

# Implementation

**Purpose** The implementation plan identifies the specific activities, projects, studies, and other tasks necessary to implement the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. These were identified by members of the public, the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC); the District's other advisory committees, staff and Managers as necessary to achieve objectives that were suggested during the public involvement process.

**Intent** The initiatives contained in the implementation plan seek to protect and improve District resources and productive capacity. In many cases, implementation requires further action and/or approval and participation of other parties. Inclusion of a program, activity, project, or capital improvement in the implementation plan is not a set decision to implement that action. Implementation rests on annual Board decisions to budget for and fund the action, and in some cases may require further legal procedures and/or the approval or participation of other parties.

The District will regularly evaluate the water resources needs within the District and make appropriate changes in priorities during the term of the implementation plan.

Over the 10-year period of this implementation plan, as new information becomes available, priorities change, new concerns emerge, or new technical approaches are developed, the District will likely amend the implementation plan to reflect this new information.

The listing of initiatives in the implementation plan is not intended to exclude other initiatives consistent with the goals identified in this Plan. If the new activity is widely different in scope or cost from that detailed in the implementation plan, plan amendments may be required. If not, the District could proceed with a new initiative under the existing implementation plan

**Scope** The implementation plan focuses on those resource concerns that are of interest to and a priority for the District to address in the next 10 years. This may result in some resource issues and concerns not being identified as a key area of focus in this Plan. This may be due to the fact that other units of government may already address these areas or because the methods for management of these issues are not yet clear or they are not a priority resource concern at this time.

**District Priority** Upon review of the District's basic statutory authorities (Appendix D), the watershed's functional capacity and tendencies (Appendix B) and the demands for values placed on water and related resources within the watershed (Appendix C), the District has committed itself to pursuing the

Mission Goals as part of its ongoing water resource management efforts. The District has also recognized that there are emerging issues that require immediate attention because they present serious problems or because there is no known management strategy or technology for dealing with them. However, while the District will continue to address both its obligations to ongoing management of the watershed and to anticipate and address emerging issues with a goal of positioning the District or preventing the issue from becoming a crises the District must maintain a focus on critical elements that exert the greatest influence on the ecology and economy of the watershed.

The District's main focus at this time is on

1. Preventing flooding
2. Improving water quality in impaired or impacted waters
3. Maintaining and enhancing water quality in waters that are not impaired.

## **Goals**

The implementation goals and objectives are:

1. To integrate water resource management with Watershed District land and resource management planning
2. To coordinate Watershed water resource protection, development, and improvement programs with similar programs of other Federal, State, and local agencies.
3. To assess effectiveness of management in meeting legislative mandates, such as those pertaining to pollution control and securing favorable conditions for stream flow.
4. To provide the operational staff with the best mix of trained staff, equipment, and support attainable within fiscal constraints.

## **Objectives**

1. Address water resource management in related land and resource planning, program planning and budgeting, and when conducting environmental analyses.
2. Coordinate programs and activities, such as precipitation monitoring, which can produce affects outside as well as within the watershed, with all affected interests
3. Support properly designed and technically sound water related activities of cooperators within the Watershed, provided those activities and anticipated results are not in conflict with any applicable law or regulation governing the administration and management of these lands.

4. To annually produce a plan, a program, and, finally, a budget for Board of Managers approval that reflects changes in the physical, social and management environments that affect water resources within the Coon Creek watershed
5. To make the adjustments to plans and programs that allow the District to continue to implement the Comprehensive Plan

**Management Overview**

The Coon Creek Watershed District’s Comprehensive Plan commits the agency to delivering a range of natural resource-based benefits to the people of the District based on the Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives. The District will seek to assist people and local units of government in being good stewards of the watershed by utilizing the strategies identified in Section 1 of this plan (Collaborative efforts; watershed and subwatershed management; performance and market based solutions; and adaptive management).

**Description of Implementation**

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will occur through an annual adaptive management using the annual planning, programming and budgeting cycle to evaluate, plan and fund activities. This process will be the primary resource management process of the Coon Creek Watershed District and contains five distinct but interrelated phases



**Annual Assessment**

In addition to establishing the framework and process for decision making on future programs, the process permits prior decisions to be re-examined and analyzed from the viewpoint of the current environment (physical

social and political/economic threats and opportunities) and for the time period being addressed. The decisions shall be based on and consistent with a set of objectives, policies, priorities, and strategies derived from the State of Minnesota, Anoka County, the Cities within the District and the Board's own priorities

In the assessment phase the role and posture of the cities, Anoka County and the state agencies in the regional and state operating environment shall be examined, considering enduring water resource objectives and the need for efficient management of resources.

**Planning** The Comprehensive Plan provides a general long-term direction for the Watershed based on 11 legislative goals identified in the Metropolitan Water Management Act, the Watershed District Act, the Wetland Conservation Act, and the Federal Clean Water Act and MS4 NPDES program.

In planning, the District will focus on:

1. Defining the Watershed District strategy necessary to help maintain sustainable management and support of state and local water resource policy 2 to 5 years in the future;
2. Planning the integrated and balanced program efforts necessary to accomplish that strategy;
3. Ensuring the necessary framework (including priorities) to manage Watershed District resources effectively for successful mission accomplishment consistent with national resource limitations; and providing decision options to the Board of Managers to help them assess the role of water resource management.

This review shall culminate in the issuance of Management Guidance.

**Annual Program Plan & Budget** In the programming phase, the Watershed District shall develop or adjust plans programs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Program Plan The Annual Plan provides short-term direction for the purposes of formulating budgets and work plans to accomplish these objectives. Annual goals and intermediate outcomes or measures are intended to show progress toward long-term goals.

These programs shall reflect systematic analysis of the District's mission and objectives to be achieved, alternative methods of accomplishing them, and the effective allocation of the resources.

The Advisory Committees shall analyze the programs and provide a comments based on the capability of the composite program and activity efforts of the District and its collaborators

**Annual Budget** The District budget provides a framework for meeting these goals by describing the resource requirements for work activities and output measures describing the actual “on-the-ground” work that needs to be done.

On-the-ground activities and projects can be for the purpose of meeting more than one objective. Consequently, trying to determine how much of the work is for one objective versus another is difficult, impractical, and may be inappropriate when the same project simultaneously contributes to multiple objectives.

The budget resources (Funding and FTE) of an activity are assigned to the program and activity is primarily dedicated toward achieving. This methodology is used to determine the total amount of resources by program and objective.

In the budgeting phase, the Watershed District program components shall develop detailed budget estimates for the budget years of the programs approved during the programming phase.

A budget review is conducted by the CAC and TAC; the results are issued in Program Budget Decisions

**Monthly Reports** Monitoring of the implementation of the annual plan and budget (and therefore the Comprehensive Plan) is done through monthly reports to the Board of Managers in the form of staff and financial reports. Monthly reports provide sufficient time to make adjustments to annual work plans and budgets.

**Annual Report** The Coon Creek Watershed District (District) is required to annually report on a variety of activities. These requirements and the state and federal laws that mandate the reporting are listed in the appendix.

The results and outcomes of the annual report provide the major inputs into the annual assessment of progress and condition.

**Implementation Plan Structure** To pursue its mission, goals and objectives the implementation of the comprehensive plan will be organized around five categories:

1. Funds
2. Programs (Cost Centers)
3. Policies and Procedures
4. Partnerships and Collaboration
5. Capital Projects

**Funds** A fund is a statutory entity required for government accounting purposes. It is defined as an independent fiscal and accounting entity with a set of self-balancing accounts. These accounts are segregated for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives.

Funding for all District operations, activities and projects can be said to be either, governmental, proprietary, or fiduciary in nature stemming from five basic fund types:

1. General Fund is used to account for financial resources that are not required legally or by sound financial management to be accounted for in another fund.
2. Special Revenue Funds account for financial resources whose use is legally restricted or defined.
3. Debt Service Funds are used to account for the accumulation of resources and payment of debt associated with general obligation bond principle, interest and fiscal charges.
4. Capital Project Funds are used to account for major repairs or improvements of individual watershed ditches, other than those financed by annual maintenance levies.
5. Agency Funds are used to account for funds received and disbursed on behalf of another entity. They are fiduciary in nature

A review of the size and use of these funds is available through the District's Annual Financial Audit.

**Programs (Cost Centers)** To accomplish its mission, the Coon Creek Watershed District operates six programs. These programs are organized units with the responsibility for carrying out specific activities and services. They are the District's cost centers:

1. Administration: Implement policies of the Board of Managers, manage financial affairs of the Watershed District, and ensure accountability of public funds
2. Development Regulations and Issue Management: Evaluate, permit, and monitor plans and programs affecting the water and related land resources of the District
3. Operations and Maintenance: Plan, design, construct and maintain the District ditch system and water control structures, and preserve the location, character, and extent of the District ditch and conveyance system
4. Planning, Programming and Budgeting: Coordinate the planning, prioritizing, and financing of District programs projects and activities and to coordinate policies and programs of the local, state, and federal government agencies to achieve consistency with the plan
5. Public and Governmental Relations: Ensure that the continuing planning and management of the Coon Creek watershed is responsive to the needs and concerns of an informed public

6. Research and Data Collection: Gather and analyze data that will result in increased efficiency and effectiveness of watershed management

**Policies and Procedures**

The approach taken in this plan does not intend to assert management strictly on the basis of an existing landscape feature but intends to emphasize the functioning of natural systems and landscape (biogeochemical) processes, especially the hydrologic system.

The watershed's environment is determined by a set of existing natural resources and processes. The primary determinant for management within the watershed is the hydrologic system.

Ditches and other watercourses, wetlands and other water bodies, floodplains and groundwater recharge are all integral parts of the hydrologic system of the watershed. Water quality, soils and wildlife are related in that they are affected by or affect the hydrologic system.

The management of these natural resources does not mean prohibiting their use, rather it means the wise use, while preserving the capacity to function, yet allowing development and use compatible with these systems. In some instances, water and related land resources should be kept free of any landscape alteration. In other instances, natural resources can sustain certain types of alteration without detrimental impact, or additional degradation of natural processes, or their ecological function can be easily replaced or mitigated.

The objectives of maintaining the Policies and Procedures are to:

1. Identify direction essential for employees to administer and control District programs and activities.
2. Classify and target needed direction to the appropriate employees.
3. Provide efficient means to supplement and revise current direction.
4. Maintain the currency of direction
5. Hold direction to the minimum necessary to fulfill the District's mission

Policies and Procedures have been developed for:

1. Ditches and Water Courses
2. Floodplains
3. Groundwater
4. Soils
5. Stormwater and hydraulics
6. Water Quality, Soils & Erosion Control
7. Wetlands and Water Bodies
8. Wildlife – Areas of endangered/ threatened/ special concern plants and animals

Between 2013 and 2023, the District will evaluate Policies and Procedures for:

1. Aquatic Invasive Species
2. Climate change
3. Groundwater dependent resources
4. Nuisance wildlife and animal damage such as beaver
5. Fishery management
6. Aquatic Life
7. Bacteria
8. Total Suspended Solids
9. Storm Water Volume Management

**Partnerships and Collaboration**

The Watershed District has responsibilities over the development of water resource projects within the Watershed District. All of these projects occur within one or more of the cities that lie wholly or partially within the watershed. In addition, efficiently and effectively accomplishing these projects depends to the great degree on partnerships and collaboration with the cities and Anoka County.

To integrate water resource management with other land and resource management in the Watershed, the District will:

- Actively coordinate its water resource protection, development, and improvement programs with similar programs of other local state and Federal agencies.
- Seek to assess the effectiveness of water management efforts within the watershed in meeting legislative mandates, such as those pertaining to pollution control and to the securing of favorable conditions of streamflow.
- Plan and execute a coordinated program of water resource development to maximize public benefits within the Watershed.

**Capital Projects**

Coon Creek’s Capital Improvement Program is intended to provide the Board of Managers and District staff with a process for identifying and prioritizing capital projects in order to coordinate the financing and timing of these projects, which maximize the return to the public. The process will enable the District to evaluate long-term cost and benefits of projects being adapted for the coming year against those projects planned between now and 2023.

The capital Improvement Program follows the following policy.

1. A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will be developed for a period of ten (10) years and included in the District’s Comprehensive Plan. As resources are available, the most current year of the CIP will be



incorporated into the current year operating budget as the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB). The CIP will be reviewed and updated annually and plan amendments completed if required. Years two through ten are for planning purposes only.

2. The District will maintain physical assets in a manner, adequate to protect the District's capital investment and to minimize future maintenance and replacement costs. The District will provide maintenance and replacement from current revenues where possible.