Hi,

I want to thank you again for your participation helping us plan the water town halls and engage your local communities. They were so successful because of your involvement. The Governor gave a press conference on water and the funding in his bonding bill yesterday for water infrastructure. We released a report that I am attaching to this email on what was heard at the town halls.

Many Thanks,

Anna Henderson | Water Advisor
Office of Governor Mark Dayton
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Ste. 130
St. Paul, MN 55155-1611
Office: 651-201-3424 | Fax: 651-797-1874

From: Dayton Media
Sent: Wednesday, February 21, 2018 2:40 PM
To: Dayton Media <dayton.media@state.mn.us>
Subject: RELEASE: Governor Dayton Releases New Water Quality Report, Urges Investments to Ensure Clean, Affordable Water for Minnesotans

[REPORT] Read a new report, summarizing 3,500 comments from more than 2,000 Minnesotans on strategies to protect and improve Minnesota’s water quality. [Link]

[ANALYSIS] See a new analysis that shows at least 171 clean water infrastructure projects across Minnesota in need of new state funding. [Link]

[PROPOSAL] Get the facts on Governor Dayton’s proposal to invest $167 in clean water infrastructure across Minnesota this year through his public works bill. [Link]

[SNAPSHOT] See a snapshot of four local water projects – two that have received state funding, and two waiting on essential state investments to ensure clean, accessible water in their communities. [Link]

[MAP] See a map of more than 200 local water infrastructure projects statewide that are either moving ahead this year, or are waiting on additional funding. [Link]
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 21, 2018

Contact: Sam Fettig
651-201-3408 office
612-214-2886 cell
sam.fettig@state.mn.us

Governor Dayton Releases New Water Quality Report, Urges Investments to Ensure Clean, Affordable Water for Minnesotans

New report summarizes key findings from Governor Dayton’s water quality town hall meetings held in communities last year, where more than 2,000 Minnesotans submitted over 3,500 ideas

Governor Dayton has proposed a $167 million investment in his Public Works Bill to help ensure more Minnesotans have access to clean, reliable, affordable water

New analysis shows that at least 171 clean water infrastructure projects across Minnesota require additional funding to move forward

ST. PAUL, MN – Governor Mark Dayton today released a new report summarizing key findings from ten Water Quality Town Hall meetings held last year with Minnesotans across the state. The report, which summarizes more than 3,500 suggestions from more than 2,000 meeting attendees, recommends strategies to boost water quality education efforts, empower local action and collaboration, and increase investments in local clean water infrastructure, among other ideas. This session, Governor Dayton has proposed a $167 million investment through his Public Works proposal, to improve local clean water infrastructure and ensure all Minnesota have access to clean, affordable water, no matter where they live.

“All Minnesotans deserve water that is safe for drinking, cleaning, swimming, and fishing,” said Governor Dayton. “In last year’s regional Water Quality Summits, I heard directly from many Minnesotans how important it is to them to protect and improve water quality throughout our state. I urge the Legislature to support my 2018 Public Works Bill’s investments to ensure clean, affordable water throughout Minnesota. Ensuring clean water for ourselves and for future generations is everyone’s challenge, and everyone’s responsibility.”

More than 40 percent of Minnesota’s waters are currently listed as impaired or polluted, and more and more rural drinking water systems are having to deal with nitrate contamination. Across Minnesota, water treatment plants and clean drinking water systems that keep our waters safe are in serious disrepair. In fact, the federal government estimates that Minnesota will need $11 billion to maintain and improve our clean water infrastructure over the next 20 years.

While at least 22 local projects were funded thanks to the 2017 Public Works Bill, a new analysis shows that at least 171 local clean water projects will require additional state funding to move forward this year, or in the years ahead. To see two examples of projects that have received funding, and two that need additional state resources, CLICK HERE.

About the Water Quality Town Hall Meetings
Between July and October 2017, Governor Dayton and state agency leaders traveled throughout the state to hear from Minnesotans about their ideas to protect and improve water quality in Minnesota communities. At these Water Quality Town Hall Meetings, the Governor and members of his Administration talked with Minnesotans about the “25 by 25” Water Quality Goal and other ideas to ensure all Minnesotans have access to clean, reliable, affordable water, no matter where they live.

More than 2,000 people attended at least one of the ten meetings across the state, with 500 others participating online or via community meetings. Overall, 3,500 ideas were submitted for improving water quality in Minnesota, which are summarized in a new report. Read more about the top concerns and strategies for improving water quality that Minnesotans expressed at the meetings below:

- **Improving Education and Engagement** – One of the major themes among comments received was improving education about water quality issues and solutions. This concern ranked at or near the top in every region of the state.

- **Reducing Water Runoff** – Minnesotans across the state cited holding more water on the land by expanding water quality projects and practices as a top concern. A wide range of strategies were raised by the public, reflecting regional topographic differences and the idea that solutions need to be site-specific.

- **Improving Collaboration** – A consistent theme in the feedback submitted was for all levels of government to work more effectively together, including through clearer communication about water quality issues, streamlining grant application processes, and better coordination among different levels of government.

- **Empowering Local Planning and Action** – The need for locally-led action and planning was a top concern across the state. Minnesotans expressed the value of local decision making to build buy-in and secure the long-term commitment needed to make change.

- **Reducing Pollutants to Protect Drinking Water** – Across the state, Minnesotans expressed a desire to reduce the amount of harmful pollutants that enter our water. These pollutants come from a variety of sources in different regions of the state.

- **Addressing Failing Wastewater Infrastructure** – Reducing failing and inadequate clean water infrastructure systems was also a concern in comments submitted. Aging drinking and waste water infrastructure threaten the good water quality all Minnesotans expect and deserve.

- **Identifying Long-Term, Sustainable Funding** – The need for long-term, sustainable funding for clean water projects and initiatives was a consistent theme at each of the town hall meetings across the state.

To read the full Water Quality Town Hall Meetings Report, [CLICK HERE](#).

**Investing in Clean, Affordable Water for all Minnesotans**

In 2017, Governor Dayton worked with the Minnesota Legislature to secure $105.7 million in new funding for local water infrastructure projects through the public works bill. This funding included $88.7 million for grant programs aimed at improving infrastructure for drinking water, wastewater, and clean water in communities across Minnesota.

Despite this investment, at least 171 clean water infrastructure local projects require additional funding to move forward this year, or in the years ahead. Governor Dayton’s 2018 public works proposal would invest $167 million to ensure Minnesotans have access to clean, reliable, affordable water, including $142 million for these grant programs to modernize Minnesota’s aging clean water infrastructure in communities throughout Minnesota.

To see which local clean water infrastructure projects have been funded, and the 171 that could benefit from new funding included in Governor Dayton’s 2018 public works bill, [CLICK HERE](#). To see two examples of projects that have received funding, and two that need additional state resources, [CLICK HERE](#).

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