

MINNESOTA WATERSHEDS

Roseau Lake Rehabilitation Project:
Flood damage reduction and improved habitat

‘25 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE

Grand View Lodge

NISSWA, MINNESOTA



Connecting People. Protecting Water.



ENHANCING *our communities*

WELCOME TO ALL OUR WATERSHED PARTNERS!

As the Minnesota Watersheds (MW) board President, I'm excited to welcome you to our annual conference. It's a great opportunity to share the hard work that our partners have been doing and to share the important work of protecting your community's water resources! It has been a busy year with many updates and successes!

Minnesota's lakes have impacted my journey, from my time at a family cabin on Lake Koronis, growing up farming and learning how water is so critical to our food production, to whitewater rafting as a Boy Scout, to my first job after high school as a dogsled guide and canoe outfitter in the Boundary Waters where I would drink right out of the lakes, to currently living on Fountain Lake in Albert Lea as the Shell Rock River Watershed District works to finish dredging the lake to enhance our community. I see my own children making similar memories and connections.

I am certain everyone reading this has their own stories to tell. We work hard to protect what is important. And few things in life are as important as the work you accomplish protecting our water. The fingerprints you leave behind in the projects you have accomplished will be visible for generations!

Last year's conference was held at Grand View Lodge for the first time. We worked through some challenges, listened to your feedback, and we're back again having incorporated your suggestions!

It is important to have a strong working relationship with vendors and contractors, so we have moved the trade show from a separate building into the ballroom and provided stages for them to present to attendees, adding value and building more networking opportunities.

Providing legislative outreach to ensure our state laws and regulations enable our watersheds to get the job done is an important part of what we offer. We bolstered that process by moving the resolutions process to start in April, initiated the Annual Meeting on Resolutions and Petitions in August,

increased the membership in our Resolutions and Legislative Committee, and have changed the process so that the membership chooses our legislative priorities at the annual business meeting in December after we know the makeup of the upcoming Legislature. These changes make the entire process more transparent and give our members a stronger voice in our legislative process.

Speaking of legislative, our lobbying team from Lockridge Grindal Nauen PLLP has been working hard to make important contributions to the understanding that our legislators have about the work that our watersheds do and how legislation impacts their ability to get important projects completed, and building the relationships needed to get our priorities passed.

Our Summer Tour in Roseau was a success, with the Roseau River Watershed District and their partners demonstrating their amazing work on watershed projects. Those projects were absolutely stunning in terms of the size and scope! Many of us also enjoyed the tour of the Polaris factory, learning about this amazing company with such a rich history and impact on our state.

Our Executive Director, Jan Voit, has been very busy representing your interests at many events and meetings, such as the Drainage Work Group, regular meetings with BWSR and other partners, and keeping our committees on track and effective with agendas, meeting support, and her knowledge. Thank you, Jan!

It is my hope that you all find tremendous value from your Minnesota Watersheds membership. We are here to serve you and be a valuable resource. We are always looking for ways to improve. Thank you for your trust. On behalf of the Minnesota Watersheds Board of Directors, I wish you a safe and productive 2026! Let's continue working together to ensure Minnesota's waters remain healthy for generations to come!

Brad Kramer *President*
MINNESOTA WATERSHEDS

Upcoming
SAVE-THE-DATE

MARCH 3, 2026
LEGISLATIVE EVENT
Providing MW members an opportunity to build relationships with key legislators and advance our legislative agenda.

AUG 24-26, 2026
SUMMER TOUR
MW partners with the Red River Watershed Management Board and the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources.

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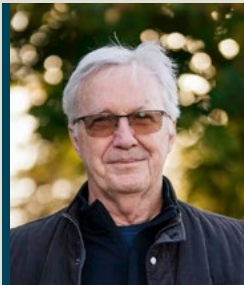
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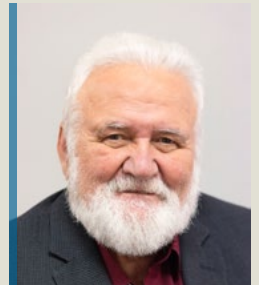
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Lobbying Group

THE LOCKRIDGE GINDAL NAUEN (LGN) GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM



Daniel Larson



Jessica Lindeen



Kevin Matzek



Cullen Sheehan



Learn more at mnwatersheds.com

Event Sponsors

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Conference SCHEDULE

DEC
3-5,
2025 *December*

GRAND VIEW LODGE
Nisswa, Minnesota

Wednesday, Dec. 3

7 - 9 am	Continental Breakfast	Main Lodge — Heritage Room
7 - 9 am	Registration and Welcome	Gull Lake Center
8 am - 4 pm	Workshop Wednesday	
	Staff Development	Gull Lake Center — Ballroom A
	Staff Technical Training	Gull Lake Center — Ballroom B
	Watershed Management	Gull Lake Center — Lake Margaret
	Drainage	Norway Center
12 - 1 pm	Lunch Buffet	Main Lodge — Heritage Room
4:30 - 6 pm	Regional Caucuses	
	Region I Caucus	Norway Center Boardroom
	Region II Caucus	Gull Lake Center — Lake Hubert
	Region III Caucus	Gull Lake Center — Lake Margaret
6 - 9 pm	Trade Show Opening Night	Gull Lake Center — Ballroom
6 - 8 pm	Night at the Movies	Gull Lake Center — Lake Itasca

Thursday, Dec. 4

7 - 9 am	Continental Breakfast	Main Lodge — Heritage Room
8 am - 1 pm	Visit the Trade Show	Gull Lake Center — Ballroom
8 am - 5:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions	Gull Lake Center — Lake Margaret and Lake Itasca
11:45 am	Lunch	Norway Center and Main Lodge — Heritage Room
12:45 - 1 pm	Prize Winner Announcements	Gull Lake Center — Ballroom
6 - 9 pm	Social Hour, Banquet and Awards	Gull Lake Center — Ballroom

Friday, Dec. 5

7 - 9 am	Continental Breakfast	Main Lodge — Heritage Room
8 - 11 am	Business Meeting	Norway Center
11 am - noon	Minnesota Watersheds Board Meeting	Norway Center Boardroom



EVENT MAP

23521 Nokomis Avenue Nisswa, MN



GRAND VIEW - LODGE - SPA & GOLF RESORT

THE NORTH HOTEL

GULL LAKE CENTER (GLC)

What's taking place

- Wednesday Workshops:
 - Staff Technical Training
 - Staff Development
 - Watershed Management
- Trade Show
- Region II and III Caucus
- Concurrent Sessions (Th)
- Door prize winner announcements (Th)
- Banquet and Awards Ceremony (Th)

NORWAY CENTER

What's taking place

- Wednesday Workshop: *Drainage*
- Lunch on Thursday
- Region I Caucus
- Annual Meeting
- MW Board Meeting

THE MAIN LODGE

What's taking place

- Breakfast and Lunch at the Heritage Dining Room

Learn more about Grand View Lodge

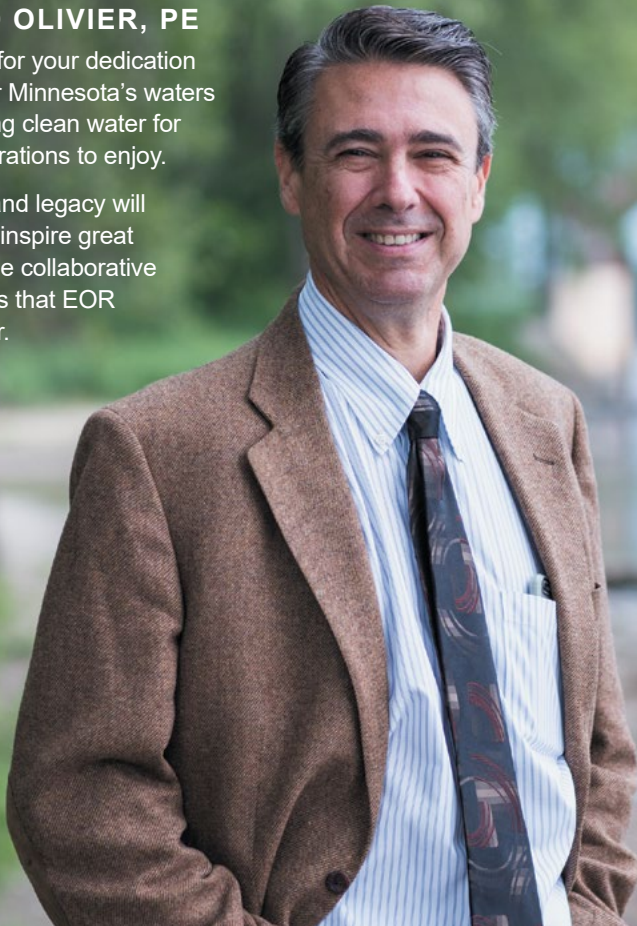


40 YEARS IN WATER RESOURCES

**EOR CO-FOUNDER
CECILIO OLIVIER, PE**

Thank-you for your dedication in caring for Minnesota's waters and ensuring clean water for future generations to enjoy.

Your spirit and legacy will continue to inspire great work and the collaborative partnerships that EOR is known for.



LILY LAKE DE-LISTING
Infiltration Basin for Improved Water Quality



CLIMATE ACTION ENGAGEMENT
Leading Watershed Workshops & Stakeholder Engagement



STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS FOR BOTTINEAU PARK
BMPs Include: Infiltration Basins, Permeable Pavers, Tree Trenches, Sustainable Landscaping, and Native Plantings



Save-the-Date for our Upcoming

SUMMER TOUR 2026

The 2026 Minnesota Watersheds Summer Tour will be hosted in Detroit Lakes, MN on Aug 24-26 in partnership with the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

**AUG.
24-26,
2026**



RRWMB

"Investing in and Managing the Watershed of the Red River Basin of Minnesota"

MISSION

The mission of the RRWMB is to institute, coordinate, and finance projects and programs to alleviate flooding and assure the beneficial use of water in the watershed of the Red River of the North and its tributaries.

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SOCIAL

[Facebook](#)

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RING DIKES

IMPOUNDMENTS

WATER QUALITY PROJECTS

GET IN TOUCH

RRWMB, 11 5th Ave East,
Ada, MN 56510

Thursday

CHOOSE YOUR CONCURRENT SESSIONS

PICK ONE
FOR EACH TIME
slot and fill up
your day

8 - 8:40 am

OPTION 1 ☐ Data Center Siting: What's Our Role as Watershed Organizations?

Data centers are in the news, and their siting and impact to water resources has become a hot topic in communities across Minnesota. Let's talk about how watershed districts could be involved, and different roles watershed organizations could have in this process. We welcome your discussion and feedback of what you are hearing in your community, and whether or how you think watershed districts should be involved. We hope you leave this session with a better understanding of the data center issue in Minnesota, and an understanding of the role you want your watershed organization to play when a data center developer approaches the communities in your watershed.

OPTION 2 ☐ Diagnosing the Impairment of Lake Osakis Using Multiple Lines of Inference

Lake Osakis is a 6,389 acre nutrient rich lake in central Minnesota that is impaired for aquatic recreation. Actions taken in the early 1900s to drain a historic shallow Lake into Lake Osakis nearly doubled the drainage area of the waterbody and continue to exacerbate water quality issues. This presentation will discuss a multiple lines of inference approach to understanding drivers of impairments and recreational issues on Lake Osakis. We will present an innovative collaborative approach to utilizing in-lake sediment survey, bathymetric survey, monitoring records, a two-dimensional lake response model, and calibrated landscape hydrology and water quality models to diagnose the issues driving the recreational impairment of Lake Osakis and demonstrate how the results will be used to inform community driven improvements on the waterbody.

8:45 - 9:25 am

☐ Saving Lily Lake: A Neighborhood Landmark

The Clean Water Act requires that states set limits for pollutants to protect water quality. If a lake, stream, river doesn't meet those standards, it requires that the water body goes on the impaired waters list. It's a place a water body doesn't want to be. It takes decades, sometimes centuries, of abuse to get on the list and very few make their way off. This is the story of a much-abused lake that the Stillwater, MN. embraced in an effort of 20 years to bring Lily Lake back from the list in a unique story. All done through watershed analysis, neighborhood outreach, street reconstruction, rain garden retrofits, ravine stabilization, major infrastructure adaptations to direct the runoff to the "world's largest raingarden", and the icing on the cake an alum treatment that improved water quality dramatically and led to the ultimate de-listing!

☐ Nelson Slough Improvement Project — Partnering with Diverse Needs

The Nelson Slough Improvement Project is located in Marshall County in northwestern Minnesota. The on-channel multi-purpose impoundment originally constructed in 1971 within the East Park Wildlife Management Area has surpassed its expected lifespan, affecting both habitat and flood storage within the impoundment. The proposed project includes a new outlet structure, raising existing levees to meet current dam safety standards, and stabilizing six miles of inlet/outlet channel. The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District, Marshall/Roseau County Drainage Authority, Lincoln and East Park Townships, and Department of Natural Resources have collaborated on watershed planning efforts to develop a joint powers agreement and operation/maintenance plan that allows for better operation of water levels to improve natural resource and flood control benefits. This effort is nine years in the making and is finally at the cusp of construction. We share with you our journey along the way and partnerships to make a diverse project a reality.

GULL LAKE CENTER

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Camilla Correll and Anabel Sanford, EOR, Inc.; Michelle Stockness and Carrie Jennings, Freshwater

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Drew Kessler, Houston Engineering Inc.; Jon Roeschlein, Sauk River WD; Scott Kronholm and Bret Zimmerman, Houston Engineering Inc.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Mike Isensee, Carnelian Range St. Croix Watershed District; Matthew Oldenburg-Downing, Middle Saint Croix WMO; Jay Michels, EOR, Inc.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Morteza Maher, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District; Tony Nordby, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Nicholas Brown, DNR

9:30-10:10 am**■ Calcareous Fens and Early Coordination for Projects**

Calcareous fens are rare, groundwater-fed wetlands that have special protection under MN Statutes 103G.223 and Rules Chapter 8420.0935, which prohibit filling, draining, or degrading fens, unless specifically authorized by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This session will help watershed districts and the DNR build a common understanding of calcareous fens and the project planning considerations needed to protect them. Participants will learn how fens are identified, the DNR's updated Technical Criteria for Identifying Calcareous Fens in Minnesota, and available data resources through the Minnesota Geospatial Commons. We will also discuss how the DNR evaluates potential project impacts to both known and newly discovered fens.

By focusing on early coordination and shared responsibilities, this session will highlight how watershed districts and the DNR can work together to avoid fen impacts, streamline project development, and achieve better outcomes for both natural resource protection and project efficiency.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Keylor Andrews, MNDNR;
Jennie Skancke, MNDNR

■ Bridging Waters, Building Futures: Youth Engagement in Local Waterways

The River Watch (RW) and River of Dreams (ROD) programs provide innovative, hands-on watershed education to over 40 schools across the RedRiver of the North Basin. Targeting elementary through high school students, these programs foster environmental awareness, scientific literacy, and stewardship through fieldwork, river excursions, and classroom-based learning. Since their launches (RW in 2010, ROD in 2017), they have become trusted models for engaging youth in local water issues. Students investigate water quality and ecosystem health across regional watersheds, gaining skills in data collection, analysis, and public communication. RW and ROD also support teachers through STEM resources and professional development. Outcomes include improved scientific understanding, exposure to environmental careers, and strengthened community ties. The programs align with regional water management plans and can be adapted elsewhere using an eight-step framework—from understanding local watersheds to building sustainable, community-based education efforts—emphasizing outdoor learning, stakeholder collaboration, and real-world problem solving.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Asher Kingery, Alyssa
Hauser, and Taylor
Lemieux, International
Water Institute

10:15 -10:55 am**■ Tackling Climate Change: Urban and Rural Connectors**

Minnesota's watershed districts and watershed management organizations are using their role and jurisdictional responsibilities to plan for climate change adaptation and resilience, serving an important connector role at a geographic scale conducive to climate action. Recent work completed by EOR with rural watershed districts located in the east metro, and urban watershed management organizations located in St. Paul and Minneapolis will serve as examples of these initiatives. These examples will range from how these organizations are integrating climate adaptation in their organizational planning, modelling and monitoring, capital planning, and outreach and engagement. Within these examples are topics in climate adaptation and mitigation including recognizing and responding to climate hazards and their associated impacts and vulnerabilities through the lenses of people, environment, and infrastructure. Discussion will explore comparisons between opportunities and challenges in rural and urban settings enabling attendees to engage with content that aligns with their watershed.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Alex Furneaux,
Emmons and Oliver
Resources; Abby Moore,
Mississippi WMO;
Mike Isensee, Carnelian
Marine St.Croix WD

■ New GIS Tools to Prioritize and Plan for Water Storage in Your Watershed

With an increased emphasis on water storage and treatment throughout the State of Minnesota, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has been implementing a systematic process to identify, prioritize, and evaluate water storage opportunities within several Minnesota watersheds. By utilizing existing Prioritize, Target, and Measure Application (PTMApp) data for the watersheds, in conjunction with the new Hydrology Analysis Toolbar, feasible water storage locations were identified and prioritized, and the hydrologic impact of those storage practices was evaluated quickly and efficiently. This ongoing effort has shown that the use of these modeling tools and data in conjunction with an organized process to engage local watershed teams can lead to the development of a prioritized water storage strategy to meet water storage goals and increase watershed resiliency to changing climate conditions.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Henry Van Offelen,
MN Board of Water
and Soil Resources;
Scott Kronholm,
Houston Engineering, Inc.



Minnesota Watersheds
2025 Annual Conference
and Tradeshow

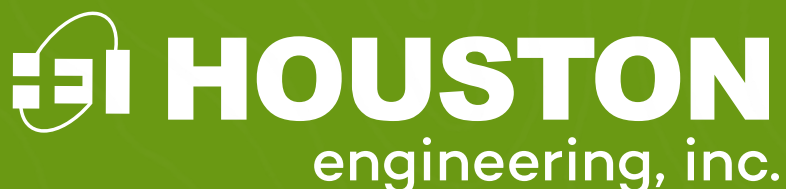
December 3-5,
Nisswa, MN

Serving Metro and Rural Minnesota with a Splash of Solutions!

Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI) has long partnered with Minnesota watershed districts and watershed management organizations to manage one of our most precious resources: water.

We serve communities with a wide variety of solutions including:

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- Water Quality
- Drainage
- Flood Mitigation
- Wetland Restoration and Banking
- Dams
- Stream Restoration
- Watershed Planning
- Community Engagement



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11-11:40 am**□ Evaluating the effectiveness of carp management in Minnesota: A statewide look at carp management projects**

Common carp management can be an effective tool to improve water quality or aquatic vegetation, by reducing carp's adverse effects on lake sediments. However, benefits vary depending on specific in-lake and watershed factors, making it difficult for lake managers to determine where and when to prioritize carp management. To better understand the factors influencing carp management as an effective lake restoration strategy, the University of Minnesota and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District have partnered with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to evaluate lake responses to carp management. Using statewide datasets, the study investigates changes in carp populations, water quality, and aquatic vegetation, to quantify relationships between these three variables at multiple scales and in diverse ecosystems. The study's results offer valuable insights that lake managers statewide can utilize to better identify and prioritize lakes that may benefit from carp management efforts.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Jake Walsh, University of MN; Jill Sweet and Brian Beck, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District; Dan Larkin, University of MN

□ Drainage Water Management in the Red River Watershed: A Look to the Future

Agricultural drainage in Minnesota began at Statehood in 1858 with the passage of "An Act to Regulate and Encourage the Drainage of Lands". Since this time, drainage law and management has evolved through several iterations with changing goals. Today, drainage serves as one of the cornerstones of modern agriculture, characterized by a mix of private and public systems working in tandem. However, concerns exist about the impacts of ag drainage, particularly related to flooding and altered hydrology, water quality, and habitat. Watershed Districts throughout the Red River basin have developed a framework for sound drainage management that includes multiple best management practices. This framework also includes collaborations with State agencies to ensure landowner rights to adequate drainage while striving to achieve water quality and habitat goals. This presentation will highlight the Red River basin approach to drainage management.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Chad Engels, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Henry Van Offelen, MN Board of Water and Soil Resources

11:45 am - 12:45 pm Lunch and Networking**1-1:40 pm****□ Minnesota Legislative Session: Review and Preview**

Our Minnesota Watershed's lobbying team will provide an overview of the latest policy and political challenges facing watersheds. There will be a review of the 2025 legislative session, a preview of the 2026 legislature, and a discussion on the opportunities for advancing Minnesota Watershed's legislative priorities. This presentation will include a brief overview of the current leadership dynamics at the capitol in St. Paul, what the outcome of the special legislative elections means for the upcoming session, and the impacts on watershed initiatives. Join us to learn about the legislative process and the advocacy work of Minnesota Watersheds.

LOCATION:

Norway Center and Main Lodge (Heritage Room)

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Kevin Matzek, Jessica Lindeen, and Dan Larson, Lockridge Grindal Nauen PLLP

□ Runoff and Recreation: Integrating Green Infrastructure at Bottineau Field Park

MWMO partnered with MPRB to integrate green stormwater infrastructure and habitat restoration into Bottineau Field Park. Designed by EOR, the project weaves habitat restoration and stormwater management into play and programmed activity areas. A stormwater tree trench along the boulevard captures runoff to nourish shade trees, cooling the plaza and basketball court. Rain gardens capture and infiltrate runoff within the park greenspaces, while a flow-through splash pad discharges to a bioswale and rain garden for infiltration and water quality treatment. The park plan reserves space for a future underground chamber system to harvest rainwater from streets for irrigation of the park's sports fields.

These improvements support MWMO's goal of improving water quality in the Mississippi River and aligns with MPRB's Above the Falls Master Plan by reducing impervious surfaces and enhancing habitat. The \$1.1 million project, including a \$300k grant from the MWMO, was completed in the fall of 2025, and will remove 2.2 lbs. of TP and 399 lbs. of TSS from park runoff each year.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Emmy Baskerville-Doeckel, Mississippi WMO; Britta Hansen, Emmons and Olivier Resources

1:45 - 2:25 pm**Where Do We Go From Here on Chloride?**

Chloride pollution from road, parking lot, and sidewalk deicing is degrading lakes, creeks, and wetlands across Minnesota. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has listed 68 chloride impairments in 42 waterbodies, with numbers rising annually. Because salt persists in the environment, reducing use is critical to protecting water resources. For several years, Minnesota Watersheds and partners have advanced legislation offering liability protection to property owners and contractors certified in proper salt application and low-salt practices. Despite Minnesota Watersheds' support, the legislation has not passed and appears unlikely to. In response, Minnesota Watersheds recently adopted a policy to explore regulatory approaches to chloride reduction. This session will review the history of the liability-limitation legislation in Minnesota, outline the case for a regulatory strategy, and engage participants in a facilitated discussion to identify pathways and implementation options for effective chloride management.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Erica Sniegowski, Nine Mile Creek Watershed District; Laura Jester, Bassett Creek WMC; Michael Welch, Smith Partners PLLP

Ditch the Drama — How to Keep Slopes from Losing It

There are many unstable ditches and natural waterways in Minnesota that are discharging sediment downstream, degrading aquatic habitat, creating loss of land, damaging infrastructure, and creating a public risk. This presentation will examine past and current projects to review signs of slope instability, typical causes of slope failures, and stabilization solutions. Our examples will show that there is no one solution to ditch instabilities. While they may appear the same, there are numerous subsurface factors that must be considered to achieve a successful project. Information will be provided on determining the causes of instability and discuss how gathering soil, groundwater, and hydraulic data is critical to identifying a solution. We will briefly discuss statutory requirements to consider, permitting, and various funding opportunities. The example projects will also highlight successful partnerships between watershed districts, county highway departments, and local soil and water conservation districts.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Drew Kessler, Scott Kronholm, and Bret Zimmerman, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Jon Roeschlein, Sauk River WD

2:30 - 3:10 pm**Agricultural Drainage: An Environmental and Economic Assessment of Critical Infrastructure**

Approximately 17% of Minnesota's farmland is tiled with the highest percentage of that being in the Minnesota River Valley, followed by the Red River Valley. An estimated 21,000 miles of ditches and channelized streams provide drainage infrastructure throughout the state. Most of this infrastructure was installed over 100 years ago with much of the recent activity replacing this older infrastructure. Yet the term 'drainage' is a catch all term that can mean many different things – patterned tile on private property, public drainage systems maintained by drainage authorities, a means of improving crop productivity, or a threat to the environment. This misunderstanding leads to confusion and erodes support for Minnesota's modern agriculture. This presentation aims to provide clarity to confusing terms and perspectives. We will provide an analysis of agriculture drainage infrastructure as it relates to existing laws, governance, impacts, and the investment necessary to maintain this infrastructure as compared to that of other necessary Minnesota infrastructure.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

Julie Blackburn and Jacob Rischmiller, ISG, Inc.

Removal of Conventional and Emerging Contaminants from Urban Stormwater by Iron-Enhanced Sand and Biochar Filters: A Case Study in Coon Creek Watershed

To address water-quality impairments, Coon Creek Watershed District (CCWD) installed various stormwater control measures throughout the watershed including two filters with iron-sand and iron-sand-biochar media. Since 2023, The U.S. Geological Survey has been monitoring the prevalence of various emerging contaminants in inflows and outflows from the two filters in coordination with CCWD who has been conducting routine monitoring for conventional pollutants. Paired inflow and outflow samples were analyzed for pesticides, flame retardants, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), pharmaceuticals, tire-wear chemicals, total suspended solids, phosphorus, and E. coli. Preliminary results indicate that particle-bound contaminants (conventional and emerging) are effectively removed but removal of dissolved contaminants varies by season and chemical. Results from the study provide insights into the occurrence and behavior of emerging contaminants in urban stormwater runoff and highlight the potential for existing stormwater practices to provide broader water-quality benefits than previously recognized.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

Sarah Elliott and Richard Kiesling, US Geological Survey; Justine Dauphinais and Chase Vanderbilt, Coon Creek WD

3:15 - 3:55 pm

□ Roseau River Rehabilitation Project — Habitat and Recreation Improvements within Projects

The Roseau Lake Rehabilitation project has incorporated multiple habitat improvement strategies to enhance the ecosystem function and value, improve public experience within the project footprint and the adjoining landscape. Habitat features include seasonal water level management within the lake basin, restoring base flows to the historic Roseau River within the lake basin, restoring flows to Pine Creek within the lake basin, hydrologic restoration of the Sprague Creek SNA and adjacent peatlands, construction of a moist soils unit, conversion of borrow area to shallow wetland complex, and construction of two wildlife viewing mounds. While these features individually have improved habitat and/or public use, the incorporation of all these components has resulted in a holistic project addressing both water resource and habitat needs for the region.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTERS:

*Blaine Broten,
Roseau River
Watershed District;
Torin McCormack,
HDR*

□ Partners in Grime: Stormwater Facility Maintenance Collaboration

CRWD and RWMWD recognize the need for consistent, high-quality operation and maintenance (OandM) of stormwater facilities to ensure proper performance and intended function. Local governments face many challenges with OandM including limited staff time and budgets, staff turnover, specialized expertise, and coordination of shared or regional facilities. Public partners have expressed interest in watershed districts taking on a more active role in the coordination, ownership, management, and/or maintenance of facilities. Improvement in the management of these constructed facilities can lead to better water quality and flood control, longer-lasting infrastructure, and improved aesthetics.

RWMWD began coordinating maintenance of partner-owned stormwater ponds in 2017, and CRWD launched its Facility Management program in 2023 with the goals of addressing gaps in completing OandM activities, improving cost and labor efficiency, and optimizing management of facilities. This presentation will highlight each watershed's approach to OandM assistance and share experiences from coordination to closeout.

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTERS:

*Forrest Kelley and
Chris Kucek,
Capitol Region WD;
Paige Ahlborg and
Dave Vlasin, RWMWD;
Gareth Becker,
Barr Engineering*

4 - 4:40 pm

□ Protecting Agricultural Lands in the Red River Basin

The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) was created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1976 and is a joint powers board of seven watershed districts. The RRWMB's primary focus is flood mitigation with water quality and habitat programs also in place. The RRWMB is working with its membership to reduce flood damage to agriculture and public/private infrastructure. Our work moves the needle on ensuring the future of Minnesota

Red River Basin farmers and their future generations. The RRWMB Strategic Plan calls for the protection of agricultural lands, and this presentation discusses activities that the RRWMB has been involved with to protect agricultural lands.

□ City of Hopkins Pioneers Low Salt Design

The City of Hopkins demonstrates how winter safety strategies built into the design process can reshape civil engineering standards in cold climates. Hopkins is the first municipality to integrate Low Salt Design into its sustainable building policy. Funding assistance from the 9 Mile Creek Watershed District allowed Hopkins' to pioneer low salt design practices that are now influencing regional best practices. Through their leadership, Hopkins is improving the safety of its built environment and ecosystem—setting a new standard for cold climate performance and environmental stewardship.

As climate change increases freeze-thaw cycles, infrastructure must evolve to reduce salt dependency. Hopkins' efforts in chloride reduction are supported by Connie Fortin, low salt strategist and/or Jenni Faulker community planner practice leader at Bolton and Menk. This presentation introduces Low Salt Design principles and its application into city policy that reduce chloride pollution at the source.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTER:

*Robert Sip, Red River
Watershed Management
Board*

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTER:

*Connie Fortin,
Bolton and Menk, Inc.;
Kersten Elverum,
City of Hopkins*



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4:45 - 5:25 pm

▣ Lessons Learned from Two 1W1P Mid-Point Evaluations and Amendments: A Red Lake Watershed District Case Study

As comprehensive watershed management plans developed under BWSR's One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) program reach the halfway point of their 10-year cycle, mid-point evaluations have emerged as a valuable tool for assessing progress and strengthening implementation. Supported by BWSR 1W1P Mid-Point Grants, these evaluations provide an opportunity to measure outcomes, integrate new data, and identify needed amendments or course corrections to ensure continued effectiveness. This presentation draws on lessons learned from the Red Lake Watershed District from undergoing the mid-point evaluation and amendments for two of its watersheds (the Red Lake Watershed and the Thief River Watershed), offering practical insights into evaluation approaches, challenges, and adaptive strategies that enhance long-term watershed management success.

LOCATION:

Lake Margaret

PRESENTER:

*Corey Hanson,
Red Lake Watershed
District;
Rachel Olm,
Houston Engineering*

▣ Watersheds and OSHA Compliance

In Minnesota, government entities are required to follow MNOSHA regulations. We'll discuss what OSHA compliance looks like for a WD, the primary requirements watersheds must follow, and why. In many states and under the federal OSHA regulations, most municipalities and government are not subject to OSHA, so there is a lot of confusion. Compliance can be easy!

OSHA requirements cover everything from machine operators (skid steer, tractor, etc.), hazardous chemicals (pesticides, water sampling agents, fertilizer), confined spaces (utility vaults, water storage tanks, culverts), excavations (working in any trench deeper than 4'), emergency plans, and more. Additionally, contractors are required to follow OSHA requirements, with many hazards typical of the construction field, such as excavations, working with electricity, and operating heavy machinery. Watersheds are responsible for ensuring contractors meet safety requirements. This presentation will help you determine what OSHA regulations apply and how to manage them!

LOCATION:

Lake Itasca

PRESENTER:

*Brad Kramer,
Shell Rock River
Watershed District*



ATTORNEYS

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Charles B. Holtman
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Through a partnership between the City of Edina and the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, Barr helped transform Lynmar Basin, an underutilized, turf park space, into a multifunctional rain garden brimming with native and pollinator-friendly plants that also provides water quality treatment for more than 20 acres of suburban runoff.

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Annual Awards

THE 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS

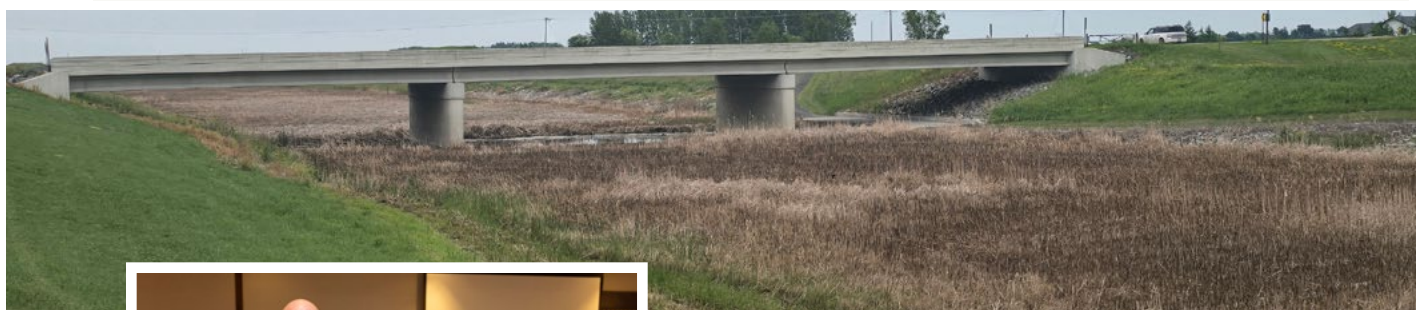
View past winners
in the MN Watersheds
Archive.



Each year, the MN Watersheds Awards Committee asks for nominations from each watershed organization. After reviewing the nominations, one winner is selected from each category and is recognized at the Awards Program during the Annual Conference.

All Awards will be announced during the banquet dinner on Thursday evening.

PROJECT OF THE YEAR AND WATERSHED DISTRICT OF THE YEAR AND OUTSTANDING
WATERSHED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR WD ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR AND
PROGRAM OF THE YEAR AND BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR / NIGHT AT THE MOVIES



PROJECT OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY MINNESOTA WATERSHEDS

HIGHLAND BRIDGE DISTRICT STORMWATER SYSTEM

Capitol Region Watershed District

WINNER



WATERSHED DISTRICT OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY THE MINNESOTA DNR

ROSEAU RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

WINNER



OUTSTANDING WATERSHED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY THE MN BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

EMILY DICK

Prior Lake Spring Lake Watershed District

WINNER



ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY THE MN ASSOCIATION OF
WATERSHED ADMINISTRATORS

JAMES WISKER

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

WINNER



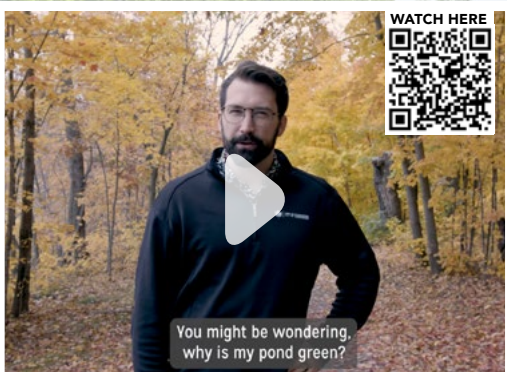
BEST PROGRAM OF 2024

PRESENTED BY MINNESOTA WATERSHEDS

CARP MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Rice Creek Watershed District

WINNER



BEST PICTURE OF 2024 (NIGHT AT THE MOVIES)

"WHY IS MY POND GREEN"

*Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek
Watershed District*

WINNER



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Happy Anniversary

WATERSHEDS CELEBRATING IN 2025

Learn more about
the watersheds
celebrating milestones



Congratulations to all the local watershed organizations celebrating their anniversaries this year! Awards will be announced during the banquet on Thursday evening.

50 YEARS

Clearwater River WD,
Ramsey-Washington Metro WD,
Sand Hill River WD

40 YEARS

North Fork Crow River WD

20 YEARS

Middle Fork Crow River WD






Ramsey Washington Metro WD celebrated their 50th Anniversary on September 18, 2025.

In 2021 the Sand Hill River Watershed District completed the Poissant Bridge Replacement by eliminating the bridge and replacing it with a rock riffle for grade control and fish passage. In 2021 the Sand Hill River Watershed District completed the Poissant Bridge Replacement by eliminating the bridge and replacing it with a rock riffle for grade control and fish passage.

Meet our 2025 Exhibitors

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20	STANLEY CONSULTANTS stanleyconsultants.com	Dan Murphy murphydan@stanleygroup.com 952-738-4360	

LIST OF EXHIBITORS

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15	MOLEAER	Jonathan Moleaer jonathan@moleaer.com	moleaer.com 320-295-6641
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