



Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, Inc.  
[www.mnwatershed.org](http://www.mnwatershed.org)

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**Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, Inc.  
2019 Annual Convention and Trade Show  
December 5-7, 2018  
Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria MN**

**MAWD Annual Meeting Materials**

Enclosed are the following items:

1. Notice of Annual Meeting
2. Delegate Appointment Form – please return to [mnwatershed@gmail.com](mailto:mnwatershed@gmail.com)
3. Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Budget
4. 2019 Resolutions Packet
5. 2020-2022 Strategic Plan

This packet has been distributed to administrators via email. Administrators – please distribute copies to your managers. No paper copies of this packet will be sent via the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: a full meeting packet, including an agenda, previous meeting minutes, and reports, will be distributed to watershed administrators and made available on the MAWD website no later than one week prior to the Annual Meeting.

**We are looking forward to seeing you at this year's convention!**

**PLEASE BRING THE RESOLUTIONS PACKET WITH YOU TO THE CONVENTION.  
EXTRA COPIES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE ON SITE. THANK YOU!!**



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## MN Association of Watershed Districts, Inc. 2019 Annual Meeting Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, Inc. will be held at the Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN, beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, December 6, 2019 for the following purposes:

1. To receive and accept the reports of the President, Secretary, and Treasurer regarding the business of the association of the past year;
2. To receive the report of the auditor;
3. To consider and act upon the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget;
4. To consider and act upon proposed resolutions;
5. To consider and act upon the proposed 2020-2022 Strategic Plan;
6. To hold elections as required by the bylaws for the MAWD Board of Directors;
7. To consider and act upon any other business that may properly come before the membership.

Sincerely,

*Mary Texer 10/30/19*

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Mary Texer  
Secretary



## MN Association of Watershed Districts, Inc. 2019 Delegate Appointment Form

The \_\_\_\_\_ hereby certifies that it is  
*name of watershed organization*

a watershed district or watershed management organization duly established and in good standing pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 103B or 103D and is a member of the MN Association of Watershed Districts, Inc. (MAWD) for the year 2019.

The \_\_\_\_\_ hereby further certifies  
*name of watershed organization*

the following individuals have been appointed as delegates, or as an alternate delegate, all of whom are managers in good standing with the District.

**Delegate #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Delegate #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Alternate:** \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\*\* Please return this form to [mnwatershed@gmail.com](mailto:mnwatershed@gmail.com) at your earliest convenience. \*\*

	FY2020	FY2019	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017	FY2016
	Oct'19-Sep'20	Oct '18-Sep '19	Oct '18-Sep '19	Oct '17-Sep '18	Nov '16- Sep '17	Nov '15-Oct '16
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>FY 2020 PROPOSED</b>	<b>FY 2019 BUDGET</b>	<b>FY 2019 ACTUAL</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUAL</b>	<b>FY2017 ACTUAL (11 months)</b>	<b>FY 2016 ACTUAL</b>
Dues - Watershed District Members	221,500	216,600	214,668	218,421	117,590	121,412
Dues - Associate Members (WMOs)	2,500	2,500	2,000			
Annual Convention						
Annual Meeting Registrations	55,000	55,000	57,525	59,129	52,068	49,390
Annual Trade Show and sponsorships	40,000	25,000	43,700	21,655	22,250	11,495
Pre Conference Workshop: Drainage	6,500	6,500	13,430	6,800	5,595	9,010
Pre Conference Workshop: Administration	2,400	2,400	0	2,550	775	600
Pre Conference Workshop: Managers	2,400	2,400	0	2,295	2,950	4,250
Legislative Day at the Capitol	8,000	9,000	6,275	8,185	8,325	7,450
Summer Tour	18,000	17,500	18,100	18,891	21,469	14,390
MAWD Workshops	2,500	2,500	0	0	2,720	3,000
Interest	100	100	51	77	111	241
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>358,900</b>	<b>339,500</b>	<b>355,749</b>	<b>338,003</b>	<b>233,853</b>	<b>221,238</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
<b>Administration &amp; Program Management</b>						
General Administration - Staff	67,500	70,000	62,099	70,747	62,311	81,345
Benefits /Taxes for Salaried Employees	30,000	30,000	16,136	15,069		
General Administration - Contract	20,000	12,000	0			
Communications, Conferences - Contract	32,000	36,000	39,753	48,835	33,750	10,000
<b>Legislative Affairs</b>						
Lobbying - Staff (includes Administrative Lobbying)	30,000	24,500	29,926			
Lobbying - Contracted Services	40,000	40,000	40,258	48,251		
Lobbyist Expenses	1,000	1,000	1,174	1,395	3,647	1,754
<b>Professional Services</b>						
Legal Fees	2,000	2,000	0	1,377	1,308	
Accounting and Review of Financial Procedures	8,000	6,000	6,850	4,650	4,100	3,550
Insurance	1,800	1,800	1,783	1,645	1,645	1,551
<b>Office Expenses</b>						
Rent	4,800	3,600	3,200	2,400		
Mileage and General Office Expenses	11,250	11,250	11,741	11,965	4,257	3,994
Dues, Other Organizations	500	500	440			
Memorials	250	250	0	50		
<b>Board and Committee Meeting</b>						
Per Diems and Expenses - Directors	20,000	20,000	14,100	16,448	22,092	26,400
Board and Committee Meeting Expenses	1,000	1,500	774	1,081	1,440	1,471
<b>Special Projects</b>						
WD Handbook, Surveys, rebranding, etc	6,000	1,600	0		1,361	7,250
<b>Education and Events</b>						
Annual Convention						
Annual Meeting	45,000	40,000	44,640	45,073	39,208	37,079
Annual Trade Show	5,000	8,500	3,270	8,631	6,322	9,569
Pre Conference Workshop: Drainage	4,000	2,500	3,967	2,871	1,817	2,993
Pre Conference Workshop: Administration	1,200	1,000	1,140	587	339	
Pre Conference Workshop: Managers	1,500	1,000	1,445	1,754	580	2,288
Legislative Breakfast	5,500	5,500	5,133	6,246	7,045	7,177
Summer Tour	12,500	12,500	7,795	9,483	16,000	14,402
Credit Card Processing Fees	3,700	3,500	4,042	3,020	3,323	2,791
Special Workshops	2,500	2,500	0		2,271	
Partner Event Participation	0	500				1,153
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>357,000</b>	<b>339,500</b>	<b>299,665</b>	<b>301,578</b>	<b>212,816</b>	<b>214,767</b>
<b>REVENUES OVER (LESS THAN) EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56,084</b>	<b>36,425</b>	<b>21,037</b>	<b>6,471</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF NET POSITION</b>						
Assets, Cash and Equivalents, actual			323,522	217,704	154,113	140,033
Deposits received, deferred			(54,109)		(4,799)	(11,385)
Liabilities, accounts payable, taxes payable			(29,973)	(34,352)	(2,387)	(2,760)
<b>ENDING NET ASSETS</b>			<b>239,440</b>	<b>183,352</b>	<b>146,927</b>	<b>125,888</b>

# Memorandum

DATE: October 30, 2019  
TO: MAWD Members  
FROM: Emily Javens, MAWD Executive Director  
RE: **2019 Resolutions**



The Resolutions Committee met on October 4, 2019 at Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to review the resolutions submitted by members. They debated each resolution and voted whether to recommend each resolution for adoption or not. All votes were unanimous. The MAWD Board of Directors accepted the committee's report on October 25, 2019.

Please review the enclosed materials, discuss at your November board meetings, and be prepared to debate and vote on these resolutions at the MAWD annual business meeting to be held December 6, 2019. Each watershed organization in good standing with MAWD is allowed 2 votes per WD/WMO. (See the enclosed delegate form for more information.) A summary of the committee recommendations is shown below.

Members of the committee included:

- Chairs: Sherry Davis White, MAWD Board of Directors, Resolutions Committee Chair  
Mary Texer, MAWD Board of Directors, Governance Committee Chair
- Region 1: Linda Vavra, Bois de Sioux WD Manager  
Jamie Beyer, Bois de Sioux WD Administrator
- Region 2: Ruth Schaefer, Middle Fork Crow River WD Manager  
Margaret Johnson, Middle Fork Crow River WD Administrator
- Region 3: Fred Corrigan, Prior Lake – Spring Lake WD Manager  
Becky Christopher, Minnehaha Creek WD Staff

#	Resolution Title	Committee Recommendation
1	Request the DNR enact legislation and policies to streamline the permitting process	<b>SUPPORT</b>
2	Default Classification for Artificial Watercourses That Serve as Public Drainage Ditches	<b>SUPPORT</b>
3	Heron Lake Watershed District General Operating Levy Adjustment	<b>SUPPORT</b>
4	Resolution to Clarify County Financing Obligation and Authorize Watershed District General Obligation Bonds for Public Drainage Projects	<b>SUPPORT</b>
5	Watershed District Membership on Wetland Technical Evaluation Panels	<b>SUPPORT</b>
6	MAWD Opposition to Any Legislation That Establishes Watershed District Spending Requirements by Political Regions or Boundaries	<b>SUPPORT</b>
7	Incorporating Nutrient Management into State Funded Practices	<b>OPPOSE AS WRITTEN</b>
8	Incorporating Soil Management Best Practices into Groundwater Appropriation	<b>OPPOSE AS WRITTEN</b>
9	Support for Managing Water Flows in the Minnesota River Basin Through Increased Water Storage and Other Strategies and Practices	<b>SUPPORT</b>
10	Chinese Mystery Snail Designation Change and Research Needs	<b>SUPPORT</b>
11	Resolution to Ban the Use of Pesticides and Herbicides that are Known Carcinogens on Residential and Commercial Lawns	<b>OPPOSE AS WRITTEN</b>
12	Resolution to Limit Wake Boat Activities that Directly Cause Shoreline Erosion and Spread Aquatic Invasive Species	<b>OPPOSE AS WRITTEN</b>
13	Additional State Funding to Watershed Management Organizations to Implement Flood Risk Mitigation Projects	<b>OPPOSE AS WRITTEN</b>

# BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #1

## Request the DNR enact legislation and policies to streamline the permitting process

**Proposing District:** Bois de Sioux WD  
**Contact Name:** Jamie Beyer  
**Phone Number:** 320-563-4185  
**Email Address:** [bdswd@runestone.net](mailto:bdswd@runestone.net)

### Background that led to submission of this resolution:

Climate change is manifesting as increased precipitation in our region. The increased precipitation is adding to our historical flood pressure. Lake water levels are rising, and there is a renewed importance to ensure unimpeded stream flows. We need proactive management by the DNR on two key issues:

- 1) **Lake Drawdowns:** We began dealing with flood issues in January 2019. We believe that the weight of ice on a chain of lakes forced water into drainage ditches - which caused flooding issues for downstream property owners. Our District spent a great deal of time and money opening-up frozen drainage ditches, because the flow of water was so significant and threatened public roads and private residences. We fear, with water levels at continued elevated levels, flooding will be repeated in 2020. Waterbodies in our area need to be more actively managed by the DNR, with regular, planned drawdowns, in order to prevent future flood damages to property and infrastructure.
- 2) **Public Water Stream Clean-outs:** We have areas in the watershed that rely on streams to convey excess surface water, and currently some streamflows are impeded due to sediment and plant debris. In these areas, clean-outs are needed to protect streamflow. We have had groups of private landowners experience great frustration and failure in navigating the permitting process (with its associated costs) over the past 2 years.

The DNR has provided us with district climate change information, and our on-going projects are being developed in response to changing environmental conditions; we would like to see the same climate change information act as a catalyst for the DNR's physical management of waterbodies.

### Ideas for how this issue could be solved:

Support legislation and policies that require DNR lake level management action and applicant permitting success.

### Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?

Unknown

### This issue is of importance (Check one):

- To the entire State:  - In areas of need of active water management  
Only our Region:   
Only our District:

# PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #1

## Request the DNR enact legislation and policies to streamline the permitting process

Submitted by: Bois de Sioux Watershed District

**WHEREAS**, the DNR manages waterbody water levels and permits for public water drainage outlet clean-outs; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statute 103G.245 defines actions under which a permit is required for work proposed in Public Waters; and,

**WHEREAS**, in the Red River Valley, we are noting increased precipitation trends and rising water levels in many waterbodies, which increases the threat of flood damage to neighboring properties and infrastructure; and,

**WHEREAS**, the DNR acknowledges that they have a responsibility to adapt to climate change; and,

**WHEREAS**, private and public landowners have run into difficulty completing the DNR permit process and have reported that the current DNR permitting process is: 1. Potentially very expensive and difficult to predict, and that also means lengthy. The application fee is \$300 - \$3,000 and payment is no guarantee of permit approval. It is unclear when an EAW will be required, and how extensive the EAW will need to be – and costs could be from \$10,000 - \$30,000 if the EAW requirement is not clearly defined. 2. Not always based on scientific data. In some cases, soil borings are not being taken by third-party organizations and industry standards.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports legislation, rules, and/or agency policies to streamline the DNR permitting process by increasing responsiveness, decreasing the amount of time it takes to approve permits, providing a detailed fee schedule prior to application, and conducting water level management practices that result in the DNR reacting more quickly to serious, changing climate conditions.

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### Notes:

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2

## Default Classification for Artificial Watercourses That Serve as Public Drainage Ditches

<b>Proposing District:</b>	Bois de Sioux WD	Bois de Sioux WD
<b>Contact Name:</b>	Linda Vavra	Jamie Beyer
<b>Phone Number:</b>	320-760-1774	320-563-8510
<b>Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:lvavra@fedtel.net">lvavra@fedtel.net</a>	<a href="mailto:bds wd@runestone.net">bds wd@runestone.net</a>

### Background that led to submission of this resolution:

In December 2018, our watershed was selected to begin MPCA's Use Attainment Assessment (UAA) to evaluate and categorize watercourses for Tiered Aquatic Life Use (TALU) Standards. We have been told that these standards have been implemented by the State of Minnesota to fulfill EPA WOTUS requirements.

To date, our District has spent \$10,000 attending and responding to these meetings. And we have not completed the process.

Our frustration and severe concern is with the default inclusion of man-made, non-tidal drainage ditches excavated on dry land, that were given the default categorization of Class 2 Aquatic Life and Recreational Use under the Dayton administration.

Our watershed is at the headwaters of the Red River Valley, and is extremely prone to flooding - in winter, spring, and summer. Drainage ditches are vital public infrastructure, protecting private property and public property (which includes our roads, highways and bridges) from flood damage. Our watershed is a drainage ditch authority for 65 systems in Grant, Traverse, and Wilkin County. The majority of our drainage systems are in need of significant repairs and/or improvements. These projects are expensive and complicated. Repairs/ improvements are funded by private landowners, whose properties were assessed when the ditches were constructed, and have since been assessed for maintenance on an annual basis.

Recently, we have seen great local support and participation in repairing/improving District drainage systems. Over the past four years, landowners have initiated three major repairs/improvements - at a potential cost to themselves of over \$3,060,000.

Often times, ditches that are out-of-repair have sedimented and eroded sides; instead of moving water, the out-of-repair ditches hold water, which encourages the growth of cattails, which further catches sediment and further holds back water. The more water a ditch is holding, the less capacity it has to accept and move new water during high precipitation events. This is where the conflict with UAA and TALU enters: ditches in good repair will be ephemeral in nature, not supporting fish and macroinvertebrates (which will result in an "impaired water"), and ditches in need of repair may meet fish and macroinvertebrate standards (which may prevent us from repairing them and returning them to their designed ephemeral state).

### Ideas for how this issue could be solved:

The State of Minnesota could abandon the overregulation instituted by the Dayton administration and recognize the EPA's own exclusions: Rule Text § 230.3(s)(2)(iii): "The following are not 'waters of the United States... the following ditches: (A) Ditches with ephemeral flow that are not a relocated tributary or excavated in a tributary. (B) Ditches with intermittent flow that are not a relocated tributary, excavated in a tributary, or drain wetlands. (C) Ditches that do not flow, either directly or through another water, into [a traditional navigable water, interstate water, or the territorial seas.

<https://www.jswcd.org/files/c141e89d1/Clean+Water+Rule+Factsheet.pdf>



For manmade drainage ditches excavated on dry land, the State of Minnesota could replace the default Class 2 Aquatic Life and Recreational Use with a default Class 7 Limited Resource Value Water. Per Administrative Rule 7050.0227, Class 7 does have water quality standards for E.coli, dissolved oxygen, pH and toxic pollutants.

We are open to other suggestions!

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

We have met with MPCA many times and expressed our concern over the past 10 months, but there has been no acknowledgment or suggestion on how we can protect, maintain, and ensure fulfillment of our duty to repair our drainage system infrastructure. In fact, at the last meeting we were at the question was raised by MPCA staff - why would we want to repair a ditch, if it is supporting biology?

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  - areas of the state that rely on manmade drainage systems to protect
- Only our Region:  infrastructure and property from excess precipitation.
- Only our District:

## PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #2

### Default Classification for Artificial Watercourses That Serve as Public Drainage Ditches

Submitted by: Bois de Sioux Watershed District

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statute 103G.005 defines three watercourses: natural watercourses, altered natural watercourses, and artificial watercourses; and

**WHEREAS**, some natural watercourses are used as public drainage systems; and

**WHEREAS**, some altered natural watercourses are used as public drainage systems; and

**WHEREAS**, some public roadside drainage systems are 100% manmade, designed and built for one, limited purpose: to convey excess precipitation, alleviating flood damages to public and private property and it is this category that are considered artificial watercourses because they lack natural stream features and do not provide stream habitat by their design; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized the unique nature of drainage ditches on June 19, 2006 in its *Rapanos* decision, stating that for Clean Water Act implementation, Waters of the United States does not automatically apply to ditch systems in which water flows intermittently or ephemerally. The EPA itself advises:

“In addition, ditches (including roadside ditches) excavated wholly in and draining only uplands and that do not carry a relatively permanent flow of water are generally not waters of the United States because they are not tributaries or they do not have a significant nexus to downstream traditional navigable waters.”

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-04/documents/rapanosguidance6507.pdf>

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is implementing its Clean Water Act Tiered Aquatic Life Uses (TALU) for all watercourses in Minnesota based on the assumption that all waters by default should be categorized by Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as Class 2 Waters (Aquatic Life and Recreation); the Class 2 label declares universally that all waters by default “support or may support aquatic biota, bathing, boating, or other recreational purposes and for which quality control is or may be necessary to protect aquatic or terrestrial life or their habitats or the public health, safety, or welfare” per Minnesota Administrative Rules 7050.0140 Subp. 3; and

**WHEREAS**, the default Class 2 Aquatic Life standard is applied by Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to public roadside drainage systems that are artificial watercourses, 100% manmade, even though these roadside drainage systems were not designed to provide habitat, and – in fact – when are in optimal operation, only hold water ephemerally when they provide flood control, storing excess precipitation until it can be metered downstream; and

**WHEREAS**, when applied to a public roadside drainage systems that are artificial watercourses, 100% manmade, the Class 2 Aquatic Life standard mandates 10-year cycle biological monitoring and testing under TALU that is lengthy and time-consuming for state and particularly local government agencies - and ultimately very expensive for state and local taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency does acknowledge in its own Rules that some watercourses should be exempt from needless TALU regulation. According to Minnesota Administrative Rules, Class 7 waters (limited resource value waters) are those that demonstrate that:

- A. *the existing and potential faunal and floral communities are severely limited by natural conditions as exhibited by poor water quality characteristics, lack of habitat, or lack of water;*
- B. *the quality of the resource has been significantly altered by human activity and the effect is essentially irreversible; or*

*C. there are limited recreational opportunities, such as fishing, swimming, wading, or boating, in and on the water resource.*

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports removal of the default Class 2 categorization for public drainage systems that are artificial watercourses and supports a default Class 7 categorization for public drainage systems that are artificial watercourses.

**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #3**

## **Heron Lake Watershed District General Operating Levy Adjustment**

**Proposing District:** Heron Lake Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Jan Voit, District Administrator  
**Phone Number:** 507-793-2462  
**Email Address:** [jvoit@hlwdonline.org](mailto:jvoit@hlwdonline.org)

**Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

1. The general operating levy limit, as set by Minnesota Statutes 103D.905, Subd. 3, is 0.048 percent of the taxable market value or \$250,000, whichever is less. This legislation has not changed since 2001 – 18 years.
2. The general operating levy is used to pay for manager per diems, staff, building rent, supplies, equipment, consultants, monitoring, project implementation, and matching funds for grants.
3. Workload and responsibilities for watershed districts have grown substantially since 2001. In addition to general operations, work related to developing Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies, increasing community involvement, acquiring tools for targeting and prioritizing best management practices installation, and implementing One Watershed One Plan are undertaken to fulfill a watershed district’s mission and goals.
4. Competition for grant funds has increased significantly. Matching funds for grants have always been committed through the general operating levy. Because of the current levy limit, providing matching funds has become more difficult.
5. The HLWD has long-term water sampling sites at three locations within the watershed. Year to year data varies based on weather patterns and land use change. The data from 2003 to 2017 shows a decline in Total Suspended Solids, Orthophosphorus, and Total Phosphorus.
6. Current levy limits constrain capacity to issue general obligation bonds to finance projects in public drainage systems.
7. The HLWD took several years to reach the general operating levy of \$250,000 cap has remained unchanged for the last 18 years, which shows the managers’ fiscal responsibility.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

Increasing the general operating levy is the only long-term solution to provide sustainable funding for personnel and projects within the watershed. Having the revenue to provide grant match would also be beneficial.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

The Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts and Board of Water and Soil Resources support adjusting the general operating levy to allow watershed districts to fulfill their responsibilities as required by statute.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State: \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District:   X

**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #3**  
**Heron Lake Watershed District General Operating Levy Adjustment**  
**Submitted by: Heron Lake Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, the Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) generates revenue through a general operating levy as authorized for watershed districts under MN Statute 103D.901 subdivision 1. This statute caps each watershed district's levy at 0.048% of the estimated market value (EMV) or \$250,000, whichever is less, regardless of the size or tax capacity of each district;

**WHEREAS**, if the levy was only limited to the 0.048% EMV cap, HLWD would be allowed to levy \$951,007 in 2020, but is instead limited to \$250,000;

**WHEREAS**, the \$250,000 limit authorized by the legislature in 2001 is equal to \$361,000 in today's dollars and that amount does not take into account the additional workload created for watershed districts by new state water management programs over the past 19 years;

**WHEREAS**, the HLWD uses the general levy to not only fund operational expenses such as rent, equipment, and supplies, it also uses the money to pay for staff time and laboratory analysis to monitor our lakes and streams for water quality issues, conduct community education and outreach activities, prioritize the best location for best management practices, and will be needed to implement activities planned for and documented in the new statewide One Watershed One Plan initiative;

**WHEREAS**, the HLWD must also use this levy when it wants to construct pollution or flood reduction projects or to provide match dollars for state or federal implementation grants to build these same projects;

**WHEREAS**, the HLWD has successfully brought in \$3,205,672 in grants while only taxing \$4,364,322 locally from 1996 to 2018. This represents \$0.77 of additional funds coming into the district for every \$1 taxed. This is also equivalent to \$14.54 taxed over the course of 23 years and \$10.69 brought in for each of the approximately 300,000 acres in the HLWD;

**WHEREAS**, an unchanged \$250,000 annual budget has ultimately led to staff reductions and an increasingly diminished capacity to be able to provide match dollars required when applying for grants to build the projects and activities desired and vetted by its local citizens;

**WHEREAS**, the HLWD has also found that current levy limits constrain its capacity to issue general obligation bonds to finance projects in public drainage systems;

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) assists districts with legislation that is needed by its members to provide adequate service to its residents;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports an increase in Heron Lake Watershed District's general operating levy cap from \$250,000 to an amount not to exceed \$500,000.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #4**

## **Resolution to Clarify County Financing Obligation and Authorize Watershed District General Obligation Bonds for Public Drainage Projects**

**Proposing District:** Heron Lake Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Jan Voit, District Administrator  
**Phone Number:** 507-793-2462  
**Email Address:** [jvoit@hlwdonline.org](mailto:jvoit@hlwdonline.org)

**Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

The Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) has served as a drainage authority for numerous public drainage systems for decades and until recently relied on county bonding to finance its drainage projects. Recently, one county has conditioned its willingness to bond for a drainage project on the HLWD surrendering its role as drainage authority. Integrated management of the watershed and public drainage systems within it are central to our mission and there is no statutory authority to require a watershed district to abandon its role as a drainage authority. Watershed districts outside the metro area have levy limits that constrain their ability to issue general obligation bonds pledging their full faith and credit.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

We have identified two possible solutions:

1. Clarify that an affected county must finance a watershed district project establishment and construction by issuance of bonds payable from assessments, backed by the full faith and credit of the watershed district; and further provide for adequate tax levy authority to assure the watershed district's credit capacity.
2. Authorize watershed districts to finance drainage project establishment and construction by issuance of bonds payable from assessments, backed by the full faith and credit of the watershed district; and further provide for adequate tax levy authority to assure the watershed district's credit capacity.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

Most counties have cooperative relationships with watershed districts functioning as drainage authorities and work together in financing drainage projects. Some counties may feel that they wish to take over drainage management and therefore may not support this clarification in the drainage code and watershed law.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_  
Only our District: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #4**  
**Resolution to Clarify County Financing Obligation and Authorize Watershed**  
**District General Obligation Bonds for Public Drainage Projects**  
**Submitted by: Heron Lake Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, watershed districts serve as public drainage authorities under the Minnesota Drainage Code (chapter 103E) and are responsible to construct projects to establish, improve, and extend public drainage systems and provide outlets for such systems;

**WHEREAS**, projects are funded by multi-year assessment of benefited lands and financing typically is required to pay costs of project establishment and construction in advance of assessments;

**WHEREAS**, watershed districts may issue bonds, but those not within the seven-county metropolitan area have a limited ad valorem taxing authority and therefore lack adequate capacity to pledge full faith and credit for such bonds, beyond a limited principal amount that is insufficient for a project of substantial scope;

**WHEREAS**, limited ad valorem taxing authority means that project financing bonds issued by watershed districts will have limited marketability and impose higher interest costs on projects, as will long term commercial loans in place of bonds;

**WHEREAS**, the Drainage Code (Minnesota Statutes §103E.635) states that a county may finance a watershed district drainage project by issuing bonds payable from assessments and backed by the full faith and credit of the county;

**WHEREAS**, some counties have taken the position that under this Drainage Code language, financing watershed district drainage projects by bond issuance or by another method is a matter for county discretion, and in certain cases have elected not to provide such financing;

**WHEREAS**, without the certainty of project financing at an acceptable rate of interest, a watershed district cannot responsibly begin to accrue project establishment costs, cannot contract for project construction, and therefore cannot fulfill its statutory responsibilities as drainage authority;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports legislation to achieve one or both of the following:

- (a) To clarify that an affected county must finance a watershed district drainage project on project establishment and request of the watershed district; and
- (b) To authorize watershed districts to finance drainage project establishment and construction by issuance of bonds payable from assessments and backed by the full faith and credit of the watershed district; and further provide for adequate tax levy authority to assure the watershed district’s credit capacity.

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**Notes:**  
After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #5**

## **Watershed District Membership on Wetland Technical Evaluation Panels**

**Proposing District:** Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Diane Lynch  
**Phone Number:** 952-440-0067  
**Email Address:** dlynch@plslwd.org

**Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

Minnesota Statute 103G.2242 Wetland Subdivision 2. Evaluation states that:

- a. Questions concerning the public value, location, size or type of a wetland shall be submitted to and determined by a Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) after on-site inspection
- b. The TEP is composed of technical professional employees of the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources, local soil and water conservation district, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for projects affecting public waters or wetland adjacent to public waters

- 1. Technical professional employees of watershed districts may be invited to attend and comment on the questions, but their comments are not considered with the same value as official TEP representatives.
- 2. Watershed districts have rules that affect draining, filling, excavating or otherwise altering wetlands.
- 3. Wetlands play a vital role in the health of watersheds.
- 4. Technical professional employees of watershed districts offer an important perspective regarding protecting wetlands within their watersheds.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

Initiate legislation to amend the statute to require technical representatives of watershed districts to be on the TEP.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

We would expect watershed districts to support it.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District: \_\_\_\_\_



**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #5**  
**Watershed District Membership on Wetland Technical Evaluation Panels**  
**Submitted by: Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) is a watershed management organization and political subdivision of the State of Minnesota established under and operating with powers and purposes set forth at Minnesota Statutes Chapters 103B and 103D; and

**WHEREAS**, the District has rules that affect drilling, filling, excavating or otherwise altering wetlands; and

**WHEREAS**, by state statute, questions concerning the public value, location, size or type of wetland are required to be submitted to and determined by a Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP); and

**WHEREAS**, technical professional employees of watershed districts are not official members of a TEP; and

**WHEREAS**, wetlands play a vital role in the health of watersheds

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports 2020 state legislation to require technical representatives of watershed districts to be official members of wetland technical evaluation panels (TEPs).

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #6**

## **MAWD Opposition to Any Legislation That Establishes Watershed District Spending Requirements by Political Regions or Boundaries**

**Proposing District:** Rice Creek Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Nick Tomczik  
**Phone Number:** 763-398-3079  
**Email Address:** [ntomczik@ricecreek.org](mailto:ntomczik@ricecreek.org)

### **Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

During the 2019 legislative session, HF 2314 and SF 2372 were introduced that set spending requirements on the Rice Creek Watershed District based on a county's boundaries. No action was taken on either bill since the initial introductions and addition of authors. Since it was the first year of the biennium, it is possible the bills could be acted on during the 2020 legislative session. It is also possible that other counties or communities could attempt to get legislation that restricts spending to political boundaries in another watershed.

Any legislation that restricts watershed district spending by political regions or boundaries interferes with a district's fundamental responsibility to implement critical flood control and water quality projects.

Water does not follow political boundaries. Watershed districts were established to reduce the political nature of water and ensure fair and equitable management. Projects are consistently developed and selected based on priorities including flooding, AIS management, stormwater management, mandated water goals, and critical regional issues.

### **Efforts to address flooding, drainage, and water quality on a county or political basis have failed in the past.**

- The Watershed Act demonstrates the legislature's determination that water resources are best managed on a watershed basis and not at the city or county levels.
- The State's efforts and commitment to One Watershed One Plan policies demonstrate the continued need for watershed-based solutions.
- Restricting watershed spending by county or political boundary is in direct conflict with the purpose and basis of the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act and other watershed management laws.

### **Any legislation that establishes watershed district spending requirements by county or political boundaries would disrupt watershed-based planning and implementation in watershed districts.**

- Using district-wide taxes to fund programs and projects allows districts to fund the highest priority watershed-based regional solutions based on science, hydrology, and critical input from partners.
- Restricting watershed spending by county or political boundary jeopardizes the ability to do regional projects.

### **Implementing projects based on political boundaries instead of watersheds decreases the ability to implement multi-county solutions. Water management issues are not county-specific.**

- Restricting regional or multi-county solutions decreases efficiency and increases implementation costs and delays
- Drainage system repairs would become more difficult because District-wide tax funds for trunk conveyance maintenance and minor drainage system maintenance activities would be restricted or unavailable
- District-wide funding policies would need replacement
- One county's water management issues are often best addressed in another county

Restricting watershed spending by county or political boundaries will likely cause a domino-effect with other communities and counties demanding that funds collected within their political boundaries be spent within those boundaries or at the very least demanding their funds not be spent in the restricting counties or communities. Such legislation could increase the costs and timelines for implementation of critical projects. Opposition to such legislation would align with the purpose

and basis for the State’s watershed management laws and promote the highest priority regional solutions based on science, hydrology, and critical input from partners. This is the very foundation of watershed-based management.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

Effective communication and outreach to stakeholders and legislative delegations is critical to their understanding that water resources are best managed on a watershed basis and not at the city or county levels. Emphasis should be given to:

1. The success of implementing highest priority regional watershed-based solutions based on science, hydrology, and critical input from partners;
2. Watershed management plans as a tool for identifying those highest priority solutions;
3. The increased cost to all communities without watershed-based funding and implementation; and
4. The potential increase in damage due to flooding or water quality impairments caused by delays in implementing projects without watershed-based funding.

Any legislation restricting spending by watershed districts based political boundaries (instead of resource priorities) would contradict the State’s One Watershed One Plan policies, the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act, and the State’s other watershed management laws.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

Watershed districts, watershed management organizations, and state agencies and organizations with water management interests should support efforts to maintain non-political, watershed-based funding and management of water resources.

Opposition may come from a few individual counties with an interest in restricting watershed-based prioritization and spending efforts and individuals who do not want watershed-based management of the resource.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

To the entire State:   X  

Only our Region:           

Only our District:

**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #6**  
**MAWD Opposition to Any Legislation that Establishes Watershed District**  
**Spending Requirements by Political Regions or Boundaries**  
**Submitted by: Rice Creek Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, many watershed districts use district-wide taxes to fund programs and projects; and

**WHEREAS**, many watershed districts fund the highest priority regional solutions based on science, hydrology, and critical input from partners; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watershed Act demonstrates the legislature’s determination that water resources are best managed on a watershed basis and not at the city or county levels; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watershed Act, the Watershed Act Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act, and other watershed management laws established watershed districts to reduce the political nature of water and ensure fair and equitable management of the resource; and

**WHEREAS**, the State’s One Watershed One Plan policies demonstrate a continued need for watershed-based solutions; and

**WHEREAS**, HF2314 and SF 2372 were introduced during the 2019 legislative session to set spending requirements on the Rice Creek Watershed District based on a county boundary; and

**WHEREAS**, any legislation that restricts watershed district spending by county or political boundaries interferes with a district’s fundamental responsibility to implement critical flood control and water quality projects; and

**WHEREAS**, any legislation that restricts watershed district spending by county or political boundaries jeopardizes the ability to do regional projects; and

**WHEREAS**, no action was taken on HF 2314 and SF 2372, however this legislation could be considered during 2020 or legislation could be introduced that would similar affects in other regions across the state.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD opposes legislation that establishes spending requirements or restricts watershed district spending by political regions or boundaries.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #7**

## **Incorporating Nutrient Management into State Funded Practices**

**Proposing District:** Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Mike Kinney, District Administrator  
**Phone Number:** (651) 395-5855  
**Email Address:** Michael.Kinney@clflwd.org

**Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

The State of MN DNR offers a variety of financial incentives to agricultural producers for conservation and water quality purposes. The MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) 2014 Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy report indicates a 2025 goal of reducing nitrogen loading by 20% and a 2040 goal of reducing nitrogen by 45% in order to meet water quality standards for the Mississippi River.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

The CLFLWD proposes this resolution in order to utilize agricultural incentive programs to make measurable progress toward the MPCA’s nitrogen reduction goals. Further, implementation of certain practices, namely maximum return to nitrogen (MRTN) and nutrient management plans, have economic benefits for the agricultural producers themselves. Therefore, benefits resulting from the proposed resolution are twofold: measurable reductions in nitrogen loading and cost savings for agricultural producers.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

CLFLWD anticipates support from MN Department of Agriculture and the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Given the economic benefit of the proposed resolution, strong opposition is not anticipated from producers.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District:  \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #7**  
**Incorporating Nutrient Management into State Funded Practices**  
**Submitted by: Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, the State of MN DNR offers a variety of financial incentives to agricultural producers for conservation and water quality purposes;

**WHEREAS**, the MN Pollution Control Agency 2014 Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy report indicates a 2025 goal of reducing nitrogen loading by 20% and a 2040 goal of reducing nitrogen by 45% in order to meet water quality standards for the Mississippi River;

**WHEREAS**, there are demonstrated and effective tools and best management practices to help maximize profits for growing row crops while limiting environmental impact;

**WHEREAS**, the concept of “maximum return to nitrogen” (MRTN) refers to the rate of nitrogen (N) application that maximizes net economic return;

**WHEREAS**, soil fertility specialists from six state universities (Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin) have used data from ongoing research trials to create a method to calculate MRTN at selected prices of N and corn;

**WHEREAS**, MRTN and nutrient management plans reduce nitrogen impacts to surface water and groundwater resources and avoid overapplication of nitrogen, while also serving the economic interests of agricultural producers;

**WHEREAS**, implementation of the MRTN and nutrient management plans by agricultural producers is considered a best business practice and thus should not require taxpayer funds to implement;

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota state agencies can calculate excess nitrogen losses by comparing crop needs to the amount of nitrogen imported into the state, so as to establish a goal for reduction;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports the goal of implementing the concept of “maximum return to nitrogen (MRTN)” and nutrient management plans generally into management of all fields that receive state financial support.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership NOT vote in favor of this resolution as written for the following reasons:

- More information is needed.
- This isn't applicable to northwest Minnesota.
- MRTN values are determined for corn and soybean fields, not ALL fields.
- Blanket mandates are usually problematic since conditions vary widely across the state.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #8**

## **Incorporating Soil Management Best Practices into Groundwater Appropriation**

**Proposing District:** Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Mike Kinney, District Administrator  
**Phone Number:** (651) 395-5855  
**Email Address:** Michael.Kinney@dfllwd.org

**Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

The MN DNR issues permits for groundwater appropriation pursuant to Minnesota Statute 103G.271 and has the authority to place reasonable conditions on appropriations authorized by permit. Agricultural producers obtain high-capacity appropriation permits to irrigate crops as a consequence of low soil water levels. Groundwater conservation is a high priority issue for the state of MN.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

There are demonstrated and effective best management practices to retain water in the soil profile and otherwise reduce needed irrigation volumes. Management options such as cover crops, no-till, strip-till, and other methods maintain or improve water holding capacity of the soil during the growing season. Prairie and wetland restoration efforts enhance groundwater recharge and are important components of the rural landscape. Other approaches such as improving irrigation efficiency are not specifically addressed by the resolution but may be elements of the discussion. Reducing groundwater appropriation and avoiding unnecessary irrigation serve the economic interests of agricultural producers.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units:**

The MN Department of Natural Resources likely would support the goals but may have concerns about implementation within its permitting program. Given the economic benefit of the best practices promoted by the proposed resolution, strong opposition is not anticipated from producers.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District: \_\_\_\_\_

# PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #8

## Incorporating Soil Management Best Practices into Groundwater Appropriation

Submitted by: Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

**WHEREAS**, the MN DNR issues permits for groundwater appropriation pursuant to Minnesota Statute 103G.271, and has the authority to place reasonable conditions on appropriations authorized by permit;

**WHEREAS**, agricultural producers obtain high-capacity appropriation permits to irrigate crops as a consequence of low soil water levels;

**WHEREAS**, there are demonstrated and effective best management practices to retain water in the soil profile and otherwise reduce needed irrigation volumes;

**WHEREAS**, management options such as cover crops, no-till, strip-till, and other methods maintain or improve water holding capacity of the soil during the growing season;

**WHEREAS**, prairie and wetland restoration efforts enhance groundwater recharge and are important components of the rural landscape;

**WHEREAS**, reducing groundwater appropriation and avoiding unnecessary irrigation serve the economic interests of agricultural producers;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports incorporation of soil management best management practices into groundwater appropriations permitting.

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### Notes:

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership NOT vote in favor of this resolution as written for the following reasons:

- This may not apply in all cases and represent unreasonable expenses in all cases.
- There is currently a requirement in the permit application (<https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/forms/irr-app.pdf>) to submit a plan approved by the local Soil and Water Conservation District before an appropriation permit is issued.

From page 2 of the permit application: "18. SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION PLAN: Indicate if a conservation plan, approved by the SWCD, has been developed for the acreage you propose to irrigate. An approved soil and water conservation plan or a written statement from the SWCD is required before a water appropriation permit can be issued. Please contact the SWCD regarding the development of a soil and water conservation plan."



# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #9**

## **Support for Managing Water Flows in the Minnesota River Basin Through Increased Water Storage and Other Strategies and Practices**

**Proposing District:** Lower Minnesota River Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Linda Loomis  
**Phone Number:** 763-545-4659  
**Email Address:** naiadconsulting@gmail.com

**Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) is the local sponsor for the US Army Corps of Engineers maintenance of the navigation channel in the Minnesota River. As the local sponsor the LMRWD has seen the amount of sediment increase significantly. The increase in sediment has increased the cost for the LMRWD to manage dredge material that is removed from the river to maintain navigation.

Numerous studies of the MN River Basin attribute the increase in sediment to an increase in the flow of water from increased agriculture drainage; increased impervious surfaces created by municipal development and increased precipitation patterns.

The LMRWD was approached by the Minnesota River Congress to ask for support for its initiative to increase the amount of water storage in the MN River Basin and seek funding for this initiative at the state and federal levels. The LMRWD agreed to support the MN River Congress and the Board of Managers felt it was appropriate to request support from MAWD for this initiative.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

The Minnesota River Congress is approaching organizations responsible for managing water in the MN River Basin, such as Counties and SWCDs (drainage authorities) to solicit support. Several MASWCD Areas have adopted resolutions of support for increasing water storage. In addition, several area legislators have agreed to introduce legislation to commit state funding to support CREP programs or develop a new program similar to CREP to take land that could be used for water storage out of production.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

The Minnesota River Congress is a coalition of many organizations in the MN River Basin and many of the governmental units are part of the coalition. There may be oppositions from any group that feels their own funding may be lessened because of this program.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District:  \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #9

### Support for Managing Water Flows in the Minnesota River Basin Through Increased Water Storage and Other Strategies and Practices

Submitted by: Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

**WHEREAS**, virtually all of the natural water storage that once existed on the landscape in the form of prairie potholes, wet meadows, and even small lakes in the Minnesota River Basin has been eliminated; and

**WHEREAS**, increased agricultural drainage and increased impervious surfaces in municipal areas along with significantly increased precipitation patterns is dramatically increasing water flow in our rivers and streams; and

**WHEREAS**, high water levels in rivers and streams flood adjacent low-lying areas, erode stream banks, create backups on existing tile and ditch systems, and increase sediment transfer downstream; and

**WHEREAS**, many acres of farm fields are flooded each year, sometimes multiple times each year, by river and stream flooding thereby preventing planting or destroying growing crops; and

**WHEREAS**, storing water in upstream areas of the landscape will mitigate and slow the amount of water moving into rivers and streams and reduce flooding and erosion; and

**WHEREAS**, storing water in upstream areas of the landscape and other strategies such as improving soil health will mitigate and slow the amount of water moving into rivers and streams and reduce flooding and erosion; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota River Congress, [a citizen-led group focusing on the natural resource and economic health of the Minnesota River Basin] is spearheading an initiative to increase water storage on the landscape using recommendations from the Collaborative for Sediment Source Reduction (CSSR) study as a basis for its initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota River Congress is planning to introduce legislation at the state and federal levels to secure significant funding, specifically for surface water storage on the landscape in the Minnesota River Watershed.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports efforts to manage the flow of water in the Minnesota River Basin and the Minnesota River Congress in its efforts to increase water storage on the landscape; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that MAWD supports the Minnesota River Congress in its efforts to secure state and federal programs targeted specifically to increase surface water storage in the Minnesota River Watershed.

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#### Notes:

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #10

## Chinese Mystery Snail Designation Change and Research Needs

**Proposing District:** Pelican River Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Tera Guetter, Administrator  
**Phone Number:** 218-846-0436  
**Email Address:** Tera.Guetter@arvig.net

### Background that led to submission of this resolution:

Chinese Mystery snails are present in most major recreational lakes within the Pelican River Watershed District and are a concern to area residents. Populations have increased to high density levels where shorelines can have up to 2-3 ft of washed up shells, fouling up beaches and causing odor problems. These species are used in aquariums, but when improperly disposed of in public waters, they cause recreational, ecological, and economical damage in our waters.

Goal: The State of MN will conduct research to control populations of Chinese Mystery Snails and to change the Minnesota designation from a regulated species to a prohibited species.

### Ideas for how this issue could be solved:

Research to control populations below nuisance levels and to change the designated status from regulated to prohibited to prevent use in aquariums and unintended release into public waters.

### Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?

### This issue is of importance (Check one):

To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_

Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Only our District: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #10**  
**Chinese Mystery Snail Designation Change and Research Needs**  
**Submitted by: Pelican River Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, Aquatic Invasive species cause recreational, economic and ecological damage—changing how residents and visitors use and enjoy Minnesota waters;

**WHEREAS**, the presence and spread of Chinese Mystery Snails, an aquatic invasive species, is a matter of growing concern in the State of Minnesota, transcending state and international lines;

**WHEREAS**, Chinese mystery snails are native to East Asia, but were brought into the U.S. in the late 19th century as a possible food source, and appeared in Minnesota in the early 2000's and have now spread to more than 27 states and the Great Lakes;

**WHEREAS**, Chinese Mystery Snails are an ecological threat as they can achieve very high densities and adversely affect aquatic food webs by competing with native snails for food and habitat and transmit harmful parasites and diseases that harm native mussels and waterfowl;

**WHEREAS**, Chinese Mystery Snails are an economic nuisance as they can die-off in large numbers and foul beaches and clog water-intake pipes;

**WHEREAS**, it is paramount to prevent the spread of Chinese Mystery Snail to un-infested waterways;

**WHEREAS**, Chinese Mystery Snail is designated as a regulated invasive species (MN DNR) in Minnesota and it is legal to buy, sell, transport, and possess, but may not be introduced into a free-living state, such as released into public waters;

**WHEREAS**, there is no known effective population control for Chinese mystery snails in natural water bodies at this time;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports Chinese Mystery Snail prevention and control research and to change the Chinese Mystery Snail designated status in Minnesota as a regulated species to a prohibited species.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership vote in favor of this resolution.

# BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #11

## Resolution to Ban the Use of Pesticides and Herbicides that are Known Carcinogens on Residential and Commercial Lawns

**Proposing District:** Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Claire Bleser, Administrator  
**Phone Number:** 952-607-6512  
**Email Address:** cbleser@rpbcwd.org

### Background that led to submission of this resolution:

Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District seeks to address groundwater health challenges through the strategies included in its 2018 10-Year Watershed Management Plan to promote the sustainable management of groundwater resources. The District recognizes that groundwater can be contaminated by fertilizer and pesticide applications, and that surface water and groundwater resources are interdependent. (10-Year Plan, 2.3.6.2, 2-21). While these relationships are challenging to quantify, contaminated water from one source can impact the water quality of the other. The District is focused on prevention of groundwater contamination through best management practices, recognizing that groundwater clean-up, when feasible, is both expensive and complex.

Pesticides and herbicides used on both commercial and residential lawns have been linked to human health problems, and some studies have connected pesticides and herbicides with carcinogenic properties, including promotion of tumors.<sup>1</sup> A variety of pesticide and herbicide products pose health concerns, and some pesticides include known endocrine-disrupting compounds that affect how natural hormones function in the body and interfere with the body's regulation of the endocrine system.<sup>2</sup>

There are two primary pathways to pesticide and herbicide exposure, both directly and via drinking water through groundwater contamination. Contaminated surface water moving through the soil carries pollutants into groundwater resources, resulting in an underground plume of polluted groundwater that may become unsuitable for drinking water.<sup>3</sup> In Minnesota, pesticides shown to disrupt hormone activity have been detected in surface waters.<sup>4</sup>

Some municipalities in Canada have restricted pesticide use for aesthetic purposes, including on golf courses, due to health effects concerns including the relation between surface-applied pesticide exposure and occurrence of cancer.<sup>5</sup> A 2006 study reviewing medical literature on herbicide and pesticide exposure notes that "the balance of epidemiological research suggests the 2,4-D [a common herbicide used to kill weeds in grass] can be persuasively linked to cancers, neurological impairment and reproductive problems. These may arise from 2,4-D itself, from breakdown products or dioxin contamination, or from a combination of chemicals."<sup>6</sup> The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center also notes that, although evidence is limited, the International Agency for Research on

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<sup>1</sup> Dich, J., Zahm, SH, Adami, HO. (1997). Pesticides and Cancer. *Cancer Causes Control*. May; 8(3), 420-43.

<sup>2</sup> Swackhamer, D. et al. (2010). Understanding Sources of Aquatic Contaminants of Emerging Concern. LCCMR Project Addendum. Available online: [https://www.lccmr.leg.mn/documents/peer\\_review/2010/addendums/subd\\_5a\\_swackhamer\\_v1.pdf](https://www.lccmr.leg.mn/documents/peer_review/2010/addendums/subd_5a_swackhamer_v1.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> See Joyce Latimer, Mike Goatley, Greg Evanylo, Bonnie Appleton. (2009). Groundwater Quality and the Use of Lawn and Garden Chemicals by Homeowners. Virginia Tech and Virginia State University: Virginia Cooperative Extension. Available online: <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-059/426-059.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Swackhamer, D. et al. (2010). Understanding Sources of Aquatic Contaminants of Emerging Concern. LCCMR Project Addendum. Available online: [https://www.lccmr.leg.mn/documents/peer\\_review/2010/addendums/subd\\_5a\\_swackhamer\\_v1.pdf](https://www.lccmr.leg.mn/documents/peer_review/2010/addendums/subd_5a_swackhamer_v1.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Loren D. Knopper & David R.S. Lean. (2010) Carcinogenic and Genotoxic Potential of Turf Pesticides Commonly used on Golf Courses. *Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health, Part B*. Vol. 7, 2004: 4, 267-279. Available online: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10937400490452697?scroll=top&needAccess=true>.

<sup>6</sup> Meg Sears, C. Robin Walker, Richard HC van der Jagt, Paul Claman. (2006) Pesticide assessment: Protecting public health on the home turf. *Pediatrics & Child Health*, vol. 11: 4, 229-234. Available online: <https://academic.oup.com/pch/article/11/4/229/2648275>.

Cancer linked certain herbicides, such as those containing glyphosate (2,4-D) with an increased risk of cancer.<sup>7</sup> According to the non-profit group Beyond Pesticides, of the 36 most commonly used lawn care pesticides registered prior to 1984, “14 are probable or possible carcinogens, 15 are linked with birth defects, 21 with reproductive defects, 24 with neurotoxicity, 22 with liver or kidney damage, and 3 are sensitizers and/or irritants.”<sup>8</sup> Additionally, “[a] child in a household using home and garden pesticides is 6.5 times more likely to develop leukemia than in a home that does not.” A 2012 National Institute of Health study of companion animals exposed to lawn care products demonstrated an association between use of specific law care products and a greater risk of canine malignant lymphoma.<sup>9</sup>

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

We have identified one potential solution:

1. Ban the use of carcinogenic pesticides and herbicides on residential and commercial lawns and encourage adoption of alternatives such as PRFCT lawns.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

Minnesota Department of Health lists pesticides as a chemical of special concern to children’s health and many be interested in partnering on legislation. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture offers voluntary turfgrass pesticide use Best Management Practices “to bring awareness to homeowners and lawn care companies on proper and judicious use of pesticides for homeowners, lawn care companies, and golf course managers to help protect water resources, humans, and non-target organisms including pollinators.” These BMPs include using non-chemical pest control methods.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>7</sup> Kellie Bramlet. (2016) Lawn Care and Your Cancer Risk. University of Texas MS Anderson Cancer Center. Available online:

<https://www.mdanderson.org/publications/focused-on-health/lawncare-cancer-risk.h26Z1590624.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Beyond Pesticides. Commonly Asked Questions About Chemical Lawn Care. Available online: <https://www.beyondpesticides.org/programs/lawns-and-landscapes/overview/faq-chemical-lawn-care>.

<sup>9</sup> Takashima-Uebelhoer BB, Barber LG, Zagarins SE, Procter-Gray E, Gollenberg AL, Moore AS, Bertone-Johnson ER. (2012) Household chemical exposures and the risk of canine malignant lymphoma, a model for non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. 112:171-176. Available online: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22222006>.

**PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #11**  
**Resolution to Ban the Use of Pesticides and Herbicides that are Known**  
**Carcinogens on Residential and Commercial Lawns**  
**Submitted by: Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District**

**WHEREAS**, watershed districts engage in conserving the state’s natural resources “by land use planning, flood control, and other conservation projects by using sound scientific principles for the protection of the public health and welfare and the provident use of the natural resources.” Minn. Stat. 103D.201, subd. 1;

**WHEREAS**, human and environmental health concerns arise from the use of health harming and potentially carcinogenic pesticides and herbicides on commercial and residential lawns because surface application exposes humans and animals to potential carcinogens, and surface water carries pesticide and herbicide pollution through soil and into groundwater sources that can affect drinking water and environmental health;

**WHEREAS**, eliminating the use of specific pesticides and herbicides on lawns will reduce surface interaction with these health-harming, potential carcinogens, and limit their entry into groundwater;

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Department of Health lists pesticides as a chemical of special concern to children’s and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture promotes turfgrass pesticide use BMPs including using non-chemical pest controls;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that MAWD supports legislation that would ban the use of carcinogenic pesticides and herbicides on residential and commercial lawns.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership NOT vote in favor of this resolution as written for the following reason:

- The committee felt this resolution was not our fight.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #12**

## **Resolution to Limit Wake Boat Activities that Directly Cause Shoreline Erosion and Spread Aquatic Invasive Species**

**Proposing District:** Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Claire Bleser, Administrator  
**Phone Number:** 952-607-6512  
**Email Address:** cbleser@rpbcwd.org

### **Background that led to submission of this resolution:**

Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District seeks to address erosion and shoreland health challenges through the water quality strategies included in its 2018 10-Year Watershed Management Plan, issues that fall within one of the plan's primary focus areas: improving and protecting water quality. In its Watershed Management Plan, the District maintains that healthy shoreland areas are a key element of healthy hydrologic systems and provide habitat to support wildlife viability. Shoreland benefits can be compromised by erosion and sedimentation, among other resource threats. The District seeks to minimize the negative impacts of erosion and sedimentation – decreasing water depth, degrading water quality, smothering of fish and wildlife habitat – that result in major contributions to water pollution, recognizing that erosion and sedimentation are often accelerated by human activities. The District also seeks to minimize the spread and reduce the adverse ecological impacts of aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Public groups and the scientific community have observed water quality issues, including scouring of lake bottoms by boat waves, sediment disturbance and damage to aquatic plants, damage to shoreline areas, and negative impacts to aquatic animals, that are linked to the large wakes created by wake boats on lakes. The current design of many wake boat ballast tanks does not enable the tanks to be completely drained or fully decontaminated, presenting an additional concern about transport of AIS. While most of the discussion has focused on wake boats, the same issues may arise with any water craft designed or operated in a manner to create wakes larger than wakes created by ordinary boats, including but not limited to boats with ballast, fins, trim tabs, or similar design features.

A 2019 University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center study showed that that large volume water holding ballast tanks of wake boats, which have the capacity to take on the most water of similar recreational boats, provide zebra mussels and larvae the greatest opportunity for inter-lake transport. These boats are not designed to fully drain all ballast tank water.<sup>10</sup>

A 2018 report from the Oregon State Legislature summarizes studies on the various effects of wake boats, noting that boat speed is a primary factor in influencing wave size.<sup>11</sup> Also cited in this report is a report by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the Chesapeake Bay Program that demonstrates a positive correlation between the size of boat wakes and the extent of shoreline erosion as well as sediment resuspension and nearshore turbidity.<sup>12</sup>

A report to the City Council of Prior Lake, Indiana assesses environmental impacts from high speed boats on the

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<sup>10</sup> Dave Orrick. (2019) Zebra Mussel's Best Friend: Wakeboard Boats, New U Study Finds. Livewell also Tested. Accessed through the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC), <https://www.maisrc.umn.edu/news/wakeboards>.

<sup>11</sup> Item E: Staff report on safety around wake sports statewide. (2018) Oregon State Legislature. Available online: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2018R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/144261>.

See also Sara MercierBlais & Yves Prairie. (2014) Project evaluation of the impact of the waves created by the type of boats wakeboat on the shores of Lake Memphremagog and Lovering; Ruprecht, Glamore, Cogland. (2015) Wakesurfing: Some Wakes are More Equal than Others. Available online: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294799932\\_Wakesurfing\\_Some\\_Wakes\\_are\\_More\\_Equal\\_than\\_Others](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294799932_Wakesurfing_Some_Wakes_are_More_Equal_than_Others).

<sup>12</sup> Id. See also USDA NRCS. (1997) Slope Protection for Dams and Lakeshores: Minnesota Technical Note 2 (reviewing shoreline erosion processes and causes).



state’s lakes. The report summarizes studies focused on ecological impacts caused by waves, including shore and bank erosion, decreased water clarity, water quality degradation, and harm to aquatic plant and animal species. Shallow waters feel the most direct impacts of boat wakes, as well as shoreline areas adjacent to less than 1,000 feet of open water, making near-shore habitat where water depth is approximately 10 feet or less– the littoral zone—the most important to protect.<sup>13</sup>

In spring 2019, Vermont considered legislation presented in Senate Bill 69 “to restrict or prohibit the use of wake boats in certain public waters.”<sup>14</sup> The bill as introduced proposes to limit wake boat speed within 200 feet of shoreline, imposing a \$500 fine per violation, and proposes to restrict use of wake boats in certain public waters based on the size of the water body, the use of adjacent land, scenic beauty, or other recreational factors.<sup>15</sup> While the bill did not progress in the 2019 session, it may be re-introduced during a future session.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

We have identified three potential concurrent solutions:

1. Limiting wake boats to areas of lakes sufficiently distanced from shorelines to allow boat-generated waves to adequately dissipate and lessen energy before coming into impact with lake shorelines; and
2. Banning wake boats wakes in shallow lake areas where waves created by wake boats detrimentally impact sediment, aquatic vegetation, and aquatic habitat; and
3. Requiring wake boats to be designed, and existing boats to be modified, to enable complete drainage and decontamination of ballast tanks to stop the spread of AIS.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

Minnesota DNR is already engaged in an education campaign, “Own Your Wake – for Everyone’s Sake,” encouraging responsible boat use near shorelines. DNR also actively promotes state AIS law, requiring boat ballast tanks to be emptied by a shoreline or waterway before being transported. We anticipate seeking DNR support for and leadership of legislation reflecting joint ideas of how to solve issues caused by wake boating.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

- To the entire State:  \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our Region: \_\_\_\_\_
- Only our District: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>13</sup> City of Prior Lake, Agenda Item #16. Information Item: A review of environmental impacts from high speed boats on Indiana’s public freshwater lakes; Administrative Cause no. 10-029V. Available online: <https://www.cityofpriorlake.com/documents/WSUM/info17.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Bruce Durgin. (2019) Wakeboard Boats Believed to Damage Lakes. The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds. Available online: <http://vermontlakes.org/wp-content/uploads//FOVLAP-Newsletter-Spring-2019-Final-digital.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Vermont Legislature (2019). Bill as Introduced: S.69. Available online: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/Docs/BILLS/S-0069/S-0069%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

# PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #12

## Resolution to Limit Wake Boat Activities that Directly Cause Shoreline Erosion and Spread Aquatic Invasive Species

Submitted by: Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District

**WHEREAS** watershed districts engage in conserving the state’s natural resources “by land use planning, flood control, and other conservation projects by using sound scientific principles for the protection of the public health and welfare and the provident use of the natural resources.” Minn. Stat. 103D.201, subd. 1;

**WHEREAS** wake boats driven in Minnesota lakes result in scouring of lake bottoms, disturbance of lake sediment and damage to aquatic plants, erosion of lake shoreline, disturbance of and damage to aquatic animals, and transfer of water in boat ballast tanks – many of which are not designed to drain completely or to be decontaminated – that results in transfer of aquatic invasive species (AIS) among Minnesota lakes;

**WHEREAS** opportunities to limit the water quality impacts of wake boats include: restricting where within and in what waterbodies wake boats are allowed; defining the depth of water in which wake boats are allowed to create a wake; and requiring wake boats to be designed, and existing boats to be modified, to enable complete drainage and decontamination of ballast tanks to stop the spread of AIS

**WHEREAS** the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is engaged in an education campaign, "Own Your Wake - for Everyone's Sake," encouraging responsible boat use near shorelines, and also actively promotes state AIS law, requiring boat ballast tanks to be emptied by a shoreline or waterway before being transported;

**WHEREAS** other states have begun to regulate wake boat minimum distance from shoreline requirements and limit in what water bodies wake boating may take place; these regulations can serve as guidelines for regulations in Minnesota;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that supports legislation to achieve one or more of the following:

- a) limiting wake boating to areas of lakes sufficiently distanced from shorelines to allow boat generated waves to adequately dissipate and lessen energy before coming into impact with lake shorelines;
- b) banning wake boats wakes in shallow lake areas where waves created by wake boats detrimentally impact sediment, aquatic vegetation, and aquatic habitat; and
- c) requiring new and existing wake boats to be able to completely drain and decontaminate their ballast tanks.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership NOT vote in favor of this resolution as written for the following reasons:

- The study appears to have not been done by professionals, but a committee.
- Currently, boat safety issues are enforced by the DNR’s conservation officers and county water patrols. Watershed districts do not have any ability to enforce.

# **BACKGROUND INFO on PROPOSED RESOLUTION #13**

## **Additional State Funding to Watershed Management Organizations to Implement Flood Risk Mitigation Projects**

**Proposing District:** Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
**Contact Name:** Tina Carstens, Administrator  
**Phone Number:** 651-792-7960  
**Email Address:** tina.carstens@rwmwd.org

**Background that led to the submission of this resolution:**

The extreme wet year and the increase in heavy precipitation is causing watershed districts to spend significantly more time and resources to mitigate and prevent flooding. The Minnesota Twin Cities area has now reached the wettest year on record. The last 5 years have been the wettest 5 years ever. The last 10 years have been the wettest 10 years ever. The intensity of rain events is also increasing.

Watersheds across the state are faced with challenges in leading and supporting our partners on reducing the flood risk to our residents. Our established flood levels are outdated because of the changes in precipitation. Our infrastructure is undersized. Homes, roads, and properties are flooding and the cost to address these challenges is enormous.

The Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District alone is conducting feasibility studies that estimate tens of millions of dollars in new infrastructure needed to address the concern. While state funding is available, the need across the state outweighs the allocation of funds and often times metro and/or urban infrastructure needs do not reach a top priority project and therefore are not funded through existing state funding resources.

**Ideas for how this issue could be solved:**

First, Minnesota watershed management organizations could compile their needs for flood risk mitigation planning and projects similar to what has been done for water quality project needs for the Clean Water Fund. If state officials saw the need across the state, they would be able to justify a greater allocation.

Different funding resources for different kinds of flood risk mitigation would address the needs in the metro/urban areas. This is due to the built nature of the environment which makes it more difficult and more costly to implement projects. And then ultimately, the state dedicating more money to this need would allow watersheds and our local government partners to address this issue.

**Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?**

We would anticipate that watersheds across the state as well as our local government partners would be in favor of more financial support for flood risk reduction.

**This issue is of importance (Check one):**

To the entire State:   X    
Only our Region:             
Only our District:

# **PROPOSED 2019 MAWD RESOLUTION #13**

## **Additional State Funding to Watershed Management Organizations to Implement Flood Risk Mitigation Projects**

**WHEREAS**, watershed management organizations in partnership with other local units of government engage in working to control and/or alleviate damage from floodwaters;

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities metro area has measured the wettest precipitation year on record and is also experiencing the wettest 5- and 10-year period on record;

**WHEREAS**, watershed management organizations are experiencing impacts on our built and natural systems due to prolonged high-water levels and rain flood events;

**WHEREAS**, current public infrastructure in our urban, built up environments is not adequate to handle the increase in rainfall and the change in intensity of our rainstorms;

**WHEREAS**, the dollars required to address the watershed management organization and local units of government needs are considerably more than what is currently allocated for flood risk mitigation;

**WHEREAS**, the current funding parameters and prioritization make it difficult for metro area applicants to qualify for the dollars allocated for this purpose;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED;** that MAWD supports additional state funding be allocated for watershed management organizations to implement flood risk mitigation projects with consideration given to a dedicated allocation for the Twin Cities metro area.

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**Notes:**

After discussion, the committee recommended the membership NOT vote in favor of this resolution as written for the following reason:

- Including a special allocation for the Twin Cities area furthers the divide between the rural and metro MAWD members that we are actively trying to close.

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## Memo

DATE: September 5, 2019  
TO: MAWD Board  
FROM: Mary Texer, Strategic Plan Committee Chair  
**RE: Proposed 2020-2022 MAWD Strategic Plan**

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### Introduction

As you read this report and the Strategic Plan that follows please note that the plan focuses on MAWD and its activities. At this point in time the shortened timeframe (3 years instead of a more traditional 5 to 10) reflects our work getting MAWD better situated to serve its membership as a whole. In order to create a plan with a longer timeframe the membership, not just the committee, needs to create a vision for the organization. This could be done as part of the Annual Meeting in 2020 or 2021.

The Strategic Plan focuses on the what we should be doing and not on how we will do it. After the Plan is accepted by the membership, specific “hows” will be developed along with assigning responsibility to various MAWD committees. This will promote accountability and measurability.

In any case the Strategic Plan needs to be reviewed and possibly revised annually to ensure it is a living document that meets the desires of the organization and not just a dusty tome on a shelf.

### Background

The MAWD Strategic Planning Committee met March 13, March 28 and April 15 at the offices of the Capitol Region Watershed District. Committee Members were:

- Craig Leiser, Manager, Browns Creek
- Daniel Money, Administrator, Two Rivers
- Dennis Kral, Manager, Pelican River
- Dick Ward, Manager, Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek
- Emily Javens, Executive Director, MAWD
- Mary Texer, Manager, Capitol Region
- Michelle Overholser, Administrator, Yellow Medicine
- Phil Belfiori, Former Administrator, Rice Creek
- Jackie Anderson, Manager, Comfort Lake Forest Lake

The committee reviewed the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan and determined that MAWD has accomplished all of the items in the current plan including:

- Split MAWD leadership duties into two positions – an Executive Director and a Lobbyist
  - Executive Director started full time on 1/1/2018
  - Lobbying Contract with Media and Government Affairs was secured through the 2017-18 biennium
- Provided more training opportunities for staff and managers
- Provided a regular presence at the Capitol and with state agencies, both in and out of session

- Provided regular communications on session activities
- Provided members with regular communications on legislative and state agencies' activities
- Developed a new MAWD website and social media presence
- Contracted for services to run the following events: Annual Meeting and Summer Tour
- Communicated training opportunities throughout the year
- Established a formal (permanent) MAWD office and contacted for administrative services at Capitol Region Watershed District
- Contracted for lobbying services for 2019-2020 Biennium

The 2018 Strategic Planning Committee decided that prior to developing the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan a new membership survey was needed. This survey was announced at the 2018 Annual Meeting and administered in December 2018/January 2019. The results of the survey were presented to and accepted by the MAWD Board at the February 2019 Board Meeting. The 2019 Strategic Planning Committee took the results of this survey and developed a Strategic Plan for 2020-2022.

Before crafting the Strategic Plan, the committee identified what they saw as MAWD's values. These are the guiding principles for MAWD's operations in all areas and are reflected in the Values Table below. This table was approved by the MAWD Board at its June meeting.

## MAWD Values

Category	Words	Consolidated Statement
How we treat each other and our membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrity</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• In it together</li> <li>• Be fair</li> <li>• Shared knowledge/meetings</li> </ul>	We will treat all with integrity, respect, and fairness.
How we conduct our business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance</li> <li>• Government Awareness</li> <li>• Protect good governance</li> <li>• Gather Stakeholder Input</li> <li>• Fiscally responsible</li> <li>• Independence</li> <li>• Present, discuss, agree on priorities</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>	We will conduct our business in a fiscally responsible, collaborative, and open manner.
What we want	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishable Swimmable Drinkable</li> <li>• Quality</li> <li>• Protect</li> <li>• Enhance water quality in Minnesota</li> <li>• Advance land management practices that protect water quality and conserve soil resources</li> <li>• Promote water and land practices that enhance biodiversity</li> <li>• Seek government policies that enhance sound water management</li> </ul>	<p>We will promote and advocate for legislation and policies that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance water quality in Minnesota</li> <li>• Advance land management practices that protect water quality and conserve soil resources</li> <li>• Promote water and land practices that enhance biodiversity</li> <li>• Enhance sound watershed management</li> <li>• Provide adequate and equitable drainage and flood damage reduction</li> <li>• Result in fishable, swimmable, and drinkable water for all</li> </ul>
How we approach problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science-based</li> <li>• Consider alternatives</li> <li>• Forward thinking</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Analyze</li> <li>• Creative</li> <li>• Know priorities</li> <li>• Expertise</li> <li>• History of issues</li> <li>• Technical knowledge</li> </ul>	We approach water-based problems and issues using science-based analysis and available expertise.
How we share our knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate citizens about water quality</li> <li>• Educate</li> <li>• Promote water stewardship</li> <li>• Community response</li> <li>• Community acceptance and endorsing</li> <li>• Respond to Issues</li> </ul>	<p>MAWD promotes and provides education for members and citizens that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes good water stewardship</li> <li>• Educates about water quality</li> </ul>

Based on the above, the following is the Strategic Plan proposed for 2020-2022.

**PROPOSED MAWD Strategic Plan - DRAFT  
2020-2022**

**I. History & Purpose:** Minnesota Watershed Districts (WDs) were established with the Minnesota Watershed Act, M.S., Chapter 103 D in 1955. From inception it was felt that Minnesota WDs should be run by people somewhat removed from the political process, so they would be able to make tough and possibly unpopular decisions without a complete focus on political consequences. To facilitate this, it was agreed that the position of WD Manager would be appointed, rather than elected. Land use and zoning powers remained with elected city and county officials.

While the boundaries of WDs are determined by hydrologic lines of demarcation, rather than political boundaries, water does not follow political boundaries. The organizations are established by local petition to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), a state agency. After filing of an establishment petition, the Board has the authority to establish a WD, define the boundaries, and appoint the first board of managers (Board) as defined under Minnesota Statutes 103D.101. All subsequent Board are appointed by the associated County Boards of Commissioners as defined under Minnesota Statutes 103D.311.

WDs responsibilities have changed from their original objectives of focusing solely upon water quantity. WDs have now assumed responsibility for a wide variety of water-related concerns, especially those related to water quality, including wetlands, wetland restoration, and groundwater management. The science associated with water quality and quantity issues continues to grow and as a result, awareness and application of these technologies is a significant consideration for WD Boards and staff.

Another important component of watershed work is engaging the public in its efforts through education, outreach, and cost-sharing grants.

WDs work with multiple state agencies, such as BWSR, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. They work with federal agencies, such as Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Department of Agriculture, United States Environmental Protection Agency and United States Fish and Wildlife Service. They also work with cities, counties, and such organizations as Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and regional governments, such as the Metropolitan Council. At all times a WD must be responsive to the community or communities they serve as well as citizen groups, which may from time to time seek assistance. This includes organizations, such as Lake Associations or Community Development organizations of many types.

To capitalize on watershed districts combined knowledge and to share information, the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) was incorporated August 26, 1971.

**II. Core Values:**

- Integrity
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Relevance
- Science-based

**III. State Mandate:** Per Minnesota State Statute 103D.201 subdivision 1, WDs are “to conserve the natural resources of the state by land use planning, flood control, and other conservation projects by using sound scientific principles for the protection of the public health and welfare and the provident use of the natural resources.”



**IV. Mission:** MAWD provides relevant educational opportunities, information, training, and advocacy for WDs and Water Management Organizations (WMOs).

**V. Vision:** Establish MAWD as the leading resource and advocate regarding water and watershed management.

**VI. Strategic Planning Committee Membership and Intent:** The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to establish goals to move MAWD to achieving its Mission and Vision.

The MAWD Board of Directors (BOD) determined that the effective membership of this committee should consist of a

- A Chair from the MAWD Board of Directors,
- Three (3) WD or WMO Managers representing the three MAWD Regions of the state
- Three (3) current WD or WMO Administrators (MAWA) also representing the three MAWD Regions of the State

The Strategic Planning Committee is charged to develop a Strategic Plan every three (3) years with annual reviews and updates in the intervening years. The first Strategic Plan covered 2016 through 2019; the second Strategic Plan covers from 2020 through 2022. Each Strategic Plan will be presented to the MAWD BOD for comment and to the membership for approval at the annual meeting.

## **VII. Strategic Goals**

Based on input from the MAWD membership via a membership survey taken in December 2018, goals need to focus in three (3) areas:

- Education and Training
- Communication and Collaboration
- Lobbying and Advocacy

MAWD activities will be done in support of these focus areas.

### **Education and Training**

Activities in this area address the education and training needs of Board Managers, Administrators, and staff. MAWD will partner with such agencies and organizations as BWSR, SWCDs, and the University of Minnesota to offer timely and affordable educational opportunities. This includes new incumbent training in the three target groups.

Ongoing activities include:

- Continue to partner with other agencies and organizations to offer timely and affordable educational opportunities.
- Continue to expand training to MAWD members to engage with their elected officials. This includes State and Federal Representatives and Senators as well as local officials.

New initiatives include:

- Identify and advertise online/eLearning courses and training opportunities.

### **Communication and Collaboration**

Activities in this area focus on keeping MAWD membership informed of developments with water issues and collaboration between MAWD and other agencies and groups.

Ongoing activities include:

- Continue to expand MAWD's social media presence to increase visibility and impact.
- Continue to improve communications to MAWD members regarding MAWD's legislative efforts and general advocacy. This would be done prior to, during, and after the legislative session.
- Continue weekly video and written updates during the session and periodically off session.

New initiatives include:

- Expand MAWD's presence in the press with the goal of educating the public about water organizations and their activities.
- Post official MAWD documents in such a way as to increase accessibility by MAWD members.
- Post the WD Handbook on line in a more searchable format that is easier to update and reference.
- Post reports from individuals representing MAWD on various state boards on the MAWD website after each meeting. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - BWSR Board
  - Clean Water Council
  - Water Roundtable
  - Drainage Work Group
- Publish quarterly financial reports to promote financial transparency between MAWD and its membership.
- Develop brochures and handouts in the following areas:
  - Annual legislative agenda
  - Benefits of watershed management
  - How to form a WD

### **Lobbying and Advocacy**

Activities in this area focus on lobbying on issues the membership identifies in their legislative agenda and advocating for MAWD and water organizations. These activities take place year-round and not just during the legislative session.

Ongoing activities include:

- Continue work to establish MAWD as a leadership organization – the experts with regard to water management.
- Continue to improve and increase the effectiveness of the MAWD legislative agenda preparation and lobbying activities.
- Continue to actively collaborate with State Agencies and other organizations as appropriate on legislative issues.
- Continue to actively support watershed management and the formation of new watershed organizations.

New initiatives include:

- Establish regional chapters in Regions I and II to promote more local information sharing and education.
- Implement MAWD's Sunset Policy for resolutions.
- Ensure that legislative positions are in alignment with the MAWD mission, vision, and core values.
- Develop State and Federal Policy statements that reflect MAWD's legislative positions and post these on the MAWD website.