BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Level II Performance Review

Rice Creek Watershed District

Local Government Unit Review

Final Report

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Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

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This report has been prepared for the **Rice Creek Watershed District** by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.102, Subd.3.

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PRAP Level II Report Summary	Rice Creek Watershed District
What is a PRAP Performance Review? The Board of Water and Soil Resources supports Minnesota's counties, watershed districts and soil and water conservation districts that deliver water and related land resource management projects and programs. In 2007 the Board set up a program (PRAP) to systematically review the performance of these local units of government to ensure their effective operation. Each year BWSR staff conduct routine reviews of several of these local conservation delivery entities. This document reports the results of one of those reviews.	**Key Findings and Conclusions** Rice Creek Watershed District is doing a very good job of administering local water management and conducting water monitoring programs and projects. The organization is getting important work done in the areas of flood damage reduction, drainage maintenance, and water quality protection. With the upcoming opportunity to update the Watershed District Plan there is an opportunity for the Rice Creek Watershed District to focus its watershed plan to problems and priorities specific to the watershed's major waterbodies, and to provide resource specific outcomes. The Rice Creek Watershed District shows excellent compliance with BWSR's basic and high performance standards. **Resource Outcomes** The Rice Creek Watershed District Plan does contain some resource outcome goals and objectives. **Commendations** The Rice Creek Watershed District is commended for meeting 11 out of 12 High Performance Standards. **Action Item –** The Rice Creek Watershed District has no action items. **Recommendations:** **Recommendation 1:** Continue and expand the use of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable as criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan as appropriate. **Recommendation 2**: Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.

Introduction

This is an informational document prepared by the staff of the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for the Rice Creek Watershed District. This report presents the results of a routine performance review of the Rice Creek Watershed District's (BRRWD) water management plan implementation and overall organizational effectiveness in delivery of land and water conservation projects and programs.

BWSR has reviewed the BRRWD's reported accomplishments of their management plan action items, determined the organization's compliance with BWSR's Level I and II performance standards, and surveyed members of the Rice Creek Watershed District and its partner organizations.

This review is neither a financial audit nor investigation and it does not replace or supersede other types of governmental review of local government unit operations.

While the performance review reported herein has been conducted under the authority granted to BWSR by Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103B.102, this is a staff report and has not been reviewed or approved by the BWSR board members.

What is PRAP?

PRAP is an acronym for BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program. Authorized by the 2007 Minnesota legislature, the PRAP purpose is to support local delivery of land conservation and water management by periodically reviewing and assessing the performance of local units of government that deliver those services. These include soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, watershed management organizations, and the local water management functions of counties.

BWSR has developed four levels of review, from routine to specialized, depending on the program mandates and the needs of the local governmental unit. A Level I review annually tabulates all local governmental units' compliance with basic planning and reporting requirements. In Level II, conducted by BWSR once every ten years for each local government unit, the focus is on the degree to which the organization is accomplishing its watershed management plan. A Level II review includes determination of compliance with BWSR's Level I and II statewide performance standards, a tabulation of progress on planned goals and objectives, a survey of board or water plan task force members and staff of the factors affecting plan implementation, a survey of LGU partners about their impressions of working with the LGU, and a BWSR staff report to the organization with findings, conclusions and recommendations. BWSR's actions in Levels III and IV include elements of Levels I and II and then emphasize assistance to address the local governmental unit's specific needs.

Background - Rice Creek Watershed District

The following background information is taken from the 2010 Watershed Management Plan for the Rice Creek Watershed District *(Amended November 9, 2016).*

Plan Overview

"Focus and Purpose

This document serves as the WMP required under MS 103B and 103D and Rule 8410. Per statute, the WMP must extend for at least five years and no longer than 10 years. The plan, which is the subject of this document, is a consolidation and update of the previous watershed plans. Specifically, this plan will replace the adopted 1997 WMP as amended in 2000 and 2008.

The WMP provides the guidance and implementation for the RCWD to manage the water and natural resources of the District into the foreseeable future extending through 2020. As such, the WMP incorporates and builds on the previous plans as well as the numerous studies, inventories and assessments that have been completed in recent history. Focusing on implementation also requires the RCWD to successfully balance conflicting water management laws, address funding issues, and effectively coordinate with constituents.

The WMP and associated policies acts as one leg of a three-legged stool which supports District operation and implementation efforts. The other two legs are the District Rules, which incorporate the outcomes of Resource Management Plans, and Repair Reports which are developed from the WMP long range work plan.

Planning Regions

The RCWD jurisdictional boundary encompasses 186 square miles of area. The expansive area is characterized by a range of landscape and resource features, which can generally be grouped into broad regions of the District. These planning regions will be used to help orient the RCWD or stakeholder when discussing resources, issues, or focusing on activities. PRs will not be used as a means to set standards or rules. Instead, they reflect an organizational structure which acknowledges general regional similarities within the District.

Five PRs have been established in the RCWD, Hardwood Creek, Clearwater Creek, Upper Rice Creek, Middle Rice Creek, and Lower Rice Creek. The planning regions were generally determined based on basic hydrologic boundaries and generally reflect groupings of different resources (e.g. urban shallow lakes, big lakes, chain of lakes) and other landscape characteristics.

Management Categories

Rice Creek and its tributaries serve multiple purposes: they drain an extensive agricultural area, function as the stormwater outlet for communities, serve as a recreational resource for adjoining residences and public parks, provide a natural habitat for aquatic organisms, waterfowl and other wildlife, and also are an open space and greenbelt resource of unique value that provide an attractive locale for residential development. A diversity of wetland and lakes occur throughout the Rice Creek system.

This WMP is organized around eight management categories, identified by the Board, Citizen Advisory Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. The eight management categories listed below serve to address the diversity of resources and issues across the District. Management categories are broad, encompassing resources, actions and efforts that serve as a means to prioritize functions and activities. The management categories in no order of priority or importance are:

1. *Education, Data, and Information*
2. *Lakes*
3. *Wetlands*
4. *Drainage Systems and Waterways*
5. *Excess Runoff*
6. *District Facilities*
7. *Open Space*
8. *Groundwater*

The use of management categories lends clarity and functionality to planning and budget needs. They are important because they guide implementation and expenditures. Chapter 3 of this WMP, Assessment of Issues, identifies RCWD problems, concerns, needs, and opportunities in accordance with management categories. The District acknowledges that in reality resource management is a multi-faceted effort. The dependencies, feedbacks and upstream-downstream dynamics of resource management make it difficult to truly distinguish isolated categories.

Geography

Situated in the northern Twin Cities area, the RCWD is encompassed by the broad North Central Hardwood Forest Level III ecoregion of Minnesota. Ecoregions (Omernik, 2004) are a nationwide classification system for grouping areas of similar climate, soils and vegetation. At a finer scale, the North Central Hardwood Forest is comprised of six sub regions which are considered Level IV ecoregions, two of which overlap the RCWD:

- *Anoka Sand Plain and Mississippi Valley Outwash (Eco-region 51a): "Undulating sandy plain with wetlands, some lakes, small grains, row crops, woodlands, and suburban development".*
- *St. Croix Outwash Plain and Stagnation Plains (Eco-region 51h): "Rolling hills interspersed with depressions of small lakes and wetlands, extensively covered by urban and suburban development, but also pasture, and some crops and woodland".*

The RCWD has abundant lakes and wetlands providing an environment conducive to wildlife and popular for recreation. The watershed is a complex environment that ranges from rural, undeveloped or agricultural areas in the north and east, to suburban and urban areas in the south and west.

Geographic proximity to Minneapolis and St. Paul is a significant element shaping the issues relevant to the RCWD. Specifically, the area that comprises the District has seen extensive growth in recent decades. Anoka, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington Counties currently comprise four of the top five most populous counties in the state. The 1950 population of Anoka County was 35,579; by 1970, it had increased over 330% to 154,556; and in 2006 the population was estimated to be 327,005, a 110% increase from 1970. The development of these second and third ring suburbs has been the main source of growth in the District in the past decade. For example, while the population of Fridley declined nearly 9% from 1970 to 2005, Blaine saw an increase of over 160%.

Topography and Drainage

Rice Creek begins at Clear Lake just south of Forest Lake and meanders southwestward through a chain of lakes to Fridley where it joins the Mississippi River. Rice Creek has two major tributaries, Hardwood Creek and Clearwater Creek, which drain the eastern part of the watershed. The elevation of Rice Creek drops 84 feet during its 28-mile course from Clear Lake, which has an ordinary high water elevation 890.3 feet above mean sea level (Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 2008), to its confluence with the Mississippi River. Most of that decline in elevation occurs in the last 8 miles before the junction with the Mississippi River. The upper 20 miles of Rice Creek has a fall of about 1 foot per mile resulting in relatively poor drainage, and providing abundant lakes and wetlands. The very flat topography in the northern part of the watershed makes drainage divides difficult to distinguish. The highest point in the District is more than 1,100 feet above mean sea level in Arden Hills; the lowest point is in Fridley where Rice Creek flows into the Mississippi River.

Subwatersheds

Subwatersheds can be used as a method of reducing the large and somewhat heterogeneous RCWD into smaller compartments that have similar features and physical characteristics, which is a useful management tool. Various approaches have been implemented to identify subwatersheds. One of the approaches is under development by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) with input from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR), the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), and the University of Minnesota, describes watersheds in finer detail than the 8-digit Hydrologic Units (HU) developed by the USGS in the 1970s.
It goes under a variety of names including the on-line, 'Interactive Watershed', and the Lake Watershed Delineation ('Lakeshed') Project promoted by the MnDNR. (http://gisdmnspl.cr.usgs.gov/index.htm)
An example of the Interactive Watershed output for Clearwater Creek in the RCWD, which is contained within the 8-digit HU 07010206, shows that it has a 7-digit minor watershed code of 2007800 with a drainage area of13.04 square miles. Within that drainage are the cities of Hugo and Centerville, and Oneika Lake. Upstream and draining into that minor watershed is 2008000 which includes Bald Eagle and Otter Lakes. Minor watershed 2008000 receives drainage from 2008100 which includes White Bear Lake and part of the city of White Bear Lake. The three minor watersheds that comprise Clearwater Creek have a total drainage area of 40.17 square miles.

In addition to larger subwatersheds defined by agencies external to the RCWD, numerous micro subwatersheds have been delineated within the District. These small-scale subwatersheds reflect localized information during studies and assessments, and the permitting process. The small-scale nature of the delineations means that they often change through time as a result of continued land use improvements or drainage projects, or may not be relevant beyond the specific study area.

Groundwater

Many of the bedrock formations discussed previously contain groundwater aquifers that are important sources of water for many of the communities in the RCWD. While the southern cities near St. Paul including Arden Hills and Roseville are supplied by the Saint Paul Regional Water Services, most of the remaining communities including the cities of New Brighton, Lino Lakes, Centerville, and all of the cities in Washington County rely on ground water for their primary source of supply. Most of this is drawn from the bedrock aquifers including the Prairie Du Chien – Jordan aquifer which is extensive in the southern part of the RCWD. More northern communities such as Blaine and Lino Lakes probably draw water from the Franconia-Ironton-Galesville aquifer. Although contaminants have been detected and are a problem in some communities, these aquifers generally are well protected from widespread contamination. Where contaminants have been detected in water supplies, treatment technologies have been employed to make the water safe for public consumption.

Surface Waters

Average annual runoff for the RCWD is between 5 and 8 inches based on data collected during 1951-80 (Gebert and others, 1987). This is considerably less than the average annual precipitation of about 32 inches. Average annual runoff is the amount of water that actually leaves a watershed after evaporation, transpiration, and infiltration are subtracted from precipitation. Due to the age of the data, the average annual run-off may not correctly account for the effects of changing land use and climate.

The flat topography and shallow water table in the RCWD, particularly in the northern portions, provide many surface water features evident throughout the District. Extensive wetlands drain into small streams which drain into shallow lakes and larger streams. While streams and lakes generally feed into progressively larger surface water features, many of the lakes are isolated from each other or have stream channels that transition into wetlands or other flat areas. Lakes which have no outlets and intermittent streams suggest a subsurface connection through the ground water system.

During seasonal dry conditions or droughts, many streams will slow to a trickle or cease to flow. Land-locked lakes may drop several feet in elevation which may inconvenience shoreline landowners who find that their shoreline is several feet beyond where it used to be. The converse also may occur during wetter than normal conditions causing flooding of shorelines and nearby dwellings, erosion, and connection of water bodies that otherwise were isolated.

Findings

This section describes what BWSR learned about the performance of the Rice Creek Watershed District during the PRAP process.

The 2010 Watershed Management Plan for the Rice Creek Watershed District *(Amended November 9, 2016)* identifies goals and policies.

Goals and Policies

"The RCWD goals, policies, and action items presented in the chapter address the requirements set forth in Minnesota Rule 8410.0080. The goals, policies and action items establish the direction for the RCWD and provide an indication of how problems and issues will be approached and resolved. The RCWD Rules embody these goals and objectives by creating legal requirements to achieve successful implementation.

The District goals are organized by management category. Policies and actions support the goals for the management category. Management categories are defined by this plan as:

- *Broad areas encompassing the actions and efforts of the District related to its day to day operations and long-range goals for managing water and land related resources;*
- *A means to communicate District efforts and activities to the cities and citizens; and*
- *An organizational framework to guide yearly implementation activities and the expenditure* of District financial resources.

The management categories are:

- *Education, Data and Information;*
- *Lakes;*
- *Wetlands;*
- *Drainage Systems and Waterways;*
- *Excess Runoff;*
- *District Facilities;*
- *Open Space; and*
- *Groundwater.*

Education, Data and Information

Goal: *Use education and outreach tools as an integral element within the many aspects of the operation of the District to credibly convey data and information, thereby increasing knowledge, awareness and the capacity for decision-making among the constituents of the District.*

Lakes

Goal: *Manage lake systems for their ecological and community value, in a manner consistent with user expectations and technically achievable goals and the resources available for preservation, maintenance and restoration.*

Wetlands

Goal: *Manage wetlands in a manner which improves diversity and ecological integrity on a district-wide basis, consistent with the Wetland Conservation Act and local opportunities for preservation, enhancement, and restoration, while balancing multiple resource issues.*

Drainage Systems and Waterways

Goal: *Manage and operate drainage systems and manage and use waterways in a manner which recognizes the origin of the system (e.g., constructed vs. natural), the interconnectedness of resources, and present and future conveyance needs, while considering legally established rights.*

Excess Runoff

Goal: *Minimize the potential damage to public and private infrastructure, private property, the land and other important water related natural resources caused by excess runoff and flooding.*

District Facilities

Goal: *Construct, maintain and operate facilities owned or operated by the District in accordance with their resource management purposes and gage their effectiveness over time.*

Open Space

Goal: *Capitalize on opportunities to enhance water quality, reduce runoff volume and flood damages, and enhance ecological resources by using open space and greenways.*

Groundwater

Goal: *Incorporate ground water considerations into the decision making process with mindfulness of the interconnectedness of water and water dependent natural resources.*

Findings Part 1: Planning

The District has identified 189 actions for these goals for which the Rice Creek Watershed District is considered the lead agency. This report assesses those 189 implementation actions.

According to the progress report, RCWD is making progress on 154 of their planned action items, have completed 60 items with 94 actions ongoing and have not started 35 planned action items.

Findings Part 2: Performance Standards

During a Level II performance review, BWSR uses performance standards to assess four areas of operation: administration, planning, execution, and communication/coordination. The standards that apply to the RCWD are divided into two categories; basic (21) and high performance (12).

The 21 **basic** standards describe practices that are either legally required or fundamental to watershed district operations. The 12 **high performance** standards describe practices that reflect a high level of performance. While all watershed districts should be meeting the basic standards, only the more ambitious ones will meet many high performance standards.

The Level II review for the Rice Creek Watershed District evaluation includes a report of compliance with 21 of the 21 basic and 11 of the 12 high performance standards for Minnesota metro watershed districts. These results put the Rice Creek Watershed District at the top of the highest performing local governments in Minnesota.

The results for the District are listed in Appendix B.

Wetland Conservation Act Compliance: Beginning in 2017, local government unit (LGU) compliance with the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) was added to the PRAP Level II assessments. In 1991, the Legislature passed the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) in order to achieve a no-net loss in the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota's wetlands. In doing so, they designated certain implementation responsibilities to local government units (LGUs) and soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to provide oversight. One oversight mechanism is an administrative review of how LGUs and SWCDs are carrying out their responsibilities.

BWSR uses the administrative review process to evaluate LGU and SWCD performance related to their responsibilities under the WCA. The review is intended to determine if an LGU or SWCD is fulfilling their responsibilities under WCA and to provide recommendations for improvement as applicable.

The BWSR Wetland Specialist assigned to assist Rice Creek Watershed District conducted an evaluation of LGU performance in carrying out the responsibilities as described in Minnesota Rules 8420.

Data for WCA program review was collected via direct interview(s) with staff, a review of an appropriate number and type of project files, a review of existing documentation on file (i.e. annual reporting/resolutions), and through prior BWSR staff experience/interaction with the LGU or SWCD. In some cases, a project site review may be necessary. Generally, interviews, project file reviews and site visits were done with two BWSR staff on agreed upon dates. A review of implementation of the Wetland Conservation Act found that Rice Creek Watershed District is generally implementing the program in compliance with Minnesota Rule 8420. A copy of the WCA report is located in Appendix D.

Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program

In 2013, the Minnesota Legislature passed Laws of Minnesota 2013, Chapter 137, Article 2, Section 7(a), requiring the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), using Clean Water Fund appropriations, to award competitive grants to local government units that will result in a significant reduction in water pollution in a selected subwatershed. Priority in making grants must be given to the three to six best designed plans each year. Based on this legislation, BWSR created and implemented the Clean Water Fund Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program (TWDP).

The program focuses on watersheds where the amount of change necessary to improve water quality is known, the actions needed to achieve results are identified, and a majority of those actions can be implemented within a four-year time period. Its emphasis is on demonstrating water quality improvements, not on sustaining high quality systems. The program stresses the importance of incorporating the wealth of science-based information, summarized in TMDLs, WRAPS and other technical reports, into sound decision-making. However, managing water resources is an ongoing task and the lag time between when actions are taken and environmental improvements are observed depends on the scale of the problem.

Rice Creek Watershed District received a Targeted Watershed grant of $3,000,000 in 2014 to construct urban stormwater practices in Hansen Park, streambank protection in Middle Rice Creek and carp management in the watershed district. Below is a discussion of the project progress and value provided by Rice Creek Watershed District staff.

At Hansen Park, all that remains is final completion and paving of a park trail that was raised by the project along with some finish grading and native plant and turf revegetation work. We expect that the iron-enhanced sand filter will begin formal operations this summer. At Mirror Lake, all that remains is final grading of the flood protection berm and some revegetation work. The new meandered channels at Middle Rice Creek were all brought "online" this winter and the old channels were filled. Revegetation will *wrap up this spring and the site will enter a monitoring phase. The project is practically complete. Carp Management activities continue as we test and fine-tune operation the low-voltage electric barriers. Permanent installations at the two barrier sites will likely utilize the remainder of our budget within that activity. Other smaller carp management activities may also be pursued this year. There were a few smaller BMPs contemplated at Hansen Park and Mirror Lake that were not pursued within the grant window, either due to site constraints or lack of adequate cost/benefit ratios. These will be addressed specifically in the final report for the grant, which is due after the end of the calendar year.*

All in all, the TWD grant provided critical funding for a suite of projects that would likely not have been possible without the financial support from BWSR. OR, possibly, it would have at least taken us many more years to implement them. Partnerships have been strengthened with the Cities of New Brighton and Saint Anthony as well as Ramsey County. We were able to also combine the water quality improvements associated with some of the projects with urban flood storage improvements, meeting additional local goals not even contemplated by the original grant application. Construction delays due to inadequate weather were a constant battle on all three major projects, however, the four-year grant window offered through the TWD program allowed for all projects to be completed on time. In all, BWSR's investment of $3.0 million was matched with approximately $4.0 million of additional local investment into the projects implemented through this program either directly or indirectly.

Findings Part 3: LGU Self-Assessment

The information in parts 3 and 4 is based on responses to surveys developed by BWSR to obtain the opinions of both board members and staff and the RCWD's partner organizations about district performance. At BWSR's request, district staff identified current managers and staff and representatives from those partner organizations with which they have an on-going working relationship. BWSR sent an online survey to the individuals identified, and analyzed the results. The identity of survey respondents is unknown to both BWSR and the watershed district.

Part 3 summarizes the results from the survey of managers and staff regarding the accomplishments of the organization over the past several years.

A total of 18 board members and staff were invited to take the survey and 14 (78%) responded. The full responses are reported in Appendix C, and summarized here.

When asked to list the district's successes, managers and staff mentioned the following:

- *Long Lake Targeted Watershed Demonstration Project, Bald Eagle Lake Alum Treatment, Southwest Urban Lakes Implementation Program, Hardwood Creek Restoration Project, development of the Stormwater Reuse for Irrigation Assessment Methodology, various grant programs, regulatory program, surface water monitoring program, public drainage system inspection/maintenance/repair program, ACD Ditch 31 & 46 repair and maintenance projects.*
- *Comprehensive Public Drainage repair, Flood Control Regulatory including permit review and inspection services, water quality protection and monitoring Stormwater Reuse Public Drainage maintenance program, Communication and Outreach.*
- *Public Drainage Program, Comprehensive Repairs.*
- *Bald Eagle and Silver Lake meeting state standards, water reuse standards developed for BWSR, Hanson and Mirror Ponds addressing water retention, flooding. Overall Ditch repair and maintenance progress.*
- *Hardwood Creek Restoration, Bald Eagle Alum Treatment, Long Lake Targeted Watershed Demonstration - carp management, Middle Rice Creek Restoration..*
- *Bald Eagle Lake Restoration Project was very successful. The District's cost-share programs, such as the Urban Stormwater Remediation Cost-Share program, are successful. The Forest Lake High School Stormwater Reuse Partnership Project is successful so far and is currently resulting in additional partnership opportunities and innovative projects with the school.*
- *Long Lake Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program (Hansen Park, Mirror Lake, Middle Rice Creek & Carp Management Projects) Public Drainage System Repair and Maintenance Program*
- *TMDL load reduction implementation flood reduction projects (ditch maintenance).*
- *Urban Stormwater Remediation, Cost-Share Program, Permitting Program, Water Quality Grant Program, Local Water Planning Process.*
- *Master Water Steward Program.*

Survey participants stated reasons for success included

- *Staff's ongoing hard work managing multiple projects/programs and collaborating with each other, partnerships with other agencies/organizations/cities/counties/landowners, various funding sources, conscious messaging and outreach.*
- *RCWD Board listening to residents and City Council while working together to address high water table and flooding problems.*
- *Vision and leadership from the Board of Managers. Outstanding staff and consulting team that has had minimal turnover. Strong partnership and collaboration with local city and county partners.*
- *Vision and leadership from the board of managers and strong staff team with minimal turn over.*
- *Access to State funding for Bald Eagle, Hanson and Mirror pond. These types of projects are*

probably impossible under BWSR pilot funding changes. Ditches are the result of long term planning and commitment.

- *Strong partnerships and leadership.*
- *Actively partnering with other agencies and grant funding helped these projects and programs be successful.*
- *RCWD is fortunate to have quality staff, an understanding and responsible Board, and engaged partners willing to come to the table and make change happen. BWSR Clean Water Fund grants have also been critical in filling funding gaps for our water quality projects.*

One survey participant stated *fostering partnerships with our communities has helped make us a successful District. I feel our staff strives to be reasonable and helpful to our communities and constituents. Our permitting staff consistently holds pre-application meetings and we meet monthly with our consultants to discuss improvements and issues. As of late, we have been working with Master Water Stewards to utilize them as stewards to help install projects with our Water Quality Grant program. We have begun meeting with communities in City/County Partner meetings to update them on District activities and solicit input. Through the local water planning process, we intend to use these plans to inform our Watershed Management Plan.*

Also mentioned was *Pre-project feasibility and planning grants good staff, board, partners and grants* as reasons the projects were successful.

When asked which of the organization's programs or projects have shown little progress or been on hold, survey participants mentioned

- *Wetland bank development, wetland restoration, wetland protection near ditches.*
- *Targeting projects in rural communities. Closing of historic permits.*
- *Rice Lake Outlet maintenance.*

One survey participant stated *our water quality/quantity monitoring program is very effective and well-managed, but I feel that additional resources and staff should be added to make it more robust than it is currently. Also, our communications and outreach program has always suffered from lack of attention over the years.*

When asked why the organization has had difficulty with these projects and programs, one person said o*verall, these projects/programs were on hold due to unplanned circumstances. We had staff turnover in 2016 that delayed some progress with the District's education and outreach efforts. The Peltier Lake Drawdown Project was also delayed due to abnormally high precipitation in 2016, which did not create ideal conditions for a drawdown. The project was able to start back up in the fall of 2017.*

Other reasons for difficulties included,

- *We have a huge watershed with a plethora of resources and some are not being watched as well as maybe we'd like. This is strictly due to the extensive workloads our staff have to manage. While we've typically always carried one full-time outreach person, the program has not been given adequate budget by our Board and the staff member is routinely pried away to work on other programs of "immediate importance".*
- *We could use more staff to support more of our programs. Specific to rural issues, it can be difficult to find willing landowners, as trust can be an issue.*
- *Permitting, weather/site conditions, interpretation of rules/laws.*

Managers and staff identified good working relationships with *BWSR, DNR, MPCA, USGS, Met Council, University of Minnesota, cities, counties, lake associations, MAWD, Met. Council, Army Corps of Engineers, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, DNR Fisheries.*

When asked who the Watershed District should collaborate with more, *DNR, MnDOT, Army Corps of Engineers,* were mentioned.

When asked what the organization could do to be more effective in accomplishing plan goals and objectives, one survey participant stated *better management plan orientation for new staff connecting their day-to-day tasks and work areas to goals and objectives laid out in the management plan. Also have ongoing management plan review for all staff (at least*

annually--a lot can change in one year). Reformat the management plan into a more usable document (hyperlinks in the table of contents, etc.).

Other suggestions for improved performance included:

- *More staff (6 responses).*
- *Complete the ongoing strategy direction process and update the watershed plan (anticipated by 2020).*
- *We are currently working on our strategic plan to develop priorities.*
- *Reinstate State funding, remove unnecessary and slow DNR and COE permit review.*
- *Continued partnership with other agencies and organizations, increase education and outreach efforts to partners and the public.*
- *Increase funding and/or staffing for monitoring and outreach programs. Simplify District policies. Stop worrying about remote possibilities of litigation over decisions made.*

Findings Part 4: Partners' Assessment

A total of 28 partners from a variety of organizations were invited to take the online survey regarding the work of, and their relationship with, the Rice Creek Watershed District. Eighteen of the 28 partners invited to take the survey responded (64%). Individual survey respondents are anonymous so there is no count of which organizations responded.

In general, the RCWD received very high marks from the partners who responded. Most partners indicated they had contact with the RCWD a few times to monthly.

About three quarters of the WD partners indicated the amount of work they do with the district to be about right (76.5%) and 23.5% said the amount of work with the WD was not enough, there is more we can do together.

Partners rated the RCWD in five performance areas; **communication, quality of work, relations with customers, initiative and timelines/follow though**. The table below provides partner ratings. More than 85% of the partners ranked the watershed district performance good or strong for communication, quality of work, initiative and timelines and follow through. Partners rated relations with customers strong by 47%, good by 29% acceptable by about 12% and poor by one person (5.9%).

Performance Area	**Partner Ratings** (Percent)				
	Strong	Good	Accep table	Poor	Don't Know
Communication	**52.9%**	**35.3%**	**5.9%**	**5.9%**	**0%**
Quality of Work	**64.7%**	**23.5%**	**0%**	**5.9%**	**5.9%**
Relations with Customers	**47.1%**	**29.4%**	**11.8%**	**5.9%**	**5.9%**
Initiative	**64.7%**	**23.5%**	**5.9%**	**5.9%**	**0%**
Timelines/ Follow through	**52.9%**	**41.2%**	**5.9%**	**0%**	**0%**

Partners also describe their working relationship with the watershed district mainly in a favorable way, with 29% rating it powerful, 47 percent describing it as strong, and about 12 percent describing it as good and one person describing it acceptable and one person rating it poor.

There were suggestions for needed improvements for the watershed district including one person stated *much more could be happening in the Washington County portion of RCWD if they did more in partnership with other LGU and invested more in the education, outreach and BMP programs for those communities. Similarly, WCD does not provide the same level of water monitoring for RCWD as in the rest of the county's watersheds. This leads to less engagement with those communities.*

One survey participant stated *it would be nice to have RCWD act as a liaison between groups for locations where drainage issues occur. Oftentimes, we are impacted by a drainage issue not being addressed by another group. When we seek action to remedy it, the issue is associated as "ours" when there are others contributing to it. This seems one of the primary reasons watershed districts were created.*

Another survey participant stated *I think they would be more effective if agencies like BWSR, DNR, and MPCA would be more willing to be creative for replacement/enhancement projects.*

Conclusions

The Rice Creek Watershed District has been very effective in implementing urban stormwater practices, streambank protection, wetland management and conducting water quality monitoring programs and projects.

The Watershed District has been effective in achieving the goals outlined in their Water Management Plan, and has been successful in creating partnerships and joint efforts to do so.

High marks were given to the RCWD by about 85% of their partners in the areas of communication, quality of work, relationships, initiative.

The performance standards assessment shows that the district is in compliance with all basic requirements.

Action Items

Action Items are based on those Part 2 Basic Practice performance standards for which the district is out of compliance. The Rice Creek Watershed District does not have any action items.

Commendations

The RCWD is commended for meeting eleven out of 12 high performance standards which represent activity and effort above and beyond basic requirements. This accomplishment puts the Watershed District at the top of all local government units in Minnesota. (See also, Appendix B).

- Administrator on Staff
- Board training – orientation and continuing education plan and record for each board member
- Staff training – orientation and continuing education plan and record for each staff person
- Operational guidelines exist and are current
- Public drainage records meet modernization guidelines
- Biennial Budget Request submitted within last 24 months
- Strategic plan identifies short-term activities and budgets based on state and local watershed priorities
- Water quality trends tracked for priority water bodies
- Watershed hydrologic trends monitored and reported.
- Coordination with County Board and City/Twp. officials
- Partnerships: cooperative projects/tasks with neighboring districts, counties, and soil and water districts, non-governmental organization.

Recommendations

This section contains recommendations offered by BWSR to the Rice Creek Watershed District board of managers and staff to enhance the organization's service to the residents of the district and its delivery of effective water and related land resource management. BWSR financial assistance may be available to support the RCWD's implementation of some of these recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Continue and expand the use of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable as criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan as appropriate.

The Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable criteria for water resource management planning goals is the new standard for One Watershed-One Plan efforts currently underway. In the next district water management plan, the managers and staff should continue to embrace this concept and structure their goals and objectives to explicitly acknowledge these criteria.

Recommendation 2: **Structure website information to report progress and trends made in achieving resource outcome goals.**

Efforts should be made to share resource progress and trend information in easy to understand and easy to access formats on the websites. Significant water quality monitoring efforts have taken place in the Watershed District and the results should be made accessible to the public.

LGU Comments and BWSR Responses

The Rice Creek Watershed District was invited to provide a written response to a draft version of this report. The response has been summarized and responded to in this section. The full response from the RCWD can be found in Appendix E of this report.

RCWD Comment #1 – The Rice Creek Watershed District Board of Managers is pleased with the results of this performance review and would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in the program. The products derived from the PRAP process will be very helpful for the District in the early stages of developing its next Watershed Management Plan.

BWSR Response – BWSR appreciates the comment and looks forward to working with the Rice Creek Watershed District in the future.

RCWD Comment #2 – The two recommendations provided by BWSR are consistent with the District's early discussions about its strategic direction for its new Watershed Management Plan (WMP). (See appendix E for full text).

BWSR Response – BWSR looks forward to working with the Rice Creek Watershed District in development of the next Watershed Management Plan.

Appendix A. Plan Accomplishments

LGU Name: Rice Creek Watershed District
Type of Management Plan: Watershed Management Plan

Date of This Assessment: April 2018
Date of Last Plan Revision: January 2010

Goal 5.1: EDUCATION, DATA AND INFORMATION – Use education and outreach tools as an integral element within the many aspects of the operation of the District to credibly convey data and information, thereby increasing knowledge, awareness and the capacity for decision-making among the constituents of the District.

Policy 5.1-1: Manage information and data collected by the District in an effective and efficient manner in accordance with applicable laws, obligations and best practices.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop a database for resource monitoring data, reasonably compatible with other environmental monitoring systems.	2010 – 2020	2010	The District has developed a resource monitoring database. It is built to be flexible so that when other monitoring database systems change, we can adapt and produce a compatible output.	☑	Maintain the database and add data annually.
2. Develop a comprehensive workflow database for administering the permit program, and make the database available internal and external to the District to enhance understanding of the permit program.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District database was developed by its engineer in 2009. The database tracks permit applications (including WCA) as well as general inquiries and complaints. The database is related by file number to the District's official records as well as GIS mapping ("permit viewer") resulting in multiple approaches to search and locate district activity. While the database is not available to the public.	☑	Currently there is no intent to make available to public based on public data practices issues although all public data is available upon request under the District's adopted data practices. The District does maintain a public drainage viewer that is used to share publicly available data about the watershed.
3. Maintain Geographic Information System (GIS) data layers created by the District and create metadata to describe the origin of the data.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Often this is completed by the District Engineer. They make reasonable efforts to create and maintain metadata for developed data layers.	○	The District expects to continue this practice.

4. Develop an effective system for recording and managing natural resource data gathered by the RCWD in an information system accessible to staff and partners.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District continues to update and maintain systems for recording and managing natural resources data. All data are submitted to the State water quality database (EQuIS).	○	The District expects to continue this practice.
5. Develop and implement specifications for the collection of consistent data related to water resources and model development.	2010 – 2020	2011	The District has developed specifications for the collection of consistent data, found in the District-Wide Modeling Final Report.	☑	The specifications will likely be incorporated into the next WMP directly.
6. Continue compliance with applicable laws and legal requirements related to the management of information and data and communications (e.g., Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).	2010 – 2020	2010 - 2018	The District has always complied with the Data Practices Act. RCWD's DPA policy was most recently updated in 2014.	○	The DPA and the District's policy will continue to be followed in the future, as is required by MN Statute.

Policy 5.1-2: Share infrastructure information developed through the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program for District-owned facilities to educate the public about how water resources are managed, the programs and policies and projects of the District, and to encourage public involvement.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory of District-owned facilities, their locations and characteristics and prepare a map showing these facilities. Create a database of these facilities which includes the intended function.	2010 – 2020	2018	The District is developing a database of District-owned facilities currently.	○	The inventory will be maintained annually and incorporated into the next WMP.
2. Provide information on the web page about District-owned facilities and their importance in resource management.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District is still prioritizing District facilities and their impact and relationship to the public.	○	If facilities are determined to be of public educational value, information may be made available to the public.
3. Collaborate with local governments to develop a toolkit of shared educational materials achieving a consistent and streamlined municipal education program to meet MS4 requirements.	2010 – 2020	2013	An MS4 Toolkit of shared educational materials was produced through the RCWD partnership with Metro Watershed Partners.	☑	Efforts will begin in 2018 to update the MS4 Toolkit.

4. Develop and share information about the effectiveness of Best Management Practices.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	RCWD utilizes a suite of techniques for educating and sharing information on BMPs (Metro Watershed Partners, social media, Blue Thumb, EMWREP, targeted programming, Master Water Stewards, etc).	☑	RCWD will continue to improve and implement education strategies for BMPs.
5. Continue to financially support the Northland NEMO program (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials) and the East Metro Water Resources Education Program.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	RCWD has continued to fund, support and utilize both programs.	○	RCWD will continue to fund, support and utilize these programs.

Policy 5.1-3: Provide data in a manner which maximizes use by the public, share and distribute data and information in the most efficient manner possible, and minimize the duplication of data collection through cooperative data collection efforts and information sharing.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop surface water and ground water monitoring plans which identify specific goals and objectives and establish an effective long-term monitoring strategy. Use these plans to convey information about District monitoring activities to stakeholders.	2010 – 2020	2011	The District developed a long-term monitoring plan for analyzing the health of its water resources. Short-term or project-specific monitoring plans are developed as needed. The District has conducted some limited ground water level monitoring associated with specific projects.	☑	Surface water monitoring plans are refined as needed and will be incorporated into the next WMP.
2. Use the data collected by the District to develop interpretative reports and educational materials which convey resource condition and trends to the constituents of the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District periodically produces “State of the Lakes” and “State of the Streams” reports. An annual report is completed on a yearly basis. These reports are published on the District website and are easily accessible by the public. RCWD also publishes information through press releases and project sheets in addition to posters and public meetings.	☑	The RCWD will continue these efforts as appropriate.

3. Use emerging technologies including internet-based applications and solutions to distribute data collected by the District, streamline the flow of permit related information, and conserve staff resources by improving the efficiency in the distribution of information.	2010 – 2020	2013 – 2018	RCWD developed a new website and has moved toward electronic formats with many of its forms and reports, utilizing e-newsletters and e-announcements to improve efficiencies.	☑	The RCWD will continue these efforts as appropriate.
4. Implement internet-based tools to disseminate information about the need for permits from the RCWD, the permit process, technical guidance related to permitting and to provide technical assistance to the development community.	2010 – 2020	2013 – 2018	The district website includes a wealth of information on the permit program. The website includes the District rules in total; keyed to individual rules for viewing and download and an informational section generalizing the need for permits based on the rule triggers. The permit process is outlined under a schedule document identifying days and the associated action or deadline. Guidance sheets on the website provide applicants with assistance to respond to complex technical matters found within any regulation.	○	The district is working to expand the current public drainage viewer (GIS based) to include parties with other ancillary information valuable in assessing their property such as NWI, PDS, soils, aerial photos, roads, floodplain, etc. The District's Communication Coordinator is also working to redevelop the District website to improve the user's experience.
5. Utilize the RCWD website to provide access and distribution of data and information.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Reports, documents and general information are maintained on the RCWD website.	○	The RCWD will continue these efforts as appropriate.
6. Update MLCCS data in accordance with documented protocols when local inventories are performed.	2010 – 2020	2010	The District participated directly in a field update of MLCCS data in the Washington County portion of the RCWD in 2010.	☑	All areas of the RCWD have had fairly recent updates of MLCCS data. The RCWD will assist counties as appropriate in the future.

Policy 5.1-4: Develop educational materials and programs for targeted audiences including local governments, citizens, educators and the development community.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop and carry out a formal (written) information and education program plan. Include in this plan a process for and the content of the District's Annual Report to BWSR.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has developed annual outreach work plans.	☑	The District intends to develop a more formal education, outreach and communication plan as a part of its next WMP.
2. Support, use and adapt the Resource Teachers Program to provide an effective natural resources-based curriculum to grades K through 12.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2013	This program was implemented during the first few years of the current WMP, however, it was discontinued by the RCWD Board of Managers.	☑	This program will not likely be included in the RCWD's next WMP.
3. Implement internet-based tools to disseminate information about, manage and communicate information about the Resource Teachers Program.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2013	This program was implemented during the first few years of the current WMP, however, it was discontinued by the RCWD Board of Managers.	☑	This program will not likely be included in the RCWD's next WMP.
4. Offer schools service learning opportunities through restoration projects.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has participated in stormwater BMP projects at Fridley Middle School, Rice Lake Elementary, and Forest Lake High School since 2010. Each project involved student participation and classroom instruction at a minimum.	○	The District will pursue additional project with schools as opportunities arise.
5. Support, use and adapt the Blue Thumb – Planting for Clean Water™ Program as an outreach program to meet the water quality goals of the District and to help their cities meet their federal Clean Water Act mandates.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Blue Thumb is a vital part of our outreach program and helps our cities meet their federal mandates. The program was transitioned to a non-profit organization in 2017. RCWD continues to participate with staff on the Blue Thumb Steering Committee.	○	RCWD will continue to fund, support and utilize the Blue Thumb program.
6. Utilize the Citizen Advisory Committee to engage private citizens and inform them about resource management issues and the activities of the RCWD.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The RCWD maintains a Citizen Advisory Committee that meets ten times per year and provides guidance to the District.	○	The RCWD will continue to maintain its Citizen Advisory Committee.

7. Utilize a Technical Advisory Committee to engage local government and state and federal agencies and inform them about resource management issues, the activities of the RCWD and opportunities to partner.	2010 – 2020	2015 – 2018	The District has begun hosting biannual City/County Partner meetings in late 2015 to provide updates on District programs and projects and serve as a conduit for feedback from the community.	○	This group will be morphed into the TAC for purposes of our next WMP update.
8. Develop, conduct and sponsor workshops, participate in speaking engagements, and prepare press releases as a component of the educational efforts of the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District actively participates in lake association and HOA meetings as well as other public speaking engagements, prepares press releases as needed, and hosts a series of topical workshops throughout the year.	○	The RCWD will continue to offer these opportunities as part of its day-to-day operations.
9. Consider a district-wide signage campaign for streams or other similar resources.	2010 – 2020	2012	The District has developed signs for shoreline restoration and raingarden projects.	○	The District will continue to distribute existing signs and is also updating signage for Master Water Steward projects.

Policy 5.1-5: Encourage landowners and cities to improve water quality, reduce runoff volume, and enhance ecological systems through the use of cost-share programs.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Encourage fully developed communities to improve water quality using a targeted education program and sharing the cost of BMP implementation. Support, use, and adapt the Urban Stormwater Cost Share Remediation Program as an outreach program to encourage cities to install BMPs within developed areas to remediate the effects of development on water quality and the volume of runoff.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The Urban Stormwater Remediation Cost-Share Program has led to the implementation of 40+ capital improvement projects by District partners since 2010.	○	The program has become a very popular mechanism to fund local water quality and flood control capital projects and will likely be continued into the next WMP.

2. Encourage individuals to implement water quality improvement practices at their homes and businesses, using education and cost share for the implementation of BMPs. Support, use, and adapt the Water Quality BMP Cost Share Program as an outreach program to encourage citizens to install BMPs for the purpose of improving water quality and reducing the volume of runoff.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The Water Quality BMP Cost-Share Program (renamed Water Quality Grant Program) has led to the implementation of nearly 150 water quality BMPs by District residents, businesses and other partners since 2010.	☑	The program has become a very popular mechanism to fund local water quality BMPs and will likely be continued into the next WMP, although the District is looking into administrative efficiency improvement ideas.
3. Evaluate the need for and implement additional cost-share programs to provide incentives to landowners and others responsible for resource management.	2010 – 2020	2017 – 2018	The District offered cost-share assistance to landowners who needed to complete work to become compliant with the State's new buffer law in 2017. Initial compliance within our watershed was extremely high and no cost-share funding has been provided to-date.	☐	The need for this program will be reevaluated in the next WMP. Another cost-share program is being discussed for tree removal along Rice Creek related to the Rice Creek Water Trail.

Goal 5.2: LAKES – Manage lake systems for their ecological and community value, in a manner consistent with user expectations and technically achievable goals and the resources available for preservation, maintenance and restoration.

Policy 5.2-1: Utilize and engage citizens to promote sustainable stewardship of lakes.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Implement a District-wide user perception survey of lake water quality which includes information about recreational use suitability.	2010 – 2020	N/A	This action item has not been implemented.	☐	This action item will be considered by the Board of Managers during development of the next WMP.
2. Continue Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program efforts with adequate and well-trained volunteer staff.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District utilizes the CAMP Program annually with 10-14 volunteers assisting the District to collect water quality samples.	○	The District will continue this activity.
3. Regularly recognize the contributions of citizens through certificates and / or annual gatherings.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has chosen to recognize outstanding permittees and provide opportunities for annual gatherings to the Citizen Advisory Committee.	☑	The District will examine the benefits of this activity for possible expansion or elimination.

4. Support the formation and operation of lake associations.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District provides support to lake associations by request. The District works with approximately ten different active associations on an annual basis.	○	The District will continue to support lake associations as needed.

Policy 5.2-2: Collaboratively manage lakes and shoreland resources, by empowering lake associations, lakeshore residents and cities, and engaging state agency management efforts.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Use special purpose management districts (e.g., Water Management Districts) and other funding tools to provide for localized financing for lake related projects and programs.	2010 – 2020	2012 – 2018	The District has established the Bald Eagle Lake WMD to finance water quality improvement projects on the lake such as the alum treatment in 2014-2016, among others.	☑	The Bald Eagle WMD will be evaluated for extension during the next WMP cycle. Additional WMDs may be explored as necessary.
2. Evaluate the need for implementation of a Lake Surface Water Management Program and other cost-share program(s) for the establishment of natural buffers, watershed projects, or bank stabilization, establishment buffer strips and similar resource management, restoration, maintenance and rehabilitation projects.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The RCWD has successfully implemented its Water Quality Grant Program since 2008, funding a wide array of project types aimed at surface water quality improvement. A Mini-Grant Program was also initiated in 2017.	☑	All cost-share programs are being re-evaluated for cost-effectiveness and workload efficiency during development of the new 2020 RCWD Watershed Management Plan.
3. Use lake management plans as a tool to cooperatively manage lakes with interested cities, counties and other potential resource management partners.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has developed many diagnostic studies and management plans for individual lakes (e.g. TMDL studies). The District uses these studies to work with partners to identify priority management actions.	☑	The District will continue to utilize existing studies to prioritize management and develop new diagnostic studies and management plans as needed.
4. Share lake and sub-watershed boundaries, developed by the RCWD with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Lakeshed effort.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has developed lake and subwatershed boundaries and shares them as requested.	☑	We will continue to update boundaries and share data as requested.

Policy 5.2-3: Develop attainable lake water quality targets, while recognizing water quality standards developed by the State of Minnesota and natural year-to-year variability in water quality.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop, in partnership with the State of Minnesota, TMDL studies for lakes identified as impaired.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has participated it he development of eight TMDL studies for waters within the RCWD.	☑	The District utilizes these studies to direct and prioritize management.
2. Explore the concept of developing a watershed based TMDL for addressing impairments for lakes within the District.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not developed a watershed-wide TMDL but has participated in subwatershed TMDLs.	○	The District is receptive to the development of new diagnostic and prioritization tools.
3. Develop a schedule for the implementation of lake management plans for lakes placing priority on those lakes currently meeting designated uses.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District developed a Lake Tier system with specific resource goals for each tier in its 2010 WMP. This tier system is referenced when the District prioritizes project funding through its CIP and cost-share programs.	○	The District anticipates carrying this system forward into its next WMP.
4. Use results of "Data and Information" actions to identify goals for lakes where data currently are not available.	2010 – 2020	2010	The District has used several diagnostic studies to identify goals and collect lake data.	☑	The District will consider refining management goals in the next WMP.
5. Periodically review and assess lake classifications and make changes where necessary, in coordination with affected local government units.	2010 – 2020	2010	Lake classifications were developed during creation of the 2010 WMP.	☑	These classifications will be reevaluated during development of the next WMP.

Policy 5.2-4: Promote and foster activities, which result in sustainable, healthy, aquatic eco-systems.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop and implement a plan to address invasive species that are detrimental to aquatic life.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District actively manages aquatic invasive species that negatively affect water quality, such as curlyleaf pondweed and common carp.	○	The District is developing a long-term carp management plan.

2. Re-establish native aquatic plant communities where appropriate.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Through lake improvement projects, the District has improved native aquatic plant communities. Aquatic plant restoration is also accomplished via stream restoration and other District projects.	○	The District will continue to manage water resources to foster native aquatic plant establishment.
3. Identify alternatives and implement sustainable watershed-based practices to manage lake systems affected by high sedimentation rates.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has completed several large stream restoration projects that address lake sedimentation on Rice Creek and Hardwood Creek. The District has also managed several sedimentation basins to reduce downstream sediment loading.	☑	The District will continue to implement projects where appropriate to address high sedimentation rates around the District

Policy 5.2-5: Manage lake levels in a manner which enhances ecological integrity and function (e.g., shallow lake systems) and acknowledges the effect of water levels on agricultural drainage and flooding.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Evaluate the feasibility of removing or enhancing the operation of water level control structures originally established for the purposes of potable water supply, recreation and other intended benefits, to provide greater system-wide ecological benefits.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District conducted a water level draw-down of Peltier Lake during the winter of 2017-2018 to enhance ecological integrity and improve water clarity.	☑	The District will endeavor when possible to add draw-down functionality to water level control structures to enhance ecological integrity.
2. Obtain basic information about the temporal variability of lake levels throughout the District, supplementing the efforts of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.	2010 – 2020	2011	The District completed Lake Level Frequency Analyses for all of the major lakes in the watershed as a part of the District-Wide Modeling Project.	☑	The District will incorporate these analyses into the next WMP and may update and refine the analyses in the future.
3. Actively plan, implement, and operate district facilities to manage lake levels to protect riparian properties from flooding and excessive shoreline erosion.	2010 – 2020	2010 - 2018	The District operates its facilities with flood protection and erosion control in mind, in addition to other considerations.	○	This activity will likely continue into the next WMP.

4. Develop policies and/or regulations necessary to address landlocked water bodies.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The current District rule regulates outlets to landlocked basins; providing an outlet only when it conforms to wetland regulation, provides storage volume for back to back 100 year, 24-hour events and does not create adverse downstream impact. The district also allows for municipalities and road authorities to develop Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plans (CSMP) which may include broader storage sites and examination to balance resource and development needs.	☑	There is no current intent to modify the District's regulations related to landlocked basins.
5. Develop, research and understand the relationship between water levels and undesirable fish species population dynamics. Use this information when developing lake-specific management plans and in assisting with achieving lake management goals.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	When possible, the District manages water levels to eliminate undesirable fish species, notably common carp, with an aim to improve water quality.	○	The District is developing a carp management plan and encourages the design of water level control structures to contain draw-down capabilities for use in future management.

Goal 5.3: WETLANDS – Manage wetlands in a manner which improves diversity and ecological integrity on a district-wide basis, consistent with the Wetland Conservation Act and local opportunities for preservation, enhancement, and restoration, while balancing multiple resource issues.

Policy 5.3-1: Manage wetland resources using the flexibility afforded by state and federal rules, including the development of Comprehensive Wetland Protection and Management Plans and Special Area Management Plans.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Coordinate and collaborate with affected municipalities and the Technical Evaluation Panel to establish innovative Comprehensive Wetland Management Plans, to provide wetland management flexibility where needed because of unique landscape settings.	2010 – 2020	2010	The district has worked with municipalities to develop five CSMPs covering many of the most rapidly developing areas of the watershed.	☑	Current plans do not include further expansion of the effort. This is based on most of the developing areas of the district being covered under a CSMP.

2. Coordinate with the Army Corp of Engineers to evaluate the development of Special Area Management Plans upon the completion of a Comprehensive Local Wetland Protection and Management Plan.	2010 – 2020	2010	The district extensively communicated and supported the development of its CWPMPs to be as aligned as possible with ACOE. In practice the ACOE recognizes and accepts portions the CWPMPs but has yet to issue the Lino Lakes SAMP initiated in 2008. Lino Lakes periodically prods for movement forward to SAMP approval.	○	The District is not extending further efforts to achieve SAMP approval.
3. Identify the locations of high quality wetlands and consider methods to preserve these wetlands throughout the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	CWPMPs require MnRAM assessments to identify wetland quality. Replacement ratios within the CWPMPs are incentive-based, aimed at preserving and creating high quality wetlands. RCWD Rule C also limits the stormwater discharge to high quality wetlands through its Bounce and Inundation standard.	○	The District intends to continue reviewing wetland impacts on a project-by-project basis using WCA and the District Rules.
4. Use wetland functions to determine and classify wetland degradation status and opportunities for wetland restoration throughout the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Within areas of the District covered by CWPMPs, the Rule requires an assessment of degradation status, incentivizing replacement and restoration within the WMC corridor.	○	No intended change at this time.
5. Develop and use wetland replacement and credit ratios based upon wetland functions tailored to the specific needs of the District and local communities consistent with a no-net loss of wetlands.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	CWPMP areas have specialized wetland replacement and credit ratios.	○	No intended change at this time.
6. Develop and implement the use of standardized technical methods endorsed by the Technical Evaluation Panel to estimate and quantify wetland impacts, including lateral affects, as a result of project proposals.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District utilizes ACOE wetland delineation methodology, the Van Schilfgaarde Equation to assess direct and indirect impacts to wetlands. The District works with its engineer to include accurate variables and constants in its use of the equation.	○	The District will continue its current methods but will explore the impact of water budgets on lateral effect.
7. Evaluate the opportunity for regulatory uniformity across the District when developing wetland rules.	2010 – 2020	2014 – 2018	The District consolidated its five distinct CWPMP Rules into a single wetland and stormwater rule to cover all five areas in 2014.	○	The District will continue under its current regulations until the Board determines an alternative direction.

8. Implement and operate a District wide wetland banking program which reflects accounts for differing replacement and credit ratios for state and federal permitting programs.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Although the District has never operated its own wetland banking program, the CWPMPs do require replacement within the contributing drainage area to the adopted CWPMPs and is attentive to the existence and development of wetland banks supporting this requirement. Additionally, the District supported a legislative alteration of wetland regulation to allow for a watershed-based replacement requirement instead of pre-settlement wetland designation.	☐	The District receives applications for the development of wetland banks and explores opportunities for development of its own wetland banks sites. It currently does not see a need to further influence the wetland banking program through alternative policy.

Policy 5.3-2: Manage wetlands and establish wetland management goals based on benchmark or reference and ecological condition.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop information to establish reference conditions for each wetland type within the District for the purposes of defining high wetland quality, wetland restoration goals and establishing replacement and credit ratios.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not pursued this action item to-date, rather it has relied on MnRAM assessments to determine a wetland's quality on a project-by-project basis.	☐	The District is looking into the use of Floristic Quality Assessments to advance an understanding of wetland function and value.
2. Use reference wetlands to evaluate, modify and improve methods currently used to characterize wetland functions and values within completed and future Comprehensive Wetland Management Plans.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not pursued this action item to-date, rather it has relied on MnRAM assessments to determine a wetland's quality on a project-by-project basis.	☐	The District is looking into the use of Floristic Quality Assessments to advance an understanding of wetland function and value.
3. Evaluate the need for a bio-monitoring program for high quality and other wetlands to better quantify existing conditions and assess the benefits of stormwater controls.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not identified a need for this program and has not pursued it.	☐	This action item will be re-considered during the development of our next WMP.

4. Evaluate monitoring reference wetlands to determine hydrologic regimes and use data to refine wetland management efforts.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has worked with the Anoka SWCD to install piezometers and monitor water table elevations within wetlands around the District and their responses to rain events.	○	The District is using its model products to consider the effects of development on wetlands receiving stormwater inputs and potential policy changes.

Policy 5.3-3: Provide incentives to private landowners to avoid wetland impact, minimize wetland impact, and restore wetlands, while acknowledging that wetland management and the monetary value of wetlands can be based upon differing value systems.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop maps and other tools which identify the locations of degraded wetlands and therefore opportunities for restoration.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has continued to operate on a project-by-project basis throughout the term of this WMP. CWPMPs incentivize the WMC corridor for restoration activities.	○	The District has developed maps identifying the WMC corridors as a preferred location for wetland restoration.
2. Quantify values for the change in runoff volume, nutrient loads, and the reduction in sedimentation for wetland restoration and enhancement, which in turn may be used as a financial incentive to landowners to manage wetland systems.	2010 – 2020	N/A	Due to the regulatory need for wetland restoration credits and the expansion of and interest in creation of wetland banks in our area, the demand for voluntary wetland restoration projects has vanished, eliminating the need to develop quantified benefits as originally anticipated.	□	The District continues to offer cost-share incentives for wetland restoration activities, however, no applications have been received in the last ten years.
3. Evaluate alternatives for establishing inclusive management boundaries along waterways that can provide multiple benefits including wetland functions and values, floodplain management, natural resource restoration, and open space.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has incorporated establishment of these corridors in developing areas through its implementation of CWPMPs and the WMC corridors.	☑	No intended change at this time.

4. Sponsor and conduct workshops for local governments and landowners to communicate the opportunity for wetland restoration, clarify the process for wetland restoration and understand the potential financial implications of restoration.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	While not taking the step of offering workshops on this topic, the District has provided substantial communication to our partners on the value of wetland restoration and has distributed a Request for Interest seeking wetland bank opportunities around the watershed.	□	Responses to the RFI are currently being considered by the RCWD Board and future opportunities may be pursued.
5. Cooperate with others to control the spread of exotic plants species, including purple loosestrife, within private wetlands and manage exotic species and weeds on district-owned lands.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has focused its efforts in this arena on District-led projects and directed public inquiries to the resources necessary to prevent the spread.	○	This has not been a focused priority of the District.

Policy 5.3-4: Operate a wetland permit program as an integrated component of the District's development review program, both under watershed district regulatory authority and as the Local Governmental Unit responsible for implementing the Wetland Conservation Act.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Maintain a staff complement capable of executing the requirements of the Wetland Conservation Act.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has maintained two filled positions that require wetland delineation and WCA education and experience, including but not limited to Wetland Delineator Certification.	○	The District will maintain these positions and offer continuing education opportunities to stay current.
2. Coordinate with the Technical Evaluation Panel.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District interacts with TEPs for three different counties. Staff provides proper noticing to the TEPs on issues requiring broad TEP input and.	○	The District will continue to coordinate with the TEPs as required.
3. Review the potential impact of District-initiated projects for Wetland Conservation Act permit requirements.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District engages its engineer to provide wetland consultant services as if it were a third party. District projects involving WCA regulation are treated like any other project and must demonstrate compliance with Statute.	○	The District will continue to self-regulate and document compliance with Statute on all District projects.

4. Facilitate discussions with the Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of landowners and cities when in the best interest of the wetland resource.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has undertaken efforts with its municipal partners and landowners in the development of CWPMPs and supports them with the ACOE for administration of wetland regulations.	○	The District recognizes there will always be a discontinuity between the Clean Water Act and WCA wetland regulations. The District will strive to bridge the gaps and achieve consistent rules across jurisdictions.

Goal 5.4: DRAINAGE SYSTEMS AND WATERWAYS – Manage and operate drainage systems and manage and use waterways in a manner which recognizes the origin of the system (e.g., constructed vs. natural), the interconnectedness of resources, and present and future conveyance needs, while considering legally established rights.

Policy 5.4-1: Apply methods, procedures, standards and criteria for the maintenance, repair, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of drainage systems and waterways, while acknowledging that traditional drainage repairs, to the as-constructed and subsequently improved condition, are generally not going to be feasible or cost effective due to changes in land uses, wetland replacement obligations, and resulting excessive cost and assessments to benefitted landowners compared to the benefits.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Initiate a systematic undertaking of drainage system repair proceedings to develop a predictable mechanism for both present and future land uses for each of the legal drainage systems in the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The RCWD has initiated/completed six repair reports on public drainage systems.	☑	We will continue initiating repair procedures on remaining systems needing repair.
2. Consider the need to develop a classification system for drainage systems and waterways which recognizes the influence of human activities (e.g., a constructed waterway, an altered natural waterway or an unaltered natural waterway).	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	While a formal map has not been developed, these classifications are used in making management decisions for non-103E drainage channels within the District.	○	The District may consider adding this level of information to its GIS database in the future.

3. Map waterways and drainage systems based upon the classification system.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	While a formal map has not been developed, these classifications are used in making management decisions for non-103E drainage channels within the District.	○	The District may consider adding this level of information to its GIS database in the future.
4. Evaluate standards and criteria for channel stability based on sediment transport and geomorphic considerations consistent with the waterway classification system. Consider the most appropriate method for implementing these standards if necessary.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has included assessments of channel stability in completed drainage system repair reports.	○	Channel stability will continue to be considered in future system repairs.
5. Define, identify, and monitor reference reaches including the use of indices of biotic integrity.	2010 – 2020	N/A	This effort has not been undertaken. 103E drainage systems have been managed for drainage function primarily and will continue to be managed in this way until otherwise directed by the Board of Managers.	☐	This is unlikely to be considered in the next WMP.
6. Develop an index of biotic integrity goals for drainage systems and waterways.	2010 – 2020	N/A	This effort has not been undertaken. 103E drainage systems have been managed for drainage function primarily and will continue to be managed in this way until otherwise directed by the Board of Managers.	☐	This is unlikely to be considered in the next WMP.

Policy 5.4-2: Drainage system maintenance and wetland replacement activities can have both public and private benefits. Therefore the District will develop a funding system that considers both: 1) localized charges on lands contributing to the drainage system management costs or benefitting from the system; and 2) ad valorem levies on lands and taxpayers benefited at large by the District's management program.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Map the benefited areas and contributing hydrologic areas for all legal drainage systems.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2012	This has been completed.	☑	Incorporate hydrologic changes as necessary and utilize maps for future system management.

2. Develop methods and procedures to generally characterize the kind of benefit, the type of benefit, the entities accruing benefits, whether benefits can be quantified, and categorization of the probable project costs, for use at the discretion of the Board when evaluating the range of drainage system repair alternatives.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Local contribution has been determined by a runoff-based calculation in lieu of traditional benefits analyses.	○	Continue to use runoff-based calculations for future system repair reports.
3. Use implementation processes and funding mechanisms consistent with the anticipated benefits received.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Local contribution has been determined by a runoff-based calculation in lieu of traditional benefits analyses.	○	Continue to use runoff-based calculations for future system repair reports.
4. Re-evaluate and formalize processes and procedures for funding repairs including the use of ad-valorem funds for the trunk drainage system and the use of water management districts for localized benefits.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The Board has maintained this as a current funding policy for drainage system repair projects.	○	The use of this policy is reviewed by the Board each time a new repair project is proposed.

Policy 5.4-3: The district will identify the level of drainage system maintenance on which landowners can depend, which in some instances could be less than the as-constructed and subsequently improved condition.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Maintain and operate public drainage systems in a manner which recognizes the need to provide agricultural drainage to lands currently in agricultural production and the future need to manage runoff as a result of development while considering natural resource issues and concerns, until a system is transferred or abandoned.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has managed the public drainage system in this manner.	○	The District will continue to manage the public drainage system in this manner into the future.
2. Identify and map land currently in agricultural production.	2010 – 2020	N/A	No mapping has been completed beyond MLCCS updates within the watershed.	□	The District does not see a need for additional mapping at this time.

3. Evaluate a range of repair alternatives to provide an adequate level of service to agricultural lands, while considering and planning for future conveyance needs.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has evaluated a range of repair alternatives within each completed repair report.	○	The District will continue to evaluate a range of alternatives for future repair projects.
4. Investigate ownership strategies and develop an approach for the transfer of public drainage systems when converted municipal use as a storm sewer trunk system.	2010 – 2020	N/A	During this plan iteration there have been no proposals to transfer ownership of any public drainage systems.	□	Future proposals may be considered as appropriate.

Policy 5.4-4: Manage public drainage systems in a manner that recognizes the need to provide a functional level of service to benefitted lands, within the context of local, state and federal laws and programs.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Identify waters of the state, which, are also public drainage systems.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2012	This action item is complete.	☑	N/A
2. Lead efforts to evaluate water quality issues associated with public drainage systems in the watershed.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District endeavors to conduct its public drainage system maintenance in a manner that has the least impact on water quality.	○	The District will continue to endeavor to conduct its public drainage system maintenance in a manner that has the least impact on water quality.
3. Explore alternative means for best addressing habitat adjacent to public drainage systems, including but not limited to abandonment of the drainage system and establishing management corridors.	2010 – 2020	N/A	RCWD drainage system repair projects have not addressed habitat improvement aside from preservation of areas known to contain threatened and endangered species, or as otherwise required by Minnesota Statute.	○	Future system maintenance and repair will be undertaken consistent with Minnesota Statutes in this regard.
4. Look for opportunities to establish voluntary rate control measures and other practices to improve drainage system water quality.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has pursued water quality improvement projects on or adjacent to the public drainage system where appropriate and feasible. (Example: Hansen Park Comprehensive Water Management Project)	○	Additional opportunities will be sought where feasible and prudent.

5. Evaluate locations where waterway buffers are lacking and where implementation can improve water quality.	2010 – 2020	2016	The State Buffer Law has superseded this RCWD policy.	○	The District has offered cost-share assistance to assist landowners in obtaining compliance with the Buffer Law.

Policy 5.4-5: Develop a hybrid legal framework that includes Minnesota Statutes103E, 103D, and 103B that balances the legal interests of the Wetland Conservation Act and the Public Waters law, along with other laws that have placed boundaries on drainage rights.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop a budgeted, capital improvement program for public drainage system maintenance and repair.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Major known upcoming repairs were included in the 2010 WMP. Those projects have all either been completed or are underway currently. Each year, the District Administrator presents the Board with a five-year look-ahead for major repair projects. The Board uses this look-ahead to prepare its budgets and decide which projects to pursue.	☑	This budgeting process has been very successful and will be utilized in the future. We expect all major system repairs to be completed early in the next WMP cycle.
2. Adopt and implement standard operating procedures and policies for inspections and minor repairs and update periodically.	2010 – 2020	2016	Operating and inspection procedures have been developed and implemented in conjunction with the District's new Drainage System Management Database.	☑	The District will utilize the database and procedures to inspect and maintain the drainage systems.
3. Establish a contingency fund for emergency repair caused by natural (catastrophic) events or similar circumstances.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District's recent and current ad valorem budgets have included a drainage system maintenance fund that is available for emergency repairs.	☑	The RCWD Board will consider continuing the current funding levels in future budgets.

4. Evaluate the ability to use a "hybrid" legal framework of Minnesota Statues 103E, 103B, and 103D to balance legal rights, drainage authority obligations, and compliance with conservation laws when considering drainage system activities.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has developed a hybrid legal framework for its drainage system repair projects utilizing elements of 103B, D & E with Water Management Districts serving as a funding source. Repair projects are designed to minimize environmental impacts and the need for wetland mitigation.	☑	This hybrid framework has been very successful and will be utilized in the future.
5. Develop Management Plans to integrate hybrid framework and land use planning.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	103E drainage system repair reports consider drainage, ecological, and land use needs of the community.	☑	This hybrid framework has been very successful and will be utilized in the future.
6. Work with the Technical Evaluation Panel to fully explore and utilize alternative methods for evaluating wetland replacement obligations.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The TEP is currently noticed on all public drainage system wetland replacement plans. The basis of drainage to-date is largely based on the application of the Van Schilfgaarde equation, however, use of the equation for this type of project has apparent limitations and the District is exploring use of a water budget to evaluate wetland impacts.	○	The District Engineer is developing a technical memorandum on this subject.
7. Explore the conservation benefits of certain drainage activities, and consider a system of reasonable and fair compensation for conservation rights and other voluntary or incentive approaches.	2010 – 2020	N/A	Abandonment of drainage systems and other landowners' drainage rights is generally not possible except in very limited circumstances. The District has not pursued this action item.	☐	Policy is likely to be removed from the next WMP.
8. Resolve uncertainty surrounding definitions used to communicate activities associated with drainage, including the terms "official profile" and "hydraulic efficiency".	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Definitions were included in the 2010 WMP and have continued to be used ever since.	○	Definitions will be carried forward to the new WMP.
9. Determine the as-constructed and subsequently improved condition for public drainage systems.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	ACSIC profiles have been determined for several systems through historical records correction proceedings under M.S. 103E.	○	This process will continue for remaining systems.
10. Consider establishing a "repair profile" for a legal drainage system as a "negotiated profile" to balance competing private and public rights, benefits and interests.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	This approach is considered during the repair alternatives analysis within repair reports.	○	This process will continue for remaining systems.

11. By policy, establish a "repair profile" for a legal drainage system, if the repair profile provides a lesser level of service for agricultural drainage than the as-constructed and subsequently improved condition.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	This approach has been utilized where appropriate and is always considered	○	This process will continue for remaining systems where appropriate.

Policy 5.4-6: The management of drainage systems and conservation programs within the legal authority of the District may involve impacts to landowner's rights. In such cases it may be appropriate to explore the conservation benefits of drainage related activities and consider a system of reasonable and fair compensation for the drainage rights and other voluntary or incentive approaches.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. No specific actions identified.	2010 – 2020	N/A	This is a typo in the 2010 WMP. Same as Policy 5.4-5, item 7.	□	Remove from next WMP.

Policy 5.4-7: Recognize the landowner as the primary entity responsible for maintaining, managing, and operating private drainage systems and mitigating wetland impacts associated with private drainage.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Identify and map existing private drainage systems within the District when convenient, as a component of drainage system related activities.	2010 – 2020	2012	This was completed in 2012.	☑	N/A
2. Complete legal review on a case-by-case basis to identify private versus public drainage systems, as a component of the Districts legal drainage system modernization program.	2010 – 2020	2012	This was completed in 2012.	☑	N/A
3. Convert private drainage systems to legal (public) systems when conveyance functions are determined to be in the best interests of the District.	2010 – 2020	N/A	This action was found to not be feasible and requires establishment of a new drainage system.	□	N/A

Policy 5.4-8: Minimize and address channel instability as a result of additional runoff due to land use changes, and promote ecological value as appropriate for the type of open channel.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop management goals for open channels within the District which incorporates their classification (e.g., a constructed waterway, an altered natural waterway or an unaltered natural waterway), geomorphic stability and condition, ecological integrity and importance as a conveyance system.	2010 – 2020	N/A	District-wide management goals for open channel classifications have not been developed.	☐	If the classification system is further developed, it would naturally follow to develop management goals.
2. Identify reference reaches or similar baseline conditions as a management target.	2010 – 2020	N/A	Reference reaches for open channel classifications have not been developed.	☐	If the classification system is further developed, it would naturally follow to develop management goals.
3. Identify priority reaches for stream rehabilitation.	2010 – 2020	2014 – 2018	RCWD has placed studied and established priority restoration reaches on Rice Creek itself. A major series of restoration projects through TCAAP in Arden Hills was completed in 2018.	☑	Remaining priority reaches will be addressed in the future as funding allows. This is expected to be included in the CIP within the District's next WMP.
4. Develop a method to assess response of natural waterways to changes in bank-full discharge.	2010 – 2020	N/A	This action has not been undertaken.	☐	This action will likely be removed from the next WMP.
5. Implement feasibilities studies to define ways to address channel instability, bank erosion and promote ecological value.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	For each proposed stream restoration project, the District has completed an individual feasibility study to address these types of design criteria.	☑	Feasibility studies will be undertaken for individual projects in the future as needed.

Policy 5.4-9: Maintain legal right of entry and access along pubic drainage systems and formally document easements along public drainage systems as part of drainage system legal proceedings and the permit review process.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps

1. Identify and map areas where easements presently exist or are needed and evaluate existing easement widths and adjust as necessary.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has determined that it has an inferred right of access over all drainage system corridors via M.S. 103E. The Board has been adopting As-Constructed-And-Subsequently-Improved-Condition profiles for drainage systems as they undergo historical records corrections, establishing the current legal location of the public drainage system.	○	Monitor historical drainage records and update systems as new records are discovered.
2. Determine criteria for reasonable cost thresholds for easement acquisition.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has determined that it has an inferred right of access over all drainage system corridors via M.S. 103E.	□	This effort has not been pursued by the District.
3. Explore acquisition of easements in existing conveyance locations, where reasonable and feasible.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has determined that it has an inferred right of access over all drainage system corridors via M.S. 103E.	□	This effort has not been pursued by the District.
4. Establish drainage easements for new conveyance systems and acquire easements during the development permit process.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	Although the District exercises the inferred right of access under M.S. 103E, the District has determined it to be valuable to also have public drainage easements recorded in recent history on the deeds of developing parcels. Projects that trigger District regulations are required to convey easement over the public drainage system at the time of permitting.	○	The District will continue to require public drainage system easement conveyance as a part of its permitting program.

Policy 5.4-10: Inventory, manage, and provide access to public drainage system records to improve operational efficiency, make accessible common information to constituents and improve the basic understanding of public drainage systems.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Create an electronic (GIS) system for capturing, modernizing, and managing drainage system records.	2010 – 2020	2010	All records were converted to electronic formats in 2010.	☑	New records will be added to the system as developed.

2. Maintain electronic versions of the as-constructed and subsequently improved and repair profiles, as established by the Board of Managers.	2010 – 2020	2010	All records were converted to electronic formats in 2010.	☑	New records will be added to the system as developed.
3. Convert records on a case-by-case basis to an electronic format.	2010 – 2020	2010	All records were converted to electronic formats in 2010.	☑	New records will be added to the system as developed.
4. Develop and update Geographic Information System (GIS) records pertaining to legal drainage system records and a component of the normal, work-flow process.	2010 – 2020	2010 - 2018	A public "drainage portal" has been developed, including all drainage system records and documents for each RCWD 103E system. A GIS viewer has also been made available, so the public can review system design information online.	☑	This system has been and will continue to be maintained by the District and its engineer as a routine activity.
5. Develop or use existing GIS data models to manage drainage system records.	2010 – 2020	2016	The District developed a modern drainage system database with the help of a BWSR grant in 2016.	☑	The database has been and will continue to be used for recording drainage system maintenance and inspections.
6. Seek funding external to the District for the modernization of drainage system records.	2010 – 2020	2010	The District received a Drainage System Records Modernization Grant from BWSR in 2010 and used it to convert existing records into electronic format and develop the drainage portal mentioned above.	☑	Maintenance of the electronic records system will continue in the future. It has been an invaluable addition to the District's 103E program.
7. Develop an automated reporting system for results of a formal inspection cycle.	2010 – 2020	2016	The drainage system database developed in 2016 provides an easy automated report for the Drainage System Inspector.	☑	This system will be used and maintained in the future.

Policy 5.4-11: Use consistent terms and definitions when describing the maintenance, repair, improvement and general management of public and private drainage systems. In support of the orderly and consistent management of public drainage systems in the District, it is the policy of the District to utilize the following definitions, to facilitate understanding and describe the work to be completed within repair reports and the need for maintenance activities, various public drainage system proceedings, and routine operation and maintenance.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. No specific actions identified.	2010 – 2020	2010 +	Definitions provided in original 2010 WMP have been used ever since.	☑	Continue to utilize the terms in the District's next WMP.

Policy 5.4-12: Use the range of legal process and funding sources available to the RCWD to manage the public drainage and currently designated trunk system during the implementation of the hybrid legal framework, which includes Minnesota Statutes 103E, 103D, and 103B. Until implementation of the hybrid legal framework is completed for a public drainage system or currently designated trunk system, funding approaches may include: 1) the use of ad valorem funds to complete minor maintenance; 2) the use of proceedings as described within MS 103E and assessments to benefited lands when permits and/or wetland mitigation is required; 3) and various combinations of 103E, 103D and 103B for systems where a repair report has been adopted and implemented., and 4) Ad- valorem funds the maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, or restoration of the trunk drainage system.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. No specific actions identified.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has developed a hybrid legal framework for its drainage system repair projects utilizing elements of 103B, D & E with Water Management Districts serving as a funding source. Repair projects are designed to minimize environmental impacts and the need for wetland mitigation.	☑	This hybrid framework has been very successful and will be utilized in the future.

Goal 5.5: EXCESS RUNOFF – Minimize the potential damage to public and private infrastructure, private property, the land and other important water related natural resources caused by excess runoff and flooding.

Policy 5.5-1: Minimize, avoid and reduce flood damages through the use of a floodplain management program including analyses completed by the District, which is focused on identifying and assessing flood prone areas, characterizing flood damages and regulating the placement of structures within the floodplain.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps

1. Implement a District-wide survey and modeling program to develop 100-year floodplain boundaries and base flood elevations, consistent with the methods of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has developed a hydraulic and hydrologic model covering flows and flood elevations on Rice Creek, the public drainage system and major lakes within the watershed.	☑	Update models annually and work to convert older InfoSWMM models to XPSWMM as time and budgets allow.
2. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a Cooperative Technical Partner with FEMA.	2010 – 2020	2018	The RCWD has been working locally with Minnesota DNR to prove the accuracy of FEMA Flood Hazard Mapping.	○	We will share updates to the District's models to DNR and other local partners.
3. Collaborate with cities and counties in the development of floodplain boundaries and base flood elevations.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District's models are available to all local partners for their use and consideration.	○	Feedback from local partners is use to complete annual model updates.
4. Engage in FEMA's Risk MAP (Mapping, Assessment, and Planning) Strategy.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not directly engaged with this FEMA Program. The District's models are available to local partners for their use and consideration.	☐	The District does not intend to actively pursue engagement with this FEMA program.
5. Submit Letters of Map Revision (LOMR) to FEMA & the MnDNR to include RCWD floodplains in FEMA FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) panels.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has provided technical support to municipalities and landowners that have pursued map revisions, although it has not submitted a District-wide LOMR.	○	The District will continue to support its local partners and residents with updated floodplain information.
6. Use updates to FEMA FIRM panels and other credible floodplain information when establishing regulatory 100-year elevations for the District permit program.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District relies on its own floodplain models for its own regulations.	○	This action item will be modified in the next WMP to reflect use of the District's model for regulatory purposes.
7. Coordinate with agencies to address water levels controlled by Peltier Lake and consider modification or removal of the control structure to achieve management objectives for the lake.	2010 – 2020	2017 – 2018	The District has not seriously evaluated removal of the Peltier Lake outlet structure. The District has conducted a winter draw-down of the lake level to achieve ecological improvement.	○	This action item will be reevaluated in its next WMP.
8. Continue to monitor lake levels within the RCWD and use periodically to update frequency analyses to estimate the 1% chance elevation.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not found a need to collect more field data to update our lake level frequency analyses.	☐	This action may be considered in the future, however, there are no current plans to continue lake level monitoring.

9. Establish maximum allowable flow rates between cities based upon the risk of flooding.	2010 – 2020	2012 – 2018	The District has used its model to develop a list of intercommunity flow rates at various locations along Rice Creek and the public drainage systems. Cities are required to address these locations and flows within their Local Surface Water Management Plans.	☑	Intercommunity flows are updated annually with the District's model.

Policy 5.5-2: Use the District rules and the permit program to mitigate the increase in the rate and volume of runoff resulting from land disturbance, land development, an increase in the amount of impervious surface, and other changes to the landscape.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Operate a permit and inspection program to regulate the rate and volume of runoff from development and land disturbing activities.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has continued to operate a regulatory and inspection program requiring volume control from new development and redevelopment.	○	The District will continue to operate a regulatory and inspection program requiring volume control from new development and redevelopment.
2. Periodically update and evaluate trends in design standards and criteria, Best Management Practices and approaches, and effectiveness monitoring results, for possible incorporation into District rules.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District Board opens its Rules for revisions in coordination with our partners approximately every two years, during which time these items are considered for effectiveness and possible revision. The District monitors updates to the MPCA's Stormwater Manual.	○	The District will continue periodic rule revisions as needed.
3. Periodically evaluate District rules related to stormwater control and evaluate ways to minimize costs and labor for all parties involved in the permit process.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District Board opens its Rules for revisions in coordination with our partners approximately every two years, during which time these items are considered for effectiveness and possible revision.	○	The District will continue periodic rule revisions as needed.

4. Consider implementing criteria and standards within the permit program, which protect waterways from erosion resulting from peak discharges and specifically, natural waterways used as stormwater outlets.	2010 – 2020	2014 – 2018	The District has implemented a Flood Management Zone downstream of Baldwin Lake, requiring permitted projects to reduce peak runoff to 80% of pre-project rates. Development proposals are incorporated into the District model to look for adverse impacts.	☑	The effectiveness Flood Management Zone will continue to be evaluated. The District has engaged Forest Lake and Columbus to consider flow-constrained areas when establishing future land use.
5. Identify sites which fail to comply with District permit requirements.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has an inspection program for this purpose and also responds to submitted concerns.	○	The District will continue operating this program.
6. Develop a database to track volume debits and credits, in connection with a database for overall permit workflow and tracking.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District maintains a robust permit tracking database for general workflow, WCA and volume banking, however, the District discontinued its volume banking program in 2014 in favor of pre-project planning under Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plans. Existing debits and credits remain until a zero balance is achieved.	☑	The database will be maintained as a critical tool for District staff. The District continues to communicate with legacy volume banking partners to achieve a zero balance.
7. Periodically evaluate, inspect, document, and monitor facilities constructed under a permit issued by the RCWD.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District obtains BMP maintenance declarations; however, inspection is limited to expressed concerns from the public due to staffing limitations. The District works closely with many cities to facilitate their inspection programs.	○	Continue working with District partners to facilitate their programs.
8. Test and when appropriate, implement innovative water quality improvement products, equipment, methods, and Best Management Practices to address sites with limited land area for conventional means to control the volume and rate of runoff.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District is open to pre-application BMP consultations and alternative BMPs, however, applications should be accompanied by supporting documentation of effectiveness such as independent third-party test results.	○	Continue to monitor MPCA's Stormwater Manual for innovative BMPs.

Policy 5.5-3: Preserve and manage the storage associated with the 100-year floodplain along and within water-bodies to minimize the frequency and severity of flooding cause by high water.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Identify water-bodies providing flood storage important for reducing the frequency and severity of flooding.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2012	The District-Wide Modeling Program provided the analysis to determine that the Lino Lakes Chain of Lakes and Long Lake are critical flood storage areas within the District.	☑	The core of RCWD flood management initiatives relies on the information developed within the District-Wide Model and focuses on preserving or enhancing the flood storage abilities of these basins.
2. Update and maintain elevation – storage relationships for water-bodies providing important flood storage.	2010 – 2020	2010 - 2012	The District-Wide Model combined with bathymetry mapping and LiDAR ground surface elevation mapping allows the District to develop stage/storage relationships and flow curves for lakes and streams within the watershed.	☑	These data products are critical to our management of the watershed and will be utilized moving forward.
3. Update and establish the normal water elevation and 100-year water surface elevations for water-bodies providing important flood storage. Identify the emergency overflow elevations and directions of flow for these water-bodies.	2010 – 2020	2012	Lake level reports were developed as a part of the District-wide H&H model (completed in 2012). Most major lakes within the RCWD were included in this effort. New OHWs were not established (DNR's responsibility), rather, the reports utilized existing data to establish District-recognized 100-year flood elevations for the lakes.	☑	The lake level reports are used routinely for many District functions and may be updated as new data becomes available.
4. Consider using financial incentives to landowners to preserve important flood storage areas, prior to receiving a specific development proposal or permit from the landowner.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District Board has not established any formal policy or program to carry out this action item.	☐	This action will be considered in the next WMP.
5. Maintain flood storage capacity along waterways of the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District's rules provide for no net increase of peak flows for new and redevelopment projects and a reduction in some areas of the District. Several capital projects have been implemented by the District and its partners to increase flood storage capacity.	○	Flood management and damage risk reduction is a core function of the RCWD.

Policy 5.5-4: Recognize the potential uncertainty associated with managing water resources and understand the implications of emerging issues including climate change, the use of monitoring data, and the interpretation of scientific and technical data, in the decision-making process.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Consider providing financial support to revise current rainfall bulletins (e.g., TP-40).	2010 – 2020	2014	TP-40 was replaced by Atlas 14 in 2014. The District has incorporated Atlas 14 into its models and regulations.	☑	We will continue to utilize the best available rainfall data.
2. Consider incentives or methods to incorporate carbon sequestration into projects.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued this action item.	☐	This is not likely to be considered in the next WMP.

Policy 5.5-5: Foster and encourage the use of agricultural conservation practices and management practices, and the implementation urban Best Management Practices, to reduce the rate and volume of runoff.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Continue aggressive inspection of Best Management Practices required by the permit program, evaluate effectiveness and modify and adjust methods to improve volume and rate control performance.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District obtains BMP maintenance declarations; however, inspection is limited to expressed concerns from the public due to staffing limitations. The District works closely with many cities to facilitate their inspection programs.	○	Continue working with District partners to facilitate their programs.
2. Minimize erosion from construction sites and prevent sedimentation downstream.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District's rules require erosion and sediment control plans for all land-disturbing activities. The District operates an active inspection program for active permitted sites.	○	The District will continue operating its permit inspection program and requiring erosion control plans.
3. Cooperative with the Soil and Water Conservation Districts to identify lands which may benefit from soil and water conservation planning and implementation of best management practices to control erosion and stormwater runoff.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has partnered with SWCDs on various BMP targeting efforts such as Subwatershed Stormwater Retrofit Assessments and others, resulting in the implementation of many projects.	○	The District intends to continue pursuing these types of assessments where appropriate and as funding allows.

4. Continue the Municipal Early Coordination Capital Improvement Program to develop and implement runoff control BMPs with communities.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	As a regular order of business, the District works with its partners to develop or provide funding to capital projects for water quality and flood control during road reconstruction and other efforts of municipalities.	○	This program has been a success and has improved our relationships with many municipal partners. It is expected to be continued in the future.
5. Identify target volume control needs by planning region, as a component of the District-wide modeling initiative.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not pursued use of the five planning regions to compartmentalize watershed management.	□	Continued use/mention of the planning regions will be discussed by the Board during development of the next WMP.

Policy 5.5-6: Foster and encourage the use of regional Best Management Practices, to reduce the rate and volume of runoff.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Coordinate with municipalities to evaluate the feasibility of implementing regional BMPs and evaluation of their use to meet the District's volume control and water quality requirements.	2010 – 2020	2017 – 2018	The District has begun engaging its city partners to consider regional BMPs in flow-constrained areas when establishing future land use.	○	Continue to share results of the district's future conditions model and critical flood areas.
2. Coordinate with municipalities to identify regional BMPs that may best be implemented by the RCWD.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	As a regular order of business, the District works with its partners to develop or provide funding to capital projects for water quality and flood control during road reconstruction and other efforts of municipalities. Projects that involve the 103E drainage system or provide benefits across municipal boundaries are usually implemented by the District.	○	This program has been a success and has improved our relationships with many municipal partners. It is expected to be continued in the future.
3. Implement the District's requirement for review and approval of city local surface water management plans.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District reviewed and approved a suite of municipal local water plans between 2010 and 2014. With changes to MN Rules 8410 in recent years, all 28 cities within the RCWD are currently working on revisions to their plans in a coordinated manner.	○	All local water plans are required to be complete and approved by the RCWD by the end of 2018. Plans will not be due again until 2028.

Goal 5.6: DISTRICT FACILITIES – Construct, maintain and operate facilities owned or operated by the District in accordance with their resource management purposes and gage their effectiveness over time.

Policy 5.6-1: Manage district-owned facilities subject to Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program requirements consistent with permit conditions and facilitate data sharing among public entities within the District, subject to MS4 program requirements.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Develop and implement specific operation and management plans for District facilities, which reflect the goal of this management category.	2010 – 2020	2018	A Facilities Inventory is in development currently.	○	The Inventory will be incorporated into the next WMP, including O&M needs and responsibilities.
2. Annually inspect facilities owned by the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	District facilities are inspected annually through routine operations of District staff. Status is reported annually in the District's Drainage System Inspection Report.	○	The District is currently developing a Facilities Inventory that will be incorporated into the next WMP.
3. Assess the condition of water resources infrastructure including inspecting a representative number (around 20 percent) of MS4 outfalls, sediment basins and ponds annually that are permitted by the District, for compliance with Local Surface Water Management Plan requirements.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	District-owned facilities and most, if not all, of the District's MS4 Outfalls are inspected annually through routine staff operations. The District does not have the staffing resources available to provide for inspection of all permitted stormwater facilities and relies on permittees to complete inspections and O&M. Reported concerns or problems with permitted stormwater facilities are inspected and followed up on.	○	The District's level of effort in this regard is not expected to change in the future.
4. Develop general maintenance agreements for municipalities or other public entities to address district permitted stormwater facilities which have been turned over to them and are part of the municipal stormwater system.	2010 – 2020	2014 – 2018	The District has developed a programmatic maintenance agreement for public entities as an alternative to project-specific maintenance declarations.	☑	A few entities have made use of this arrangement; the District will further encourage use of the programmatic agreement in the future.

5. Obtain GIS data, maps, and MS4 related information from cities within the RCWD as a means to improve water resource data developed by the RCWD.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The district has actively pursued obtaining storm sewer, DWSMA, and other relevant geospatial information for incorporation into its models and mapping.	☑	The District will request updated information periodically to ensure accuracy.
6. Develop, create or use existing databases based upon standardized data models, to share information about municipal storm sewer outfalls, structural practices, and maintenance activities among MS4 permit holders, to increase operational efficiency.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not developed or implemented any advanced MS4 tracking databases.	☐	The District's role as an MS4 permittee is extremely limited. We do not expect to need a formal database in the future. If that changes, use of a database may be re-evaluated.
7. Participate in user and GIS groups focused on MS4 issues and stormwater data.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has participated in various GIS groups associated with MS4 and stormwater data.	☑	The District will participate and assist similar groups as requested.

Policy 5.6-2: Manage district-owned facilities in accordance with the original design purposes, periodically review these purposes, and modify operation in consideration of current resource management objectives.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Inventory historical records to identify District-owned facilities and basic information about these facilities.	2010 – 2020	2018	The District has undertaken a District Facilities Inventory Project, with a goal of having the inventory completed in time to be incorporated into the 2020 WMP.	○	Complete the inventory project and incorporate it into the 2020 WMP.
2. Define the purposes, locations, operational conditions, and maintenance needs for District-owned and operated facilities and create a modern records management program.	2010 – 2020	2018	The District has undertaken a District Facilities Inventory Project, with a goal of having the inventory completed in time to be incorporated into the 2020 WMP. O&M needs for each facility will be developed and included in the inventory.	○	Complete the inventory project and incorporate it into the 2020 WMP.

3. Develop and implement a "Facilities Operations and Maintenance Plan", which includes information about inspection frequency, infrastructure condition, maintenance requirements, maintenance and repair priority, and the funding needed for maintenance and repair.	2010 – 2020	2018	The District has undertaken a District Facilities Inventory Project, with a goal of having the inventory completed in time to be incorporated into the 2020 WMP. O&M needs for each facility will be developed and included in the inventory.	○	Complete the inventory project and incorporate it into the 2020 WMP.
4. Create a database and map of District-owned facilities.	2010 – 2020	2018	The District has undertaken a District Facilities Inventory Project, with a goal of having the inventory completed in time to be incorporated into the 2020 WMP. A map of facilities will be developed.	○	Complete the inventory project and incorporate it into the 2020 WMP. It is unknown at this time if a formal database will be required.
5. Establish a dedicated maintenance and repair fund, and complete maintenance and repair in accordance with the "Facilities Operations and Maintenance Plan".	2010 – 2020	2018	The District has undertaken a District Facilities Inventory Project, with a goal of having the inventory completed in time to be incorporated into the 2020 WMP.	○	Costs identified for maintenance and repair of facilities included in the inventory will be presented to the Board for consideration in future budgeting processes.

Goal 5.7: OPEN SPACE – Capitalize on opportunities to enhance water quality, reduce runoff volume and flood damages, and enhance ecological resources by using open space and greenways.

Policy 5.7-1: Encourage the use of open space in the design of district sponsored projects when multiple benefits are realized and the benefits are consistent with the mission of the District.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Identify open space priority benefits of interest to the District.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued open space preservation in its own projects.	□	The District does not anticipate continuing this policy in its next WMP.
2. Evaluate methods to incorporate these benefits into cost-share programs operated by the District.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued open space preservation in its own projects.	□	The District does not anticipate continuing this policy in its next WMP.

3. Incorporate open space into the design of District projects when the open space priority benefits can be realized.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued open space preservation in its own projects.	☐	The District does not anticipate continuing this policy in its next WMP.

Policy 5.7-2: Capitalize on the efforts of others responsible for managing open space to enhance their ongoing recreational programs, when these programs are related to the water and resource management effort and are consistent with District open space priorities.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Identify existing and planned city and county parks, open space locations, and greenway corridors along with the responsible department, and the appropriate management contact person and evaluate for opportunities for incorporation of these spaces into District plans and projects.	2010 – 2020	2010	The District completed a stormwater management BMP appendix for Roseville's Parks Master Plan in 2010, but other communities have been addressed only on a case-by-case basis.	○	This policy may be carried forward to the next WMP.
2. Implement improvements to Rice Creek that serve mutual recreation and water resource benefits within the riparian corridor through publicly controlled land including the former Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant area.	2010 – 2020	2016 – 2018	The District completed a major stream restoration project on Rice Creek through the TCAAP corridor in 2016-2018. The effort was done in cooperation with Ramsey County Parks and BWSR. The work will enhance recreational opportunities in the corridor, adjacent to the Rice Creek Commons redevelopment of TCAAP.	☑	The District will continue to coordinate with Ramsey County Parks to enhance environmental and recreational opportunities in the Rice Creek corridor as appropriate.
3. Collaborate with local governments to develop conservation and restoration plans for land and water resources with areas having unique value, such as a MnDNR Heritage Rank of "A/B" or better, sites of biodiversity significance of High or Outstanding, and/or highly rated Native Plant Communities.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District actively administers "Special Considerations" within the WCA regulation, specifically targeting threatened and endanger species as well as rare natural communities as viewed on DNR's NHIS system.	○	The District will continue to administer "Special Conditions".

4. Evaluate the need to create and implement a Conservation and Restoration Program.	2010 – 2020	N/A	No formal program has been established to-date.	☐	There are no plans to establish such a program at this time.
5. Facilitate and / or support projects to remove and control the spread of exotic species such as buckthorn and purple loosestrife.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has endeavored to control exotic species when they occur within the boundary of District capital projects, but not as a stand-alone program.	○	Invasive species control will continue to be included in future District projects.
6. Use Resource Management Plans developed by the District as a means to identify and protect open space areas serving multiple District established priority benefits.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District utilizes the RMPs in administration of rules to identify wetland management corridors for preservation and buffering.	○	Continued use of the RMPS are up for discussion with the next WMP.
7. Assist in large scale efforts to improve the natural resource functions and recreational potential of open space and natural resource corridors.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has endeavored to improve habitat and recreational opportunities when they arise during the context of District capital projects, but not as a stand-alone program.	○	These benefits will continue to be included as secondary goals in future District projects.

Policy 5.7-3: Seek opportunities to enhance habitat function and integrity, to benefit water resources and ecosystems.

Progress Rating: ☐ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Preserve and enhance the natural vegetation existing in floodplain areas for fish and wildlife habitat and improving water quality.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has endeavored to improve habitat when opportunities arise during the context of District capital projects, but not as a stand-alone program.	○	These benefits will continue to be included as secondary goals in future District projects.
2. Provide regulatory incentives for the conservation of desirable undisturbed vegetation as sites develop.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	High value natural wetland community areas have higher replacement ratios, encouraging avoidance and preservation.	○	Assemble and map areas under easement to evaluate continuity and present to Board for consideration.

3. Continue to operate a cost-share program for creating and maintaining natural buffers along lakes and streams, when in the best interest of the District.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The Water Quality BMP Cost-Share Program (renamed Water Quality Grant Program) has led to the implementation of nearly 150 water quality BMPs by District residents, businesses and other partners since 2010 many of which involved shoreline and streambank restoration efforts.	○	The program has become a very popular mechanism to fund local water quality BMPs and will likely be continued into the next WMP, although the District is looking into administrative efficiency improvement ideas.

Goal 5.8: GROUNDWATER – Incorporate ground water considerations into the decision making process with mindfulness of the interconnectedness of water and water dependent natural resources.

Policy 5.8-1: Continue to evaluate and monitor County Groundwater Plans and participate in collaborative efforts to manage groundwater resources.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Work with Anoka, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington Counties on development and implementation of groundwater protection plans and programs.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District has actively participated in work plan development for Washington County's groundwater plan and has participated when Ramsey County was working on a groundwater plan. Anoka County has not pursued this type of effort and we have not participated with Hennepin County in any way due to only covering 0.5 square miles of Hennepin County.	○	The District will remain open to partnerships with the counties that pursue active groundwater management plans.
2. Assess a rule revision to address gravel mining activities and runoff volume control in the Anoka Sand Plain to protect groundwater from contamination and potential impacts from groundwater appropriations on surface water elevations.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not been approached for permitting for any gravel/sand mining operations under this WMP.	○	Assess usefulness of this action item in next WMP.

Policy 5.8-2: Collaborate with other Metropolitan watershed districts with volume control requirements to develop a consistent message for managing groundwater concerns due to infiltration.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Participate in inter-agency and / or inter-watershed task force to assess information on pollutants entering shallow groundwater through infiltration.	2010 – 2020	N/A	No specific task force has been established, however the District does participate with the Washington Water Consortium and other groups as necessary to discuss and review groundwater / surface water interactions. Concerns on this topic seem to have waned.	○	Consider removal of this policy from next WMP.

Policy 5.8-3: Achieve a better understanding of local surface and ground water dynamics and interactions.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Identify groundwater-dependent resources.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued a groundwater monitoring program.	□	The District's role in groundwater management will be discussed during development of the 2020 WMP.
2. Identify existing MnDNR groundwater monitoring wells / network within the RCWD and evaluate opportunities for collaboration.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued a groundwater monitoring program.	□	The District's role in groundwater management will be discussed during development of the 2020 WMP.
3. Consider augmenting the monitoring wells in conjunction with an overall monitoring program to gain a better understanding on inter-connectedness of surficial groundwater and surface water resources in the District.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued a groundwater monitoring program.	□	The District's role in groundwater management will be discussed during development of the 2020 WMP.
4. Research and develop a pilot study for detailed hydrologic modeling at the site-scale for shallow groundwater dynamics.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The District has not actively pursued a groundwater monitoring program.	□	The District's role in groundwater management will be discussed during development of the 2020 WMP.

Policy 5.8-4: Guide the use of stormwater infiltration BMPs in sensitive areas such as DWSMAs.

Progress Rating: □ =not started/dropped ○ =on-going progress ☑ =completed/target met

Planned Actions or Activities	Proposed Timeframe	Actual Timeframe	Accomplishments to Date	Progress Rating	Next Steps
1. Provide information and guidance from Minnesota Department of Health to developers during the permit application process.	2010 – 2020	2010 – 2018	The District's rules address infiltration restrictions within highly sensitive DWSMAs and, specifically, Emergency Response Areas.	○	Maintain a rule consistent with MDH guidance.
2. Develop a panel of local member communities to assess the on-going success of source water protection and excess runoff reduction.	2010 – 2020	N/A	The WD has not convened such a panel to-date due to lack of need.	□	To our knowledge, the protections in place are consistent with MDH guidance and have been accepted by our local partners as responsible. This action will not likely be pursued in the future.

Appendix B. Performance Standards

METRO WATERSHED DISTRICT and WMO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

LGU Name: Rice Creek Watershed District

Performance Area	Performance Standard	Level of Review	Rating	
	★ High Performance standard ■ Basic practice or statutory requirement (see instructions for explanation of standards)	I Annual Compliance II BWSR Staff Review & Assessment (1/5 yrs)	Yes, No, or Value	
			YES	NO
Administration	■ Activity report: annual, on-time	I	X	
	■ Financial report & audit completed on time	I	X	
	■ Drainage authority buffer strip report submitted on time	I	X	
	■ eLink Grant Report(s): submitted on time	I	X	
	■ Rules: date of last revision or review	II	12/14/16	
	■ Personnel policy: exists and reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II	X	
	■ Data practices policy: exists & reviewed/updated within last 5 yrs	II	X	
	■ Manager appointments: current and reported	II	X	
	■ Consultant RFP: within 2 yrs for professional services	II	X	
	■ **WD/WMO has resolution assuming WCA responsibilities and appropriate delegation resolutions as warranted** (N/A if not LGU)	II	X	
	■ **WD/WMO has knowledgable & trained staff that manages WCA program or has secured a qualified delegate.** (N/A if not WCA LGU)	II	X	
	★ Administrator on staff	II	X	
	★ Board training: orient.& cont. ed. Plan, record for each board member	II	X	
	★ Staff training: orient. & cont. ed. plan and record for each staff person	II	X	
	★ Operational guidelines for fiscal procedures and conflicts of interest exist and current	II	X	
	★ Public drainage records: meet modernization guidelines	II	X	
Planning	■ Watershed management plan: up-to-date	I	X	
	■ City/twp. local water plans not yet approved	II	N/A or 0	
	■ Capital Improvement Program: reviewed every 2 yrs	II	X	
	★ Biennial Budget Request submitted on time	II	X	
	★ Strategic plan identifies short-term priorities	II	X	
Execution	■ Engineer Reports: submitted for DNR & BWSR review	II	X	
	■ **WCA decisions and determinations are made in conformance with all WCA requirements.** (if delegated WCA LGU)	II	X	
	■ **WCA TEP reviews & recommendations appropriately coordinated.** (if delegated WCA LGU)	II	X	
	■ Total expenditures per year (past 10 yrs)	II	Submitted	
	★ Water quality trends tracked for key water bodies	II	X	
	★ Watershed hydrologic trends monitored / reported	II	X	
Communication & Coordination	■ Website: contains informationas required by MR 8410.0150 Subp. 3a, i.e. as board meeting, contact information, water plan, etc.	II	X	
	■ Functioning advisory committee(s): recommendations on projects, reports, 2-way communication with Board	II	X	
	■ Communication piece: sent within last 12 months	II	X	
	Communication Target Audience:	Agency Partners & Stakeholders		
	★ Track progress for I & E objectives in Plan	II		X
	★ Coordination with County Board, SWCD Board and City/Twp officials	II	X	
	★ Partnerships: cooperative projects/tasks with neighboring organizations, such as counties, soil and water districts, watershed districts and non-governmental organizations	II	X	

Rice Creek Watershed District Expenditures for last 10 years

2008 $3,596,875.04
2009 $3,442,131.27
2010 $3,283,515.46
2011 $3,823,438.48
2012 $4,212,508.37
2013 $3,509,240.77
2014 $3,930,736.25
2015 $3,527,972.21
2016 $5,113,592.19
2017 $6,706,183.91
Total Expenditures –
2008 – 2017 = $41,146,194

Appendix C. Summary of Survey Results

Survey Overview:

The survey was developed by BWSR staff for the purpose of identifying information about the local government unit's performance from both board members and staff and from the unit's partner organizations. The Rice Creek Watershed District identified, at BWSR's request, their current board members, staff and the partner organizations with whom they have an on-going working relationship. BWSR staff invited those people to take the on-line survey and their responses were received and analyzed by BWSR staff. Board members and staff answered a different set of survey questions than the partners. The identity of the survey respondents is unknown to both BWSR and the Rice Creek Watershed District.

In this case, 18 board members and staff, and 28 partner organization representatives, were invited to take the survey. Fourteen board members or staff responded (78%). Eighteen partners responded, a 64% response rate. Both sets of responses are summarized below. Some responses were edited for clarity or brevity.

Board Member and Staff Questions and Responses

How often does your organization use your current management plan to guide decisions about what you do?	(response percent)
Always	**69.2%**
Usually	**30.8%**
Seldom	**0.0**
Never	**0.0**

Additional Comments:

- *The management plan is difficult to use on a day-to-day basis due to its length and format. It's an ongoing process to connect day-to-day tasks to big-picture management plan components (the connections to various program areas or projects are not always clear and the management plan is high-level and complex).*
- *The WMP sets District policy and guides all actions undertaken by the RCWD.*

List your organization's most successful programs and projects during the past 3-5 years.
Long Lake Targeted Watershed Demonstration Project, Bald Eagle Lake Alum Treatment, Southwest Urban Lakes Implementation Program, Hardwood Creek Restoration Project, development of the Stormwater Reuse for Irrigation Assessment Methodology, various grant programs, regulatory program, surface water monitoring program, public drainage system inspection/maintenance/repair program (various other projects and programs too that are still underway; too early to be listed as a "most successful" program or project).
ACD Ditch 31 & 46 repair and maintenance projects.
Comprehensive Public Drainage repair Flood Control Regulatory including permit review and inspection services Water quality protection and monitoring Stormwater Reuse Public Drainage maintenance program Communication and Outreach.
Public Drainage Program 5 Comprehensive Repairs Built the largest flood control project in the Districts History Received the largest grant in Districts History.
Bald Eagle and Silver Lake meeting State Standards. Water reuse standards developed for BWSR. Hanson and Mirror Ponds addressing water retention, flooding. Overall Ditch repair and maintenance progress.
Hardwood Creek Restoration, Bald Eagle Alum Treatment, Long Lake Targeted Watershed Demonstration - carp management, Middle Rice Creek Restoration, Hansen Park and Mirror Lake stormwater retrofit.

I have worked for the Rice Creek Watershed District for less than three years, however what I've seen so far is the Bald Eagle Lake Restoration Project was very successful. The District's cost-share programs, such as the Urban Stormwater Remediation Cost-Share program, are successful in that there's a high demand from partner agencies and the public with many projects getting installed. The Forest Lake High School Stormwater Reuse Partnership Project is successful so far and is currently resulting in additional partnership opportunities and innovative projects with the school.
Long Lake Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program (Hansen Park, Mirror Lake, Middle Rice Creek & Carp Management Projects) Public Drainage System Repair and Maintenance Program Bald Eagle Lake Improvement Project.
TMDL load reduction implementation flood reduction projects (ditch maintenance).
Urban Stormwater Remediation Cost-Share Program Permitting Program Water Quality Grant Program Local Water Planning Process.
Targeted Watershed Demonstration Projects (Hansen Park, MRC restoration, Mirror Pond, Carp Mgmt.), BEL Alum Project, ACD 31/46 repair project, ACD 10-22-32 Repair Project, ACD 53/62 Br 1 Repair Project, ACD 5/AWJD4 Repair-Maintenance Project, Cost-Share program, USWR cost share program, Master Water Steward Program.

What helped make these projects and programs successful?
Staff's ongoing hard work managing multiple projects/programs and collaborating with each other, partnerships with other agencies/organizations/cities/counties/landowners, various funding sources, conscious messaging and outreach.
RCWD Board listening to residents and City Council while working together to address high water table and flooding problems.
Vision and leadership from the Board of Managers. Outstanding staff and consulting team that has had minimal turnover. Strong partnership and collaboration with local city and county partners.
Vision and leadership from the board of managers and strong staff team with minimal turn over.
Access to State funding for Bald Eagle, Hanson and Mirror pond. These types of projects are probably impossible under BWSR pilot funding changes. Ditches are the result of long term planning and commitment.
Strong partnerships and leadership.
Actively partnering with other agencies and grant funding helped these projects and programs be successful.
RCWD is fortunate to have quality staff, an understanding and responsible Board, and engaged partners willing to come to the table and make change happen. BWSR Clean Water Fund grants have also been critical in filling funding gaps for our water quality projects.
Pre-project feasibility and planning grants good staff.
Fostering partnerships with our communities has helped make us a successful District. I feel our staff strives to be reasonable and helpful to our communities and constituents Our permitting staff consistently holds pre-application meetings and we meet monthly with our consultants to discuss improvements and issues. As of late, we have been working with Master Water Stewards to utilize them as stewards to help install projects with our Water Quality Grant program We have begun meeting with communities in City/County Partner meetings to update them on District activities and solicit input. Through the local water planning process, we intend to use these plans to inform our Watershed Management Plan
Staff, Board, partners, grants.

During the past 3-5 years, which of your organization's programs or projects have shown little progress or been on hold?
None that I know of.
There has been progress on all prioritized program and project areas.
I believe all programs are making progress.
None.
Unsure.
I have worked for the Rice Creek Watershed District for less than three years, however I recall in 2016 aspects of the District's Education and Outreach Program and the Peltier Lake Drawdown Project were on hold.
Our water quality/quantity monitoring program is very effective and well-managed, but I feel that additional resources and staff should be added to make it more robust than it is currently. Also, our communications and outreach program has always suffered from lack of attention over the years.
Wetland bank development wetland restoration wetland protection near ditches.
Targeting projects in rural communities Closing of historic permits.
Rice Lake Outlet maintenance.

List the reasons why the organization has had difficulty with these projects and programs.
NA
There are more emerging issues than anticipated and priorities change.
N/A
Unsure
Overall, these projects/programs were on hold due to unplanned circumstances. We had staff turnover in 2016 that delayed some progress with the District's education and outreach efforts. The Peltier Lake Drawdown Project was also delayed due to abnormally high precipitation in 2016, which did not create ideal conditions for a drawdown. The project was able to start back up in the fall of 2017.
We have a huge watershed with a plethora of resources and some are not being watched as well as maybe we'd like. This is strictly due to the extensive workloads our staff have to manage. While we've typically always carried one full-time outreach person, the program has not been given adequate budget by our Board and the staff member is routinely pried away to work on other programs of "immediate importance".
We could use more staff to support more of our programs. Specific to rural issues, it can be difficult to find willing landowners, as trust can be an issue.
Permitting, weather/site conditions, interpretation of rules/laws.

Regarding the various organizations and agencies with which you could cooperate on projects or programs…
List the ones with which you work well already
BWSR, DNR, MPCA, USGS, Met Council, University of Minnesota
Some local cities
Cities, Counties, lake associations, most state agencies, MAWD, Met. Council
BWSR, ACD, RCD, WCD, ACOE, MnDNR

BWSR, Non- Project Lake Organizations as well as cities and counties
BWSR
Soil Water Conservation Districts, Cities, BWSR, Met. Council
Many of our cities have been active and engaged partners, key examples are New Brighton, Roseville, Forest Lake & Hugo. All three SWCDs (Anoka, Ramsey, Washington) in our jurisdiction are excellent partners.
BWSR, DNR Fisheries, County SWCDs
BWSR on WCA items; Soil and water conservation districts are great
Cities, BWSR, SWCDs, DNR
List the ones with which better collaboration would benefit your organization
MN DNR, MnDOT ACOE
Army Corps, DNR on occasion.
Army Corps, DNR
DNR, COE
Counties
MnDOT, first and foremost. Certain cities are less engaged for various reasons.
ACOE, DNR Waters
DNR
If you don't know much about your organization's working relationships with partners, enter "I don't know"
I don't know.
I don't know much yet.

What steps could your organization take to increase your effectiveness in accomplishing your plan goals and objectives?
Better management plan orientation for new staff connecting their day-to-day tasks and work areas to goals and objectives laid out in the management plan. Also have ongoing management plan review for all staff (at least annually--a lot can change in one year). Reformat the management plan into a more usable document (hyperlinks in the table of contents, etc.).
More staff.
Complete the ongoing strategy direction process and update the watershed plan (anticipated by 2020).
We are currently working on our strategic plan to develop priorities.
Reinstate State funding, remove unnecessary and slow DNR and COE permit review.
More staff.
Continued partnership with other agencies and organizations, increase education and outreach efforts to partners and the public, and potentially add more staff in the future.
Increase funding and/or staffing for monitoring and outreach programs. Simplify District policies. Stop worrying about remote possibilities of litigation over decisions made.

Hire additional staff.
Additional staff/funding.

How long have you been with the organization?	(response percent)
Less than 5 years	38.5%
5 to 10 years	53.8%
More than 15 years	7.7%

Partner Organization Questions and Responses

Question: How often have you interacted with this organization during the past two to three years? Select the response closest to your experience.	(response percent)
Not at all	0.0%
A few times	5.9%
Several times a year	29.4%
Monthly	41.2%
Almost every week	23.5%
Daily	0.0%

Is the amount of work you do in partnership with this organization…	(percent)
Not enough, there is potential for us to do more together	23.5%
About right	76.5%
Too much, they depend on us for work they should be doing for themselves	0.0%
Too much, we depend on them for work we should be doing ourselves or with others	0.0%

Additional Comments:

- *None*

Based on your experience working with them, please rate the organization in the following areas:					
Performance Characteristic	Rating (percent of responses)				
	Strong	Good	Acceptable	Poor	I don't know
Communication *(they keep us informed; we know their activities; they seek our input)*	52.9%	35.3%	5.9%	5.9%	0%
Quality of work *(they have good projects and programs; good service delivery)*	64.7%	23.5%	0%	5.9%	5.9%
Relationships with Customers *(they work well with landowners and clients)*	47.1%	29.4%	11.8%	5.9%	5.9%
Initiative *(they are willing to take on new projects, try new ideas)*	64.7%	23.5%	5.9%	5.9%	0%
Timelines/Follow-through *(they are reliable and meet deadlines)*	52.9%	41.2%	5.9%	0%	0%

How is your working relationship with this organization? (percent)	
Powerful, we are more effective working together	29.4%
Strong, we work well together most of the time	47.0%
Good, but it could be better	11.8%
Acceptable, but a struggle at times	5.9%
Poor, there are almost always difficulties	5.9%
Non-existent, we don't work with this organization	0%

Comments from Partners about their working relationship with the Rice Creek WD.

- *We are not always identified as a project partner when we do have stakes or potential investment into the opportunity.*
- *Need to work to eliminate redundant regulation and responsibilities revolving around MS4 requirements.*
- *There is always room for improvement.*

Do you have additional thought about how the "subject" organization could be more effective?
Much more could be happening in the Washington County portion of RCWD if they did more in partnership with other LGU and invested more in the education, outreach and BMP programs for those communities. Similarly, WCD does not provide the same level of water monitoring for RCWD as in the rest of the county's watersheds. This leads to less engagement with those communities.
It would be nice to have RCWD act as a liaison between groups for locations where drainage issues occur. Oftentimes, we are impacted by a drainage issue not being addressed by another group. When we seek action to remedy it, the issue is associated as "ours" when there are others contributing to it. This seems one of the primary reasons watershed districts were created.
I think they would be more effective if agencies like BWSR, DNR, and MPCA would be more willing to be creative for replacement/enhancement projects.
Not to be redundant, but redundancies of regulation and oversight is our main concern. The district rules mirror regulations from the MPCA that are already on the books. Cities in the district are all MS4s, and are therefore, bound by these rules. Yet, RCWD requires maintenance agreements, conducts erosion control inspections, reviews plans and performs other functions, all of which are already required under NPDES/MS4 rules. We would also favor a more accountable board (one which is elected).

How long have you been with your current organization?	(response percent)
Less than 5 years	47%
5 to 15 years	47%
More than 15 years	6%

Appendix D. Wetland Conservation Act

WCA Performance Standards Staff Review Questions for LGU

Administration

1) Does the LGU have a written acknowledgment and adopting resolution assuming WCA responsibilities on file? If so, when was this executed? A copy should be provided.

   Yes, RCWD Board Resolution 8-25-1993. 8420.0200 Duties: must send an acknowledgement. BWSR has in Anoka files: 1992 interim rule adoption through July 1993. Aug. 5, 1993 Resolution adopting WCA program within the boundaries of the district. Resolution attached in email to BWSR.

2) Does the LGU have copies of resolutions from other cities/municipalities who have delegated WCA to the LGU? Is there a matching resolution that the LGU accepts this delegation? Copies should be provided.

   RCWD understands this item to not be applicable to metro area PRAP reviews. RCWD is the LGU with no city/municipality is defined as LGU. RCWD notes that two cities, Hugo and Circle Pines have assumed WCA regulatory authority.

3) Has the LGU granted decision making authority to staff? If so, is there a resolution, rule or ordinance in place indicating this? What decisions are delegated to staff and/or consultant? Does the resolution or rule include all decision types? A copy should be provided.

   Yes, some WCA decision authority delegated to District Administrator. The delegated WCA authority under RCWD Resolution 2009-07 is to:

   - Wetland Type
   - Wetland Boundary
   - No-Loss
   - Exemption
   - Certain Replacement Plan Amendments replacement plan determinations meeting the following criteria:
     - Amendments to Board-approved replacement plans adjusting wetland replacement design (layouts, alignments, dimensions and footprint) provided replacement requirements are met.
     - Amendments to Board-approved replacement plans reflecting changes to wetland impact (layouts, alignments, dimensions and footprint) provided that there is no increase in wetland impact or change to type of wetland impacted.

   Resolution attached in email to BWSR.

4) Does the LGU have knowledgeable and trained staff that manages the WCA program or has secured a qualified delegate? *Evaluate primary staff person. Secondary staff should be included as applicable.*

   ☒Staff OR ☐Qualified delegate/Consultant OR ☐None

   a. What background, training, and/or experience does this person have?

Nick Tomczik – Permit Coordinator/Wetland Specialist

Check All That Apply with Approximate Dates if known	
☒	5 Day WDCP Basic Delineation Training Class Attendance **Attended in early 2000 timeframe**
☒	Delineation Certification – Professional/In-Training **Professional Certification # 1050 September 2005**
☒	BWSR Academy WCA Session Attendance **Routine attendance; last in 2017 emphasis on WCA and Wetland related items**
☒	Soils Training/Education – BWSR Academy/WDCP/Other **Past BWSR Academy**
☒	Hydrology Training/Education – BWSR Academy/WDCP/Other **Past BWSR Academy**
☒	Vegetation Training/Education – BWSR Academy/WDCP/Other **Past BWSR Academy**
☒	College Degree – AA/AS/BA/BS/MS – Natural Resources/Hydrology/Soils/Vegetation/Biology/Environment/Policy **B.A. Local & Urban Affairs**
☒	Other: **WPA Forums**
☐	Other:Click here to enter text.

b. Years of Experience Administering WCA (<2 yrs. OR 2-5 yrs. OR >5 yrs.)? Experience greater than 5 years. Employment with WCA administration duties started in May of 2000 with Benton County and continued uninterrupted with WCA administration continuing at RCWD in 2008 until today.

c. Has there been recent staff changes? No.

d. Are there identified areas in which staff requires additional training or experience? WDCP type refresher course.

Patrick Hughes – Regulatory Assistant

Check All That Apply with Approximate Dates if known	
☒	5 Day WDCP Basic Delineation Training Class Attendance **Fall 2016**
☐	Delineation Certification – Professional/In-Training
☒	BWSR Academy WCA Session Attendance **2014 and 2017**
☐	Soils Training/Education – BWSR Academy/WDCP/Other
☐	Hydrology Training/Education – BWSR Academy/WDCP/Other
☐	Vegetation Training/Education – BWSR Academy/WDCP/Other
☒	College Degree – AA/AS/**BA**/BS/MS – Natural Resources/Hydrology/Soils/Vegetation/Biology/Environment/**Biology, Society, and Environment**
☐	Other:Click here to enter text.
☐	Other:Click here to enter text.

e. Years of Experience Administering WCA (<2 yrs. OR 2-5 yrs. OR >5 yrs.)? 2-5 yrs

f. Has there been recent staff changes? No

g. Are there identified areas in which staff requires additional training or experience? Patrick to take Certification test in 2018.

5) Is there a local appeals process set up by resolution, rule or policy? If so, does it address all decision types and adequately lay out the process? Does it include a public hearing process? Explain and/or attach a copy.

Delegated decision appeal process is defined in RCWD Resolution 2009-07; bringing the appeal to RCWD Board for consideration. All other decisions are Board decisions in which case appeal is considered by BWSR. Resolution 2009-07 attached in email to BWSR.

6) Other questions specific to Region or LGU as determined by the reviewer. *Consider questions on administration of local rules/ordinances, CoWPMP, or local violation resolutions as applicable.*

Question 1. CWPMP. Yearly report are sent to BWSR.

Question 2. RCWD does get pass through NRBG, LGU reporting district-wide. Both Anoka and Ramsey County pass through NRBG funding.

Summary and Recommendations: *RCWD staff meet or exceed trained and knowledgeable criteria per WCA.*

Execution & Coordination

1) Does the LGU make decisions and determinations in conformance with WCA Rule? *This question will be answered via the questions below in conjunction with an appropriate amount of project file reviews (See WCA Project File Review and Summary Sheet) as determined by the reviewer.*

   a. General Workload summary (i.e. typical project review types/significant workload areas/estimate percent of staff time spent annually or FTE) : Workload is generalized as 50% of Permit Coordinator's time and 35% of Regulatory Assistant. However, the primary WCA staff have administrative and site assistance. Office staff assist in initiating file/record setup in various RCWD electronic tools (Laserfiche, Permit Viewer, Database, etc.). Additionally, RCWD has multiple field inspection staff. These staff complete site inspections and ensure compliance for WCA items during construction and facilitate documentation, survey as built condition, for impacts and replacement components.

   b. Number and Type of Files reviewed: RCWD files reviewed: 17-078R Lot 3, Block 1, Blaine's Northern Asphalt, 17-024 County Rd I @ Silver Lake Road Ditching, 17-104 Reinke-Camp 3 Road Driveway, 17-006 Tiller Corporation

   c. Does the LGU provide an NOA for no loss and exemptions? By local requirement or staff choice based on project? *(i.e. does the LGU go beyond the WCA requirements for these project review types in some cases?)*
   Staff judgement based on given circumstance of application request. A controversial or technically complex circumstance is likely to be noticed for comment.

   d. Does the LGU have any project specific mitigation sites within their jurisdiction that have not been certified as complete at this time? If so, what is the status of these? *The reviewer should evaluate at least one site to determine the level of LGU oversight on these projects.*

      RCWD has several open project specific mitigation sites. All permits with project specific mitigation include stipulation requiring annual monitoring of the mitigation. RCWD field inspectors manage permit stipulations to ensure applicant is aware and held to the monitoring requirements.

      There are approximately 20 project specific mitigation sites that have not been certified as complete at this time. 6 of these are still within the typical 5-year monitoring requirement and are submitting yearly reports. The rest have a varying degree of status, including no monitoring reports received, no DoRC recorded on the parcel, some monitoring received but outstanding issues/recommendations remained. These in part are older files being perhaps 20 years old and the record is not definitive on the actual communications of that timeframe. Additionally, contact with the original applicants is at times futile and so as uncovered staff present the findings of the current condition to the TEP for consideration.

      RCWD is working to improve the database tracking system and intends to augment the system to improve tracking of site specific mitigation.

   e. Summary of Project Reviews noting specific examples of inconsistencies, identify any misapplication of exemptions or rules, the adequacy of sequencing, and/or procedural errors. Summary should also identify high quality work/methods as applicable. (See Project Review Sheet(s))

Overall project files reviewed meet expectations.

2) What is the LGU's record retention policy (minimum 10 yrs.) and how are records stored/filed? Does the LGU track current projects to insure successful review/rule application in the future (i.e. projects tracked via Parcel ID, Tax ID, or other)?

RCWD Record Retention Policy Board Approved 6-25-2003. RCWD board minutes attached in email to BWSR. Policy states 10 year minimum. Applications tracked by geographical location.

3) Has the LGU submitted the annual report via the required form/process and does it accurately represent the LGU actions? If not, explain.

Yes – tracking of WCA activity is completed by in-house database. RCWD communicated to BWSR of possible multiple reports coming for Anoka County as ACD appears to utilize the annual reporting as support/documentation of NRGB pass-through dollars. RCWD annual reporting does not include the cities of Hugo and Circle Pines, which have assumed WCA regulatory administration. RCWD receives funding from NRBG through ACD and Ramsey Co. RCWD reports one doc. for entire district (regardless of county).

4) Does the LGU Coordinate the TEP appropriately? *This may require staff interviews in conjunction with project file review(s).*

a. Does the LGU provide a staff member with expertise in water resource management to the TEP?
Designated LGU Staff member: Yes, Nick Tomczik, with Patrick as backup and less complicated sites.
Length of Service on TEP: Approximately 18 years, Patrick 4.5 years.

b. In cases where the SWCD is Delegated as the LGU, are there two separate staff members serving on the TEP (i.e. one rep for LGU, one rep for SWCD)? N/A

c. Is the TEP utilized when required (i.e. if formally requested, road/banking projects, monitoring/deposit requests, etc.)? Yes. May include monthly schedule meetings.

d. Is the TEP utilized <u>beyond</u> only required projects (i.e. difficult or controversial projects)? Estimated frequency? Yes, regularly scheduled TEP in Anoka County. Agendas sent out prior and meeting notes sent out after. RCWD protocols include TEP member participation in site visits. RCWD rules for CWPMPs require TEP involvement.

e. Are TEP findings adequately summarized with clear recommendations? Are these produced in a timely manner as to provide meaningful assistance to the decision-making body? Yes, TEP comments are electronically filed in official record and referenced as exhibits in permit materials.

f. Does the LGU consider the TEP findings and recommendation in the decision-making process/NOD with an adequate summary provided? Yes, application report, engineer's report, states request for comments, comments and comments being addressed under recommendation to decision maker.

g. If the decision is contrary to the TEP recommendation, is this adequately supported in the record/NOD? N/A, No known occurrence of decision being contrary to TEP

comments/recommendation. RCWD staff do an outstanding job of addressing controversial matters and mediating to resolve issues with applicants and applicant's consultants. Staff routinely demonstrate exemplary soft skills in navigating challenging situations with applicants, consultants as well as field/seasonal challenges.

5) Does the LGU assist in resolving complaint's and/or violations (i.e. consultation with TEP or SWCD as needed, tracking progress and keeping others informed, provide assistance as requested, etc.)? *The reviewer should evaluate an appropriate number of examples to summarize this item.*

   Yes, RCWD utilizes RCWD field staff to investigate potential violations and escalate as needed to WCA violation procedures. These situations often include the coordination of local conservation district and BWSR Wetland specialist as well as city representative. Example Main St violation 17-222R.

6) Does the LGU coordinate with other LGU's, agencies, local authorities, and/or internal staff as appropriate to ensure WCA rules are being followed? Give examples (i.e. COE included in all notices and invited to TEP, open communication when projects overlap between agencies/personal, other).

   Yes, RCWD coordinates with outside agencies. The cities and counties of the RCWD are considered partners in RCWD WCA goals/outcomes. ACOE and Cities are copied on all notice documents and invited to TEP meetings and site inspections.

7) Has WCA been incorporated into the local Planning & Zoning Process (i.e. require delineations for platting or building permits, site visits or off-site review prior to permit issuance, etc.)? If so, how? If not, summarize what options are available and how to incorporate these options into the process.

   RCWD is not the land use authority. Cities predominately include RCWD decisions and process as foundational in moving forward through the land use authorities process. Landowners are directed to RCWD for projects. WCA is incorporated in to watershed district permitting process and incorporates WCA in the other 28 cities water plans.

8) Are there areas of concern identified by the LGU? Are there opportunities to promote competency or efficiencies identified by the LGU? *This question is intended to capture items which the LGU staff has identified as a problem with the goal of coming up with creative ways to address the problem (i.e. specific training needs, process changes, rule clarity, contact with other LGU's, etc.).*
   No

9) Other questions specific to Region or LGU as determined by the reviewer:

   Question 1. Staff continually handle workload and dealing with consultants needs/wants/complaints. Need to appease applicants with rules and oversight by board and manager.

Summary and Recommendations: Staff routinely handles large volumes of work and has an excellent tracking system and rarely is out of compliance with noticing procedures.

Appendix E. LGU Comment Letter

RCWD
RICE CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

RECEIVED
AUG 13 2018
Bd. of Water & Soil Resources
St. Paul

August 8, 2018

Dale Krystosek
MN Board of Water & Soil Resources
520 Lafayette Road N
New Brighton, MN 55112

Re: Response to PRAP Level II Performance Review

Dear Mr. Krystosek,

The Rice Creek Watershed District Board of Managers is pleased with the results of this performance review and would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in the program. The products derived from the PRAP process will be very helpful for the District in the early stages of developing its next Watershed Management Plan.

The two recommendations provided by BWSR are consistent with the District's early discussions about its strategic direction for its new Watershed Management Plan (WMP). The Board of Managers has expressed an interest in targeting the implementation of water quality and flood control projects to areas of the watershed with demonstrated need and that have received a measurable level of study and advanced review. This is consistent with our efforts to develop subwatershed stormwater retrofit assessments, working with our SWCD and municipal partners. Further, we intend to pursue development of a new District website in conjunction with the eventual roll out of the new District WMP. It is anticipated that this new website will provide much easier access to the water quality data and reports for the waterbodies and projects within the District.

In summary, we expect to incorporate the two recommendations into the District's next WMP and future operations. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact me at 763-398-3071 or pbelfiori@ricecreek.org.

Sincerely,

Phil Belfiori
Administrator

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

Appendix F. Program Data

Time required to complete this review

Rice Creek Watershed District Staff: 65 hours

BWSR Staff: 90 hours

Schedule of Level II Review

BWSR PRAP Performance Review Key Dates

- April 9, 2018: Initial meeting with staff and board
- April 12, 2018: Survey of Board/Committee, staff and partners
- August 6, 2018: Presentation of Draft Report to Board/Committee and staff
- August 23, 2018: Date of Transmittal of Final Report to LGU

NOTE: BWSR uses review time as a surrogate for tracking total program costs. Time required for PRAP performance reviews is aggregated and included in BWSR's annual PRAP report to the Minnesota Legislature.