

Evaluation

Introduction

The Coon Creek Watershed District (District) is committed to collecting, reporting and making decisions based on “sound scientific principles” and the best data possible. This means ensuring that the data is accurate, reliable, complete, timely and valid in reflecting District goals and mission.

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Goals

1. To monitor the development of the Comprehensive Plan as a whole, and of its component projects, in relation to changes in the context, operating environment and circumstances of their implementation.
2. To monitor the development of the program as a whole, and of its component projects, in regard to goals, timelines and any unforeseen circumstances.
3. To implement a rapid problem identification system, as well as, a system for internal communications to the various stakeholders.
4. To facilitate evaluation procedures during and after activities, through the definition of specific indicators.

Overview

In addition to daily control over operations, deadlines and any other problems that may arise, the CCWD will perform periodic evaluations of the Comprehensive Plan implementation as a whole. These evaluations are needed to gauge the results obtained by each stage or aspect of implementation within the District physical, social and managerial context.

A system of indicators has been developed for evaluating progress in implementation. The indicators are divided into two sub-systems.

1. Reality Monitoring Indicators
2. Activities Undertaken and their Results

Reality Monitoring

All programs and activities can be seen as initiatives in pursuing the mission and goals and objectives of the watershed district as well as

strengthening natural capital. Indicators relative to ‘reality monitoring’ should therefore be focused on three orders of macro-phenomena: physical capacity, beneficial uses and needs and managerial requirements and capacity.

Physical Capacity If we define physical capacity as the overall ability of an ecosystem to maintain its natural, original, or current condition and to produce goods and services. This includes both the current stock and the ability of an ecosystem to produce more of a specific resource. This includes surface and subsurface water and related renewable resources.

Measurement Tools The following tools for measuring successful implementation of this plan are to be used annually under the District Performance Measurement System:

1. The primary metric primary metric for evaluation of progress by the District’s programs is improvement in water quality goals as measured by water quality trends determined from the District monitoring efforts and supplemental monitoring conducted by other agencies.
2. A secondary metric is the completion of planned programs and projects. This secondary metric is a quantitative assessment of the completion of projects and the success of programs. This quantitative assessment will also allow evaluation of specific projects and initiatives and allow evaluation of resource goals.

Quantitative Assessment: Issue Areas Addressed The quantitative measurement of the District’s accomplishment of projects and programs will indicate progress in addressing District Goals and Issues from the short term perspective of successful completion of planned program initiatives and projects.

Projects The District will perform an annual inventory of District projects accomplished in the preceding year. Result will provide a simple assessment of which Issues have received attention through project work that was intended for completion that year. Progress in each issue area will be evaluated based on the progress Evaluation Metrics identified in each area areas.

Programs Ongoing initiatives conducted through district programs will be evaluated in a similar manner. Since ongoing initiatives, by definition, have no end point of completion, District Board and staff will assign a numerical score (1 – 10) based on the level of effort put into the program in the preceding year.

Additional evaluation of success of District programs will be completed by evaluating progress towards the goals of the program. Programs will

be evaluated based on the Progress Evaluation Metrics identified in the program description.

Program Evaluations

Periodic evaluations of implementation and accomplishments of individual water and related resource programs and activities administered by the CCWD are a critical element of overall performance measurement. Findings of periodic and annual evaluations are used to refine the District's objectives and guide revisions to the District's comprehensive plan.

A variety of program reviews and evaluations are routinely conducted within the CCWD. Most of the evaluations are applied to all aspects of the District's programs and activities, but not necessarily within the same year. Schedules are established each year so that, in a five to seven year period, all programs are reviewed.

Programmatic Review Program coordinators conduct programmatic reviews to assess the propriety of program implementation at the field level.

Compliance Review The District Administrator conducts independent reviews of programs to ascertain compliance with existing laws, Board policy, regulations, policies and procedures. Review types include surveys, comprehensive reviews and quick response reviews depending on the issue, scope and depth of review needs.

State Program Review State agencies (BWSR & MPCA) conduct compliance reviews and audits of the individual programmatic activities and for operational reviews within their jurisdictions. The auditor conducts an annual review of compliance and financial efficiency.

- The BWSR conducts Performance Review and Assistance Studies (PRAP) and reviews of Wetland conservation Act administration.
- The MPCA conducts periodic audits of MS4s to ensure compliance with NPDES permit requirements.

In 2008, the Board of Water and Soil Resources conducted a review of District administration and operations under the Program Review and Assistance Program (PRAP). Using a standardized methodology, integrated strategies were developed to facilitate and evaluate implementation of the District's long range goals and objectives. In addition, an evaluation of the District's goals, objectives and performance measures were considered during revision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Measuring Implementation Progress

Due to its decentralized structure and wide scope of programs and activities, the CCWD maintains several systems to track performance and provide management information on the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. These include the following:

- Staff Activity Reports (SAR)
- Water Monitoring & Atlas System (WMAS)
- Asset Knowledge/ Infrastructure Database.

Staff Activity Reporting (SAR)

This system is for District programs. It is used to set annual performance targets toward the start of the year and annual plan commencement and report on accomplishments at the end of the year. Each CCWD program is assigned targets for the major activities associated with the program. Mid-year adjustments to activity targets may be made to reflect changes in priorities, needs, costs or resources. CCWD staff record data on activity accomplishments on a monthly basis, through the Administrators monthly staff report. This data is then reviewed and aggregated for the District before being submitted to the Board of managers for review and receipt.

SAR data is recorded monthly electronically. The electronic format consists of a spreadsheet with monthly and annual totals by program.

SAR data goes through several layers of review starting with the District Administrator, then through the Board of Managers, and finally the Advisory Committees and the BWSR in the District's Annual Report. The data is again reviewed by staff, administration and the Board of Managers during the Annual Evaluation and Assessment steps to assess program and activity trends, shifts and needs for future budgeting and planning.

Water Monitoring & Atlas System (WMAS)

The WMAS tracks funding and attainment of monitoring and research work. At the beginning of the year, Monitoring funds are allocated to the Anoka Conservation District (ACD) based on the Board of Managers adopted budget and work plan. The ACD then allocates the funding and work load across the varying monitoring activities (Lakes, streams, wetlands and precipitation). The data are reviewed by ACD staff, entered into Storet/Equis where appropriate and, at years end, prepare a report (The County Water Atlas) on the results and the conditions, trends and management implications of the data. The CCWD then takes the final report and incorporates that into the CCWD's annual report to the BWSR.

Data is also used in the District's Annual Assessment of resource condition, trends and needs which in turn feeds into a review of the District's progress in achieving its long range goals and the discussion

of adjustments for the District's next budget cycle.

Data quality problems occur infrequently, and when they do are typically related to equipment failures or flow conditions (high or low).

**Asset Knowledge/
Infrastructure
Inventory Database**

INFRA is the District Asset inventory of constructed features, ditches, ponds, control structures, dams and other water management features. The database includes that quantified asset information which is readily available for asset management purposes. Having this information for all the District assets is the foundation for good decision making. The definition implies that the information is organized and readily available in a clear and structured way.

Asset knowledge has five objectives:

1. Define the minimum level of detail for an asset (what assets to track)
2. Establish a uniform asset enumeration scheme (asset organization)
3. Identify existing assets and related attributes (asset data)
4. Identify the probability and consequence of failure of an asset (asset risk)
5. Establish the level of asset management performed (asset management strategy).

The District will review and update its asset management source databases to be reconciled with each other and in accordance with the minimum asset detail and asset numbering guidelines.

The conveyance system will be updated using the latest "stream order maps," combined with the record drawings. The stream order maps have been kept up to date and provide a view of large branches of the system.

The District is currently in the process of updating its conveyance geographical information system (GIS). At the end of this project, the District will have all of its conveyance facilities included on the District GIS system.

In parallel with this effort, the District will record appropriate asset data if it is not recorded already. Such asset data will fall into three sets:

1. Identifying information, such as construction date, and original cost.
2. Basic hydraulic information, such as 100 year flood elevation, flow capacity, and length.
3. Maintenance history, such as types and frequencies.

The District will define the required information by asset class to ensure that a consistent set of data is achieved. This effort will be ongoing.

Asset Condition and Consequence Database

Describes the procedures for determining, recording, tracking and updating condition assessments and intervals.

Current condition of each of the ditch systems, and maintenance needs are reviewed and tracked twice per year.

1. The overall condition of the drainage system is reported in the District’s annual report. Reporting the condition of the drainage system to the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources is a legislative requirement.
2. The condition of the drainage system, results of recent spot and system inspections, entries into the Issues Log, and comments by Managers and residents of the watershed are reviewed as part of the annual budget process.

The overall condition of a ditch system is recorded in the “infrastructure inventory” portion of the District’s asset inventory which is reviewed at the times noted above and during the District’s annual audit.

Annual Evaluations Used to Revise Goals and Objectives

The evaluations required an identification of needs that in turn formed recommendations for future goals and objectives with associated outcome statements, outcome measures, efficiency measures, output measures, baselines and targets where appropriate.

When determining the suitability of proposed goals, objectives and performance measures, we considered the results of both a review of the District’s external environment (physical, social and political and economic trends) and our organizational capability based on our internal factors of production (finances, knowledge, skills and abilities of staff, work procedures and relations with collaborators).

Schedule of Future Program Evaluations

The Watershed District conducts regular program evaluations at various levels of the organization separate from those conducted by state agencies. The following schedule identifies significant evaluations projected over the next 10 years. As necessary, the Watershed District will conduct additional studies and evaluations as directed by the Board of Managers, BWSR or the legislature.

Evaluation	Scope	Methodology	Timetable
Subwatershed Management	Major Subwatershed/ Ditch system – flooding, water quality & other uses	Reviewed with Cities & other collaborators	Same schedule as inspections. Every 5 years or 20% each year.
Maintenance Review	Ditches, structures	Inspections, Issue investigations	Annually prior to budget
Integrated reviews of programs with partners	Review of programs under agreement or memoranda	Program and partner field reviews	Periodically
Financial Audit	review of compliance and financial efficiency & procedures	Governmental Accounting Standards & Practices	Annually
Watershed Assessment of Natural Resources	Evaluate status, condition, trends and uses of Coon Creeks resources and the processes which support them	Independent technical assessment of condition, trends and emerging issues	2015 2020 2025
Research and Monitoring	District wide and by subject	Integrated review of joint subwatershed and monitoring program to evaluate mission delivery	2014 2019 2024