

COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: March 24, 2025
AGENDA NUMBER: 7
ITEM: Advisory Committees Report

AGENDA: Policy Discussion Information

ACTION REQUESTED

Receive Report

BACKGROUND

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) met on February 12th. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on February 13th.

- The next CAC meeting is scheduled: March 12th at 4:30 pm hybrid with Zoom.
- The next TAC meeting is scheduled: March 13th at 8:30 am hybrid with Zoom.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

All members of the CAC were present at the meeting along with CCWD staff Jessica Lindemyer.

1. Open Forum

Each member of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) briefly introduced themselves and welcomed new member, David Petry, to the group. David is a relatively new Coon Rapids resident and works as a Project Manager for Rice Creek Watershed District.

Gary Nereson requested that any materials given to the CAC for review be accompanied by a brief background as well as a summary of any changes that have been made since the CAC last reviewed the item.

2. District Update

Jessica Lindemyer gave a brief update on various District activities including the 2024 Part of the Year, the 2024 Annual Report, the Lower Coon Creek Corridor Restoration Project timeline, and the spring flood outlook.

3. Municipal Insights

Jessica gave a presentation on the initial insights from Phase One of the Municipal Insight Survey effort. She explained that the objective of this effort is to guide CCWD in

determining the best methods for engaging with the District's municipal partners by identifying their needs, values, priorities, and perceptions regarding water management. The end goal is to be able to improve the District's engagement and public information strategy by crafting its efforts in a way that speaks to the values and interests of the individuals who share the responsibility of achieving the TMDL and communicate in a language in which they understand and in terms that are of interest to them.

Jessica provided an overview of the target audiences, survey methods, and initial results. Next steps for this effort include interviews and surveys of the general public after which the responses will be compiled, analyzed, and formulated into a final report. This report will be shared with the Coon Creek Board of Managers, the Technical Advisory Committee, and the Citizen Advisory Committee.

4. 2025 priorities

Jessica recapped the topics and activities outlined for 2025 that the CAC agreed upon at the last meeting, opening the floor for discussion and/or additions.

Jim Lindahl expressed interest in having District Staff provide overviews of the various "segments" of Coon Creek; what the water quality looks like, what projects have been completed or planned in the area, and what issues or concerns the watershed anticipates encountering in that area. Jessica offered that these discussions could be partnered with the District's subwatershed planning efforts which bring together staff from various agencies and municipalities to analyze subsections of the District and plan for improvement projects/programs. There was a general consensus among members to pursue this topic in 2025.

2025 Topics

- Wetland Banking
- Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)
- Threatened and Endangered Species (T&E)
- Anoka Sand Plain
- Subwatershed Spotlights *new

2025 Activities

- District Tour (~June)
- CAC Meet-up with RCWD (TBD)
- Volunteer Clean-Up (April or September based on weather).

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

All members of the TAC were present at the meeting except for the City of Columbus.

1. Situation

Jon Janke provided the TAC with a brief update on recent weather and hydrology. The current flood risk is relatively low but the District is keeping an eye on the frost depth and ice flows. Both the Mississippi River and Coon Creek are flowing well, it is largely the low-flow systems in the headwaters that are freezing solid at this time which is to be expected.

Eik Bye reminded the group that Anoka County will be holding the kick off meeting for their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) next week.

Legislative Update

Jon Janke shared that the District is keeping an eye on House File 8 (HF8) and how it affects wetland rules. There are a couple of other bills that may be coming forward, if/when they do, the District will provide updates on how they may affect water management work in our area.

Minnesota Watersheds is holding a legislative briefing on the 19th and 20th. The League of Minnesota Cities and others are holding similar meetings and briefings. District staff anticipate bringing further information on the topic to the March TAC meeting.

Dave Berkowitz provided an update on Andover's funding request that is in the governor's bill. They are asking for 8 million to complete Phase 2 of the Red Oaks Groundwater Mitigation Construction in 2026.

2. Concerns

Floodplain Maps (HUC 8)

Erik Bye provided an update on the status of the floodplain mapping effort. The general understanding at this point is that the new updated FEMA map will not match the District's current floodplain map. The DNR is not proposing to add any new areas that FEMA did not originally map, they will only be updating the information on FEMA's existing mapped areas. As such, the new FEMA maps will likely not have much utility when it comes to holistic floodplain management.

Subwatershed Reports

Erik Bye announced that the annual subwatershed check-in meetings for Springbrook, Pleasure Creek, and Ditch 39 will be held in March. Meeting invites will go out within the next week. Partners are asked to come prepared with any updates, insights, or emerging water resource concerns within their respective subwatershed jurisdictions.

TMDL Progress Update

Justine Dauphinais gave a presentation on the progress made to-date toward TMDL goals. Her presentation included a summary of water quality impairments and aquatic life stressors, water quality trends, and a summary of the TMDL progress to-date.

There are a lot of factors that go into measuring TMDL progress:

Total Maximum Daily Load = Wasteload Allocation + Load Allocation + Margin of Safety + Reserve Capacity"

Allowable # pollution = Regulated Stormwater Sources + Unregulated Non-Point Sources + 10% unallocated

When looking at just TMDL MS4 WLA Compliance, we're around 35% of the way there. However, when looking at the overall TMDL number that includes unregulated sources, we're making much more progress, especially in the area of sediment reduction.

Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) – Kickoff Meeting.

Justine Dauphinais provided a summary on the background of the Watershed Based Implementation Funding non-competitive grant program and the purpose of the Kickoff Meeting. For this round of funding, the Coon Creek Watershed Area has been allocated \$294,100. With the required 10% funding match, the total cost of the selected project(s) should be at least \$323,510. Activities eligible to be funded are prioritized, targeted, & measurable projects/programs with the primary purpose of water quality improvement. The selected project(s)/program(s) must also be referenced in the implementation section of the CCWD Comprehensive Plan.

In order to access these funds, there is a specific process that must be followed. The group needs to establish a facilitator, decision-making criteria, and voting members. The group will then hold a formal convene meeting to vote on the final project(s)/program(s) to be funded. Once a project or program has been selected, a request gets submitted to BWSR and a grant agreement is executed.

the TAC completed the following WBIF tasks at this meeting:

1. Selected Justine Dauphinais and Rebecca Haug as co-facilitators
2. Selected the following representatives
 - a) CCWD: Tim Kelly
 - b) ACD: Chris Lord
 - c) City Rep #1: George Linngren, Spring Lake Park
 - d) City Rep #2: Tim Himmer, Coon Rapids
3. Decided on using a tiered majority vote as the method of decision-making
4. Decided on using a combination of ranked categories and projects to select which project(s)/program(s) to fund.
5. Reviewed a draft list of eligible projects

At the March 13th TAC meeting, members will vote on the project(s)/program(s) to be funded and select which entity will be the fiscal agent.

CCWD CIP Updates

Coon Creek will be updating its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), this will require a minor amendment to the 2025-2033 Comprehensive Plan.

3. Briefs

Atlas 15

NOAA will be publishing Atlas 15. Once it goes live in our area it will replace Atlas 14. At the end of January, NOAA hosted a webinar regarding their pilot work with Montana. The data and resources shared looked to be very useful and self-evident. Volume One of Atlas 15 provides the standard information we are used to with Atlas 14, Volume Two uses climate projections to forecast the range of likelihood for future advancements. NOAA is not making recommendations or providing interpretation of the projection data, they are simply making it available for use. We should receive a draft of Atlas 15 this year, with a final version next year.

Monarch CCAA

Jon Janke noted that the Monarch is currently being considered for addition to the Federal Endangered Species List. There are two separate populations of Monarchs, the Eastern

population that we have here in MN is less vulnerable than the Western population but is still considered to be vulnerable. Should the Monarch be added to the endangered species list, the biggest effect will see locally is with our vegetation management and restoration plans.

Rebecca Haug provided details on the Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for the Monarch Butterfly that encourages land managers (particularly those in the energy and transportation sectors) to adopt measures to create net conservation benefits for the monarch butterfly. Several states, including Texas, Colorado, and Iowa, have been participating in this effort for several years converting many of their rest areas and ROW sections to monarch habitat. Minnesota counties have started opting into this program with their highway departments dedicating around 5% of their ROW corridors to Monarch habitat by changing their mowing practices, invasive species work, and brush removal. Discussion of Anoka County participating in this effort is still in the very early stages and it has not yet been brought before the County Board. Anoka County has 40% of all threatened and endangers species in Minnesota, in talking with the DNR, there may be some potential for participation in this program to help offset some of the issues the County has been having with takings permits. There is a one-time application fee of \$8,000. Enrollment for the first year is estimated around \$9,000 and then ongoing costs for 2-25yrs that range from \$5,500 - \$6,000/year for monitoring and reporting. Benefits of the program include reduction in permitting uncertainty and the potential to incorporate benefits for the rusty patch bumble bee.

There was general discussion about the potential for this program to be incorporated into parks. Rebecca Haug clarified that this program is solely for ROW, transportation corridors, and utilities; it is not designed for parks.

Anoka County HMP – Floodplain

Erik Bye noted that the district has been working with Anoka County on the flood risk assessment for their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Once the plan is updated, the county will be making an interactive map available to the public. This map has brought up a larger discussion about the District's floodplain map which is currently not publicly available. The District has yet to decide whether to allow Anoka County to use the floodplain model given this potential. If the county does not use the district model, they will be using the FEMA floodplain map.

MnDOT Transportation Research: Investigating Real Storms

Jon Janke explained that MnDOT has developed an extreme flood vulnerability tool to better assess the sustainability of their roadways, particularly bridge crossings. While our local resiliency and climate change adaptation efforts are slowly evolving, MnDOT is trying to find a more innovative and statistical approach to the effort. As a part of this work, MnDOT has reached out many metro organizations for any existing modeling data that they can compile into a database. The District provided its XP-SWMM model and has invited MnDOT to attend regular TAC meetings to get more involved in local planning efforts. Tim Himmer expressed his support for having MnDOT at future meetings.

4. Other Water Management Concerns

Commencement of Shallow Groundwater Study

Erik Bye shared that the District kicked off the shallow groundwater study with USGS last month in the hopes of better understanding chloride transportation within shallow groundwater. The deliverable for this project is a preliminary model which is anticipated to be done around June. After that USGS will help the District set up a shallow groundwater monitoring network which will help establish a long-term systematic approach to collecting shallow groundwater data.

The District is also working with the University of Minnesota on a similar study looking at chloride transport in groundwater. The District is one of several partners working with the U of Mn on this study. One new well will be installed in Blaine and four wells installed in Fridley. The report for this work is anticipated to be complete in the fall of 2026.

5. Announcements

Jon Janke gave a shout-out to Rebecca Haug for the MS4 training resource recently shared by Anoka County.

Tim Kelly announced that more conversations will be had at the March TAC meeting surrounding floodplain maps and the issue of floodplain management. Particularly as they relate to FEMA's efforts vs. the local needs.

Tim Kelly also asked that partners share any specific examples they may have of 401 or NPDES snags or delays that were a result of last-minute editions to permit requirements and can be documented as such.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the report.