COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: April 11, 2016
AGENDA NUMBER: 15
ITEM: Review of Significant Events of the Current Year (2015-16)

AGENDA: Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED
Discuss and receive

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS OF THE CURRENT YEAR
Coon Creek Watershed District was one of the fastest growing Districts in terms of population growth in the Twin Cities metropolitan area since the 2000 census through 2006. Since 2006, the pace of residential development has slowed and is attributable to regional and national economic factors. The District has taken a revised outlook on where growth is most likely to occur in contrast to previously determined urban services staging areas. In 2015, the District issued 85 permits with an estimated valuation of $21,250,000, compared to 71 permits with an estimated value of $17,750,000 in 2014.

Some additional noteworthy event/activities that occurred in 2015 include:
1. The year began particularly dry and by March was 60% below normal, compared to the wettest spring on record in 2014. The watershed finished 2015 well within the variation seen in a ‘normal’ year and a growing season on the wet-side of normal.

2. The District experienced a continued resurgence in new residential development with 170 permit applications compared to 120 in 2014. Including medium to large residential developments such as Hickory Meadows 2nd Addition in Andover, Wagamon Ranch in Blaine, Wellington Ridge commercial development in Coon Rapids, Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley and Harmony Estates and Co-Part in Ham Lake.

3. In 2015 the District, in cooperation with Anoka County and the City of Blaine, worked through the planning and permitting of Bunker Lake Blvd in Andover, Main Street in Blaine and Foley Blvd in Coon Rapids.

4. The District started initial discussion and planning for a permanent home for the District. The building is envisioned to provide for the District’s operations and maintenance activities as well as development regulation and community water information, education and involvement needs.

5. In spite of the dry spring, the District experienced a 60% increase in issues called in by citizens and cities within the watershed. Sixty-three percent of those issues
stemmed directly from water and related resources and required direct intervention on
the part of the District.

6. The District completed construction of two sets of Bioretention basins on Sand Creek
and Woodcrest creeks to complete the water quality treatment retrofits of the
neighborhoods served and alleviate chronic street flooding.

7. The District conducted critical ditch repairs on Tronson and Coon Creeks essential to
protect several homes and ensure flood protection to approximately 20 more.

8. Inspections and condition assessments were completed on all structures and 28 miles
(20%) of public ditch owned and operated by the District.

9. The District removed over 100 trees from channels within the watershed. This was
more than a 400% increase from the previous year.

10. Completed two bank stabilization projects in the headwaters on ditches 11 and 44 to
reduce suspended solids within the main stem of the drainage system.

11. Initiated an ‘Early Detection’ system for aquatic invasive species on Crooked and
Ham Lakes.

12. Returned $162,926 in escrows from 72 completed projects, an 88% increase from
2014.

13. Had contact with approximately 95,000 people in 2015 primarily through the
District’s web site and audio visual outreach. A 25% increase from 2014.

14. Conducted 44 education programs involving more than 1,400 people. Continued
support of Water Fest, outdoor clean ups and training opportunities for local city
staffs.

15. Sponsored 105 opportunities for citizen involvement ranging from group activities to
committee meetings providing input into District priorities, decisions and actions.

16. Monitor eight different features of water quantity and quality on 64 different sites.

17. The Board of Managers reaffirmed the District’s commitment to collaborating with all
units of government in managing water and related natural resources.

18. The Board of Managers reaffirmed the District’s commitment to collaborating with all
units of government in managing water and related natural resources.

19. The District’s Annual financial Audit received and unqualified opinion for the 26th
year in a row.
20. The District continues to make progress in the process of digitally imaging documents retained by the District and disposing of documents not essential, according to the District’s records retention plan approved by the State of Minnesota.