



MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Date: November 13, 2023
To: CLFLWD Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney, District Administrator
Subject: Legacy Payment Program – MN Watersheds
Presentation



District Wide

Background/Discussion

The Watershed Legacy Payment Program is an innovative part of the District's Comprehensive Shoreline Program. The program, and the legacy payment program specifically, has generated a great deal of interest from other natural resource professionals. This is interest beyond the landowners in the District that are interested in the program and enrolling.

The District nominated the Watershed Legacy Payment Program for the Minnesota Watersheds Program of the Year award. The program's uniqueness and innovation as a tool to reinforce good land management, protect natural shorelands, encourage desired upland land management practices, and efficiently using District dollars combined with the outside interest in the program, motivated staff to recommend its nomination during the pilot stage of the program. The Watershed Legacy Payment Program is a finalist for the Program of the Year awards at the 2023 Minnesota Watersheds Annual Conference; final awards announcements will be made at the annual conference in late November.

Staff also submitted a proposal to present on the Watershed Legacy Payment Program at the 2023 MN Watersheds Annual Conference. The proposal was selected, and staff members Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist and coordinator of the program, will be presenting with Beth Carreño, Senior Program Manager. The session title is "Legacy Payment Program: Recognizing Landowners Who Maintain Natural Resources & Shorelines."

Participants in this session are natural resources professionals who understand that the loss of natural shoreline and upland land management practices have a significant impact on water quality that is not always understood by the general public. They are familiar with the traditional cost-share programs that restore or improve land areas to improve water quality. The presentation will introduce the concept of providing a tax rebate or payment for land already using good practices. This concept has some use in agriculture, and District Administrator Kinney had experience with it in natural resources management from his time in Wisconsin. The presentation will discuss how this concept has been used, and how it was modified for implementation in our District.



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The presentation will also provide: reinforcing information on the impact that shoreline and upland land practices have on water quality, information on the District's shoreline and water quality goals, as well as results from our recent shoreline inventories; background on how tax rebates and payments have been used in other areas; the process the District went through in developing the comprehensive shoreline program and the legacy payment program; how the programs fit into the District's watershed management plan and goals; information available to landowners and the steps for participation in the program; outcomes from the pilot year; and future goals and next steps.

It's a short overview presentation at 4pm on Thursday, November 30th, with approximately 30 minutes of presentation and 10 minutes for questions.

Some supporting information for the presentation was taken from the Natural Shorelines Partnership's purpose statement.