Overarching Strategies

Coon Creek Watershed District activities are guided by broad, unifying strategies that are consistent with our Guiding Principles. For the period of 2013 to 2023 we have defined the following strategies. In the next ten years we will:

1. Seek to promote cooperative/collaborative efforts to achieve water and related resource goals.

2. Provide information and assistance to encourage and enable locally led, watershed, subwatershed and minor subwatershed scale management.

3. Facilitate the growth of performance based solutions that recognize the multi-scale nature of comprehensive water management.

4 Utilize an adaptive management process that allows the District to continually evaluate the performance of the resource and adjust its programs and activities to increase effectiveness

Collaborative Management

The Coon Creek Watershed District is of the position that enduring conservation of water and related resources can only be achieved through cooperative and collaborative efforts of individuals, agencies and organizations operating within the watershed.

The Watershed District, Cities, Conservation District and State agencies represent a unique partnership dedicated to comprehensive water resource management. The one-on-one assistance and collaboration this partnership provides to landowners and developers forms a foundation for collaborative management.

Today, there is a growing need for the effectiveness of collaborative approaches that conserve and sustain water resources. To meet this need the District will seek to strengthen our efforts. Specifically we will:

- Increase our investment in developing the resource information system and analytical tools that collaborating agencies can use to reach consensus on water resource goals

and take action to achieve those goals.

- Expand our efforts to broaden our partnerships and build new alliances. We will continue to coordinate and collaborate with our Cities and Conservation District to develop strategies to make our joint actions more efficient.

- Enable strong local water resource leadership, working with partners who have responsibility for state and local long-range planning and local organizations that have a stake in water resource management.

- Improve the quality of cooperative and collaborative water resource management programs and projects by playing a more proactive role in providing technical advice in decision making arenas at all levels.

- Continue to commit the resources needed to enable staff to develop the necessary skills to serve as catalysts and coordinators at the local level. Collaborative management requires a significant investment of staff time to work with stakeholders to define conditions, foster communication among all parties, and inform people on the issues and options.

- Collaborate with the Cities and Conservation District as well as state agencies in program development, refinement and delivery and to accelerate cooperative and adaptive management at the local level.

- Pursue partnerships with varied interests, to strengthen and collaborate in research efforts and to encourage pilot and demonstration efforts in areas of stormwater and water quality management.

Watershed Approach

The Coon Creek Watershed District practices a watershed-based approach to water resource management. This approach is key to wisely using the water and related resources of the District.

Decisions about how to use and manage water resources are best made by focusing on the biogeochemical processes of natural systems within the landscape that is the drainage area of Coon Creek (Appendix A & B). Watersheds provide the context within which we can most meaningfully evaluate aquatic habitats and the movement of water, nutrients, sediment and energy through the landscape. They are universal, well-defined areas that provide a

common basis for discussion of water, related resources and landscape processes.

By using a collaborative, scientific-based watershed approach, the District hopes to ensure the most productive use of financial investments to address water quality, water supply, flooding and aquatic habitat conservation. Managing on a watershed level will provide a way to integrate District activities with other state and local programs and activities to achieve the greatest results.

Protecting watershed health and function begins with a local commitment to joint action to prevent or solve a resource problem of major community importance. Where local communities have developed a vision of their local watershed and reached consensus on priorities for action, the District can tailor assistance to meet those priority needs. In communities where a vision has not been developed, the District can promote the concept of water resource planning. When helping local leaders assess conditions and evaluate options, the Coon Creek Watershed District provides information about how the local watershed affects and is affected by conditions and events in other parts of the larger watershed of which it is part.

The Watershed District is committed to providing services on a watershed basis to enable people to assess their water resource conditions, evaluate alternatives, and implement solutions and measure success.

Providing assistance on a watershed basis requires that the District continue to improve our inventory and assessment and technology transfer services, and that we strengthen our capability to provide watershed planning assistance and technical assistance to communities and individuals. It does not require whole sale changes in the nature or structure of District operations.

To accomplish this, the District will:

- Continue to invest in employee development, technology development and data collection that will be needed to enable the watershed approach to succeed.

- Enhance District ability to provide data at a variety of watershed scales and assist in analyzing data. Watershed-scale planning requires data and analytical tools to help assess conditions, analyze options and develop consensus on solutions.

- Enable District staff to develop the necessary skills to serve as catalysts for watershed planning. Facilitating local efforts on a watershed basis requires a significant investment of time in working with cities and other stakeholders, as well as a high degree of expertise in a wide range of technical disciplines.

- Utilize a progressive and iterative approach to watershed planning. Planning assistance occurs along a continuum and can be provided at various levels of intensity, depending on scope and complexity of the water resource problems, the target audience, available technologies and local interest and commitment.

- Use rapid watershed assessments to evaluate water resource conditions and tailor the delivery of District services on a watershed basis. Technical and financial assistance may be available to develop water resource assessments. Watershed assessments will be used as a platform for conservation program delivery.

- Use the multi-disciplinary expertise of the District staff and partners to expand the local delivery system and initiate cross-agency collaboration for technology transfer, data access and development and technology development.

- Develop improved indices for watershed baseline conditions, and strengthen our ability to measure the effects of programs, activities and practices on the health and quality of the watershed.

- Collect data and document best management practices and program results by watershed and subwatershed boundaries.

Market- Based Approach

The Coon Creek Watershed District is of the position that a voluntary, incentive-based approach based on the function and performance of the watershed is the most effective method for achieving sound water resource management on all lands.

Minnesotan's and the residents of the Coon Creek Watershed value the natural resource (Appendix C). They want clean water, protection against flooding and healthy wildlife populations and they are willing to invest in protecting things they value.

Lack of reliable information about benefits and consequences produced by specific management actions hinders the development of market-based solutions. To ensure that District

programs provide the best return on taxpayers' investment in water resource management, the Watershed District and other natural resource agencies are seeking to quantify the effects of management practices and programs and comparing the benefits and costs of management options. Reliable information is not only improving the management of District programs but creating opportunities for markets to play a role in accelerating sound water management on private land.

Markets for some types of environmental credits already exist. Wetland banks and credit systems already exist for qualified projects. Opportunities for land owners to participate in pollutant credit trading for reduction of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) pollutants are expected to increase. In the future, individuals or organizations may be able to buy credits for clean water or wetlands.

This type of approach could also leverage stormwater utility payments, where they exist, from property owners, replacing the need for public program dollars. To this end the District will promote the use of environmental credit trading and reporting registries.

Credit trading, however, is only one way to introduce market principles into the basic public good of water resource management. The District will focus on developing and implementing innovative, market-based approaches within the context of existing programs and activities. Specifically the District will:

- Help provide information necessary for markets to function by increasing our investment in technology and research needed to evaluate and measure benefits and costs of conservation treatments. Consistent and reliable measurements of conservation benefits should encourage private investment.

- Support the Metro Association of Watershed District's and or League of Minnesota Cities' efforts to develop innovative technology that has not yet matured to the point that public funds should be invested.

- Work with Cities and others to identify and assess opportunities for private sector investment in community-based water resource management.

Ensure that a market-based approach is used to help determine the

proper level of public investment in any water resource management effort.

Adaptive Management

Implementation of the Watershed Management Plan will occur through adaptive management. This process will be the primary resource management process of the Coon Creek Watershed District and contains five distinct but interrelated phases

1. Annual Assessment & Evaluation
2. Planning
3. Annual Work Plan & Budget
4. Monthly Reports
5. Annual Report

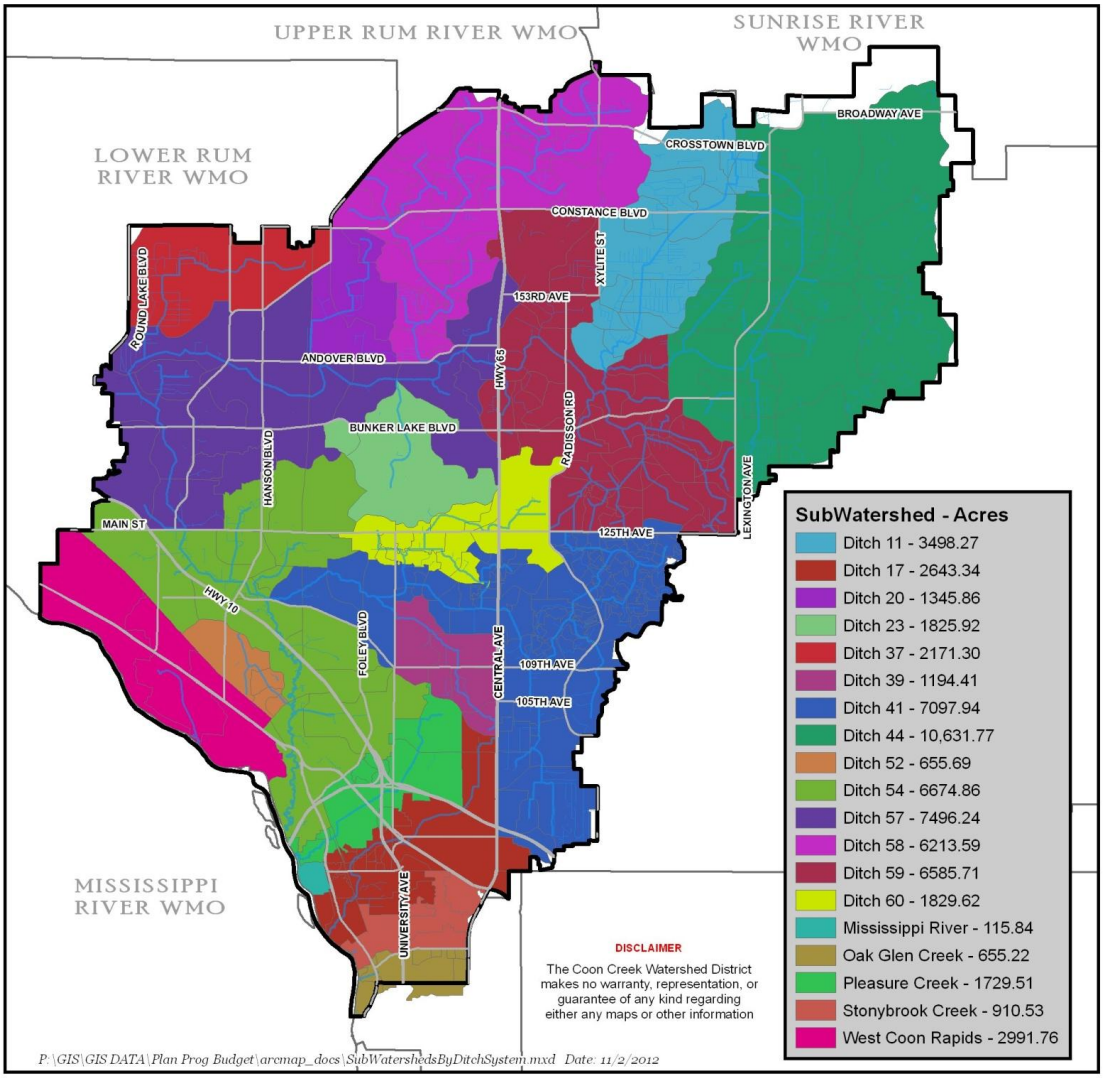
Management Areas & Subwatersheds

The Coon Creek Watershed District encompasses approximately 107 square miles. The watershed is characterized by three land type associations dissected and drained by 14 separate drainage and conveyance features.

These sub-watersheds are used to orient individuals working and living within the watershed when discussing resources, issues and management alternatives

The Subwatershed Management Areas within the District are:

System	Acres	Square Miles
Ditch 11	3,498	5.5
Ditch 17	2,643	4.1
Ditch 20	1,346	2.1
Ditch 23	1,826	2.9
Ditch 37	2,171	3.4
Ditch 39	1,194	1.9
Ditch 41	7,098	11.1
Ditch 44	12,845	20.1
Ditch 52	656	1.0
Ditch 54	6,675	10.4
Ditch 57	7,496	11.7
Ditch 58	6,214	9.7
Ditch 59	6,586	10.3
Ditch 60	1,830	2.9
Mississippi River	116	0.2
Oak Glen Creek	655	1.0
Pleasure Creek	1,730	2.7
Stonybrook Creek	911	1.4
West Coon Rapids	2,992	4.7
TOTAL:	68,480	107.0


UPPER RUM RIVER WMO
SUNRISE RIVER WMO
LOWER RUM RIVER WMO
MISSISSIPPI RIVER WMO
BROADWAY AVE
CROSSTOWN BLVD
CONSTANCE BLVD
XYLITE ST
153RD AVE
ROUND LAKE BLVD
ANDOVER BLVD
HWY 65
BUNKER LAKE BLVD
RADISSON RD
HANSON BLVD
LEXINGTON AVE
MAIN ST
125TH AVE
HWY 10
FOLEY BLVD
CENTRAL AVE
109TH AVE
105TH AVE
UNIVERSITY AVE
DISCLAIMER
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SubWatershed - Acres
Ditch 11 - 3498.27
Ditch 17 - 2643.34
Ditch 20 - 1345.86
Ditch 23 - 1825.92
Ditch 37 - 2171.30
Ditch 39 - 1194.41
Ditch 41 - 7097.94
Ditch 44 - 10,631.77
Ditch 52 - 655.69
Ditch 54 - 6674.86
Ditch 57 - 7496.24
Ditch 58 - 6213.59
Ditch 59 - 6585.71
Ditch 60 - 1829.62
Mississippi River - 115.84
Oak Glen Creek - 655.22
Pleasure Creek - 1729.51
Stonybrook Creek - 910.53
West Coon Rapids - 2991.76