COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE:       June 13, 2016
AGENDA NUMBER:      18
ITEM:              Preliminary Proposals for Program Changes and Additions

AGENDA:            Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED
Review and discuss preliminary proposals for program changes and additions

BACKGROUND
At this point in the budget process, staff is articulating potential changes in District programming. The exact budget impact of these changes is not known at this time.

The proposed changes are a distillation of Board comments and discussions as well as comments and conversations with staff.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

Monitoring: During budget conversations last year, staff expressed some of its frustrations and confidence with the current monitoring efforts.

Options discussed were assuming the responsibilities in-house by potentially re-assigning work or adding staff in addition to continue to contract with the ACD, or a mix.

The evaluation of those options and their associated costs and effectiveness are scheduled to be part of the program review preliminary budget discussion on June 27.

Riparian Protection: Minnesota Statutes 103F.48 The Riparian Protection and Water Quality Practices Act (AKA The Governor’s Buffer Bill) will really take effect in 2017. While staff believes the requirements of the Act will place demands on the District, and that there will be the need for program changes and additions starting in 2017. One of the changes may be a required inspection of buffers and compliance with the state buffer requirements. The current DRAFT BWSR policy on this (Policy 3) is provided as part of the update on the buffer rule.

The current discussion by the State agencies is that the Exemption for MS4s only applies to MS4s who have a program and are adequately protecting riparian areas within their jurisdiction by implementing the state standards for establishment and maintenance of buffers, or equivalent BMP, within their jurisdiction.
The good news is that the vast majority of the District should already be in compliance. Staff has already initiated steps to determine how big any non-compliance problem might be.

**Special Road Crossing Maintenance Fund:** Staff has identified a need for ready access to funds to clear channels upstream and downstream from city and county culvert replacement. An appropriate amount has yet to be determined.

So far in 2016 the District has encountered four locations that with the higher peak flows the road culverts are contributing to not meeting the District standards in passing the volume of water per unit time to facilitate drainage upstream. While the high elevation of these culverts were known, it was not until recently that they have become a significant problem. Also, while the culverts are the responsibility of the owner of the road, in some cases, repair of the ditch needs to occur upstream and downstream far enough to be clearly outside the scope of the culvert replacement project.

Staff is suggesting the establishment of the fund or line item to address these issues.

**PRIOR DECISIONS**

**Monitoring:** In 2015 during discussions for the 2016 budget, it was planned that the water quality coordinator closely monitor the existing monitoring programs to be able to better sort out and identify options for assumption, partial assumption or continued contracting for monitoring and hence identify labor and expertise needs. Because of health issues that task has not been accomplished so far this year.

**OPTIONS**

1. Discuss and receive the report

2. Provide staff direction for program review and preliminary budget for the June 27 meeting

**RECOMMENDATION**

Provide staff direction for program review and preliminary budget for the June 27 meeting