COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: March 11, 2013  
AGENDA NUMBER: 16  
ITEM: DRAFT Upper Mississippi River Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

POLICY IMPACT: Discussion  
FISCAL IMPACT: n/a

REQUEST

BACKGROUND
The above study was released by the MPCA for public review on March 6. It is this TMDL that the District’s involvement in the WRAPP is attempting to mitigate by expanding the analysis and thus allowing for efficiencies and reduced costs by integrating best management practices.

A large number of Minnesotans rely on the Mississippi River for recreational activities and drinking water. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has identified several Mississippi River reaches from St. Cloud to St. Paul as impaired for bacteria. The Upper Mississippi River Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Project that will address these impairments may include parts of nine counties and 32 cities. The MPCA and Minnesota Department of Health are partnering to lead this project in close coordination with area land and watershed management organizations, cities and counties, and agencies to develop a TMDL report and implementation plan. The ultimate goal of this project is to improve and restore the water quality of the Upper Mississippi River.

Minnesota’s water quality standard for E. coli bacteria in streams is 126 organisms per 100 ml (milliliters) of water. Testing for pathogens in water bodies is difficult, so indicator organisms such as E. coli bacteria are used to indicate the likelihood that a river contains disease-causing pathogens. E. coli comes from human, livestock, pet, and wildlife waste. Bacteria can be transferred to water bodies from stormwater systems, areas with field-applied manure fertilizer or storage, non-compliant septic systems, connected water bodies, or feedlots.

The process for conducting the TMDL study will consist of evaluating the water quality problem, determining the sources of the pollutant, allocating pollutant loads to sources and areas, and developing a plan for implementing activities to restore water quality.
ISSUES/CONCERNS
Comment Period: Comments are due to MPCA by March 29.

Public Briefing, Q&A: March 22; 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Elk River City Hall


RECOMMENDATION
1. Direct staff to review and provide comments to MPCA consistent with District policies and priorities
2. Provide the Board with copies of staff comments