

Photos (Optional)

You may include up to four (4) photos of your project or program.

Submit nomination materials to Mark Doneux, mark@capitolregionwd.org by August 17, 2017.



Before and after at Reach 1 of the City of Edina portion of the project



Work in progress in the City of Hopkins portion of the project



Rock riffle at a site in the City Hopkins portion of the project.

2018 MAWD Project & Program of the Year

Preliminary Nomination Form

The MAWD Awards Committee is now accepting **Preliminary Nominations for Program or Project of the Year**. This simple, one-page **Preliminary Nomination Form** **must be submitted by August 17, 2018**. When determining the finalists, the Awards Committee will consider: clearly defined need, creative partnerships, innovative financing, resourceful solutions, success at meeting goal, and public value. Finalists, in each category will be asked to complete a full nomination form. The Preliminary Nomination form only requires a project/program description up to 250 words.

Award Category (check one)

Project Program

MAWD Region:

One Two Three

Watershed District:

Nine Mile Creek Watershed District

Project/program name:

Watershed Sandbox

Nominator (if different from above Watershed District)

Project/Program Summary (Up to 250 words).

The watershed sandbox is a mobile, interactive education tool created in partnership with local artists and the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District. We created it to meet the need of explaining to people what a watershed is in a simple, hands-on way, since most people do not understand watersheds. Helping people understand watersheds and watershed districts is part of our education goals and necessary for the work we do, but they are difficult concepts to explain. The sandbox helps users of all ages see what a watershed is, and then create one in sand. While using the sandbox at events, it is also a tool for staff to have longer, more meaningful conversations with adults about water issues, while kids are engrossed in hands-on learning.

Through interactive virtual reality technology, the sandbox helps users understand the connection between topography and water flow. A projector shows elevations and topography lines on the sand below, in real time, as people move and shape the sand. Users can also control virtual water that "falls" onto the sand and see how it moves across the landscape they built. Thus, watersheds are formed and can be easily explained to users. We can also explain other difficult concepts like erosion, topographical features, pollution, and infiltration.

The sandbox has drawn in larger crowds to our watershed district booths at community events, and encouraged visitors to stay longer, allowing for deeper conversations about water issues. Over 550 people have interacted with the sandbox in the three months since its launch.

Project Contact: *Name:* Gael Zembal

Phone: 952-204-9691

Email: gzembal@ninemilecreek.org

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