



2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Letter To Community

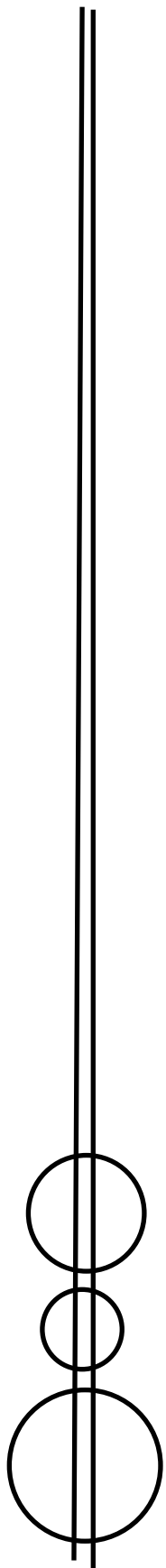
Dear watershed residents,

On behalf of future generations we would like to thank you for being a steward of water in Minnesota. Here at the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District we often find ourselves talking about how crucial citizens are to keeping water clean. We could not do it without you. Like all important work, the work of preserving and improving water quality takes a community of involved, dedicated business owners, teachers, retirees, farmers, nurses, mechanics & mentors; here on the shores of the Middle Fork with our many shining lakes this could not be more true.

During the 2016 year we were able to get many best management projects (BMPs) implemented throughout the watershed (*see 2016 projects*), helping to slow down and filter water before it flows into our streams, rivers, and lakes. Whether a wetland restoration on agricultural land or a tree trench on a city sidewalk, projects like these would not have happened without help from many different constituents & organizations.

With over 40 percent of waters in Minnesota classified as impaired or polluted, it is now, more than ever, important that you stay involved. To continue learning about ways that you and your family can help keep the land of over ten thousand lakes fishable, swimmable and drinkable: visit our website, follow us on Facebook, and come out for one of our events. We want to meet you, so please stop by our office and say hi.

- MFCRWD



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YOUR DISTRICT

Mission

We exist for the protection & preservation of water quality in the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed.

What is a Watershed District?

A watershed district is a special-purpose unit of local government that works with the community and organizations through federal and state grant money to restore, protect and preserve wetlands, streams, rivers and lakes within the watershed.

Minnesota is the land of over

10,000 lakes; water is very important to our way of life. Minnesotans rely on healthy lakes, rivers & ground water for clean drinking water, fishing (*through ice & from a boat*), swimming, duck hunting, kayaking, canoeing & water sports; to name a few. Most boundaries are political,



watershed district boundaries are not, because water does not follow man made boundaries. Currently there are 46 established watershed districts in Minnesota, all of which work to protect the surface and ground waters that make life in Minnesota wonderful.

About Middle Fork Watershed District

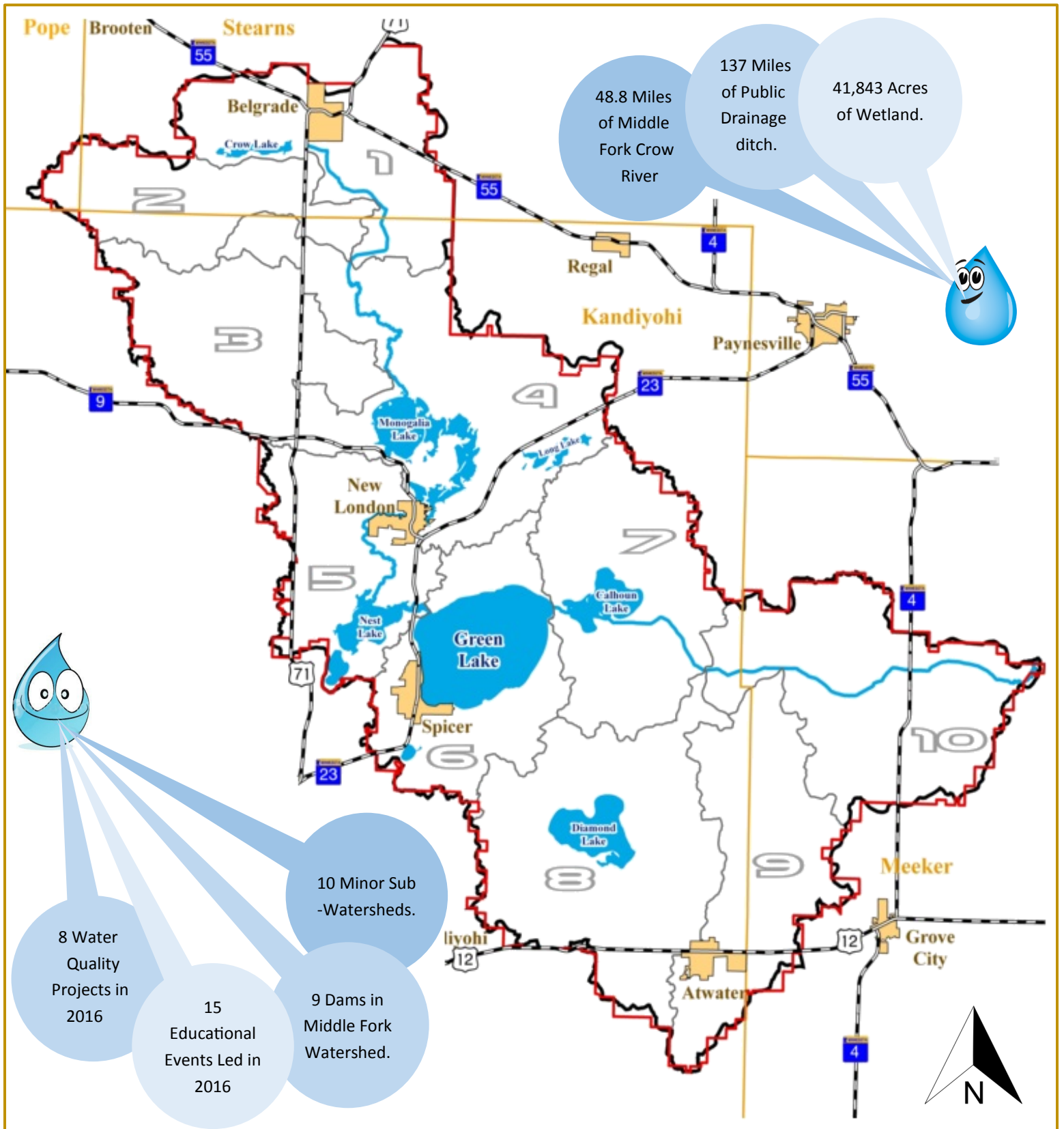
The Middle Fork Watershed District was established in April 2005. The District exists for the protection and preservation of water quality in the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed. The District consists of a board of five Managers from three of the four counties in the watershed; watershed boundaries within Pope county are too small to constitute a member from that county.

Board members must live in the district and are appointed by County Commissioners to serve three year terms.

The Middle Fork Crow river Watershed drains a 271 square mile area. The river begins in Stearns County in the Belgrade area and flows southward through north central Kandiyohi county. As the river flows south it passes through the City of New London

and enters Green Lake in Spicer. After the river outlets from Green lake, it flows eastward. Water from the City of Atwater and Diamond lake enter the Middle Fork Crow River just before it crosses the Meeker County line. The Middle Fork of the Crow river joins the North Fork Crow River just east of Manannah and eventually enters the Mississippi near Dayton.

YOUR DISTRICT



District map

Monitoring

Why Monitor?

Monitoring helps us fulfill our mission of protecting and preserving water quality in the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed. The information we gather from monitoring helps us assess water quality trends and provides insight as to where to implement projects. We have a number of historic sites that allow the District to track long-term changes. These historic sites include 5 stream sites and 8 major lakes. A good example of the use of

monitoring in project development is the work we have done around the Hubbard, Schultz, Wheeler chain of lakes (*see Cleaning up Diamond*). Through monitoring we have established a baseline for water quality in these lakes and will continue this throughout the life of the project. This will provide us valuable information as to the efficacy of the project and the impact it will have for the surrounding area and its water quality.

Importance of Chemistry

Phosphorus (P) – A key element necessary for growth of plants and animals, however if too much phosphorus enters the waterway, algae and aquatic plants will grow excessively, overwhelming the waterbody. As the algae and plants die, their decomposition depletes the water body's oxygen supply, leading to loss of aquatic life. Anthropogenic (human activity) sources of phosphorus include cropland (fertilizer), human waste, and stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces in urban areas.

Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN) – Measures the sum of ammonia and organic nitrogen in water. An abundance of organically bound nitrogen, ammonia, manure, or sewage will result in high TKN values and can lead to eutrophication (excessive algae).

Total Suspended Solids (TSS) – Materials suspended in the water column can decrease the diversity of aquatic organisms and increase the water temperature. Plant populations can decrease as the suspended materials block the ability of sunlight to penetrate the water. Fish populations and other aquatic organisms suffer when eggs are smothered by silt, gravel and clay. The material suspended in the water can be both organic (plankton, sewage) and inorganic (silt, clay). By measuring total suspended solids, the effects of runoff on a water body can be determined.

Chlorophyll-a (Chl-a) – The pigment in plants that makes them look green. Measuring chlorophyll-a indicates the amount of algae in the water column. Chl-a levels naturally fluctuate over time but consistently high levels of Chl-a is an indicator of poor water quality.

Monitoring

How We Monitor

MFCRWD has monitored lakes and rivers since our inception in 2005. This has been accomplished through a dedicated staff and an invaluable group of volunteers.

In addition to chemistry samples volunteers measure water quality with a Secchi disk or tube, and note physical appearance and determine recreational suitability

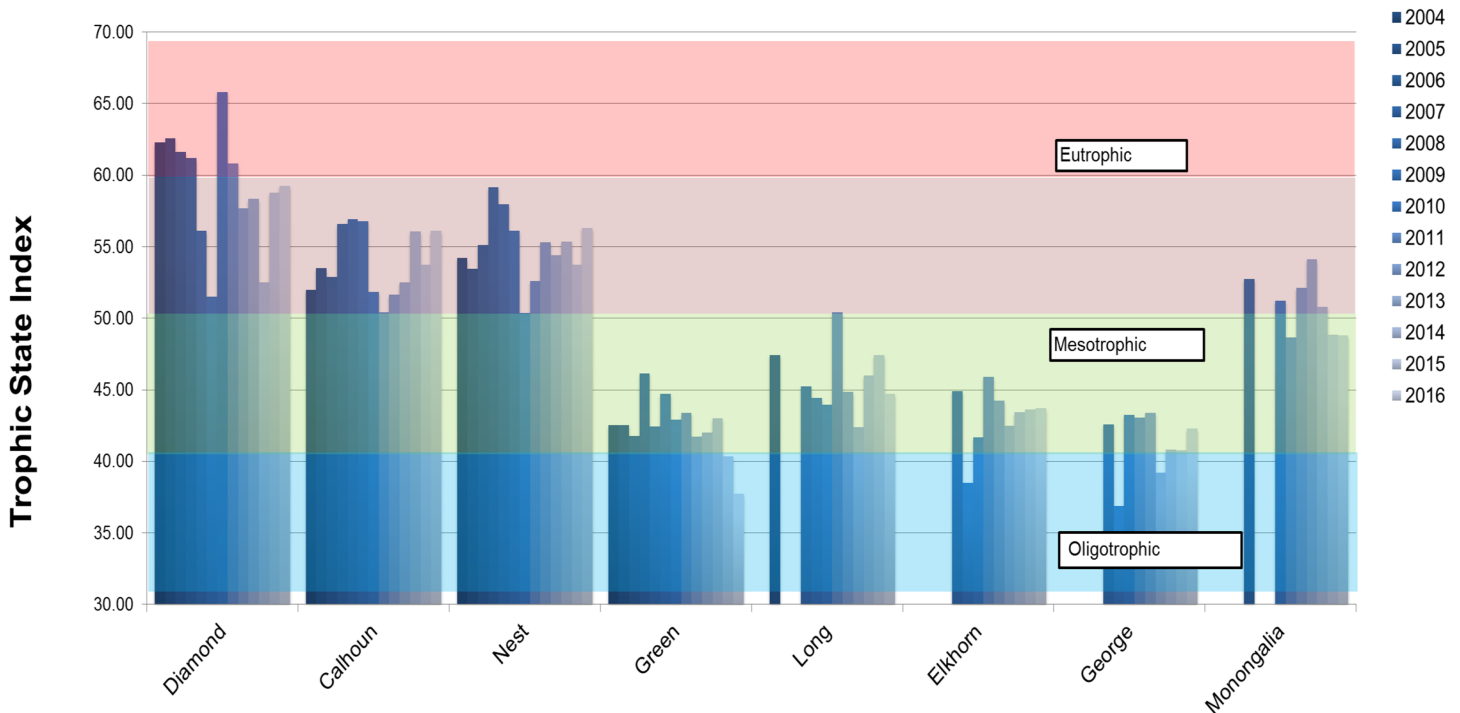
of water at each sample site. Staff use a number a different tools to obtain water quality data such as water flow meters, multi-parameter water quality probes measuring pH, Temperature, Conductivity, and Dissolved Oxygen.

Thanks to volunteers we are able

to stretch our monitoring budget and develop a very thorough picture of water quality in our watershed.

The Trophic State Index (TSI) of lakes is a valuable way to look at water quality and is displayed below.

Annual TSI Values (2004-2016)



TSI 30-40 Oligotrophic – clear water, hypolimnion (Lower layer of water in a stratified lake) is oxygenated throughout the year (except in shallow lakes).

TSI 40-50 Mesotrophic – Water moderately clear, but anoxia becoming more likely in hypolimnion during the summer.

TSI 50-70 Eutrophic: Decreased transparency, anoxic hypolimnion during the summer, dominance of blue-green algae, algal scums probable, extensive aquatic plant problems possible.



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

Bob & Sue Dice ◇ **Bruce Wing** ◇ **Danielle & Michelle Steffen** ◇ **Gordy Behm** ◇ **Graden West** ◇ **Guy Chetrit** ◇ **Mary Jo & Randy Patton** ◇ **Ruth Schaefer & Lee Thompson** ◇ **Wayne Knudsen**

For more Monitoring info - jon@mfcrow.org

2016 PROJECTS ~ Bass Lake Access

MFCRWD was approached by Green Lake Township in August of 2015 for assistance with a troublesome lake access.

Located on the north shore of Bass Lake, the access was highly erosive prior to project implementation. Trucks and trailers using the access used a makeshift turn-a-round that had been worn to bare ground; during rain events the bare soil in this area flushed downhill into the lake jeopardizing water quality.

This project was part of a larger body of work undertaken in the Diamond Lake Subwatershed to address issues identified in a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study conducted in 2010.

1-Vegetation & Boulders



2-New Pavement



2016 PROJECTS ~ Bass Lake Access

The Bass Lake Access project incorporated four separate best management practices (BMPs) in order to eliminate erosion at the access:

1-Vegetation was planted where trucks and trailers had worn down grass above access; boulders were added here for aesthetic appeal and to protect new vegetation.

2-New pavement was added to create a turn-a-round to eliminate erosion.

3-At water's edge, downhill of new pavement, an infiltration basin was installed to slow runoff as well as filter water before it reaches the lake.

4-Lastly, ramp planks were installed to protect bank from erosion and make boat unloading and loading easier.

3-Infiltration Basin



4-Ramp Planks



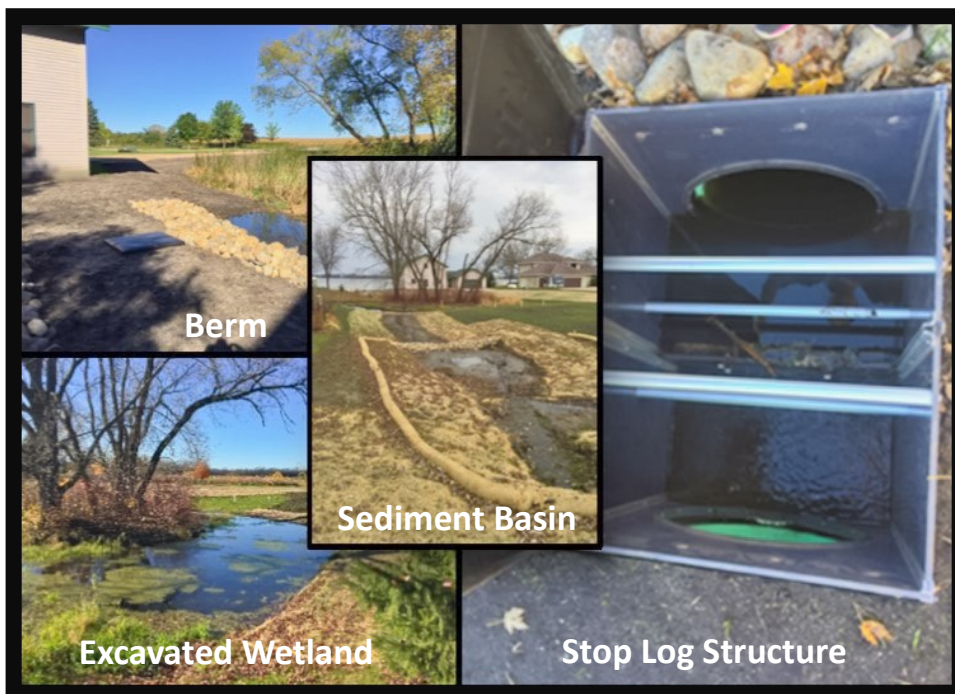
2016 PROJECTS ~ Diamond Lake Wetland Restoration

BEFORE

Prior to project the Leither/Borth wetland was filled with sediment and was not functioning. Total suspended solid (TSS) removal efficiency was 62%, and total phosphorous (TP) removal efficiency was 35%.



AFTER



During construction 650 cubic-feet of anthropogenic sediment was excavated from the wetland, a 24 inch pipe with stop-log structure was installed in the berm and a series of sediment basins were created both up hill and down hill of the wetland.

Post construction removal efficiency is 92% for TSS and 59% for TP.

Tree Trenches

Choices made on the landscape by landowners determine whether the land retains its soil, absorbs rainfall or filters nutrients. Conventional streets and parking lots are a major source of non-point pollution in our waterways. During rain events and snow melt, pollutants from our vehicles: antifreeze, oil, hydrocarbons and heavy metals are carried from streets and parking lots into our

streams, rivers, and lakes.

New streets and parking lots are being designed using the methods of green infrastructure; such designs mimic a watershed's natural hydrologic cycle. Tree trenches are an example of green infrastructure working to catch runoff from impervious street and parking lot surfaces to filter the water, increase water storage and reduce flooding and runoff that would otherwise go directly into our waterways.

Tree trenches are built where storm drains were traditionally installed. Water runs off streets and parking lots into the tree trench; water then slowly filters through the soil and is absorbed by the trees and plants in the trench. Water is cleaned through filtration and seeps into the storm drain and runs into local bodies of water. During this process water absorbed by the trees and plants is used for biological processes that allow the trees and plants to grow.

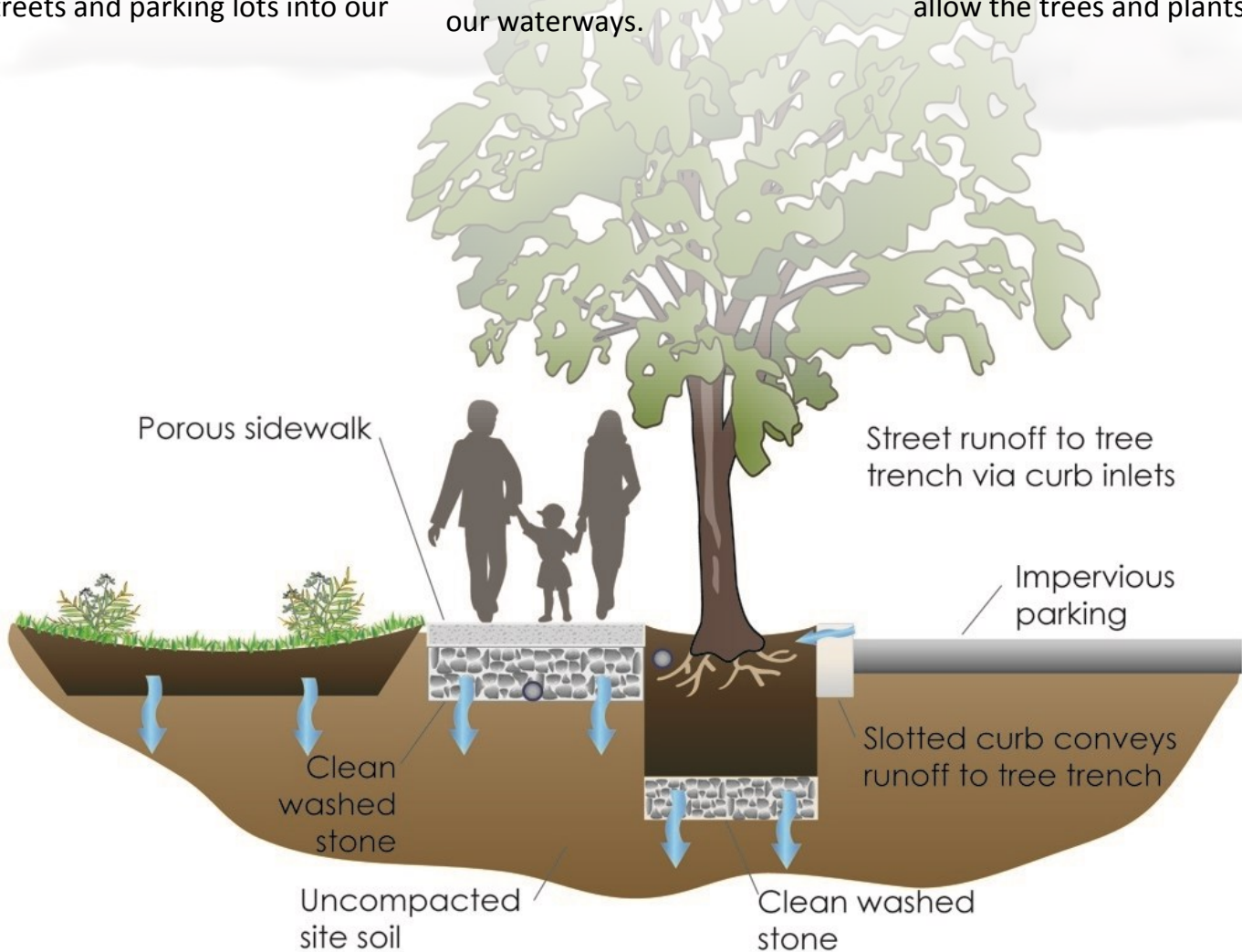


Image sourced at: melioradesign.net

2016 PROJECTS ~ ACGC YES! Team Tree Trench



An all bituminous courtyard at Atwater, Cosmos, Grove City Middle School had been experiencing flooding during large rain events. During these events water levels would reach critical levels and spill through the threshold of a back door and into the school hallway. By working with the school the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District was able to incorporate a best management practice (BMP) project of porous pavers and a tree trench to mitigate water pooling in the courtyard and promote groundwater recharge.

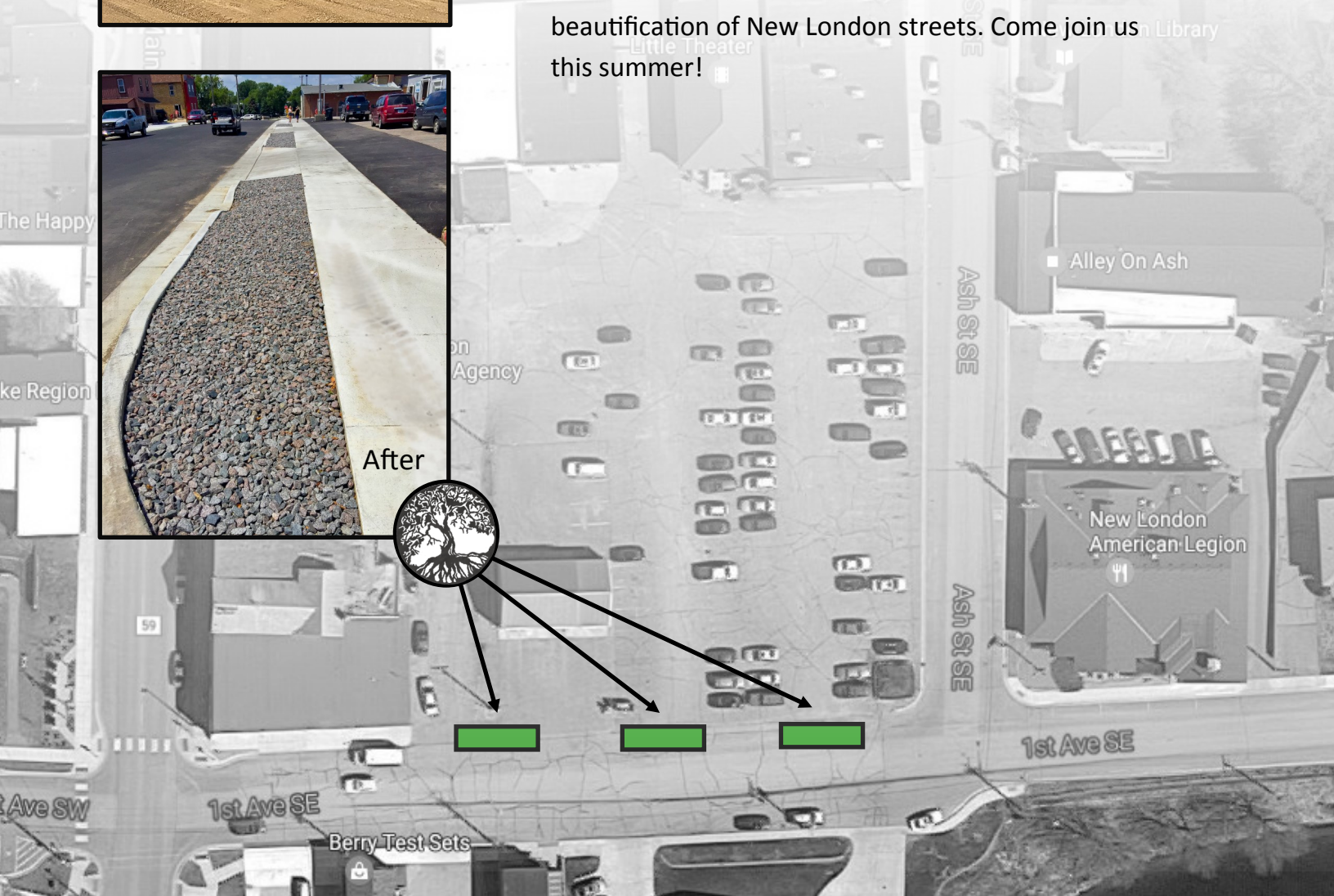
With cost-share assistance from the Middle Fork Watershed District, and monetary help from the City of Atwater the YES! team and the ACGC school district were able to construct their project. The ACGC YES! team helped during the design process and will promote the project this spring when they take lead on planting and installing a stormwater educational plaque near the tree trench.



2016 PROJECTS ~ New London Tree Trench



The New London Tree Trench project came to be through a collaborative effort between the city of New London, the Middle Fork Watershed District and the Master Gardener's club of New London. As shown in image titled "After", trenches have yet to be planted; planting will take place in summer 2017 by the New London Garden Club. During this time an informational plaque will be installed at the site, explaining the importance of tree trenches for water quality in our area and how a tree trench works. After planting a community gathering will take place to honor the work done and celebrate the beautification of New London streets. Come join us this summer!



Cleaning Up Diamond ~ Hubbard, Schultz, Wheeler Project

The Minnesota State approved Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)* study for Diamond Lake recommended a project to improve the water quality in the Hubbard, Schultz, and Wheeler Lake chain. An estimated 74% and 83% of the total phosphorus entering Diamond Lake from surface runoff in 2008 and 2009, respectively, came from the chain of lakes. *TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet state water quality standards.

The project is envisioned as a cooperative action of the MFCRWD, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Ducks Unlimited for the construction, operation and maintenance of water control structures to allow for temporary draw-down of the lake chain to enhance their condition and for

the combined purposes of improving wildlife habitat and water quality.

Through temporary water level draw-downs, basin sediments are exposed, consolidated, and aerated to allow rooted aquatic plants to germinate from natural seed banks that absorb nutrients and help anchor bottom sediments. Through active water level management, shallow lakes can be managed to persist in a clear water healthy condition, whereas deteriorated, turbid water conditions provides little benefit. Just as fire maintains the health of native prairies, we know through science that shallow lakes and wetlands require periods of low water or droughts to stay healthy, productive, and beneficial for water quality, waterfowl, wildlife species, and humans as well. High stable water levels, excessive nutrient inflows, invasive fish, and the lack of natu-

ral fish winterkill have led to the loss of aquatic vegetation and invertebrate populations, both of which are key elements to a healthy shallow lake system. Essential to improving the overall health of these lakes is our ability to actively manage water levels.

Phase I (*see pg. 29*), was in process Fall 2016 and will be completed in the Spring of 2017.

Phase II will consist of the structure placement between Schultz & North Wheeler and a second structure between North Wheeler and South Wheeler.

Moving forward, the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District, Ducks Unlimited and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will continue working with the Diamond Lake Area Recreational Association, and other partners to complete the project.





Board of Managers

Gordy Behm



Gordy is a retired farmer and businessman who currently resides on Diamond Lake. He was a partner in Behm Seed Farms, Behm Seed Company, Atwater Grain, and a Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed representative for over thirty years. He is currently a Manager for Middle Fork Watershed District, board member of the Glacial Lakes Sanitary Sewer and Water District, Diamond Lake Area Recreational Association and a director of Willmar Realty Corp. He served on the boards of Atwater Development Association, Kandiyohi County Economic Development Commission, Island Falls Golf Course, Central Lakes Co-op, and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. Throughout his years farming he implemented many conservation practices on his own land including conservation tillage, minimum till planting, sediment blocks, grass waterways, buffer strips, and blind field tile intakes. Gordy has been a Manager for the MFCRWD since it formed, and is proud of the successful projects and educational programs which have been put into practice to preserve and improve our land and waters for future generations.

Bob Hodapp



I'm Bob Hodapp. I have been on the Board of Managers of the MFCRWD for approximately 10 years, since the formation of the district in 2004. This has been my "full time" job since I retired from the practice of medicine in Willmar over 2 years ago. I have greatly enjoyed being on the board because it has been gratifying to see the completion of so many water quality improvement projects over the past decade. I also feel we have done a lot to increase public awareness of water quality issues in our district. One of the best things about being on the board is the opportunity to be exposed to so many talented people who have

dedicated their lives to environmental and water quality improvement issues. I am continually amazed at the challenges these individuals tackle at the local, regional and state levels. When I started on the WD board 10 years ago, I didn't know a rain garden from a rose garden. Every meeting, every conference I attend is a learning experience for me and that is part of what makes serving on the WD board so enjoyable.

Board of Managers

Bruce Wing



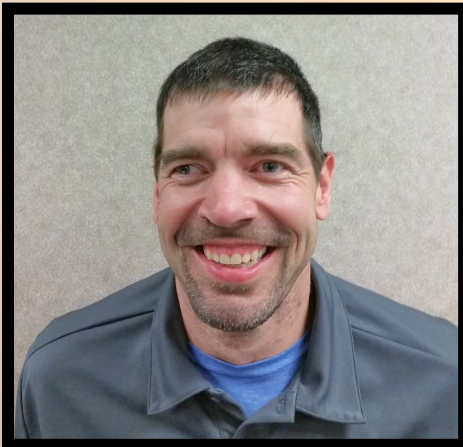
I was raised on a family farm in southern Minnesota. As a child I spent a lot of time with my grandfather hunting and fishing in that area. It was he who taught me the importance of protecting our natural resources. He was a conservationist and received several state awards for his work on protecting a lake and river his farm bordered. I attended Comfrey High School and went on to Mankato State University with a degree in Guidance and Counseling; I then served as a Guidance Counselor at BBE Schools from 1977 to 2005. One of the reasons I choose BBE was the abundance of lakes available in this area. Serving on the watershed board has given me an opportunity to learn more about our water resources and the opportunities to improve and protect that resource.

Ruth Schaefer



The first time I heard the term “Watershed District” was at a meeting in St Cloud. Ann & Bill Latham, Ron Schnieder and I met with Doug Thomas with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources in search of grant funds to complete Phase III of a water quality project on the Middle Fork Crow River. We were thrilled when Mr. Thomas said “Yes, BWSR has funding for the project. But first, you would need to start a Watershed District”. We all looked at each other and asked “What is a Watershed District?” That is the humble beginning of what is now a well established organization that will outlive us. So “Thank you to all those who volunteered their time in the creation of this Watershed District”. Who knew that I would end up here 10+ years later. I would like to encourage everyone to find something that is of interest to you and see where it takes you. Life is an interesting journey.

Joe Flanders



Hello Everyone My name is Joe Flanders,

I have been on the board for 10 years, and have enjoyed serving over those years. I am married to my wife Luann and we have 4 children: Patina 16, Emma 14, Alex 9, and Melissa 4. I farmed for 18 years; where I milked cows and raised corn, beans and alfalfa. It was in this occupation where I gained a great respect for the land and nature in general; and where I learned that we need to do what we can to keep the environment as clean as we can to give to the next generation. Because of health reasons I had to retire from farming and now work in Ag sales at Lake Henry Imp.

Change is not a bad thing, it just gives us a chance to look at the world differently.

Citizen Advisory Committee

Mission

The Mission of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) is to assist and advise the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District (MFCRWD) Board of Managers (Board) in accordance with Minnesota State Statutes section 103D.331. This is accomplished by reflecting community values in the development of MFCRWD projects and programs and by providing information and feedback on programs in the District.

Want to Join?

The Middle Fork Watershed District is always recruiting new committee members!

Our statute states that members should include representatives from each Soil and Water Conservation District, a representative of each county, a member of a sporting organization, and a member of a farm organization. We are currently in need of a member of a sporting organization as well as a member of a farming organization to bring a broader perspective to our group. With that said, we welcome all interested citizens and passionate stakeholders within the Middle Fork of the Crow River Watershed District to join!

Thank you to all Current CAC members!

For More Information

Call Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District @ 320-796-0888 - ask for Dylan

Or

Email Dylan - Dylan@mfcrow.org



Leaves and grass

Keep them off sidewalks and streets.



Dirt

Keep soil covered with plants and mulch, especially near sidewalks and driveways.



Dog poop

Pick up after your pet and put it in the trash.



As you read this report we hope it inspires you. With this inspiration you might ask what can you do to help. There are many things you can do to help water quality. On this page you will find various everyday activities that can be done to protect our water. For those of you looking to go above and beyond we have the Adopt-a-Drain program!



How to Adopt a storm drain

1. **Sign up online!**
To adopt a drain go to: www.adopt-a-drain.org
2. **Keep your storm drain clear.**
Sweep and rake leaves and other debris off the drain surface year around
3. **Post a small sign in your yard**
to let your neighbors know you're protecting clean water. And if they ask, let them know how they can do their part!

Trash

Seal your trash bags and keep litter out of the street.

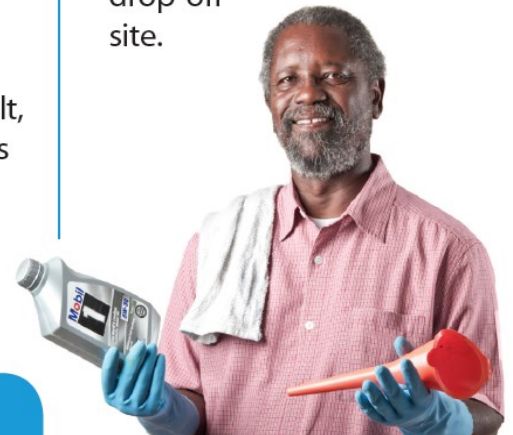


Salt

Always shovel before you salt, and remember: it only works when it's above 15 degrees and you only need a little. For colder temperatures, use sand or kitty litter.

Motor oil

Keep your car tuned up so fluids don't leak on the street. Take used motor oil to a neighborhood drop-off site.



adopt-a-drain.org



**Come Join us for the 2017
Clean Up the Crow Day!**

~September 16th

~9am—12pm

**~ Complementary Lunch
Following Clean Up!**

Below: Press release — Willmar Tribune — written by volunteer Carmen Clementson

In October I had an opportunity to participate in the annual “Clean up the Crow River” event. In its 13th year, the Crow River Organization of Water has coordinated over 3,000 volunteers to remove over 66 tons of trash from the Crow River and its tributaries. This year netted an impressive list of items including tires, plastic buckets, bottles and toys, Styrofoam containers, cans, fishing lures and line and a television. Locally, the Crow River Watershed District organizes the event. Anyone who is

concerned about clean water is welcome to contact them at www.mfcrow.org.

We are fortunate in Minnesota to have so many lakes, rivers and waterways. Sadly, less and less of this great natural resource can be called clean. Please consider adopting the motto “Leave NO Trace”. When traveling the lakes and rivers of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, this is not only a value but a requirement. Why would we want anything less for the rest of our great state?

Education & Outreach ~ Paddle the Crow



Join us for
the 2017
Paddle
the Crow!
June 3rd,
8am -
Noon



Paddle the Crow is an exciting event that the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District and Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center put on each year. We meet at the New London Mill Pond in the morning, shuttle to the launch point where kayaks, canoes, and one GIANT canoe are waiting for us, with all the life jackets and paddles we could need. The rest of the morning is spent on the Middle Fork of the Crow; Row, row, row, make the boat Go!

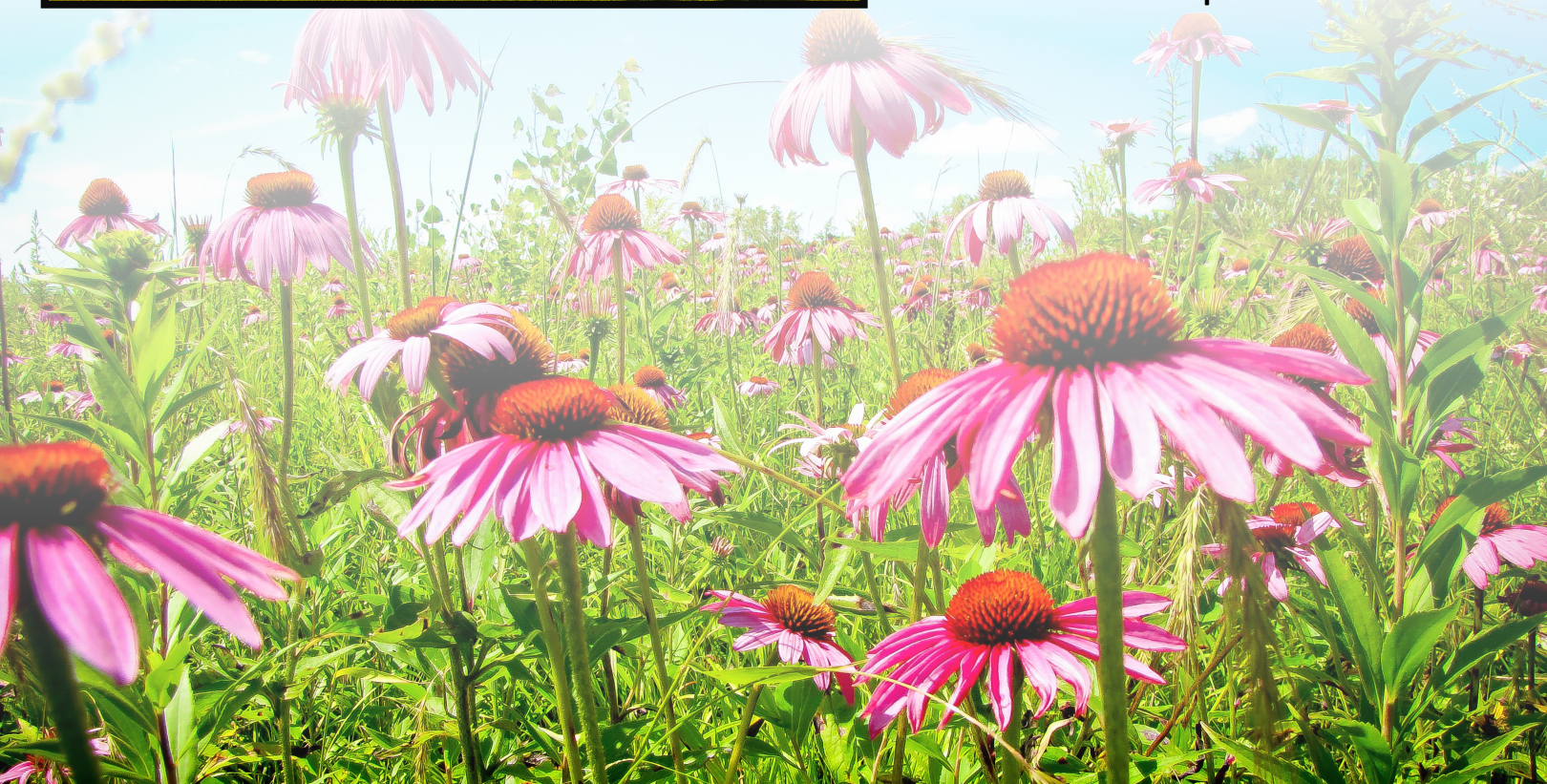


Education & Outreach ~ Raingarden workshop



The 2016 raingarden workshop was a success and the raingarden that was created is thriving and doing its job! The workshop started indoors with a presentation in which participants were introduced to raingarden design concepts from size and soil type to choosing plant species; giving you're raingarden the highest chance of succeeding. Following the presentation everyone headed out to get their hands dirty and participated in planting the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed's downspout raingarden.

Raingardens are a great way to hold water on your property and filter water before it finds its way into nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. Plus, they create beautiful space for you and your family to share with butterflies and other pollinators.





Youth Energy Summit, YES! is a team-oriented youth program that uses hands-on, experiential learning and energy action projects to address energy opportunities and issues in rural Minnesota communities. YES! has dedicated their 2016-2017 year to water; kicking the year off with the 10th annual Fall Summit themed: “Say YES! to Youth-Led Water Solutions!”

The Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District attended the summit, which was held at St. Johns University in Collegeville on the 12th of October. During the one day event, over 200 students from 16 YES! teams participated in our watershed and lake ecology workshop. After an introduction to lake ecology and land use principals groups were handed a description of a lake along with land use practices within their lakes watershed. Groups were then asked to draw their lake along with it’s specific land use practices; from their drawings the students used what they had just learned about lake ecology and land use principals to deduce their lake’s fish species, eutrophic state and potential water quality. The Activity culminated when each group shared their drawings and findings with other groups. What a Fun day of learning!

Erosion & Stormwater Permits

What & Why:

The MFCRWD statutory purposes are to protect water quantity and quality within the watershed, in order to maintain adequate surface and groundwater supplies for all users. Our permit management plan is required by the state of Minnesota Statute Chapter 103D, and is meant to promote responsible land use practices before, during and after construction projects.

Who & How:

If you have an upcoming construction projects and will disturb greater than 300 square feet of land that is within 300 feet of a lake, river, wetland, or curb please contact the district or visit www.mfcrow.org to begin the permit process.

If you do not get a permit and your project falls under the above land disturbance criteria, and is found to be in violation, we may issue a civil citation. This is the least favorite part of our job, however we must follow statute, so please reach out to us if you think that your upcoming project may require a permit.

Obtaining a permit is a strait forward process that often requires little more than a silt fence or other erosion control method. If your project disturbs between twenty thousand and three hundred square feet of land the cost of your permit will be \$100; if your projects land disturbance is greater than twenty thousand square feet yet less than one acre the cost of your permit will be \$150; land disturbances greater than one acre of land will require a stormwater permit with an engineer review.

We are more than happy to meet you on site to help you figure out the best erosion control or sormwater management practice for your particular project.

Together we can keep our streams, rivers, lakes & groundwater healthy; so we can all enjoy the waters that make Minnesota so unique.

-Thank You



2016 Financial Report

REVENUES

2016 Revenue		
General Income	\$	250,000.00
Basic Water Management	\$	46,874.23
Survey and Data Acquisition	\$	48,081.43
Special Assessment	\$	17,904.04
SPL ASMT - Nest Lake	\$	34,764.99
SPL ASMT - Diamond Lake	\$	28,452.30
Clean Water Fund	\$	66,396.29
Interest	\$	1,158.77
Grants	\$	129,529.64
Miscellaneous	\$	26,203.30
Permit Program	\$	3,240.00
Revenue Total	\$	652,604.99

NET POSITION DECEMBER 31, 2016: \$564,706.22



EXPENDITURES

2016 Expenditures		
Managers Expense	\$	7,287.15
Health Insurance	\$	7,652.84
Employee Mileage	\$	5,030.91
Seminar Expenses and Fees	\$	6,213.73
Monitoring	\$	19,930.07
Public Education	\$	20,015.73
Payroll	\$	190,904.22
Payroll Expenses	\$	17,172.47
PERA Expense	\$	11,458.55
Payroll Services Fee	\$	2,265.90
Audit/Accounting Services	\$	17,029.68
Legal	\$	16,927.98
Office Equipment/Supplies	\$	2,473.40
Office Utilities	\$	8,698.20
Postage/PO Box Rental	\$	962.01
Leased Equipment	\$	6,283.16
Repair and Maintenance	\$	623.00
Fuel	\$	1,434.98
Insurance	\$	7,173.00
Dues	\$	2,333.50
Loan Repayment	\$	45,075.00
Bond Repayment	\$	29,111.98
Miscellaneous	\$	715.38
Project Development	\$	61,156.58
Engineering/Technical Assistance	\$	102,340.86
Consultation/Inspection	\$	1,162.50
Construction Installation	\$	145,585.77
Expenditure Total	\$	737,018.55

Low-Interest Loans Available for Septic System Upgrades

This loan can be obtained through the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District

- **3.0%** Interest Rate.
- Repaid through property taxes over 10 years.
- Available to landowners within the District.

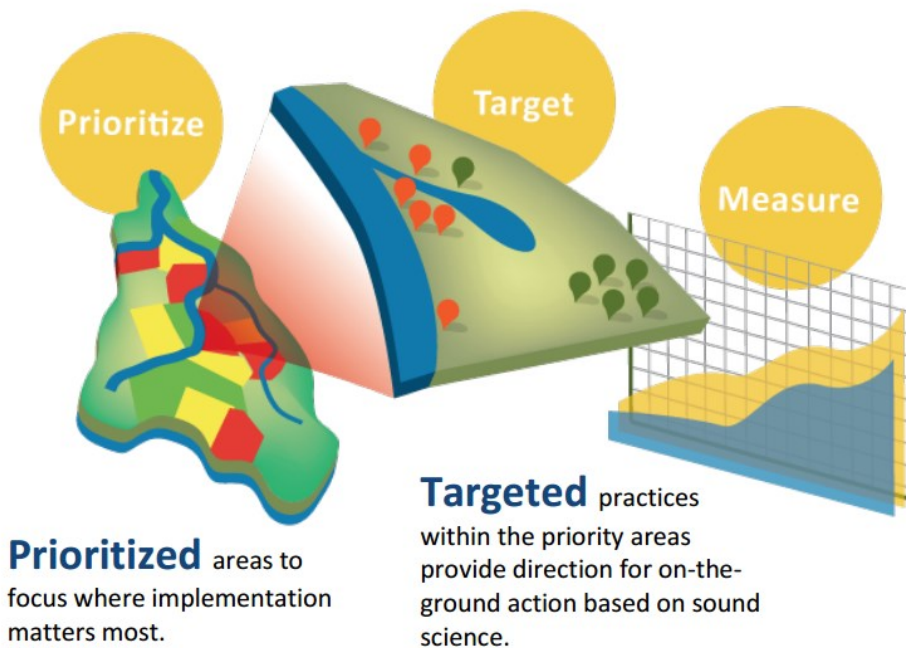
Includes portions of **Kandiyohi, Stearns, Meeker, and Pope** counties.

Contact the District for more details on how to apply.

One Watershed One Plan

The concepts behind watershed planning and management are not new to Minnesota. Our structure sharing responsibility between the State and local government dates back to 1937 legislation allowing for the creation of our state's soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). This tradition continued in 1955 when the State recognized the importance of watershed management and enacted legislation allowing for the creation of watershed districts (WDs). With the 1980s and 1990s came a renewed recognition of the important role local government plays in managing the State's water resources across political boundaries, creating legislation for the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act, the Greater Minnesota Comprehensive Local Water Management Act, and the State Groundwater Protection Act. In 2008, Minnesota citizens passed the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment dedicating a portion of the sales tax to clean water. With this new funding came new expectations for the

pace of progress in assessing waters, in going about the business of cleaning up those that do not meet water quality standards, and in protecting others that are threatened from becoming impaired. Local governments and BWSR are meeting this challenge by evolving the way in which we plan our work. In 2011, members of the Local Government Water Roundtable recommended that local governments charged with water management responsibility should organize and develop focused implementation plans on a watershed scale. That recommendation was followed by legislation in 2012 which gave BWSR the authority to develop and implement a comprehensive watershed management plan approach as a means to transform the current system of water plans, largely organized on political boundaries, to one where plans are coordinated and consolidated on a watershed basis. This legislation has come to be known as One Watershed, One Plan. (text from bwsr.state.mn.us)



Goals for One Watershed, One Plan:

- Acknowledges and builds off of existing local government structure, water plan services, and capacity;
- Incorporates and makes use of data and information including newly developed Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies;
- Clearly identifies the responsibilities and actions necessary to achieve the goals of the plan;
- Solicits input from and engages experts from agencies, citizens, and stakeholder groups;
- Consolidates the number of water plans from over 200 to less than 100 ; and
- Focuses on implementation actions that are prioritized, targeted, and measurable.

BWSR has identified the following outcomes for the program:

- Shared understanding on the definitions of prioritized, targeted and measurable
- Informed by existing science, studies, and projects
- Established water quality goals and targets by parameter of concern at the sub-watershed level
- Identified specific strategies and actions needed to achieve established restoration and protection targets
- Included short-term (10 year) and long-term (20 year) quantifiable milestones
- Identified the implementing authorities and established timelines and cost estimates based on milestones
- May serve to coordinate the collection, ranking, and submission of requests for funding to the State and other sources.

The 2012 legislation was passed to help natural resource managers create consistency in water planning and consolidate the 200+ plans produced by a multitude of entities down to 81 plans based on the major watershed present in Minnesota. This is an effort to increase efficiency with funds and management energy, as well, as to help focus targeting and implementing efforts to increase water quality.

In July 2014, CROW received word from the Board of Soil and Water Resources that our North Fork Crow River One Watershed One Plan project request was picked as one of five pilot projects in the State. The CROW will be working with 2 watershed management organization, 2 watershed districts, 6 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and 7 Counties to produce one plan that will reflect the unique characteristics and needs in the North Fork Crow watershed. This is an opportunity to use innovative planning techniques to incorporate both surface and ground water concerns.

BWSR Clean Water Fund One Water One Plan Pilot Program

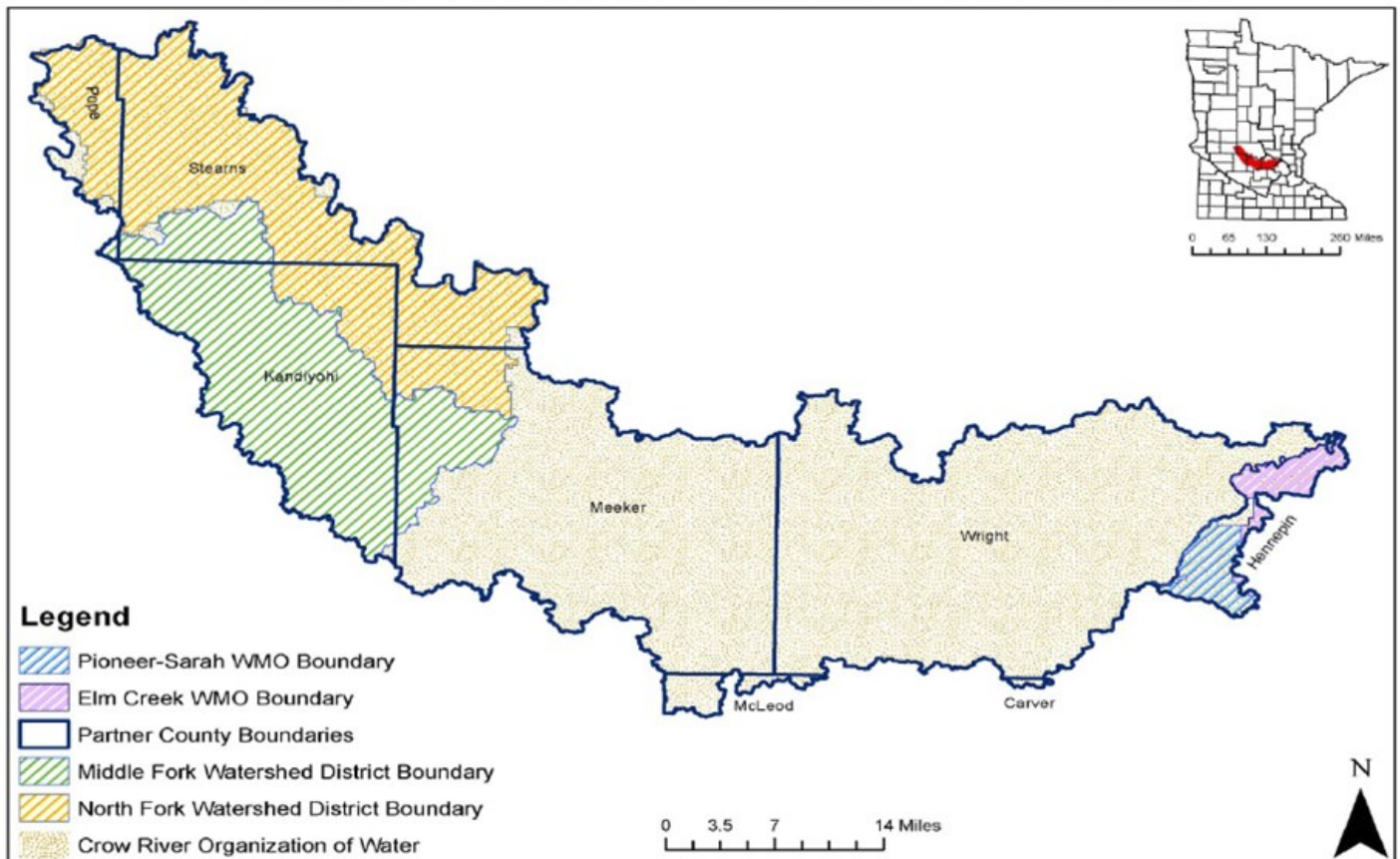
Grant Timeline: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Grant Dollars: \$218,550 Match: No Match Required

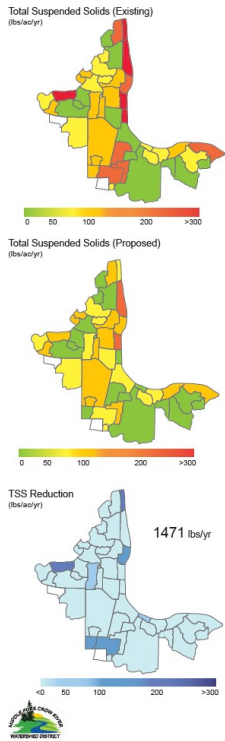
Outline: The CROW received special State funding from the Clean Water Legacy fund (a portion of the special sales tax for environmental protection, trails, arts, and wildlife habitat approved by voters in 2008) to prepare a plan for the North Fork of the Crow River. The North Fork is one of five pilot large-scale watersheds to receive this State funding to create an integrated comprehensive watershed management plan that satisfies both State and local visions for our water resources. One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) is the label given to this new approach to water management. The new approach to water planning must consider existing local efforts. Currently the North Fork of the Crow River has two watershed district plans, six county water plans, six soil and water conservation district water plans, one joint powers watershed plan, and several State and Federal agency plans/efforts in place. With the 1W1P, this entire area will be managed and coordinated by one comprehensive plan (see map). This new plan will focus on prioritizing and targeting water quality protection efforts and provide for an ongoing measurement of success.

Map A: North Fork Crow Local Government Units/Partners

North Fork Crow Partners' Boundaries



Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District received an Accelerated Implementation Grant (AIG) to complete a two part public stormwater assessment project to identify areas where runoff pollution is the worst within the city limits of New London and Spicer. The assessment is used to identify future water quality & quantity projects throughout the two cities.



Spicer Watershed Study



Graphics Provided by: **WENCK ASSOCIATES**

By modeling subwatersheds in the cities of New London and Spicer we were able to gather very detailed information as to which areas would provide the most bang for our buck in water quality & quantity projects.

The process of using this assessment to implement projects in conjunction with city projects, such as road reconstructs will avoid retrofit costs. We believe this study takes stormwater management planning to the next level.

AIG Process

Raw Data

Precipitation, Temperature, Land use, & existing Stormwater Infrastructure

P8 Model

Preliminary Ground Truthing - Meet with community experts, Use P8 Map as an outreach tool to gain specifics as to who/ what occupies assessed land.

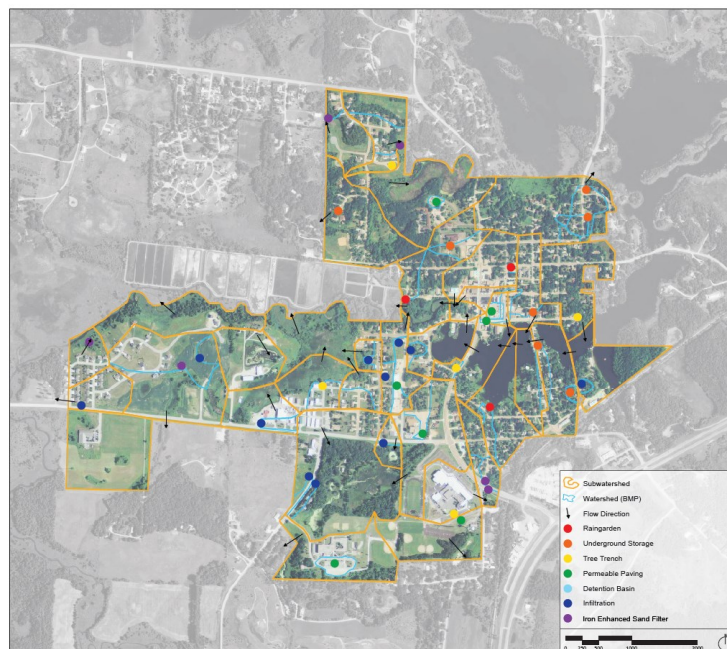
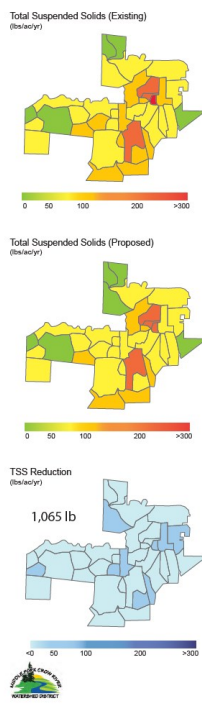
Use P8, HydroCAD and Local Knowledge to select/size conceptualized BMPs

Rerun P8 Model with conceptualized BMPs to determine efficacy.

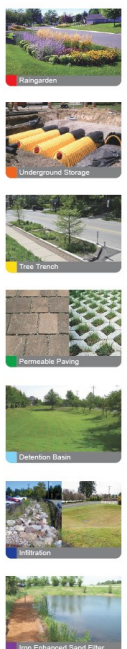
Second Round Ground Truthing, to see what size and type of project fits location.

Prioritize Projects - Treatment Area, Load Reduction, Cost, and Cost per lb of pollutant removed. Can also factor in Project implementation (Land use).

Use Prioritized BMPs to start conversation with landowners and to focus action to most needed areas.



New London Watershed Study



Graphics Provided by: **WENCK ASSOCIATES**

Grants

The MFCRWD continues monitoring, education, and implementation projects with grants expended in 2015. A summary of our expended grants and contract agreements from 2015 follows:

Watershed Pollutant Loan Monitoring Network: The purpose of this monitoring project is to maintain water quality data collection and develop a better understanding of land use impacts on rivers. This project will collect water samples at seven locations in the Crow River watersheds.

Completion date: December 31, 2018. Total grant: \$22,980

Middle Fork Crow Watershed Resource Investigation:

Improve the effectiveness of limited implementation funding by using monitoring data to prioritize areas requiring protection and restoration. In recognition of the importance of awareness and civic engagement, the District will continue its education and outreach programs to watershed residents of all ages.

Completion date: June 30, 2016. Total grant: \$63,250 Total match: \$87,650 Total: \$150,900

Diamond Lake TMDL Implementation Projects grant:

The degradation of Diamond Lake's water quality resulted in the placement of the lake on the MPCA's List of Impaired Waters in 2006. The MFCRWD and its partners are making significant progress towards reducing phosphorus loading to Diamond Lake by completing implementation activities outlined in the Diamond Lake TMDL Report. Completion date: December 31, 2018. Total grant: \$176,000 Total match: \$59,434 Total: \$235,434

DNR Program - Aquatic Invasive Species Watercraft Inspection: This grant allowed the District to hire three interns to inspect watercraft for AIS on area lakes.

Completion date: December 31, 2015. Total grant: \$7,800 Total match: \$6,277 Total: \$14,077

Middle Fork Crow Watershed Restoration Loan Program: This allows the District to provide financial assistance to District residents interested in septic upgrades as well as BMPs through low interest loans.

Completion date: June 30, 2018. Total low interest loans available: \$100,000

Developed Partners Expanded Resources Accomplishment: Many of the organizations partnering with the District have a vested interest in the quality of local and regional water resources. The District has the unique ability, because of these strong aged partnerships, to provide financial assistance in the format of sub-grants to those in need of implementing their waiting Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Completion date: December 31, 2018. Total grant: \$125,000 Total match: \$37,500 Total: \$162,500

Integrated Water Quality Analysis for Targeted Priority Practices: The river assessment will target two reaches of the Middle Fork, 13.75 miles. This project will also analyze impervious surfaces in the New London and Spicer area. This project will drive annual budgetary decisions and project planning, give District constituents a view of the watershed's health, and provide an implementation strategy for water quality efforts for effective on-the-ground and shovel-ready projects.

Completion date: December 31, 2018. Total grant: \$97,500 Total match: \$26,364 Total: \$123,864



**NORTH FORK
CROW RIVER**
WATERSHED DISTRICT



Meet the Staff

District Administrator

Margaret Johnson: Born and raised in Butler, Minnesota, a small farming community, Margaret is the second oldest of seven children. Her parents, John and Mary, raise cattle, corn, and sunflower seeds, and also run a greenhouse business. She studied Environmental Policy and Management at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where she traveled abroad to China facing perplexing courses on Land Use and Water Issues. She then completed a Master of Science program at Bemidji State University in Environmental Policy and Planning. Margaret joined the District in early 2012. During her tenure, she has been an active member of the



Association of District Administrators, supportive sub-committee member for the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, has been a contributor to policy and tax changes at the Capitol, and has managed \$663,000 in capital improvement projects. In addition, she has helped secure and manage over \$1.9 million in state and federal funding, with an additional state grant partnership of over \$1.75 million.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading, curling, gardening and canning, fishing, traveling, camping, helping her mom and dad at the greenhouse, and spending quality time with her husband and 3-year-old daughter.

Watershed Program Manager

Jon Morales: Has been with the District since August of 2015. As the Watershed Program Manager Jon oversees the District's monitoring program, and best management practices program. Jon believes water is as the center of Minnesota's identity and believes that together we can all strive for swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waters in our state and county. Jon hopes everyone in the Middle fork Crow River Watershed sees the district as a resource, valuable partner, and leader when it comes to local waters.



managing communities and especially their water! This experience along with work at Yellowstone National Park to reestablish a native trout stream solidified Jon's desire to work with water. After returning to his home town Jon began

working at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center that eventually lead to his employment at the watershed. This combined experience has provided him with a valuable base of knowledge and contacts that he has and will continue to put to use in protecting our waters.

When not at the Watershed you can find Jon camping, running, biking, climbing, hiking, swimming, and skiing with his wife and three daughters!

Having started his career at the Center for Sustainable Community Development, Jon appreciates the many moving pieces when it comes to

Middle Fork Welcomes Dylan

Watershed Specialist

Dylan Erickson: The newest member of the Watershed district, is the District's Watershed Specialist. Dylan oversees the Citizens Advisory Committee, implements water quality projects, assists with the watershed's monitoring program, and preforms stormwater and erosion permitting.

Dylan grew up in Seva, Minnesota as the fifth generation in a family farm house. His early years were spent roaming the countryside and working on the farm.

He played hockey for the Willmar cardinals and attended Willmar schools until age 17 when he moved out West.

With his base in Portland Oregon Dylan spent time traveling and working: salmon fishing in Alaska, backpacking through Mexico and Central and South America, bike touring cross-country, and working odd jobs.

Dylan then enrolled at Portland Community College where he completed his general studies requirements; he then transferred to Portland State University (PSU). While at PSU Dylan worked for the Outdoor Program leading climbing, kayaking and hiking trips. Also while at PSU Dylan interned on an urban forestry study



collecting and analyzing data, looking at the impacts that proximity to an urban center has on forest diversity. While he enjoyed his time spent in the woods, he gravitated toward water science classes and volunteer opportunities with this discipline.

By the time he graduated with a degree in Environmental Studies Dylan had made up his mind that he would work in water resource management. His job search eventually led him back to his homeland and the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed.

When Dylan is not working for the Middle Fork he can be found enjoying himself: over a good meal, on an outdoor adventure, at Goat Ridge Brewery, with family or friends or both, in a good book, playing hockey, building something out of wood, or trying something new. To enhance any or all of the above activities Dylan will share the experience with his wife Ashley; whom he considers to be his best friend, lover, confidant and partner in crime.

Dylan is pleased at the opportunity to serve the citizens of the Middle Fork Watershed and is excited to reacquaint himself with the land, people and traditions of rural life in central Minnesota



Please Join us for these Exciting events:

April 22nd ~ Earth Day

June 3rd ~ Paddle the Crow

September 16th ~ Clean Up the Crow

For more information

Visit www.MFCROW.org

Or Call us at 320-796-0888

MIDDLE FORK CROW RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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