

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Board Room
Coon Creek Watershed District Offices
Monday, June 23, 2025
5:30 p.m.

Board of Managers:

Jim Hafner, President; Erin Lind, Vice President; Jason Lund, Secretary; Mary Campbell, Treasurer; Dwight McCullough, Member at Large

Note: Individuals with items on the agenda or who wish to speak to the Board are encouraged to be in attendance when the meeting is called to order.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of the Agenda** (*Additions/Corrections/Deletions*)
- 3. Announcements**
- 4. Open Mic/Public Comment**

*Members of the public at this time may address the Board, for **up to three minutes**, on a matter not on the Agenda. Individuals wishing to be heard must sign in with their name and address at the door. Additional comments may be accepted in writing. Board action or discussion should **not** be expected during the presentation of public comment/open mic. Board members may direct staff to research the matter further or take the matter under advisement for consideration at a future Board meeting.*

CONSENT ITEMS

The consent agenda is considered as one item of business. It consists of routine administrative items or items not requiring discussion. Items can be removed from the consent agenda at the request of a Board member, staff member or a member of the audience.

- 5. Approval of Minutes of June 9, 2025**
- 6. Approve Bills for Payment**

POLICY ITEMS

PERMIT ITEMS

7. 2025 MIPC Project – Highway 10
8. Hogie Home

DISCUSSION ITEMS

9. Municipal Insight Survey Results
10. Discuss Board Tour
11. Update on MAWA Resolutions (ABM)

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

12. Some Minnesota boaters will need safety training, permit starting July 1

ADJOURN

COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT BOARD OF MANAGERS' MEETING

The Board of Managers of the Coon Creek Watershed District held their regular meeting on Monday, June 9, 2025, at the Coon Creek Watershed District Office.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM

Board Members Present: Mary Campbell, Jim Hafner, Erin Lind, and Dwight McCullough.

Board Member absent: Jason Lund.

Staff Present: Tim Kelly, Corinne Elfelt, Erin Margl, Michelle Ulrich, Abbey Lee, Hattie Hillukka, Erik Bye, Justine Dauphinais and Jason Hilst.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Board Member McCullough moved to move Permit Item 13 to the Consent Agenda and the 2026 Program Budget to Discussion Items number eighteen (18) on the Agenda. Seconded by Board Member Lind. The motion carried with four (4) yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind and McCullough) and no nays.

Board Member Campbell moved to approve the amended agenda. Seconded by Board Member McCullough. The motion carried with four (4) yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

3. Announcements

Administrator Kelly provided the following announcements:

As result of the Grant to The City of Spring Lake Park, The City named the new street sweeper after Justine Dauphinais.

American Public Works Association made available the revisions of the Federal Emergency Management Area Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Program.

The 2024 Comprehensive Financial Report is published and available.

Tyler Thompson is back from paternity leave.

4. Open Mic/Public Comment

No one was present for comment.

CONSENT ITEMS

5. Approval of Minutes of May 27, 2025

6. Administrator's Report

7. Advisory Committee Report

8. Approval of Bills for Payment

Claims totaling \$230,434.15 on the following disbursement(s) list will be issued and released upon Board approval.

Vendor	Amount
V0008--US BANK	11,208.69
V0010--A1 FLOOR AND CARPET CARE INC	1,119.30
V0037--ECM PUBLISHERS INC	113.40
V0054--MICHELLE J ULRICH PA	3,193.75
V0071--SUNRAM CONSTRUCTION INC	63,510.13
V0111--WELL GROOMED LAWNS INC	700.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	1,485.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	1,485.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	165.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	144.00
V0195--STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC	16,070.80
V0195--STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC	26,581.20
V0195--STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC	38,558.50
V0195--STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC	10,021.00
V0195--STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC	4,539.00
V0242--METRO I NET	6,753.00
V0249--PLAUDIT DESIGN	450.00
V0299--MP+G MARKETING SOLUTIONS LLC	22,700.00
V0352--HEALTH EQUITY INC	5,778.06
V0362--PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION	8,460.84
V0363--MINNESOTA STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEM	1,370.00
V0366--KRAUSE, EMMA	192.49
V0387--SHOT BY SCHULTZ LLC	5,325.00
V0387--SHOT BY SCHULTZ LLC	500.00
V0388--HATTIE HILLUKKA	9.99
	230,434.15

The following permit item was moved to the Consent Agenda.

13. Bunker Hills Regional Park Redevelopment

The purpose of this project is the reconstruction of various roadways, parking areas, boardwalk, and trails with utility work and stormwater management features. The project is located at Bunker Hills Regional Park, 550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW, Andover, MN. The project will disturb 27 acres and create 3.28 acres of regulated impervious surface. The southern portion of the project drains to County Ditch 54, the northeast portion of the project drains to County Ditch 23 and the northwest portion of the project drains to County Ditch 57. The relevant water resources concerns are stormwater management,

erosion and sediment control, and floodplain. These correspond to District Rules 3, 4, and 6.

Staff recommendation was to Approve with (two) 2 Conditions and (four) 4 Stipulations as outlined in the complete Permit Application Review Report dated June 4, 2025, and before the Board of Managers June 9, 2025.

Conditions to be Met Before Permit Issuance:

Rule 2.7 – Procedural Requirements

1. Submittal of a performance escrow in the amount of \$15,500.00. Rule 3.0 – Stormwater Management
2. Provide proof of recording of a fully executed Operations and Maintenance Agreement for the perpetual inspection and maintenance of all proposed stormwater management practices after review and approval by the District.

Stipulations: The permit will be issued with the following stipulations as conditions of the permit. By accepting the permit, the applicant agrees to these stipulations:

1. The applicant must apply for coverage under the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA's) Construction Stormwater Permit (Permit No: MNR100001).
2. Submittal of as-builts for the stormwater management practices and associated structures listed in Tables 2 and 3, including volume, critical elevations and proof of installation for hydrodynamic separators.
3. Completion of a post construction infiltration test on Infiltration Basins 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4, 5, and 6 by filling the basin to a minimum depth of 6 inches with water and monitoring the time necessary to drain, or multiple double ring infiltration tests to ASTM standards. The Coon Creek Watershed District shall be notified prior to the test to witness the results.
4. If dewatering is required, provide DNR dewatering permit prior to construction. If a DNR permit is not required, provide well-field location, rates, discharge location, schedule and quantities prior to construction

Board Member Campbell moved to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Seconded by Board Member Hafner. The motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

POLICY ITEMS

9. Election of Officers

President Hafner called for any proposed changes to the current officer positions; none were brought forward.

Board Member McCoullough moved to nominate Jim Hafner as the president of the CCWD. Seconded by Board Member Lind.

Board Member Hafner moved to nominate Erin Lind as the vice president of the CCWD. Seconded by Board Member McCoullough.

Board Member McCoullough moved to nominate Jason Lund as secretary of the CCWD. Seconded by Board Member Campbell.

Board Member Lind moved to nominate Mary Campbell as treasurer of the CCWD. Seconded by Board Member McCoullough.

Each motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Hafner, Lind, Campbell, and McCoullough) and no nays.

10. Administrator's Annual Review (ABM)

Board Members Hafner and Campbell met with District Administrator Tim Kelly for his annual performance review. Mr. Hafner expressed appreciation for the work well done through out a year with difficult situations, in particular moving away from the County. Mr. Kelly will continue as the District's Administrator.

Board Member Campbell moved to receive the report regarding the Administrator's Annual Performance Review. Seconded by Manager Hafner. The motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCoullough) and no nays.

11. SWPPP Annual Meeting

Erik Bye, Planning Coordinator, presented the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Bye stated the purpose of the SWPPP is to reduce storm water discharges to the 'maximum extent practicable', to protect water quality and to satisfy the water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Holding an annual public hearing is a requirement of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program and requires the submittal of an Annual Report to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) by June 30. This year, no one from the public was present for the annual public hearing, but Planning Coordinator Erik Bye presented to the Board a summary of the six Maximum Control Measures (MCM's) required by the SWPPP.

- 1) Public Education and Outreach on Storm Water Impacts. This has been tracked the past 3 years, with minimal change. The poop bags, swag bags, rain gauges and pens have been received very well by the public.
- 2) Public Involvement/Participation which is satisfied by this meeting complying with public notice requirements when implementing public involvement and participation.
- 3) Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination to develop, implement and enforce a program to detect and eliminate illicit discharges. There has been a slight decline in discharges this year. There were 7 reports via public complaint proving the online Issue Report system is successful. Mr. Bye mentioned the two prominent issues were the Coon Rapids Dam discharge. This was mentioned in

the newspaper and reported by several people. It was discovered to be a food grade hydraulic fluid. Secondly, there was an illicit discharge in connection with Mercy Hospital discovered by CCWD staff. Both were addressed and are no longer an issue.

- 4) Construction Site Runoff Control highlights that the number of overall plan reviews conducted has declined due to a lower demand for permits. There was however an increase in enforcement actions taken because of a marked increase in inspections conducted. Most issues were taken care of with voluntary compliance and only a few outstanding issues remain. Implementing a new inspection protocol involving a priority strategy has been useful in optimizing the time spent at priority sites. In addition, a new inspection after rainfall was implemented into protocol.
- 5) Post-construction Storm Water Management falls under the regulatory program with stipulations which our program must have and our program meets all requirements.
- 6) Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations requires CCWD to develop a program making sure the district owned, or operating facilities are in good working condition and not polluting any waters. This requirement is mostly geared toward the cities with material and salt storage and stockpiling techniques, and we are involved mostly with ditch repairs however, we are satisfying all requirements for storage handling. A question was raised by Board Member Hafner regarding the fluctuating number of inspections and Mr. Bye explained that is because the inspections are done mostly on a two-year cycle.

Compliance requires that TMDL implementation is reported. In 2016 the TMDL study for Aquatic Life and Recreation was completed and approved by EPA establishing required Wasteload Allocation (WLAQs) for Total Suspended Solids (TSS), Total Phosphorus (TP) and E. coli. Most recent year update shows an increase in the amount of total sediment. This jump is a result of the filters. Board member Hafner asked if we have ever been audited and Mr. Bye responded not yet, but some of the cities have been and we are on the list and expect we will be.

The Notice of the Public Hearing was posted in the official newspapers of the CCWD on May 23rd and May 30th in the Anoka County Union-Herald and on May 30th and June 6th in The Life, and on the CCWD website since May 22nd, 2025.

The staff made the recommendation to hold a public hearing to review CCWD's performance in stormwater management and to receive comments from the public.

Board Member Campbell moved to open the Public SWPPP Annual Hearing to review CCWD'S performance in storm water management. Seconded by Board Member McCoullough. The motion carried with four (4) yeas (Board Members Lind, Campbell, Hafner and McCullough) and no nays.

Board President Hafner called for comments three times. Hearing none, Board Member McCoullough moved to close the Public SWPPP Annual Hearing to review CCWD'S performance in storm water management. Seconded by Board Member Lind. The motion

carried with four (4) yeas (Board Members Lind, Campbell, Hafner and McCullough) and no nays.

Board Member Lind moved to receive the SWPPP Annual Report to review CCWD'S performance in storm water management. Seconded by Board Member McCoullough. The motion carried with four (4) yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

12. Cost -Share Awards

Justine Dauphinais, Water Quality Coordinator, presented the cost- share awards report to the Board. Dauphinais noted the purpose of this item is to ensure progress towards achieving required pollutant reductions and addressing identified stressors to aquatic life by administering cost- share programs for water quality improvement and protection projects.

This item specifically addresses time-sensitive applications submitted as part of the open 2025 request for proposals.

Dauphinais presented information regarding the June 2025 cost-share award recommendations. Application deadlines are usually done twice yearly, but the TAC changed the policy to receive applications more frequently on a case-by-case situation primarily for time sensitive matters. This is the first time the District has received 2 applications this way and both were in the month of May 2025.

The first application was submitted by The City of Coon Rapids for an expansion of the City's pilot program to investigate and mitigate leaky private sanitary infrastructure to include purchase of a CCTV truck and accessories. The request is for \$48,900.

The City is seeking to purchase a CCTV truck that could evaluate infrastructure from public-private connection points. The City secured \$225,000 in State grant funding towards this \$350,000 truck and is seeking an additional \$48,900 in CCWD cost- share funds for this purchase which would max out their 2025 request to \$75,000 total towards sanitary efforts this year.

The second application from the City of Coon Rapids was for Street Sweeping Enhancements. A 3-year pilot study implementing the "Plus 1 Sweeper Districtwide" scenario from CCWD enhanced sweeping study: Sweeping priority zones 7x/yr vs 5x, increasing total sweeping effort by 323 lane miles. This would allow for the sweeping of high priority older portions of the City with higher tree canopies and that are directly connected to the storm sewer and creeks without any treatment. The sweeping would accumulate 99 pounds of phosphorus reduction. The request is for \$69,100 and is the largest water quality improvement cost-share award project the District has considered.

Coon Rapids will hire a contractor for additional sweeping but will manage the sweepings in-house requiring additional staff time, equipment, and disposal costs. The City will also improve record keeping by tracking volume by route (GPS) and weighing representative loads to allow for volume to mass conversions, thereby maximizing eligible credits towards joint TMDL Wasteload Allocation compliance.

The recommendation is to award cost-share funds to identified projects in accordance with Staff recommendations.

Board Member Hafner moved to award cost-share funds to identified projects in accordance with staff recommendations. Seconded by Board Member Lind. The motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

PERMIT ITEMS – *(moved to Consent Agenda)*

13. Bunker Hills Regional Park Redevelopment

DISCUSSION ITEMS

14. Cost of Cross Training/Re-training In-House Employees (At Board Meeting)

As a follow up to Board Member Campbell's question regarding cost of cross training or re-training in-house staff, Mr. Kelly stated the figure to be between \$15,000-\$30,000. Board member Campbell asked for Mr. Kelly's perspective, and he said it would still mean acquiring a new staff member with the unique skill set that is needed.

Board Member Campbell moved to receive the verbal report. Seconded by Board Member Hafner. The motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

15. Annual Structure Inspection

Operations and Maintenance Manager, Jason Hilst, discussed the results of the annual inspection of water control structures maintained in the District. There are currently ten structures addressed throughout the District, and all are in good condition. Five of the structures are lake outlets, two are concrete weirs in the ditch 58 system and three are earthen berms. There were only a few with some concerns. At Laddie Lake Outlet the veg is starting to creep in, Lake Netta Outlet there is minor leaf and debris accumulation, and Timberline Weir there is a small leak on the right side.

Along with these inspections, past projects were also inspected one year after construction and then will be assessed every five years after. The 2025 inventory inspections are all in good condition except a few rain gardens. All past inspections of the District BMPs passed and there were no recommendations. The CCWD bank stabilization projects since 1995 are all in good and fair condition with no maintenance recommendations. Ditch numbers 39, 41 and Lower Coon Creek were added for inspection to the six ditches from 2024. The key takeaways were that most 2025 inventory assets are in good condition and no maintenance is recommended at this time.

The staff recommendation is to receive the report and to re-inspect structures in 2026.

Board Member Campbell moved to receive the Inspection Report. Seconded by Board Member McCullough. The motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

16. District Tour Update

The District Tour will be held on Monday, June 16, 2025. The itinerary includes visiting the following three sites: 1. Elwell Farms – Lexington Waters, 2. Lower Coon Creek Corridor Restoration in the Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park, and 3. Fields of Andover – Rural Reserve. The bus will be arriving at the District office at 2:30 pm and snacks and beverages will be provided. The tour should take about 2 hours, with return time expected at 4:30pm. Members from the CAC and TAC have been invited as well.

17. Resolution Seeking Amendment to State Endangered Species Act (ABM)

Administrator Kelly stated this is the first draft of a resolution and has been provided for review to Minnesota Watersheds. No action is requested currently other than the Boards comments/questions.

18. 2026 Program Budget

Administrator Kelly presented the proposed draft 2026 Program Budget. The purpose of the 2026 Program Budget addresses the core costs for operating the District. The Rough Draft Budget is \$5,674,745. This is a \$115,000 decrease (2%) in expenditures on the program budgets from the 2025 budget. This budget allows the District to remain on schedule to meet its interim 2027 goal in pursuit of the Comprehensive 2034 objectives and 2045 goal of substantial achievement of the TMDLs within the watershed. These are preliminary figures, and the recommendation is to receive the report.

Board Member Lind moved to receive 2026 Program Budget. Seconded by Board Member McCullough. The motion carried with four (4) yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind and McCullough).

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

14.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Campbell moved to adjourn at 6:34 pm. Seconded by Board Member Hafner. The motion carried with 4 yeas (Board Members Campbell, Hafner, Lind, and McCullough) and no nays.

President

COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: June 23, 2025
AGENDA NUMBER: 6
ITEM: Bills to Be Paid

FISCAL IMPACT: Budgeted
POLICY IMPACT: Policy

REQUEST
 Approve bills

BACKGROUND

Claims totaling \$85,499.56 on the following disbursement list will be issued and released upon Board approval.

Vendor	Amount
V0019--MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES	180.00
V0037--ECM PUBLISHERS INC	113.40
V0047--AH IND SCHOOL DIST 11	2,280.00
V0047--AH IND SCHOOL DIST 11	4,830.00
V0110--RESPEC COMPANY LLC	7,758.75
V0128--YTS COMPANIES LLC	7,393.75
V0128--YTS COMPANIES LLC	3,587.50
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	144.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	216.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	248.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	161.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	237.00
V0138--RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	144.00
V0150--PROWIRE INC	276.00
V0150--PROWIRE INC	695.00
V0197--VANDERBILT, CHASE	34.30
V0221--ABDO LLP	1,250.00
V0221--ABDO LLP	5,466.67
V0242--METRO I NET	6,753.00
V0302--PETTY CASH C/O JULIE PETERSON	107.66
V0348--BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN	23,396.36
V0350--FIRST UNUM LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY	1,345.01
V0352--HEALTH EQUITY INC	35.10
V0352--HEALTH EQUITY INC	1,250.00
V0352--HEALTH EQUITY INC	778.06
V0362--PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION	8,573.28
V0373--NORTHDAL CONSTRUCTION CO	3,060.00
V0389--T SQUARED STORAGE LLC	1,742.62
V0390--STRUCTURAL BUILDINGS INC	1,965.74
V0391--JOHN & CHRISTINE KINGHORN	1,477.36
	85,499.56

Item 6: Bills to be Paid Page 2 of 2

Company name: Created on:	Coon Creek Watershed District 6/17/2025									
	Vendor name	Bill number	Date	Fund name	Department name	Account	Capital Project ID	Grant ID	Transaction amount	Memo
0973569-001 JULY25	FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY FRSTUNIMLIFEINSURANCE COMPANY	0973569-001 JULY25 0973569-001 JULY25 0973569-001 JULY25 0973569-001 JULY25 0973569-001 JULY25 0973569-001 JULY25 0973569-001 JULY25	6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025	General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund	Administration Administration Administration Water Quality Operations & Maintenance Administration Watershed Development	60715 21050 21050 60715 60715 21050 60715			141.17 411.00 144.38 30.46 33.66 567.55 16.79	JULY2025 INSUREADM JULY2025 INSLTD JULY2025 INSUREFVQ JULY2025 INSURECOM JULY2025 INSSID JULY2025 INSUREWD
Sum for 0973569-001 JULY25									1,345.01	
1051864	EOMPUBLISHERS INC	1051864	6/6/2025	General Fund	Administration	61559			113.40	AD1472207 ANNL SWPPP HEARING
Sum for 1051864									113.40	
25 CVREIMB	VANDERBILT CHASE	25 CVREIMB	6/16/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61475			34.30	REIMB JUNE 25 MILEAGE
Sum for 25 CVREIMB									34.30	
2514	METROINET	2514	3/1/2025	General Fund	Administration	63066			6,753.00	MTHLYT SERVICES MAR 25
Sum for 2514									6,753.00	
3083330001	BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN	3083330001 3083330001 3083330001 3083330001 3083330001 3083330001 3083330001	6/11/2025 6/11/2025 6/11/2025 6/11/2025 6/11/2025 6/11/2025 6/11/2025	General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund	Water Quality Operations & Maintenance Administration Administration Watershed Development Planning	60722 60722 60722 21050 60722 60722 60722			5.38 20.20 41.06 23,293.30 20.90 15.52	JULY 2025 HEALTH & VISION INS JULY 2025 VISION INS JULY 2025 VISION INS JULY 2025 HEALTH INS JULY 2025 VISION INS JULY 2025 VISION INS
Sum for 3083330001									23,396.36	
37537	YSIS COMPANIES LLC	37537	5/14/2025	General Fund	Operations & Maintenance	61251	PROJ25-400		7,393.75	ROUTINE D57 FORESTRY
Sum for 37537									7,393.75	
37889	YSIS COMPANIES LLC	37889	5/30/2025	General Fund	Operations & Maintenance	61251	PROJ25-400		3,587.50	ROUTINE D57 FORESTRY
Sum for 37889									3,587.50	
37904	PRO WIRE INC	37904	6/15/2025	General Fund	Administration	61263			276.00	ANNL SECURITY MONITORING
Sum for 37904									276.00	
37905	PRO WIRE INC	37905	6/15/2025	General Fund	Administration	61263			695.00	ANNL FIRE SYSTEM MONITORING
Sum for 37905									695.00	
507489	AEDO LLP	507489	5/31/2025	General Fund	Administration	63052			1,250.00	ACCT 300036 WSPYRL & CONSULT MAY 25
Sum for 507489									1,250.00	
507940	AEDO LLP	507940	5/31/2025	General Fund	Administration	63052			5,466.67	ACCT 90223FSRPFVSVC MAY 25
Sum for 507940									5,466.67	
9JMF50Z	HEALTH EQUITY INC	9JMF50Z	6/13/2025	General Fund	Operations & Maintenance	60713			1,250.00	DPC REIMB JUNE 2025
Sum for 9JMF50Z									1,250.00	
B017454	RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	B017454	5/31/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61549	PROJ25-504		216.00	WO B017454 MONITORING
Sum for B017454									216.00	
B017519	RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	B017519	5/30/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61549	PROJ25-504		144.00	WO B017519 MONITORING
Sum for B017519									144.00	
B017520	RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	B017520	6/6/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61549	PROJ25-504		248.00	WO B017520 MONITORING
Sum for B017520									248.00	
B017521	RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	B017521	6/6/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61549	PROJ25-503		161.00	WO B017521 MONITORING
Sum for B017521									161.00	
B017701	RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	B017701	6/10/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61549	PROJ25-504		237.00	WO B017701 MONITORING
Sum for B017701									237.00	
B017703	RMB ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES INC	B017703	6/10/2025	General Fund	Water Quality	61549	PROJ25-504		144.00	WO B017703 MONITORING
Sum for B017703									144.00	
HIDRN4	HEALTH EQUITY INC HIDRN4 HEALTH EQUITY INC HEALTH EQUITY INC HEALTH EQUITY INC HEALTH EQUITY INC	HIDRN4 HIDRN4 HIDRN4 HIDRN4 HIDRN4 HIDRN4	6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025 6/16/2025	General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund	Planning Operations & Maintenance Public & Governmental Affairs Water Quality Watershed Development Administration	60713 60713 60713 60713 60713 60713			136.00 136.53 69.00 136.53 75.00 225.00	JUNE 20 EEHSA DEDUCTIONS JUNE 20 EEHSA DEDUCTIONS JUNE 20 EEHSA DEDUCTIONS JUNE 20 EEHSA DEDUCTIONS JUNE 20 EEHSA DEDUCTIONS JUNE 20 EEHSA DEDUCTIONS
Sum for HIDRN4									778.06	
INV05250146	RESPEC COMPANY LLC	INV05250146	6/6/2025	General Fund	Administration	63010			7,758.75	PROJ02735 24013 GIS MAY 25
Sum for INV05250146									7,758.75	
K8Z45DQ	HEALTH EQUITY INC	K8Z45DQ	6/11/2025	General Fund	Administration	60713			35.10	JUNE 2025 FEES
Sum for K8Z45DQ									35.10	
MWPCTRNGCCWD	MINNESOTA BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES	MWPCTRNGCCWD	6/16/2025	General Fund	Watershed Development	61355			180.00	MWPCTRNGCCWD KHASBROOK
Sum for MWPCTRNGCCWD									180.00	
PAN 18-108	JOHN & CHRISTINE KING HORN	PAN 18-108	6/23/2025	Escrow Fund	Administration	24210			1,477.36	P18-108 ESCROW REF KING HORN RESIDENCE
Sum for PAN 18-108									1,477.36	
PAN 18-117	AHIND SCHOOL DIST 11	PAN 18-117	6/23/2025	Escrow Fund	Administration	24210			2,280.00	P18-117 ESCROW REF COON RAVEN HILLS ADDN
Sum for PAN 18-117									2,280.00	
PAN 19-180	TS SQUARED STORAGE LLC	PAN 19-180	6/23/2025	Escrow Fund	Administration	24210			1,742.62	P19-180 ESCROW REF ABC MINI STORAGE ADDN
Sum for PAN 19-180									1,742.62	
PAN 19-183	AHIND SCHOOL DIST 11	PAN 19-183	6/23/2025	Escrow Fund	Administration	24210			4,830.00	P19-183 ESCROW REF ANDOVER HS & IJ
Sum for PAN 19-183									4,830.00	
PAN 22-048	NORTHDALE CONSTRUCTION CO	PAN 22-048	6/23/2025	Escrow Fund	Administration	24210			3,060.00	P22-048 ESCROW REF MEADOW CREEK RECON
Sum for PAN 22-048									3,060.00	
PAN 23-039	STRUCTURAL BUILDINGS INC	PAN 23-039	6/23/2025	Escrow Fund	Administration	24210			1,965.74	P23-039 ESCROW REF R&H FACILITY
Sum for PAN 23-039									1,965.74	
PETTY CASH 0625	PETTY CASH C/O JULIE PETERSON PETTY CASH C/O JULIE PETERSON PETTY CASH C/O JULIE PETERSON	PETTY CASH 0625 PETTY CASH 0625 PETTY CASH 0625	6/23/2025 6/23/2025 6/23/2025	General Fund General Fund General Fund	Administration Administration Administration	61477 62231 61149			70.66 19.90 17.10	PETTY CASH REIMB JUNE 25 STAFF RECOG PETTY CASH REIMB JUNE 25 POSTAGE PETTY CASH REIMB JUNE 25 SUPPLIES
Sum for PETTY CASH 0625									107.66	
SOMPER00804198	PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION	SOMPER00804198	6/20/2025	General Fund	Administration	21050			8,573.28	06202025 PERA P4RL
Sum for SOMPER00804198									8,573.28	
Sum Total									85,499.56	

Permit Application Review Report
Date: 6/18/2025**Board Meeting Date: 6/23/2025**
Agenda Item: 7Applicant/Landowner:

Centerpoint Energy
Attn: Colton Peshek
505 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55459

Project Name: 2025 MIPC Project - Highway 10**Project PAN:** P-25-016**Project Purpose:** two excavations to remove and replace existing pipeline elbow**Project Location:** Within CenterPoint's existing easements along the north and south side of Highway 10, Coon Rapids**Site Size:** size of disturbed area - 1.48 acres; size of regulated impervious surface - 0 acres**Applicable District Rule(s):** Rule 2, Rule 4, Rule 5, Rule 6

Recommendation: Approve with 2 Conditions and 0 Stipulations

Description: CenterPoint Energy is proposing to replace two small sections of an existing 16 inch natural gas pipeline. The project consists of 2 excavations to remove and replace existing pipeline elbows via the open trench method. The project will disturb 1.48 acres and create no regulated impervious surface. The area drains to Lower Coon Creek. The relevant water resource concerns are erosion and sediment control, wetlands, and floodplain. These correspond to District Rules 4, 5, and 6. See attached Figure 1: Project Location and Figure 2: Site Plan/ESC.

Conditions to be Met Before Permit Issuance:Rule 2.7 – Procedural Requirements

1. Submittal of a performance escrow in the amount of \$2,750.00.

Rule 4.0 – Soils and Erosion Control

2. Update the erosion and sediment control plan to stabilize soils and soil stockpiles within 24 hours of inactivity.

Stipulations: The permit will be issued with the following stipulations as conditions of the permit. By accepting the permit, the applicant agrees to these stipulations: None

Exhibits:

Exhibit Type	Exhibit Author	Signature Date	Received Date
Permit Application	CenterPoint Energy	05/15/2025	05/15/2025

Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan	ERM	undated	05/15/2025
Project Narrative	CenterPoint Energy	05/15/2025	05/15/2025

Findings

Fees and Escrows (Rule 2.7):

The applicant has submitted a \$1,760.00 application fee and deposit which corresponds with the nonrefundable application fee (\$10), base fee for a Separate Private Utility project (\$1,750.00). The applicant will be required to submit a performance escrow in the amount of \$2,740.00. This corresponds to a base escrow of \$2,000, plus an additional \$500/acre of disturbance (1.48 acres of land disturbance proposed).

Stormwater Management (Rule 3.0):

The proposed project does not create a cumulative total of 10,000 sf or more of new or fully reconstructed impervious surface, or 5,000 sf or more of new or fully reconstructed impervious surface for non-residential or multifamily residential within one mile of and draining to an impaired water. The proposed project is not a public linear project where the sum of the new and fully reconstructed impervious surface is equal to one or more acres. Stormwater Management standards do not apply.

Soils and Erosion Control (Rule 4.0)

Rule 4.0 applies to the proposed project because it includes land disturbing activities of 10,000 square feet or more and is within 300 feet of and drains to a waterbody.

The proposed project drains to Lower Coon Creek. The soils affected by the project include Alluvial and Zimmerman and have a soil erodibility factor of 0.15 or greater. Disturbed areas are not proposed to be stabilized within 24 hours, as required. The proposed erosion and sediment control plan includes erosion control blanket, perimeter control, and street sweeping. The erosion control plan does not meet District requirements because soils and soil stockpiles are not proposed to be stabilized within 24 hours. The site does require an NPDES permit, which has been obtained. See Figure 3: Site Plan/Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

Wetlands (Rule 5.0)

Wetlands exist on site, but no impacts are proposed. The applicant submitted a joint application form requesting a No Loss decision on 02/25/2025. The application was noticed to the TEP on 02/26/2025. The TEP agrees that the proposed project meets the requirements for a No Loss under No-Loss (8424.0415) Part F.

Floodplain (Rule 6.0)

Rule 6.0 applies to the proposed project because it includes land disturbing activities within the boundary of the 100-year flood elevation as mapped and modeled by the District.

The regulatory floodplain elevation is 896 ft NAVD 88. The project proposes no permanent impacts to the floodplain area.

Drainage, Bridges, Culverts, and Utility Crossings (Rule 7.0)

The proposed project does not include land disturbing activities which construct, improve, repair, or alter the hydraulic characteristics of a bridge profile control or culvert structure on a creek, public ditch, or major watercourse. The proposed project does not include land disturbing activities which involve a pipeline or utility crossing of a creek, public ditch, or major watercourse.

The proposed project does not include land disturbing activities which construct, improve, repair or alter the hydraulic characteristics of a conveyance system that extends across two or more parcels of record not under common ownership and has a drainage area of 200 acres or greater. Rule 7.0 does not apply.

Buffers (Rule 8.0)

The proposed project does not include a land disturbing activity on land adjacent or directly contributing to a Public Water, Additional Waters, High or Outstanding Ecological Value Waters, a Public Ditch, or Impaired Waters/waters exceeding state water quality standards. Rule 8.0 does not apply.

Variances (Rule 10.2)

The proposed project is not requesting a variance from the District's rules, regulations, and policies. Rule 10.2 does not apply.

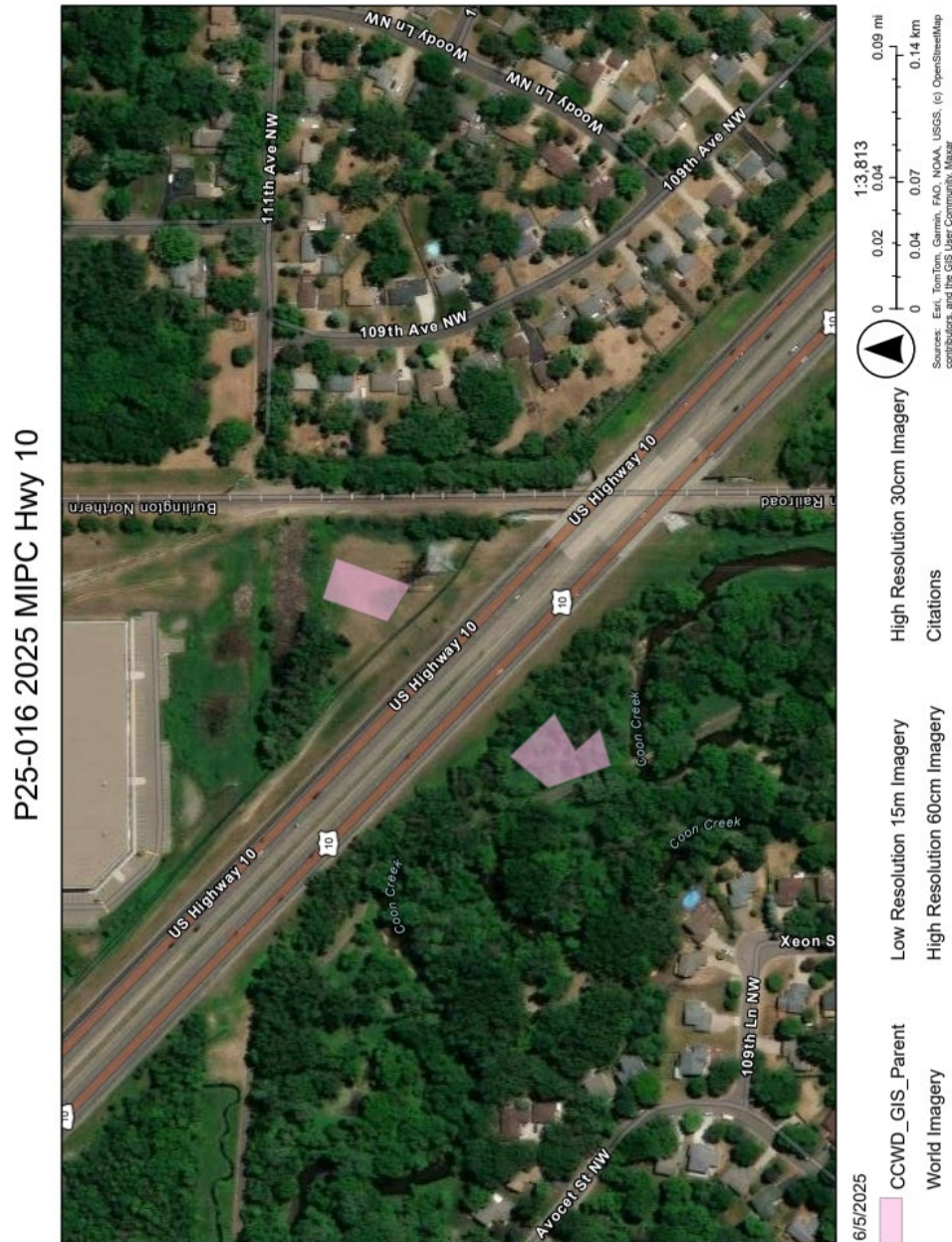


Figure 1: Project Location

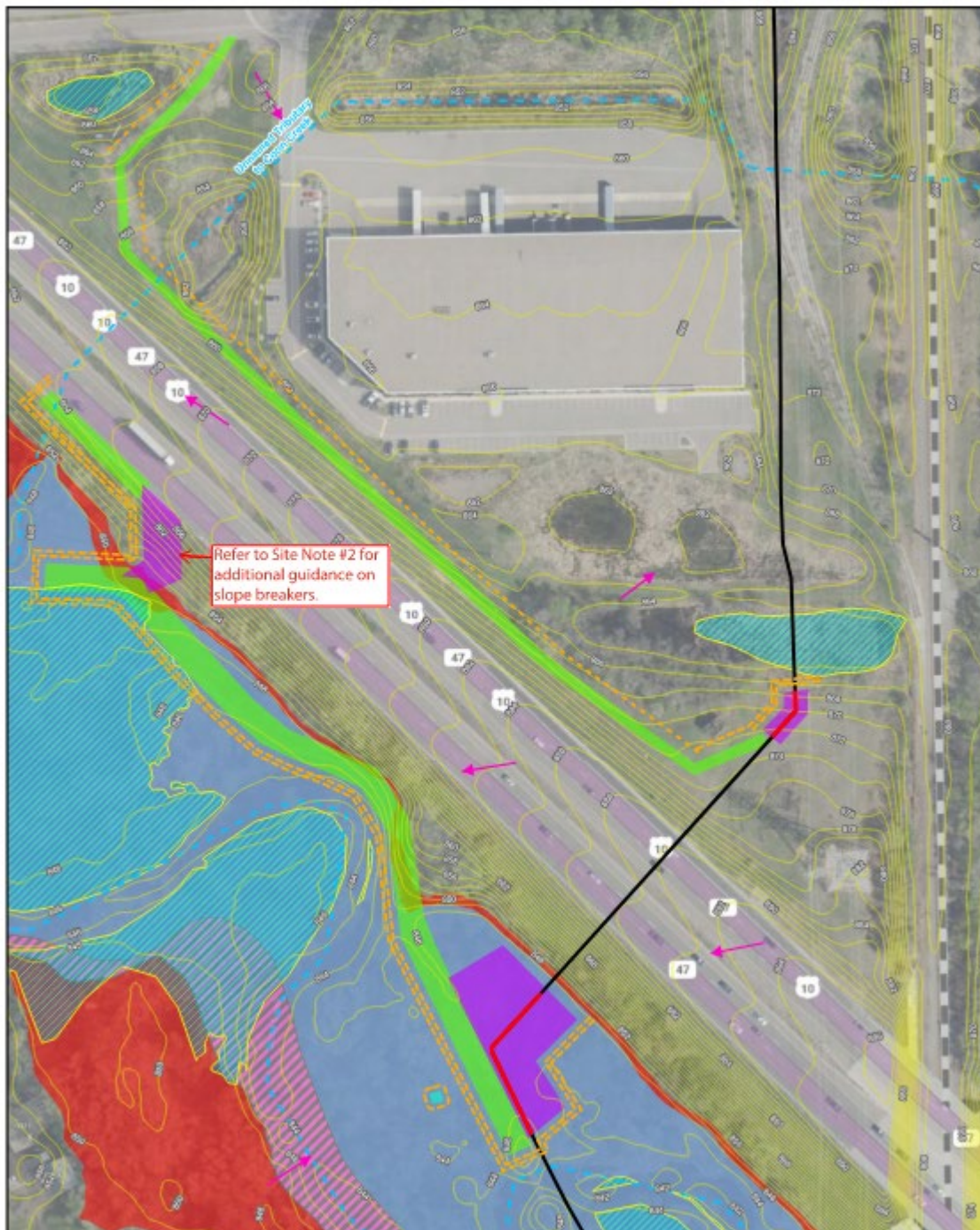


Figure 2: Site Plan and Erosion & Sediment Control Plan

Permit Application Review Report
Date: 6/18/2025

Board Meeting Date: 6/23/2025
Agenda Item: 8

Applicant/Landowner:

Attn: Chris Hogie
19296 109th St SE
Big Lake, MN 55309

Project Name: Hogie Driveway and Home

Project PAN: P-24-042

Project Purpose: construction of a driveway, shed and home

Project Location: 10-acre parcel on north side of Old Constance, 3rd parcel west of university extension, Andover

Site Size: size of parcel - 10.0 acres; size of disturbed area – 0.5 acres; size of regulated impervious surface - 0.5

Applicable District Rule(s): Rule 2, Rule 3, Rule 4, Rule 6, Rule 5

Recommendation: Approve with 1 Condition and 2 Stipulations

Description: The project was initially approved and permitted for the construction of a new driveway and shed on an undeveloped parcel with the condition that another application was to be made in the future for the construction of a home on the same parcel. Stormwater treatment would then be required for all the impervious from both applications. The applicant is now proposing the construction of the home and stormwater treatment. This parcel drains to County Ditch 58. The relevant water resource concerns are stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, wetlands and floodplain. These correspond to District Rules 3, 4, 5, and 6. See attached Figure 1: Project Location and Figure 2: Site Plan.

Conditions to be Met Before Permit Issuance:

Rule 2.7 – Procedural Requirements

1. Submittal of an additional performance escrow in the amount of \$60.00.

Stipulations: The permit will be issued with the following stipulations as conditions of the permit. By accepting the permit, the applicant agrees to these stipulations:

1. If dewatering is required, provide DNR dewatering permit prior to construction. If a DNR permit is not required, provide well-field location, rates, discharge location, schedule and quantities prior to construction.
2. Submittal of grading as-builts for the project to confirm adequate floodplain

compensatory storage has been provided.

Exhibits:

Exhibit Type	Exhibit Author	Signature Date	Received Date
Survey	Bogart, Pederson & Associates, Inc.	04/21/2025	06/02/2025
Stormwater Management Report	Bogart, Pederson & Associates, Inc.	05/28/2025	06/02/2025
Joint Application & Exemption	Bogart, Pederson & Associates, Inc.	08/06/2024	08/06/2024
Wetland Delineation Report	Bogart, Pederson & Associates, Inc.	06/07/2023	06/24/2024
Construction Plans	Bogart, Pederson & Associates, Inc.	08/07/2024	08/07/2024

Findings

Fees and Escrows (Rule 2.7):

The applicant has previously submitted a \$1,060.00 application fee and deposit which corresponds with the nonrefundable application fee (\$10), base fee for a Single-Family Lot project of 10.0 acres (\$750.00 and addition to base fee (\$300.00) for the initial application. The applicant has submitted an additional application and review fee of \$750.00 for a single-family home project to accompany the revised application. The applicant will be required to submit an additional performance escrow in the amount of \$60.00. This is for an additional disturbance of 0.12 acres.

Stormwater Management (Rule 3.0):

Rule 3.0 applies to the proposed project because it includes land disturbing activities creating a cumulative total of 10,000 sf or more of new or fully reconstructed impervious surface.

The Hydrologic Soil Group (HSG) of soils on site are HSG B.

Rate Control: A model was not provided to determine existing and proposed runoff rates. There will be slight increases in rates due to the increase in impervious from the project. The project discharges into a large wetland complex in which the slight increases are not anticipated to cause adverse impacts. The rate control standard is considered met.

Volume Control: The proposed project is new development; therefore, the volume reduction requirement is equal to 1.1 inches over the area of all impervious surface. The amount of proposed impervious required to be treated is 21,811 ft². The proposed house and shed make up 8,407 square feet and meet the criteria listed in Rule 3.3.3.3 and are considered effectively treated. The proposed driveway makes up the remaining impervious of 13,404 sf. Although this is a drivable surface and does not technically meet the criteria in Rule 3.3.3.3, runoff from most of the driveway (11,117 sf) will flow through an adequate flow length of dense woods and vegetated areas (ranging from 16 to 60 ft) prior to entering the wetland and can be considered effectively treated. The remaining portion of the driveway (2,287 sf) that is directly within the wetland cannot feasibly be treated. No adverse impacts are anticipated.

Water Quality: Stormwater treatment on site must remove at least 80% of the average annual post development TSS per discharge location. The following TSS removal has been provided:

Discharge Point	TSS Removal Provided
wetland	80
driveway to wetland	0

As stated in the volume control section, a portion of the driveway cannot be treated. The water quality requirements are considered met to the maximum extent practicable.

Discharges to Wetlands: Stormwater from the proposed project is being discharged into the surrounding wetland. Only a small portion of the project is discharged directly to the wetland. This portion has been reviewed, and no impacts are anticipated. Because the project meets the criteria for Rule 3.3.3.3 for the home and shed, the discharges to wetland requirement is considered met to the maximum extent practicable.

Landlocked Basins: The proposed drainage system does not outlet to a landlocked basin, therefore this section does not apply.

Low Floor Freeboard: The proposed project is new development which includes buildings and habitable structures. Therefore, SMPs must be designed such that the lowest basement floor elevations are at least 2 feet above the 100-yr high water level and 1 foot above the emergency overflow. The lowest basement floor elevation proposed is 908 ft NAVD 88. The applicable 100-year high water level is 899.8 ft NAVD 88.

Maintenance Agreements: A maintenance agreement is not required.

Soils and Erosion Control (Rule 4.0)

Rule 4.0 applies to the proposed project because it is a land disturbing activity that requires a permit under another District rule.

The proposed project drains to Ditch 58. The soils affected by the project include Lino, Markey, Isanti and Zimmerman and have a soil erodibility factor of 0.15 or greater. Disturbed areas are proposed to be stabilized within 24 hours, as required. The proposed erosion and sediment control plan includes perimeter control. The erosion control plan does meet District requirements. An NPDES permit is not required. See attached Figure 3. Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

Wetlands (Rule 5.0)

Rule 5.0 applies to the proposed project because it includes activities which result in the filling, draining, excavating or other altering the hydrology of a wetland.

Wetlands were delineated under PAN W24-020. The boundary and type application reviewed and approved. The Notice of Decision was issued on 7/16/2024. The applicant submitted a joint application form requesting an Exemption decision on 08/06/2024. The NOD was sent on 8/16/2024.

Wetland ID	Impact Type (F/D/E)	Impacts (sf)	Impact Duration (T/P)	Replacement Ratio	Required Mitigation (sf)
Basin A	Fill	4,272	Permanent	0	0

Table 1.

The applicant has provided sufficient evidence that the project qualifies for a de minimis exemption per M.S 8420.0420 Subpart 8. See attached Figure 4: Wetland Impacts.

Floodplain (Rule 6.0)

Rule 6.0 applies to the proposed project because it includes land disturbing activities within the boundary of the 100-year flood elevation as mapped and modeled by the District.

The regulatory floodplain elevation is 899.8 ft MSL. The application proposes the placement of 205 cubic yards of fill within the floodplain. Compensatory storage is required. The proposed project provides 213 cubic yards of compensatory storage, which exceeds the required 1:1 ratio and is within the relevant reach. Figure 3: Floodplain Impact and mitigation.

Drainage, Bridges, Culverts, and Utility Crossings (Rule 7.0)

The proposed project does not include land disturbing activities which construct, improve, repair, or alter the hydraulic characteristics of a bridge profile control or culvert structure on a creek, public ditch, or major watercourse. The proposed project does not include land disturbing activities which

involve a pipeline or utility crossing of a creek, public ditch, or major watercourse.

The proposed project does not include land disturbing activities which construct, improve, repair or alter the hydraulic characteristics of a conveyance system that extends across two or more parcels of record not under common ownership and has a drainage area of 200 acres or greater. Rule 7.0 does not apply.

Buffers (Rule 8.0)

The proposed project does not include a land disturbing activity on land adjacent or directly contributing to a Public Water, Additional Waters, High or Outstanding Ecological Value Waters, a Public Ditch, or Impaired Waters/waters exceeding state water quality standards. Rule 8.0 does not apply.

Variances (Rule 10.2)

The proposed project is not requesting a variance from the District's rules, regulations, and policies. Rule 10.2 does not apply.

P24-042 Hogie Driveway and Home



Figure 1: Project Location

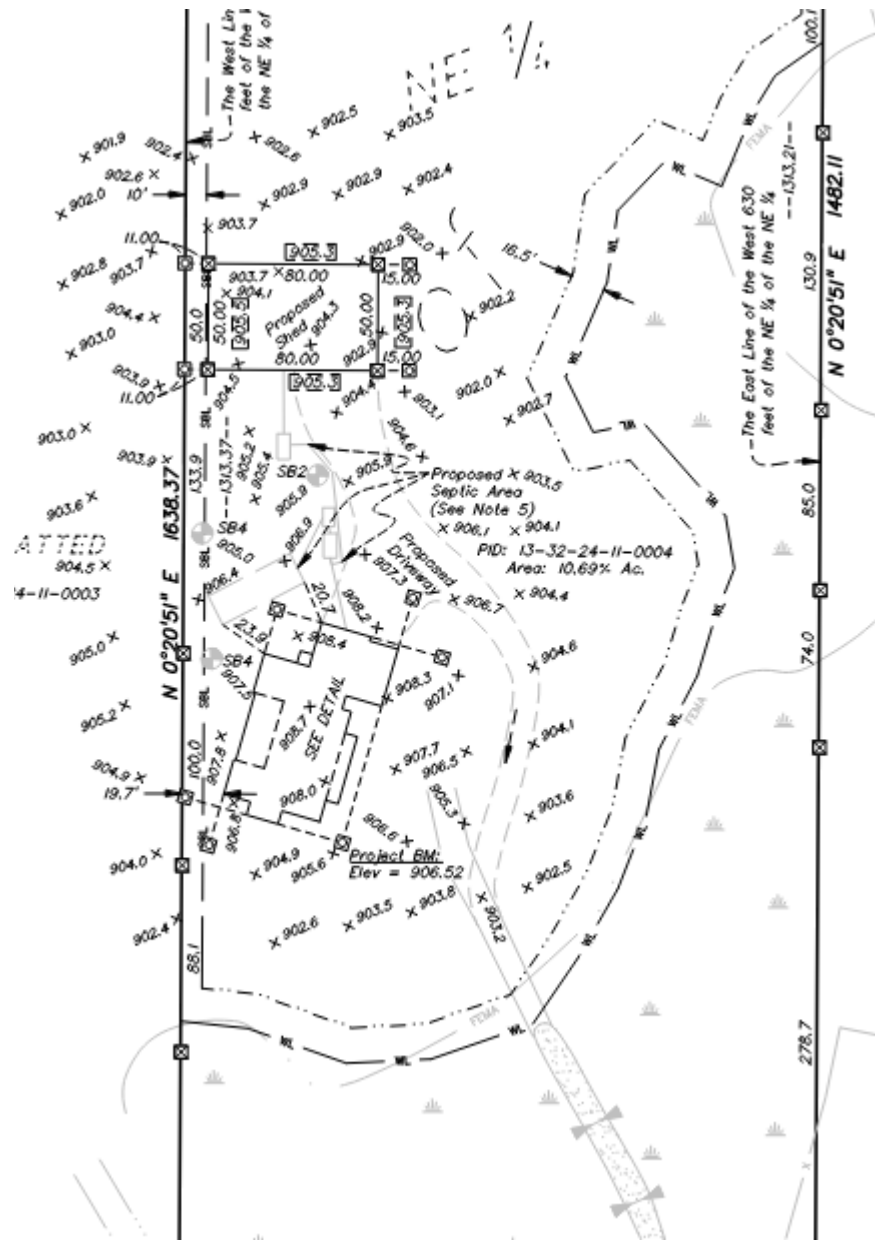


Figure 2: Site Plan

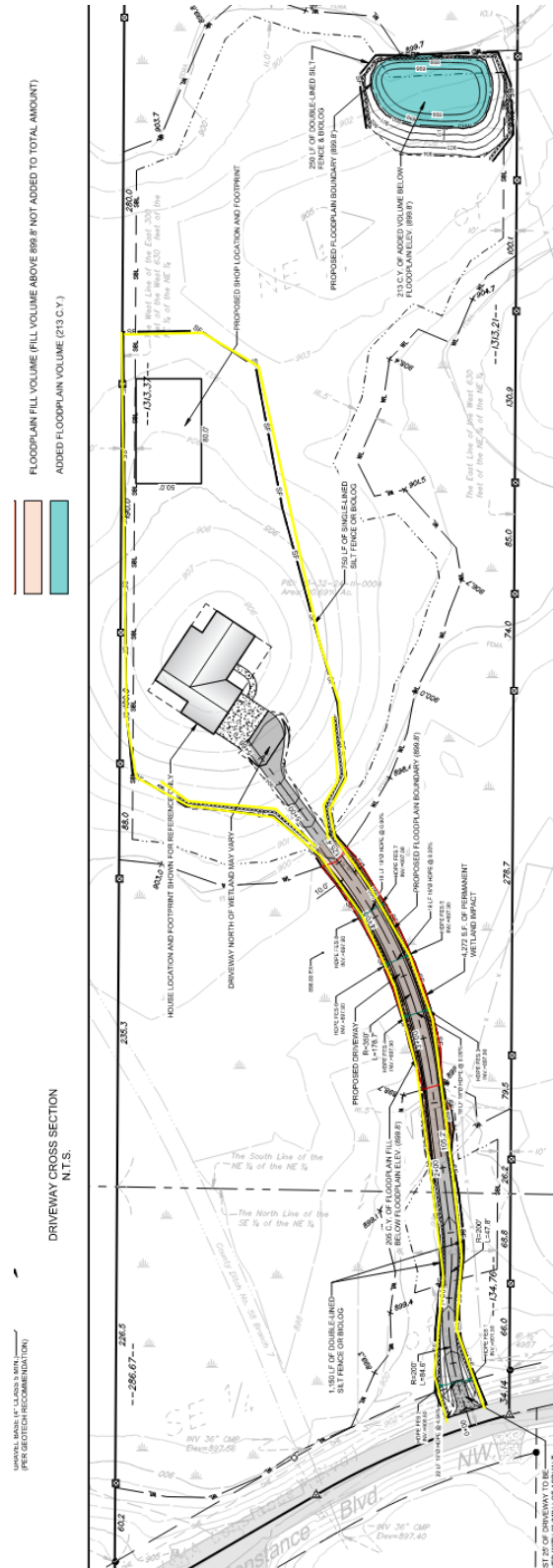


Figure 3: Erosion and Sediment Control Plan/Floodplain Impacts & Mitigation

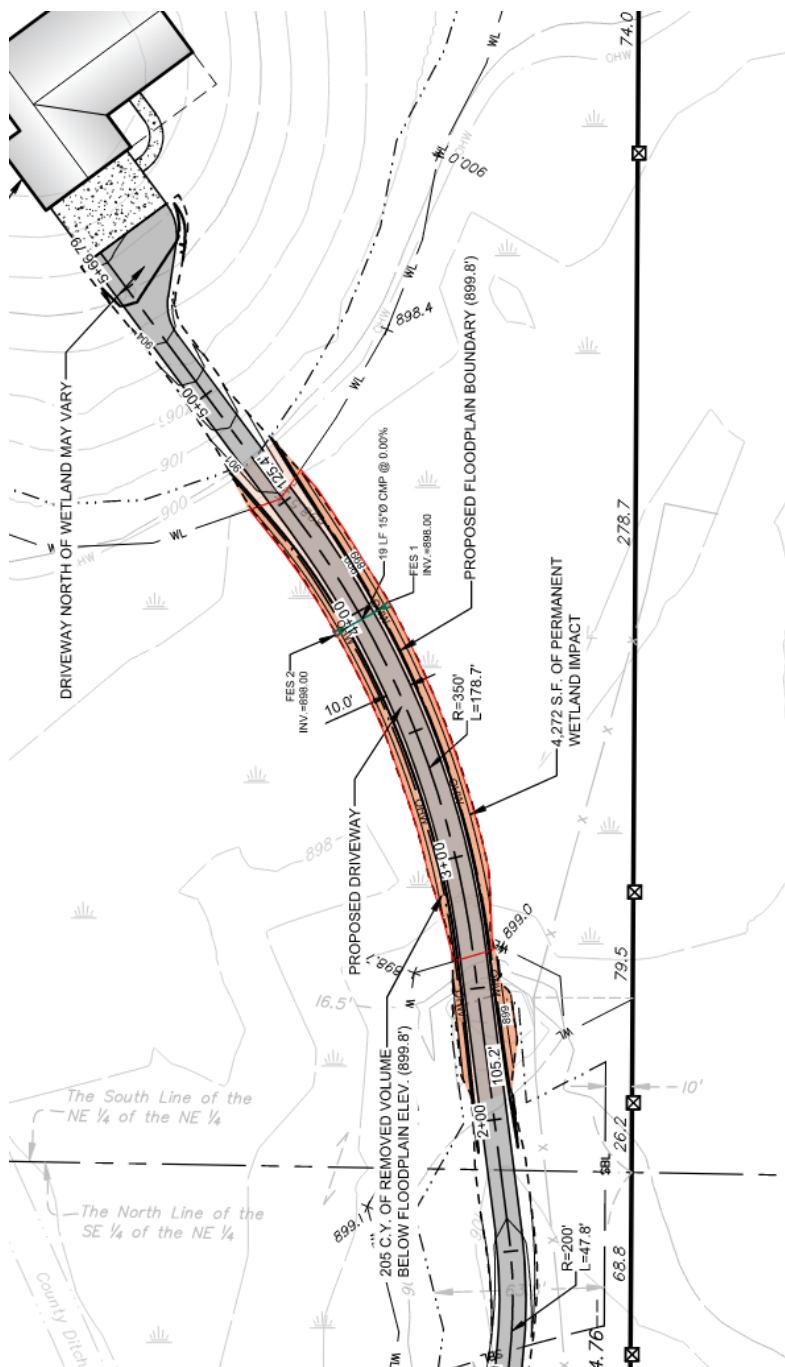


Figure 4: Wetland Impacts

COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: June 23, 2025
AGENDA NUMBER: 9
ITEM: Municipal Insight Survey Results

AGENDA: Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED

Receive Report

PURPOSE & SCOPE OF ITEM

To provide a summary of key insights from the completed Municipal Insight Survey. CCWD Engagement Coordinator, Jessica Lindemyer, will be available to give a brief presentation.

LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

CCWD, and the municipalities within its jurisdiction, are federal and state MS4s (municipal separate storm sewer systems). As MS4s these entities are required to address impaired waters that do not meet water quality standards by the goal deadline of 2045 under the Coon Creek Watershed TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load).

SITUATION

The cost associated with addressing the TMDL impaired waters by the 2045 goal deadline is approximately \$70 million over the next 10 years and \$103 million over the next 20 years. This places a significant financial burden on the local tax base and raises several concerns related to the need for increased state and federal funding, functional classification changes, and extension of the 2045 timeline. It also has the potential to create further divides between the public and the various government entities tasked with achieving the TMDL.

In order to make meaningful progress on impaired waters by 2045 CCWD and its municipal partners must work collaboratively to identify, fund, and implement cost-effective projects and practices.

The Municipal Insight Survey is intended to guide CCWD in determining the best methods for engaging with CCWD's municipal partners to facilitate a unified government approach.

APPROACH

CCWD staff worked with consultants from MP+G Marketing Solutions to implement the Municipal Insight Survey. The effort was divided into two main phases, targeting two key audiences: municipal decision-makers & registered voters of the watershed.

The objective of this effort was to identify the needs, values, and priorities of the individuals who make water management decisions at the municipal level and gain a better understanding of their perceptions related to water management (quality/quantity) and the TMDL with the goal of:

- Improving CCWD's engagement and public information strategy by crafting our efforts in a way that speaks to the values and interests of the individuals who share responsibility of achieving the TMDL
- Communicating with these audiences in a language in which they understand and in terms that are of interest to them.

Phase One of the Municipal Insight Survey focused on gaining insights from municipal decision-makers. This phase consisted of two parts: 1) one-on-one interviews and 2) online surveys. Thirteen (13) one-on-one interviews were conducted by MP+G to complete a qualitative analysis and identify themes, key messages, audience commonalities/contrasts, trusted messengers, and preferred/recommended communication channels. The insights from these interviews were then used to develop a quantitative survey that was distributed to a broader group of municipal staff working in water management within the District. Twenty-five (25) municipal staff members completed this survey.

Phase Two of the Municipal Insight Survey focused on gaining insights from a random sampling of registered voters within the watershed. Similar to Phase One, Ten (10) one-on-one interviews were conducted by MP+G to complete a qualitative analysis and identify themes. Insights from these interviews were then used to develop a quantitative survey that was distributed to a random sampling of registered voters within the District. One hundred fourteen (114) individuals completed this survey.

COLLABORATION

Results of this effort will be shared with CCWD's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in July and used as a catalyst to form an inter-agency communicators workgroup. District staff will take feedback from these groups to inform next steps and identify areas for further research.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

In addition to addressing impaired waters, municipalities are faced with the risk, uncertainty, and cost associated with random damaging weather events, aging infrastructure, demands for tangible results, and growing public skepticism.

As public skepticism increases, particularly skepticism of state and federal government, it will become increasingly hard to connect with local stakeholders both on a personal level

and a community level. CCWD should be able to navigate this growing skepticism by continuing to be a trusted resource for local municipalities.

The Municipal Insight Survey is intended to guide CCWD in determining the best methods for engaging with the District's municipal partners.

CONCLUSIONS

MP+G has provided CCWD with a final research report of the findings from the Municipal Insight Survey. A summary of the key findings are listed below:

Municipal Audience

- Mitigating risk, preventing loss, protecting public health/safety, and receiving regular progress updates are key factors in encouraging support for water management funding
- Lack of trust in state/fed regulators, lack of perceived benefits, and a belief that water management issues should be tackled by others, are the main factors discouraging individuals from supporting funding for water management
- Inter-city competition can be a motivating factor, but we want to be careful about how we may utilize that factor so as to remain unified in our actions
- Cities already see us as a trusted resource and appreciate our expertise, but they would like continued help with explainer resources and outreach assistance

Public Audience (registered voters)

- Protecting public health and safety, working across communities, preventing pollution, and mitigating flooding are key factors in encouraging support for water management funding
- While government spending for water management is broadly supported, some express distrust of the government's ability to solve water quality problems and manage tax revenue
- The most meaningful differences between those who support funding vs those who do not appear to stem from age and income
 - Individuals ages 18-39 are more willing to support tax increases for reasons of public health and safety; however, those over the age of 60 are more likely than younger residents to accept any potential claims describing the activities of CCWD.
 - Older individuals with higher incomes were the most likely to be familiar with CCWD
- Many residents equate clean water with drinking water and "what comes out of the tap" not necessarily the water on the landscape

Audience Comparison

- Both audiences perceive public health and water quality as the most important reasons to take action on water management
- Both audiences expressed some level of distrust in state/fed government, yet showed trust in their own city staff and CCWD

- Long-term planning is highly valued by most municipal audiences, however, long-term planning is not well supported by the public audience as a justification for tax increases
- The municipal audience was much more aware of infrastructure issues and valued infrastructure protection more than the public audience
- The public audience valued cross-community efforts more than the municipal audience, which focused more on working within their own community

RECOMMENDATION

Receive Report



Coon Creek Watershed District Comprehensive Research Report



Photo Credit: Coon Creek Watershed District

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Key Market Research Findings	4
Recommended Key Messages Across All Audiences	5
Purpose of the Market Research	6
Background and Purpose	6
Research Approach: Phase 1	7
Research Approach: Phase 2	8
Research Questions: Phase 1, Municipal Leaders	8
Research Questions: Phase 2, Residents	9
Ethical Research.....	10
Risks and Benefits	10
Findings: Phase 1, Municipal Leaders.....	12
Leaders: Factors that Support/Justify Water Management Funding and Programs	13
Leaders: Factors that Discourage Support for Water Management Funding and Programs	14
Leaders: Meaningful Differences	16
Leaders: Trusted Sources of Information.....	17
Leaders: Perceptions about CCWD and Staff	18
Leaders: Other Findings	18
Leaders: Implications of this Data	19
Leaders: Needed Resources	19
Leaders: Good Ways to Know Water Investments are Working	20
Leaders: Communications Channels and Messengers.....	21
Findings: Phase 2, Residents.....	22
Residents: Factors that Support/Justify Water Management Funding and Programs	23
Residents: Factors that Discourage Support for Water Management Funding and Programs	24
Residents: Meaningful Differences.....	24

Residents: Trusted Sources of Information	25
Residents: Perceptions about CCWD and Staff.....	25
Residents: Good Ways to Know Water Investments are Working	25
Residents: Other Findings	26
Residents: Implications of this Data	26
Residents: Communications Channels and Messengers	27
Meaningful Differences Between Audiences	28
Communication Recommendations: All Audiences	29
All Audiences: Research-driven Key Messages.....	29
All Audiences: Communications Channels and Messengers	29
Appendix A: Municipal Leaders Survey Data	31
Appendix B: Resident Survey Data.....	32

Executive Summary

The Coon Creek Watershed District (CCWD) contracted with MP+G Marketing Solutions to conduct market research in 2024-2025 to better understand what motivates municipal leaders in the District to support, plan, and allocate the necessary tax funding for stricter water quality standards that will come into effect in 2045. Because budget-setting elected officials are accountable to voters for their decisions on water management issues, CCWD also undertook research with a group of District residents who are registered voters. This report summarizes the market research findings.

Key Market Research Findings

- The municipal leaders and residents who participated in these interviews and surveys are most motivated to support water management programs and funding to **protect water quality for drinking and recreation**.
- **Preventing pollution to preserve the environment, wildlife and fishing** is the second most compelling reason to support water management.
- **Preventing flooding and protecting infrastructure** is important to leaders and residents.
- **Communities working together** to protect water quality and prevent flooding is highly valued by residents.
- **The Coon Creek Watershed District is a trusted source of information** for those that have contacted it and/or are aware of its services.
- Many participants said that **regular progress reports from the District** would/do encourage support for water management funding and programs.
- **Participants that were kept informed by city staff members and the CCWD about water management issues, and particularly about the 2045 TMDL requirements, appeared more ready to meet those goals.**
- There were few meaningful differences between those who appear to support water management investments and those who do not. Some differences in perceptions were detected based on age and income.

- Those 18-39 are more willing to support a tax increase for reasons of public health and safety.
 - Those over 60 and those with incomes over \$100,000 are more likely to be familiar with CCWD.
 - There is limited awareness of 2045 changes in water quality standards—especially among those not familiar with CCWD.
 - Those over age 60 are more likely than younger residents to accept any of the potential claims describing the activities of CCWD.
- A number of respondents said that explaining water management science to others was a challenge. **Plain-language tools are needed** to teach “why,” “how,” and “how much.”
 - **Many respondents asked for CCWD to do more of what they are doing well: public outreach and education.**
 - **Residents don’t know what they currently pay for CCWD.**
 - Residents were asked what additional tax amount would be acceptable to pay for increased water management efforts. Very few residents were able to even guess at an amount, primarily because none of them knew what they currently pay, nor what added amount might be proposed. Others were unclear whether the tax they now pay comes out of property taxes or another source.

Recommended Key Messages Across All Audiences

Coon Creek Watershed District works across communities to:

- 1. Keep water safe for drinking and recreation***
- 2. Help control pollution to keep people, fish, and wildlife safe***
- 3. Prevent damage from flooding and erosion***
- 4. Protect roads and bridges through responsible water management***
- 5. Protect water for future generations***

Purpose of the Market Research



Photo Credit: Coon Creek Watershed District

Background and Purpose

The Coon Creek Watershed District (CCWD), and all but one of the municipalities within its jurisdiction, are federal and state MS4s (municipal separate storm sewer systems). As MS4s, these entities are required to address impaired waters that do not meet water quality standards by 2045 under the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). TMDLs are action plans to restore clean water by defining how much of a pollutant a water body can tolerate and meet water quality standards.

The cost associated with addressing these impaired waters by the 2045 deadline is approximately \$70 million over the next 10 years and \$103 million over the next 20 years. This places a significant financial burden on the local tax base and raises several concerns related to the need for increased state and federal

funding, functional classification changes, and extension of the 2045 timeline. It also has the potential to create further divides between the public and the various government entities tasked with achieving the TMDL.

Additionally, these entities are faced with the risk, uncertainty, and costs associated with random damaging weather events, aging infrastructure, demands for tangible results, and growing public skepticism.

As public skepticism increases, particularly skepticism of state and federal government, it is becoming increasingly hard to connect with local stakeholders both on a personal level and a community level. The District should be able to navigate this growing skepticism by continuing to be a trusted resource for local municipalities.

How do the local government entities responsible for the TMDL fund, and staff, the necessary water management efforts in the next 10-20 years while continuing to deal with the developing needs of the present?

The purpose of the research is to better understand the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, policies, and other factors that increase willingness of municipal leaders and residents in the District to support tax increases and other beneficial actions that advance CCWD's water quality improvement and protection programs, as well as those factors that decrease willingness. In addition, we are seeking insights into the communication messages, messengers, methods, and engagement tools that might increase or decrease willingness among the target audiences.

Research Approach: Phase 1

Qualitative data has been collected through 13 Zoom or phone interviews with elected officials and city staff members (e.g., city engineers, public works, planning and zoning, and/or city information officers). Shaped by the interviews, survey questions were developed and quantitative data collected through a survey sent to approximately 82 elected officials in the District, of which 25 were returned. Names and contact information for the interviews and survey were supplied by CCWD.

Mary Pat McNeil and Danie Watson of MP+G Marketing Solutions structured the interviews, and wrote the interview guide and survey questions—aligning each with the research questions—and submitted these to CCWD for approval.

The interview guide and survey began with an explanation of the “who, what, and why” of the research, and set a respectful tone. Before the interviews began, participants were asked for permission to record their conversation (for note-taking purposes). Audio recordings were made; notes were taken simultaneously. The survey was conducted online.

The data was analyzed by Danie Watson, research lead, for themes, key messages, trusted messengers, and other factors influencing decisions around water quality management and resource allocation. The findings for Phase 1 are summarized in this report.

Research Approach: Phase 2

Qualitative data has been collected through 10 Zoom or phone interviews with CCWD area residents who had contacted CCWD with questions or concerns in the past. Shaped by the interviews, survey questions were developed and quantitative data collected through a survey sample of 114 registered voters in the District. Names and contact information for the interviews were supplied by CCWD; names and contact information for 104 of the surveys were provided by Dynata, a market research firm. The additional 10 surveys were completed at the 2025 North Suburban Home Show supervised by Jesscia Lindemyer, CCWD Engagement Coordinator.

Mary Pat McNeil and Danie Watson of MP+G Marketing Solutions structured the interviews, and wrote the interview guide and survey questions—aligning each with the research questions—and submitted these to CCWD for approval.

The interview guide and survey began with an explanation of the “who, what, and why” of the research, and set a respectful tone. Before the interviews began, participants were asked for permission to record their conversation (for note-taking purposes). Audio recordings were made; notes were taken simultaneously. The survey was conducted online.

The data was analyzed by Danie Watson, research lead, for themes, key messages, trusted messengers, and other factors influencing decisions around water quality management and resource allocation. The findings for Phase 2 are summarized in this report.

Research Questions: Phase 1, Municipal Leaders

Actionable intelligence is needed for CCWD to advance engagement efforts with municipal leaders, and persuade them to support water quality funding to meet

TMDL goals. The research questions are the “need to know” questions that will inform CCWD and its stakeholders as they ready their outreach and engagement efforts to municipal leaders.

Note: The ***research questions, used for research planning***, are different from the ***interview and survey questions, which are used for data collection***.

In Phase 1, we gathered the following information from **municipal leaders and staff** of the seven municipalities of the CCWD:

1. What knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, policies, and other factors appear to *increase* willingness among **municipal leaders** to support tax increases and resource allocation for improving and protecting water quality in the CCWD?
2. What factors appear to *decrease* willingness for this target audience?
3. Under what circumstances do they perceive water quality improvement expenditures to be justified?
4. Are there meaningful differences between those who are receptive to TMDL compliance expenditures and those who are not?
5. What messages and messengers resonate with and motivate these audiences? Is there wording they find off-putting or confusing?
6. Who/what are the trusted sources for information and assistance around TMDL compliance and water quality improvement?
7. What resources, such as current or potential partner organizations, are available to help reach the target audiences?

Research Questions: Phase 2, Residents

Actionable intelligence is needed for CCWD to advance engagement efforts with **CCWD residents**, and persuade them to support water quality funding to meet TMDL goals. The research questions are the “need to know” questions that will inform CCWD and its stakeholders as they ready their outreach and engagement efforts.

Note: The *research questions*, used for research planning, are different from the *interview and survey questions*, which are used for data collection.

In Phase 2, we gathered the following information from **residents** of the seven municipalities of the CCWD:

1. What knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, policies, and other factors appear to *increase* willingness among **members of the public** to support tax increases for water quality programs, and to value water quality in the CCWD?
2. What factors appear to *decrease* willingness for this target audience?
3. Under what circumstances do they perceive water quality improvement expenditures to be justified?
4. Can we gain some insight into the amount of tax increase the audience may find acceptable?
5. Are there meaningful differences between those who are receptive to tax increases for water quality and those who are not?
6. What messages and messengers resonate with and motivate these audiences? Is there wording they find off-putting or confusing?
7. What communications resources may be helpful for reaching these target audiences?

Ethical Research

Participation in the interviews and surveys was voluntary, and confidential, however confidentiality was limited since the names of people who were invited to participate are known to staff at CCWD.

Interview participants were given a verbal disclosure (including who is conducting the research and why, why they are being asked to participate, what the potential risks are of participating, how their confidentiality will be protected, and what will be done with the information they provide), and asked to give verbal permission to proceed. Researchers listened openly, and welcomed a diversity of opinions and experiences. Survey participants were similarly be provided with a written disclosure. Completing the survey implies consent.

Risks and Benefits

No potential risks to participants were identified, aside from limited confidentiality. Interview participants were asked to volunteer 45 minutes of their time. Survey participants were asked to volunteer 5-10 minutes.

In Phase 1, as a token of our appreciation, residents who chose to participate in an interview received a rain gauge and a native seed packet. Some participants may also see a benefit in helping to shape CCWD water quality improvement efforts and TMDL compliance programs.

In Phase 2, survey participants were compensated by Dynata for completing the survey. No other tangible benefit for participants was identified, though some participants may see a benefit in helping to shape CCWD water quality improvement efforts and TMDL compliance programs.

Findings: Phase 1, Municipal Leaders



Photo Credit: Coon Creek Watershed District

The research findings expand our understanding of the influences and choices about water quality funding made by this target audience, and the ways we may be able to measurably influence those decisions through tailored communications.

Research Sample Size

Qualitative data was collected through 13 Zoom or phone interviews with elected officials and city staff members (e.g., city engineers, public works, planning and zoning, and/or city information officers). Quantitative data was collected through a survey sent to approximately 82 municipal officials in the District, of which 25 were returned.

Limitations of the Research

However, the value of the input from this interview and survey research is more descriptive than predictive, qualitative not quantitative, and not directly generalizable to the target audience as a whole.

Note also that some responses may be duplicated, as interviewees were not prohibited from completing the survey (and at least one person did).

Leaders: Factors that Support/Justify Water Management Funding and Programs

Concern for protecting water quality and public health

Among these participants, water quality was the factor mentioned most often for motivating investments in water management. Specifically, concern about “contaminants” or “public health and safety.”

“If there is a contaminant within the creeks, ditches, or streams, E. coli or something similar, that has to be taken care of.”

Interview participant

While comments about water management were infrequently mentioned by the public, water quality was the issue residents reportedly mentioned most often to respondents.

Desire to mitigate risks to infrastructure and prevent loss

In the interviews, infrastructure was mentioned by only one participant as a justification for water management expenditures. However, in the survey, when this answer was offered as an option, it was selected by nearly all respondents. Researchers infer that while it may not be top of mind, it is still strongly motivating for this audience.

“[We will know water management efforts are working when] water quality test results improve and infrastructure issues/concerns are reduced.”

Survey participant

“Risk management...Education about risks that are very real if you don’t manage water properly...Surface water flooding, and impacts to their property or property values, like trees dying.”

Interview participant

Seeing a cost-benefit balance

Several respondents were looking for a balance between expenditures and benefit, and seeing the need to justify spending for constituents, their city, and their own sense of responsibility.

“People understand we need to protect water but don’t go overboard.”

Interview participant

"Finding that balance. Not locking everything down."

Interview participant

Awareness of, and willingness to meet, regulatory levels

Meeting standards, regulations, and policies was frequently given as both a justification of, and a measure of success for, water management investment. No one mentioned any expected consequences if standards were not met.

"Meeting water quality testing standards [is how to know if we are reaching our goals]."

Survey participant

Ongoing engagement with city staff and CCWD

Participants that were kept informed by city staff members and the CCWD about water management issues, and particularly about the 2045 TMDL requirements, appeared more ready to meet those goals.

"Coon Creek has kind of taken the lead on this. And so I'm kind of letting them run [it] with us for right now."

Interview participant

CCWD progress reports

Many participants said that regular progress reports from the District would/do encourage support for water management funding and programs.

"An annual report is helpful."

Survey participant

"Data showing the effectiveness of pollutant reductions for storm water best management practices, as well as effectiveness of certain maintenance protocols."

Survey participant

Leaders: Factors that Discourage Support for Water Management Funding and Programs

Lack of confidence in federal and state entities that set contaminant levels

Several respondents expressed the opinion that federal and state agencies that regulate water quality are capriciously setting accepted levels of contaminants.

When levels change over time, they see it as evidence that levels are set without reasoning.

*"How are you picking this number out of the air?
Do you have some research behind it?
What happens if we don't make that number?"*
Interview participant

*"We can all question the federal government standards –
unfunded mandates."*
Interview participant

Not feeling that expenditures are worthwhile

Some respondents were not persuaded that spending millions of dollars on water management projects was justified.

"It is on our radar but not a priority."
Interview participant

Belief that water management is a problem for others, but not us

Some respondents said that more problems are happening in "upstream" locations than in theirs; others expressed the view that their municipality is not affected. One person stated a willingness to push off the problem to future elected leaders.

"One size fits all, but doesn't work that way. Setting policy for everybody and [we] cannot meet these standards. We deal with pollutants we don't have."
Interview participant

"A waste of money to a community that doesn't have issues."
Interview participant

Perception that water quality problems are caused by something we can't control

For one respondent, the ongoing challenge of goose poop contaminating water with E. coli bacteria had created a belief that water quality problems were not something that municipalities could control. As mentioned above, several others said that upstream communities were creating the problem.

"The local goose population that happens to be flying past is depositing some material inside the streams – there ain't a whole lot I could do about that...It's been getting in the stream for the last thousands of years."

Interview participant

Leaders: Meaningful Differences

There were observable differences between those who appear to support water management investments and those who do not.

Key difference: Long-term planning

The communities that appeared to be most ready to meet the 2045 goals were those that were furthest along in the planning process. Some are not planning for it even though they are aware of the deadline.

"[We have done planning for 2045.] We put together our own capital planning process related to stormwater...and doing a stormwater rate study analysis this year, and meeting to understand what increases would be necessary to build up the capital long-term to pay for those projects."

Interview participant

"For us to take on a \$1 million project is not in our plan. Not in the capital improvement plans."

Interview participant

Key difference: Ownership and shared responsibility for the problem

Participants who viewed the problem as something to be addressed by other communities or people in the future, or who did not perceive that water quality was a problem needing attention, were less ready to invest in water management than participants who conveyed a sense of ownership or shared responsibility for the problem.

"I think almost everyone involved can acknowledge needing to do it. It's just not having the confidence in other cities to also do their part."

Interview participant

"[Our city] is trying. We have a healthy stormwater budget, but not near enough - need to double it. Had meetings to know what needs to happen, but getting support for that large of increase [will be hard]."

Interview participant

Key difference: Trust in standards-setting agencies

A few respondents expressed the opinion that the regulatory agencies that set standards, TMDL/contaminant levels, regulations, and/or policies were doing so without good reasons. These respondents were less ready to support investment in water management.

"Half the time I think that there's bureaucrats that are making the number up and not actual science behind it."

Interview participant

For most others, meeting regulatory benchmarks was a key way to measure progress towards, and success of, water management efforts.

"We need to do better, and do better documenting as to where we are at with our goals."

Interview participant

"Meets testing standards, cleaner streams and creeks, decreased flooding and erosion. Improved native species, health and numbers in watershed."

Survey participant

Leaders: Trusted Sources of Information

These participants said when they had questions about water management they most often turned to:

- City staff
- CCWD

Also mentioned were:

- Other watershed districts and WMOs (where overlapping)
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Outside consultants/firms
- City leadership
- The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
- The Minnesota Department of Health

No topical journals, professional associations, or membership organizations were mentioned.

Only a few people mentioned sources of information they did not trust, but among those who did, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Metropolitan Council were named.

"...a state agency or something like that, I don't have confidence in."

Interview participant

Leaders: Perceptions about CCWD and Staff

When asked if they had thoughts to add, many of these respondents praised Coon Creek Watershed District and its staff members.

"Keep up the good work and open communication channels."

Survey participant

"Very pleased with the CCWD staff and [the] support/assistance that our city receives."

Survey participant

Leaders: Other Findings

Some asking for greater participation in decision-making

Several participants from different cities said they felt their municipality was not adequately represented in the process – for example, by not having anyone from their city on the CCWD board, not feeling the tax burden was fairly distributed, or not having a liaison to CCWD – and wanted more involvement or power.

"As Coon Rapids is at the bottom of the watershed, what is done upstream has a larger impact on us than what we do ourselves. Therefore, we should have more say in what happens upstream and the brunt of the cost should not be borne on our taxpayers."

Survey participant

"How watershed district is set up – no elected officials, everyone is appointed. Taxation without representation."

Interview participant

Words to avoid

During one conversation, one participant (only) reacted unfavorably to the word "misinformation"; it may be best to avoid the word in future communications.

Leaders: Implications of this Data

Working with municipal partners should:

- Bring partners together to build a sense of shared responsibility
- Offer community briefings and/or work sessions quarterly, or as frequently as each municipality will embrace them (such as at planning commission meetings, council meetings, site tours, or public workshops)
- Provide municipalities and other partners with content for resident communications, such as a monthly column on water management issues and approaches. This content should follow communications recommendations (e.g., teach water science in plain language, explain why standards change over time, describe dangers of not acting to protect water resources, etc.).

Communications should:

- Show why investments are worthwhile. Use visually—and persuasively compelling—graphics to demonstrate the financial and human benefits of investment in water management.
- Clearly explain “why” when standards change (and why they sometimes do change over time)
- Give examples of the financial and environmental consequences of not acting to manage water resources responsibly and meet TMDL targets

Leaders: Needed Resources

Periodic progress reports

Respondents suggested that city-by-city periodic reports showing progress toward benchmarks—shared widely and publicly—will support meeting water management goals. Progress reports should include:

- Previous TMDL levels
- Actions being taken to reduce TMDL levels
- Progress towards goals
- Comparisons to other municipalities in the District

Explainer resources with minimal jargon

A number of respondents said that explaining water management science to others was a challenge. Plain-language tools are needed to teach the “why,” “how,” and “how much” of:

- Improving water quality, both natural water bodies and drinking water
- Preventing flooding and erosion
- Complying with regulations, standards, and policies

- Protecting infrastructure
- Protecting the environment/wildlife/fishing
- Importance of working together as a community

"Being able to communicate that with the residents is always challenging...They want an instant solution. They want clean water. They don't want to change how they're managing their landscape 'because nobody else is.'"

Interview participant

More public outreach and education

Many respondents asked for CCWD to do more of what they are doing well: public outreach and education. Public events should invite and include both residents and municipal leaders. Public presentations, such as site visits, could be used to:

- Demonstrate the value of water stewardship
- Create a sense of shared responsibility
- Explain the need for greater efforts
- Prepare the public for tax increases

"I am a huge fan of in-person presentations and public classes. Tying to things like local breweries who use this water as an opportunity to discuss the multi-faceted benefit of good water management."

Survey participant

Leaders: Good Ways to Know Water Investments are Working

When asked how to know our water management efforts are working, most respondents pointed to meeting water quality standards:

- Show year-over-year metrics
- Give an annual report
- When we delist bodies of water
- Fewer closed beaches
- Data showing effectiveness of pollution reduction and maintenance protocols

Other measures mentioned included:

- No complaints from residents
- Presence of or increased biodiversity
- Decreased flooding and erosion
- Support for increase in stormwater fees

"Reductions in flooding and erosion; delisting water bodies; reductions in algae blooms and closed beaches."

Survey participant

"General support for a raise in stormwater fees."

Survey participant

Leaders: Communications Channels and Messengers

We recommend communicating with municipal decision makers through:

- City staff
- CCWD presentations and work sessions
- Site visits
- Outside engineering and management consultants/firms

We recommend helping municipal decision makers communicate with the public through:

- Explainer resources city staff can use, such as handouts, infographs, and videos
- Content for city newsletters, city websites
- Inserts in utility bills and other mailings
- CCWD presence at public events
- CCWD question on resident surveys (Fridley has one biannually)
- Public awareness campaign

"Here in Fridley, we do a resident telephone survey every other per year, and perhaps opportunities like that, or maybe the watershed district doing some surveys themselves to understand the general public's awareness of their role in water quality and the challenges that are out there."

Interview participant

Findings: Phase 2, Residents



Photo Credit: Coon Creek Watershed District

The research findings expand our understanding of the influences and choices about water quality funding made by **residents**, and the ways we may be able to measurably influence those decisions through tailored communications.

Research Sample Size

Qualitative data was collected through 10 Zoom or phone interviews with CCWD area residents who had contacted CCWD with questions or concerns in the past. Quantitative data was collected through a survey sample of 114 registered voters in the District.

Limitations of the Research

However, the value of the input from this interview and survey research is more descriptive than predictive, qualitative not quantitative, and not directly generalizable to the target audience as a whole.

Note also that some responses may be duplicated, as interviewees were not prohibited from completing the survey.

Residents: Factors that Support/Justify Water Management Funding and Programs

Protecting water quality and public health is most valued

Among these participants, water quality was the factor mentioned most often for motivating investments in water management.

"Water quality is pretty important for swimming and boating and fishing."

Interview participant

"There needs to be worldwide attention paid to this issue."

Survey participant

Working across communities is key

In the survey, working together across communities to prevent flooding and erosion and to maintain and improve water quality were frequently rated as priorities both for overall water management and as justifications for tax increases. "Long-term planning based on expected water needs" was also highly rated as "making sense," however it was not as well supported as a justification for a tax increase. These constituents want to see communities cooperating to solve regional water management challenges.

"I appreciate the work you are doing to secure viable water sources for our future."

Survey participant

Preventing pollution to preserve the environment was highly rated

Survey participants also gave high ratings to "preventing pollution to preserve the environment, fish and wildlife." Most of the interview participants also agreed that it was important to protect wildlife, habitat, and fishing, as well as seeing this as a valuable justification for public spending on water management.

"The most important is the environmental part – keeping good controls on pesticide use and anything that would negatively impact water quality, especially being on the creek. A lot of wildlife in our yard – protect habitat."

Interview participant

Mitigating flooding/erosion and protecting infrastructure are important

For these participants, it was important to protect against flooding and erosion, and to prevent the damage that floods could cause to roads and bridges.

"I think [paying taxes to prevent flooding] is every bit as important as the quality of the streets on the front of my house."

Interview participant

Residents: Factors that Discourage Support for Water Management Funding and Programs

Government seen as ineffective

While government spending for water management was broadly supported, a few survey respondents expressed distrust of the government's ability to solve water quality problems and manage tax revenue.

"Government seldom has the best interest of the people or the surrounding area. I do not trust them to do anything that isn't a financial win for them."

Survey participant

One interview participant said that people with homes in areas prone to flooding should pay more in water management taxes.

Residents: Meaningful Differences

There were few meaningful differences observed in Phase 2 between those who appear to support water management investments and those who do not. Some differences in perceptions were detected based on age and income.

- **Those 18-39 are more willing to support a tax increase for reasons of public health and safety.**
- Those over 60 and those with incomes over \$100,000 are more likely to be familiar with CCWD.
- There is limited awareness of 2045 deadline for improvements in water quality—especially among those not familiar with CCWD.
- Those over age 60 are more likely than younger residents to accept any of the potential claims describing the activities of CCWD.

Residents: Trusted Sources of Information

Responses varied by age, but overall, these participants said when they had questions about water management they most often turned to:

- CCWD news
- City news
- CCWD staff
- Engineers, professionals

No participants mentioned sources of information they did not trust, but some survey participants responded that they had no trusted source of information about water management.

Residents: Perceptions about CCWD and Staff

When asked about their interactions with CCWD and its staff, many of these respondents were familiar with Coon Creek Watershed District.

Among survey respondents, **nearly four in every ten** consider themselves at least somewhat familiar with CCWD. Older residents and those with higher incomes are far more likely than others to report familiarity with CCWD.

Interview respondents—all of whom had contacted CCWD in the past—very often praised the District and its staff members.

"Watershed [District] is a reliable service with excellent staff."

Survey participant

"I would probably go to the contact at the watershed district...and then they would direct me if I needed to go somewhere else... they've been responsive."

Interview participant

Residents: Good Ways to Know Water Investments are Working

When asked how to know our water management efforts are working, most interview participants pointed to **clean water for drinking and recreation**. Phase 2 survey respondents were not asked this question (due to time limitations).

"The proof is in what's coming out of the tap."

Interview participant

Residents: Other Findings

Residents don't know what they currently pay for CCWD

Interview participants were asked **what additional tax amount would be acceptable to pay** for increased water management efforts. Very few people were able to even guess at an amount, primarily because **none of them knew what they currently pay, nor what added amount might be proposed. Others were unclear whether the tax they currently pay comes out of property taxes or another source.**

"I buy lottery tickets to support you."

Interview participant

Awareness of 2045 deadline for cleaner water is limited

Seven out of the ten interview participants and six out of every ten survey participants were unaware of the 2045 deadline by which CCWD and the seven area municipalities must meet water quality improvement targets/lower TMDL levels.

Residents: Implications of this Data

Working with residents should:

- **Bring all stakeholders, including community representatives, together** to build a sense of shared responsibility and demonstrate cooperation.
- Offer community briefings and/or work sessions quarterly, or as frequently as each municipality will embrace (such as at planning commission meetings, council meetings, site tours, or public workshops). Publicize these opportunities to members of the community.
- Communicate more frequently with residents, such as running a monthly column on water management issues and approaches in municipal newsletters. Consider beginning to publish a quarterly CCWD newsletter or signing up residents (and municipal leaders) for periodic updates on the progress of water quality improvement efforts—similar to the bulletins people receive about road improvements. Publicize the updates and encourage subscriptions. The content should follow the communications recommendations.

Communications with residents should:

- **Emphasize how efforts are preserving and improving public health and keeping water safe for drinking and recreation**—as well as repeating other key messages.
- Position water quality improvement efforts as **community challenges** rather than CCWD/city/government challenges.
- Be clear and specific about current and proposed tax amounts to address water management improvements (to meet TMDL goals). Show why investments are worthwhile. Use visually-compelling graphics to demonstrate the financial and human benefits of investment in water management and **make tangible the costs of not acting**. Again, emphasize key messages.
- Increase awareness of the 2045 water quality deadline, and how it will impact residents (positively, in terms of public health and flood prevention, and negatively, in terms of cost per household). Explain the “exchange” using key messages, e.g., “\$20 per area household per year will protect clean water for drinking and recreation, and help to control pollution.”

Residents: Communications Channels and Messengers

We recommend communicating with residents through:

- CCWD column in city newsletters and websites
- CCWD newsletter or bulletins (new) and website
- CCWD outreach through social media, direct mail, utility bills
- CCWD presentations at city meetings
- CCWD presence at community events

As noted earlier, we recommend helping municipal decision makers communicate with the public through:

- Content for city newsletters, city websites
- Explainer resources city staff can use, such as handouts, infographs, and videos
- Inserts in utility bills and other mailings
- CCWD presence at public events
- CCWD question on resident surveys (Fridley has one biannually)
- Public awareness campaign

Meaningful Differences Between Audiences

The participating municipal leaders and residents were quite similar in the views they expressed, especially that **both groups perceive public health and water quality as the most important reasons to take action on water management**. Yet some differences were observed.

- Infrastructure was not often mentioned by residents to researchers unless they had experienced flooding or damage on their own property. However, municipal leaders did often mention flooding and protecting infrastructure as reasons to pursue water management.
- Residents suggested the best way to prevent flooding and erosion was by working together across communities, while municipal leaders were more likely to talk about working within their own community.
 - In the resident survey, “working together across communities to prevent flooding and erosion” and working together across communities to maintain and improve water quality” were frequently rated as priorities – both for overall water management and as justifications for tax increases.
 - “Long-term planning based on expected water needs” was also highly rated as “making sense,” however, it was not as well supported as a justification for a tax increase. Note that municipalities that have engaged in long-term planning around water management were more likely to be aware of and preparing for the 2045 deadline.
- Several municipal leaders said they are looking for a cost-benefit balance, while residents don't know what they currently pay for water management.
- Members of both groups expressed some distrust in government, yet showed trust in their own city staff/local city and CCWD.
- Leaders are asking for more detailed progress reports as well as “explainer” resources in plain language, while residents are relying on information from their city or CCWD.



Communication Recommendations: All Audiences

All Audiences: Research-driven Key Messages

The top key messages—or talking points—across **all audiences**, based on this research, are:

Coon Creek Watershed District works across communities to:

- 1. Keep water safe for drinking and recreation***
- 2. Help control pollution to keep people, fish, and wildlife safe***
- 3. Prevent damage from flooding and erosion***
- 4. Protect roads and bridges through responsible water management***
- 5. Protect water for future generations***

All Audiences: Communications Channels and Messengers

We recommend communicating with residents through:

- **CCWD column in city newsletters and websites**
- CCWD newsletter or bulletins (new) and website content
- CCWD outreach through social media, direct mail, utility bills
- CCWD presentations at city meetings
- CCWD presence at community events

As noted earlier, we recommend helping municipal decision makers communicate with the public through:

- Content for city newsletters, city websites
- Explainer resources city staff can use, such as handouts, infographs, and videos
- Inserts in utility bills and other mailings
- CCWD presence at public events
- CCWD question on resident surveys (Fridley has one biannually)
- Public awareness campaign

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2025/06/15/some-minnesota-boaters-will-need-safety-training-permit-starting-july-1>

Some Minnesota boaters will need safety training, permit starting July 1

[Kirsti Marohn](#)

June 15, 2025 7:00 AM



A wakeboat pulls away from a dock on Lake Minnetonka in Mound, Minn.

Boaters age 12 to 21 will soon need to get a permit before they can legally operate a motorized watercraft in Minnesota.

The state Legislature passed the new safety [requirements](#) in 2023, as a response to a pandemic-fueled increase in people owning and operating boats on Minnesota lakes and rivers.

The law also aims to educate people about the environmental impacts of boating, including preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species and shoreline erosion.

Despite having more registered boats per capita than almost every other U.S. state, Minnesota was one of just a few states that only required youth, not adults, to have a watercraft operator's license.

“We’re excited about it, because it provides more education for safety on the water,” said Joe Shneider, president of the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations.

Minnesota already requires training for operating snowmobiles and off-highway vehicles, said Adam Block, boating law administrator with the state Department of Natural Resources.

“The time was right to start including watercraft, just given the sheer nature of the amount of traffic we’re seeing on our waterways,” he said.

Starting July 1, the new law applies to anyone age 12 or older and born after June 30, 2004, who wants to operate a boat or personal watercraft with a motor greater than 25 horsepower.

The new requirements will be phased in over three years, and will gradually apply to older age groups. By the time the law takes full effect in 2028, everyone born after June 30, 1987, will be required to get an operator’s permit.

To get a permit, boaters will need to successfully complete an online course, pass an exam and pay a one-time fee of \$34.95.

The requirements are similar to what other states have adopted, said Jesse McArdell, senior manager of Midwest government relations for the National Marine Manufacturers Association, which represents more than 1,300 boat, trailer and accessory manufacturers. It was one of several boat industry groups that supported passage of the law.

McArdell noted that Minnesota has more than 800,000 registered boats — nearly one boat for every six people.

“We know that we have a lot of users here and that it’s a big boating state,” he said. “So we wanted to ensure we were able to get a boater safety education program in place that would be holistic, that would cover a broad range of different boat types.”

That includes teaching people not only how to boat safely, but also how to conduct themselves with “a high level of etiquette on the water,” McArdell said.

The online test is a national standard training test, with some Minnesota-specific content. It covers the rules of the water, what buoys and navigation lights mean, who needs to wear a life jacket and other safety issues, Block said.

It also includes questions about conflicts with other water users, invasive species prevention and potential environmental damages caused by boats.

Renting boats, which has become increasingly popular on Minnesota lakes and rivers, has different rules. The law requires anyone renting a boat to be 18 and older, and to have a valid permit.

People born before 1987 won't ever need to get a permit, unless they're going to rent a boat or serve as an "accompanying operator" for someone without a permit, Block said.

The new law actually lowers the age that kids with a permit can operate a personal watercraft on their own from 14 to 12. However, anyone younger than 12 can't operate a boat or personal watercraft with a motor over 75 horsepower.

Violating the law could result in a citation and about \$130 fine. However, Block said the DNR plans to give people time to comply.

"We are starting off with an educational approach to remind people that, 'Hey, you need to get the training, because we want our waterways safer,'" he said.

However, Shneider of the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations, said he's not in favor of a lenient approach.

"If they're not going to give out tickets, then it doesn't have any teeth," he said.

Still, Block said he's optimistic that the law will lead to safer lakes and rivers. When Minnesota adopted youth safety boating requirements decades ago, it led to fewer problems among that age group, he said.

"We're coming into the game a little later than a lot of states," Block said. "But just looking at the data across the nation, I think that we expect our fatalities, our crashes, our incidents, even just our sheer complaints on the water to go down for sure with more people obtaining this training."

Passage of the new law was driven by some environmental groups and lake associations, who wanted to see stricter regulations on wakesurfing boats. The high-powered boats create a large wave behind them that surfers can ride, but can also damage shorelines and cause conflicts with other lake users.

Jeff Forester, executive director of the nonprofit Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates, said the size and speed of boats have changed dramatically in recent decades.

"I learned to drive a 16-foot Alumacraft with a 25-horsepower motor," he said. "Now, the boats are so much bigger, so much more powerful, so much faster, that without training, it's just bad. Things can happen a lot more quickly."

Rolling out the new law in phases, starting with the next generation of boaters, makes sense, Forester said.

“They’ll carry it with them as they get older, and that’ll be useful,” he said. “This really isn’t about penalizing people. It’s about education and behavior change, and that takes time.”

Some lake associations are offering residents incentives, such as gift certificates and other prizes, to make sure family members understand the new rules and take the training, Shneider said.

“We want this to happen,” he said. “We know the education will provide value and hopefully, a safer boater environment.”