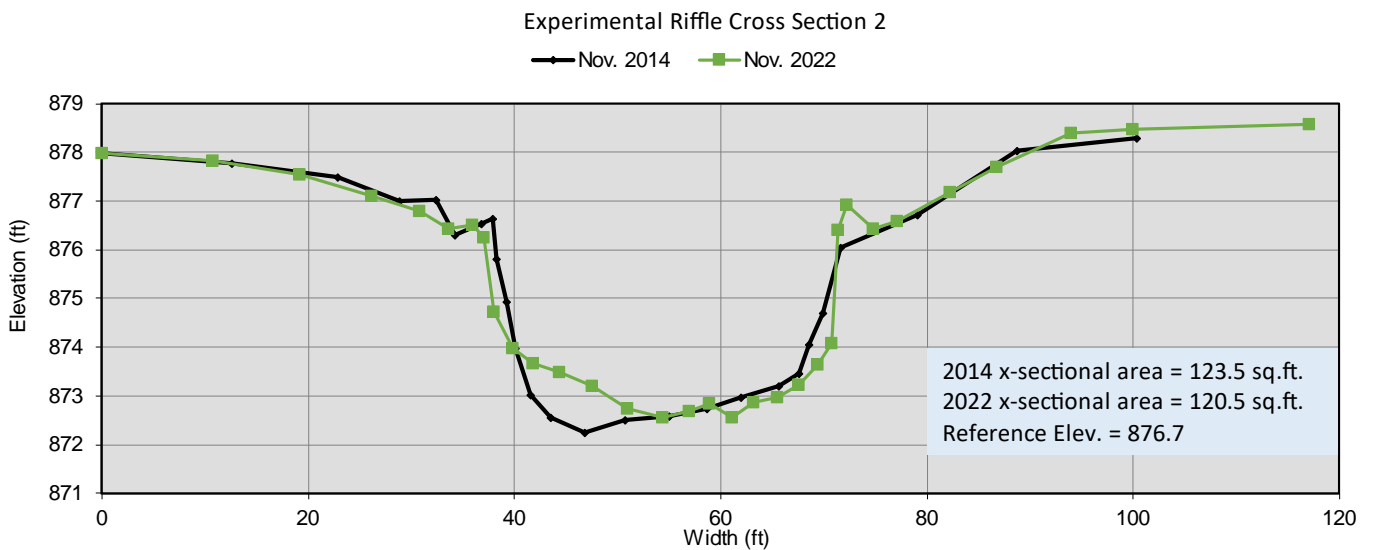


Figure 11. Experimental Riffle Cross Section 2 (Looking Downstream)

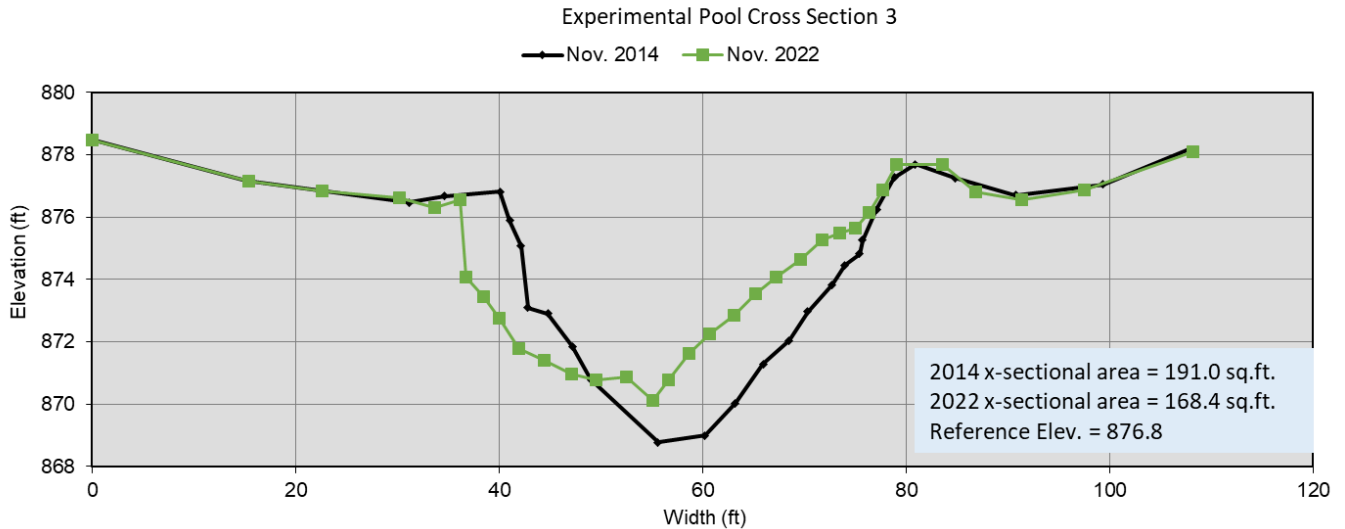


Figure 12. Experimental Pool Cross Section 3 (Looking Downstream)

Discussion

The measured bank erosion rate of the reference reach was significantly greater compared to the experimental reach (1.13 feet/year compared to 0.65 feet/year respectively) and is influenced by limited bank protection and a tighter radius of curvature compared to the experimental reach. The rootwads installed along the outside bend in the experimental reach (BEHI Bank 4) have pushed the channel thalweg toward the center of the channel and have protected the bank during low to moderate flow events. However, lateral bank migration has still occurred, resulting in a shift of the thalweg behind some of the rootwads as measured in 2022. As such, the toe protection provided by the rootwads has diminished over time, and the rootwads may become buried in sediment by the encroaching point bar if lateral bank migration progresses.

EOR has measured BEHI/NBS predicted bank erosion rates at several streams in the Twin Cities metro area including South Fork Nine Mile Creek, Hennepin County (0.02-0.1 feet/year), Brown’s Creek, Washington County (0.1-0.3 feet/year), and Rush Creek, Hennepin County (0.25-0.4 feet/year). Bank erosion rates varied considerably between these three sites and were largely dependent on soils composition (cohesive silt/clay versus sand), radius of curvature, and the physical location of the measurements (outside bends versus straight reaches). The closest comparison to the Middle Rice Creek reach was Rush Creek in Hennepin County. Both sites have low stream slope, sandy bank soils, and high sinuosity. For Rice Creek, it is estimated that bank erosion rates of 0.3-0.5 feet/year is close to natural background conditions along outside bends, and less than 0.3 feet/year along straight reaches. It should be noted these estimated erosion rates are based on a small sample set and additional measures outside the project reach are needed to confirm the rates. The high bank erosion rates measured in the reference reach (1.13 feet/year) suggest accelerated bank erosion is occurring along the outside bends where tight meanders occur. The data collected in the experimental reach also indicate accelerated bank erosion is occurring, but is moderated by the existing toe protection and lower radius of curvature along the long, sweeping meander.

To address potential maintenance needs of the project, a high-level construction cost estimate was developed to determine approximate costs to restore the eroding banks of both reaches. The reference reach was included as a recommended restoration site to prevent an ensuing meander cutoff (Figure 4). Potential maintenance activities include installation of tree/shrub revetments,

grading of bankfull benches, and reuse of existing rootwads and boulders for ballast and anchoring of the tree/shrub revetments. Maintenance is only recommended along the eroding banks (measured BEHI banks) where active bank erosion was documented. If tree/shrub revetments are considered, EOR recommends harvesting existing woody material near the creek to reduce costs to procure materials for the project. There are numerous aspen present near the project area that could be utilized for the revetments as well as young cottonwood and buckthorn. Toewood could also be considered as a maintenance practice but would require several hundred rootwads to stabilize the eroding banks in both reaches and may be cost prohibitive to procure for the project.

Table 1 summarizes the high-level construction cost estimate for both reaches and includes a 15% construction contingency. The cost estimate only includes an approximation for construction activities and does not include any engineering, permitting, or construction management fees.

Table 1. High-Level Construction Cost Estimate for Maintenance of the 2006 Middle Rice Creek Project (Reference & Experimental Reaches Combined)

ITEM #	MNDOT Ref #	BASE BID ITEM	UNIT	QUANTITY	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
1	2021.501	Mobilization	LS	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
2	2101.501	Site Clearing / Tree & Shrub Harvest	AC	1.5	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 7,500.00
3	2105.507	Common Excavation	CY	1000	\$ 15.00	\$ 15,000.00
4	SP	Tree / Shrub Revetment	LF	1000	\$ 40.00	\$ 40,000.00
5	2577.502	Rootwad - Remove & Reinstall	EA	20	\$ 400.00	\$ 8,000.00
6	2575.505	Seeding - Site Disturbance	AC	1.5	\$ 700.00	\$ 1,050.00
7	2575.508	Seed, State Mix 34-261	LBS	35	\$ 30.00	\$ 1,050.00
8	2575.511	Mulch Type 1 Weed-Free Straw	TON	3.0	\$ 700.00	\$ 2,100.00
SUBTOTAL						\$ 84,700.00
CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY					15.00%	\$ 12,705.00
Construction Total						\$ 97,405.00

Project Name | Middle Rice Creek Restoration**Date** | 6/19/2026**To / Contact info** | Matt Kocian – Lake & Stream Manager**Cc / Contact info** | RCWD Board of Managers**From / Contact info** | Mike Majeski**Regarding** | Scope for Bank Repair of Meander A

Background

Following the 2022 site assessment of the Middle Rice Creek restoration project (originally constructed in 2006), EOR identified several banks within the project area that would benefit from maintenance repair. In May 2026, RCWD reached out to EOR to develop a design-build approach to advance the recommended bank repair of Meander A located upstream of County Road I (Figure 1). The 2022 site assessment recommended repair of Meander A by utilizing existing woody material near the creek to reduce costs to procure materials for the repair project. There are numerous aspen trees and buckthorn shrubs near Meander A that can be utilized for toewood/ tree revetments to stabilize the eroding bank.

Scope of Services

EOR will utilize the original Middle Rice Creek Restoration construction drawings to develop a repair plan for Meander A. The original plan contains sufficient site information to guide the design-build approach and project access. Construction inputs will be developed based off the original plan dimensions and recommendations in the 2022 site assessment to determine quantities. The construction drawings and quantities will then be used to seek quotes from experienced stream construction contractors. Once a contractor is selected for the project, EOR will coordinate with RCWD staff to determine timing of construction. Construction oversight will be completed by EOR staff, and an as-built will be completed to document construction inputs. A simple record drawing of the bank repair site will be completed and submitted to RCWD as a final deliverable.



Figure 1. Location of Meander A bank repair area north of County Road I.

Cost Estimate

Table 1 summarizes the tasks and estimated hours to complete the bank repair project.

Table 1. Engineering Services to implement repair of Meander A.

TASK	HOURS	ESTIMATED COST
Engineering Design, Permitting & Project Management	7	\$1,525
Construction Oversight & Asbuilt	29	\$6,425
TOTAL	36	\$7,950

*includes mileage

Construction Schedule

The anticipated construction schedule for the project is estimated between October and early December 2026 during a period of baseflow stage. High water events may delay the project until the following year.

Assumptions

The following is a list of project assumptions:

- RCWD will work with MnDNR to amend the original Public Water Work permit for the project, and EOR will work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff to amend the original federal permit
- No other permitting will be required for the project
- EOR to assist with seeking quotes from construction contractors, and RCWD will contract directly with the selected contractor
- RCWD staff to coordinate with the landowner to secure site access
- Construction to be conducted during baseflow stage
- Landowner will allow harvest of aspen, boxelder, and woody invasive shrubs for the project

**White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan –
Metropolitan Council**

MEMORANDUM

Rice Creek Watershed District



Date: June 29, 2026 (updated from August 2025)
To: RCWD Board of Managers
From: Matt Kocian, Lake and Stream Manager
Subject: White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan - Met. Council

Summary

Led by the Metropolitan Council, the *White Bear Lake Work Group* has been tasked by the MN Legislature to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing drinking water supply and groundwater protection/recharge. The Group’s work is about to conclude. An update will be provided at the July Board Workshop.

Background

Water levels on White Bear Lake have long been highly variable. Over the long history of water level monitoring, levels have varied by more than 6 feet. Water level records dating back to 1924 are shown in Figure 1.

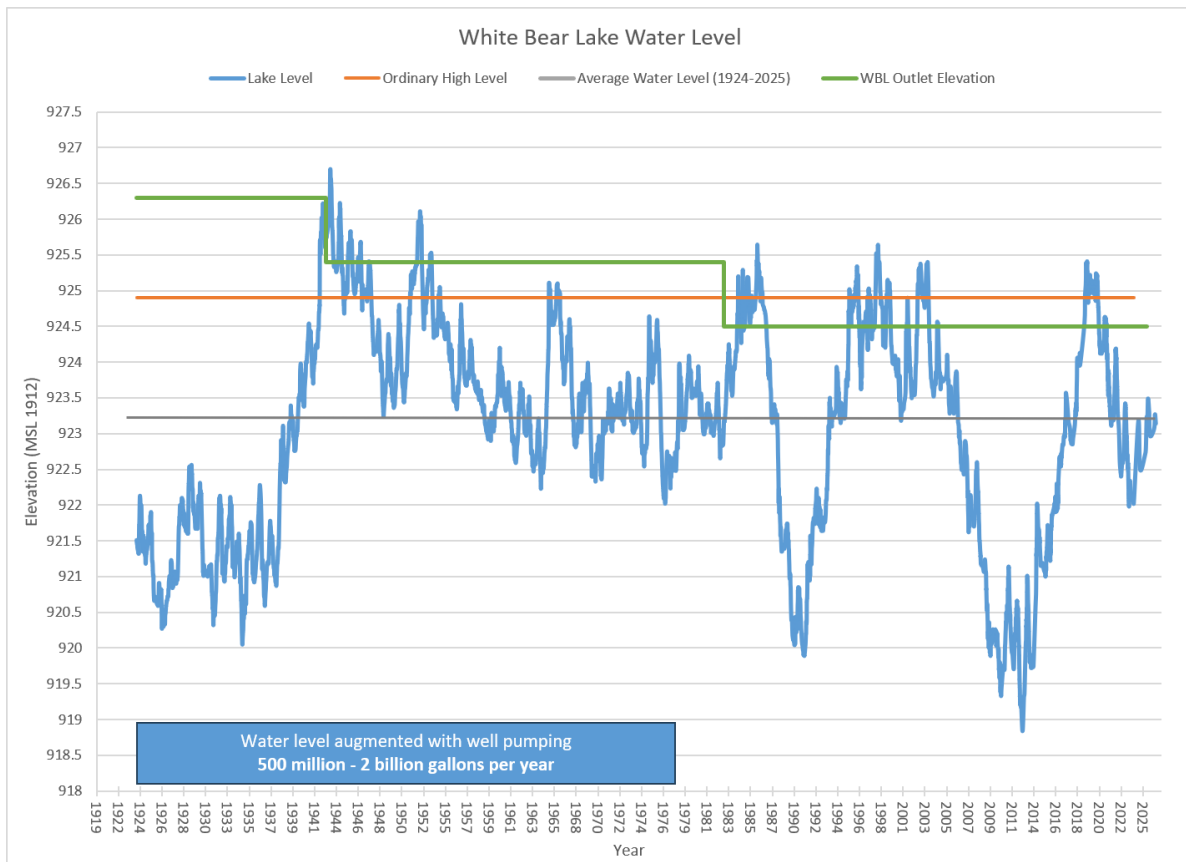


Figure 1: White Bear Lake water levels; the OHW is indicated by the orange line, lake outlet elevation by the green line, and the long-term average level is indicated by the grey line.

MEMORANDUM

Rice Creek Watershed District



To increase water levels and mitigate large variations, groundwater was pumped into White Bear Lake from the mid-1920's through the late 1970's. Annual pumping volumes ranged from 500 million to 2 billion gallons. This past augmentation raised White Bear Lake water levels, and reduced variability from year to year. It also influences the long-term average water level (roughly 923.2 MSL1912), skewing the long-term average upward. Currently, MN law bans the large-scale use of groundwater for the purposes of surface water level management (103G.271).

White Bear Lake water levels gained renewed attention in 2009 - 2014. Back-to-back severe droughts in 2008 and 2009 led to a period of low water levels, including a record low in 2013. Concern about low water levels led to several new studies, each seeking to identify the causes of low water levels. A study from the U.S. Geological Survey suggested that, along with decreased precipitation, increased use of groundwater played a role in the lake level decline¹. However, the relative role of precipitation, evaporation, and groundwater use remains debated. Some scientists suggest that precipitation and other climatic variables are the primary driver, and groundwater extraction plays only a small role². Others suggest that increased evaporation in recent decades plays a significant role³.

The District's role regarding water levels on White Bear Lake is minimal. Section 3.2.5.6 of the District's 2020 Watershed Management Plan identifies the issue of *Surface Water / Groundwater Interactions*. District goals, defined in the WMP, are to:

- Protect groundwater-reliant resources by implementation of surface water activities, such as stormwater infiltration (groundwater recharge) or stormwater reuse (groundwater preservation)
- Participate in collaborative efforts related to groundwater resources

The District has been working diligently on these goals, supporting infiltration and water reuse projects, and collaborating with partners.

In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature allocated \$2 million to the Metropolitan Council to "develop a comprehensive plan to ensure communities in the White Bear Lake area have access to sufficient safe drinking water to allow for municipal growth while ensuring the sustainability of surface water and groundwater resources to supply the needs of future generations." The plan must, among other things, "evaluate methods for conserving and recharging groundwater." The legislative language requires examination of several possible methods, including:

1. converting [municipal] water supplies from groundwater to surface water
2. reusing water
3. **projects designed to increase groundwater recharge, and**
4. other methods for reducing groundwater use

¹ Jones et al, 2013 Groundwater and Surface-Water Interactions near White Bear Lake, Minnesota, through 2021, USGS SIR 2013-5044

² Tonkin, 2014 Expert Report of Matthew J Tonkin Re: WBL Restoration Assoc vs. MN DNR

³ Xiao et al 2018 Evaporation from a temperate closed-basin lake and its impact in present, past, and future water level, Journal of Hydrology, 561 (59-75)

MEMORANDUM

Rice Creek Watershed District



To accomplish this work, the Metropolitan Council was directed to form a Work Group, made up of representatives from DNR, MPCA, St Paul Regional Water Services, and areas Cities. Subsequently, the Work Group identified and ranked potential solutions for each Legislative directive. **Under “Projects designed to increase groundwater recharge”, the group identified their top solution to evaluate as “Lake augmentation by pumping treated surface water from the [Vadnais] Chain of Lakes into White Bear Lake.”** Consequently, the Work Group is now conducting studies to evaluate the possibility of pumping water from the Mississippi River, via the Vadnais Chain of Lakes, into White Bear Lake. These studies are evaluating potential impacts of this action, including water quality impacts on White Bear Lake.

Work group members have also asked their project engineer, Kimly Horn, to review other possible surface water sources for pumping to White Bear Lake, including Ramsey Washington Judicial Ditch 1, the outlet of Bald Eagle Lake, and Centerville Lake. This information was shared with the Board at the August 2025 workshop. The Board provided a statement to Metropolitan Council, attached below. In essence, this statement supported stormwater re-use as a means for reducing groundwater use, identified concerns about water quality impacts to White Bear Lake by pumping water from other locations, and noted that the lack of available “excess” water at the locations noted above. The exact status of the inclusion of these potential pumping locations (JD1, Bald Eagle outlet, and Centerville) in the final report remains uncertain.

Details of the White Bear Lake Work Group’s past meetings can be found on the project website: <https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Work-Groups/White-Bear-Lake-Work-Group.aspx> Or, search “White Bear Lake Comprehensive Plan Work Group”.

Staff Recommendation

Staff will review the final Metropolitan Council Draft report, available later this calendar year, and present a summary to the board. RCWD staff recommend the Board consider issuing official comments or statements at the time, if warranted.

Attachment

- RCWD Board Statement on potential White Bear Lake surface water augmentation locations, August 2025

Manager Bradley, makes the following motion providing Rice Creek Watershed District's (RCWD) position on the use of surface water from Bald Eagle Lake (Ditch 1, or Bald Eagle Lake outlet), or Peltier/Centerville Lakes to augment water surface levels in White Bear Lake.

RCWD supports the investigation of potential sources for re-use and diversion for the purpose of hydraulic augmentation of White Bear Lake. However, with respect to the use of water from these specific resources, RCWD is guided by its current Water Management Plan. RCWD's current Water Management Plan (as addressed through its stormwater grant program and other approved comprehensive sub-watershed plans) strongly endorses using water reuse, and groundwater recharge where the water is not needed to sustain existing surface water levels and/or the diverted water addresses capacity constraints/flooding concerns. With respect to Bald Eagle, Peltier and Centerville Lakes, the surface water has been used for decades to support existing surface water levels. Further, there are no flooding or capacity concerns that would be addressed by diverting surface water from Bald Eagle, Centerville, or Peltier Lakes.

Further, there are legitimate concerns for water quality impacts on White Bear Lake as water from these other RCWD sub-watersheds each have higher nutrient loads than White Bear Lake, and water diversion would increase the risk of future cross contamination.

This response does not address areas of the City of Grant, or other alternatives such as access to the White Bear Lake subwatershed and its drainage to Ramsey County Ditch 11.

Motion: Bradley

Second: Weinandt

Passed, 2-1

RCWD Fund Balance – Project Anticipation Fund

MEMORANDUM

Rice Creek Watershed District



Date: June 26, 2026
To: RCWD Board of Managers
From: Nick Tomczik, Administrator
Subject: RCWD Fund Balance – Project Anticipation Fund

Introduction

This is an information and discussion item regarding the District’s Fund Balance, its Project Anticipation Fund, financial Capital Improvement Plan planning.

Background

The District’s current General Fund Balance Policy which the Board approved August 22, 2022, provides for the establishment of project anticipation fund. The Project Anticipation Fund is first present in RCWD’s 2023 budget and thereafter.

The District approach to anticipated future public costs is a “saving in advance” approach. The origin of the approach exists in past RCWD budgets; notations for multi-year “accumulation” of funds for future work. Project expenditures that were anticipated to be large were to be managed in a way that did not burden the public with significant upward and downward changes in the general levy.

(This is like the District’s approach to its Public Drainage Authority obligation to repair the numerous drainage systems. The District determined it best to approach the large public cost in repair of the public ditch system obligation is a prioritized, systematic, method. One major system is repaired per year over multiple years. This spreads and “evens” the cost and supports “stability” in the ad valorem levy.)

The District has identified by study, District Wide Model, and engagement with its partners, issues which will need to be addressed to fulfill the District’s mission of public drainage management, flood management, and management for healthy water quality. These issues are of varying importance, priority, and magnitude requiring additional data and study by which to further develop sound solutions; “anticipated projects”. By their nature, anticipated projects are generally over a 5-year time horizon and so are largely rudimentary both for project and cost. The project exercise is for planning purposes.

(This is like the District’s Brown’s Preserve wetland credits and credit allocation towards future potential credit use for a particular project. Here too, the projects are envisioned, developing and require further development to take place. The credit allocation exercise is for planning purposes.)

Staff Recommendation

This item is informational for the Board’s deliberation/discussion in consideration of financial planning.

Attachment

- RCWD General Fund Balance Policy

General Fund Balance Policy

Board approved 12/7/2011; amended 8/22/2022.

Purpose:

Sound financial management policies provide for the financial stability of the Rice Creek Watershed District. Fund balance reserves are an important component in ensuring the District's ability to maintain the continuity of its work and its overall financial health. Reserves give the District sufficient funds to provide for cash flow where ad valorem levies are received semi-annually, address unexpected costs and liabilities, and pursue unexpected opportunities. In establishing an appropriate fund balance, the District needs to consider the demands of cash flow, the need for emergency reserves, its ability to manage fluctuations of revenue sources, its credit rating and its long-term fiscal health.

Policy:

The District will provide for a fund balance cash flow operating reserve comprising two elements:

- An unassigned fund balance within the General Fund of not less than 40 percent of the General Fund budget.
- An assigned fund balance within the Implementation Fund of not less than 40 percent of the next-year's administrative (00) budget lines.

The District will implement this policy through the annual budget process, with reserve amounts calculated in reference to the next-year's budget. The District administrator will propose a budget that conforms to these benchmarks. In the budgeting process, the Board of Managers will review the amounts in fund balance. The District will seek to establish conforming fund balance reserve as of the beginning of the fiscal year, on the basis of the Board-approved fiscal-year budget, and to maintain this reserve through the fiscal year. The Board may approve a budget that deviates from this benchmark, but will document its rationale for doing so. If at the end of a fiscal year, the fund balance reserve is less than the benchmark figure, the Board, in its judgment, may pursue an approach that reinstates fund balance reserve to the benchmark over a period of years.

At the discretion of the Board of Managers, fund balance may be committed for a specific purpose by resolution designating the specific use of fund balance and the amount. The resolution will be approved by the close of the reporting period.

At any time, the Board by formal action may reduce the fund balance reserve, including below the benchmark, to provide funds for present-year spending or commitment. For a substantial

reduction below benchmark, the Board's action will indicate how the Board may replenish the reserve.

Within the framework of the approved budget, the Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to assign unassigned fund balance, in accordance with the definitions below, by establishing subfunds to reflect the District's intended use of the assigned funds.

When both restricted and unrestricted resources are available for use, it is the District's policy to first use restricted resources, and then use unrestricted resources as they are needed. When committed, assigned or unassigned resources are available for use, it is the District's policy to use resources in the following order; 1) committed; 2) assigned; 3) unassigned.

Fund balance reserve as defined under this policy is not intended to accumulate funds for future capital project, capital maintenance or replacement, or program spending. For that purpose, the Board of Managers may establish a project anticipation or similar subfund within the Implementation Fund and commit funds to that subfund on the basis of findings as to the potential future need for those funds.

Definitions:

Fund balance - the difference between assets and deferred outflows of resources, and liabilities and deferred inflow of resources, reported in a governmental fund.

General Fund – covers the general administrative expenses of the District, including salaries, benefits, and office expenses.

Implementation Fund – covers the costs of preparing or amending the District's plan and the implementation of the plan through projects and programs, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.241.

The following fund balance classifications are used to report fund balance for governmental funds. The classifications are set forth in General Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 54. This GASB standard advises that the classifications form a hierarchy "based primarily on the extent to which the government is bound to honor constraints on the specific purposes for which amounts in those funds can be spent."

Nonspendable fund balance - amounts that are not in a spendable form or are required to be maintained intact.

Restricted fund balance - amounts subject to externally enforceable legal restrictions.

Unrestricted fund balance - the total of committed fund balance, assigned fund balance, and unassigned fund balance.

Committed fund balance - amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes determined by a formal action of the government's highest level of decision-making authority. Commitments may be changed or lifted only by the government taking the same formal action that imposed the constraint originally.

Assigned fund balance - amounts a government intends to use for a specific purpose; intent can be expressed by the government body or by an official or body to which the governing body delegates the authority.

Unassigned fund balance - residual amounts that are available for any purpose in the general fund.