



**Title:** 2025 Permitting Briefing – A Year in Review

**Prepared by:** Name/Title: Veronica Sannes, MCWD Permitting Lead  
Phone: (952) 641-4580  
vsannes@minnehahacreek.org

**Purpose:**

To provide an overview of the Permitting Program’s performance in 2025. At the February 26, 2026 Policy and Planning Committee, staff will review the strategic context of the program as it entered 2025, summarize accomplishments and insights generated through a year of transition, and outline concepts for the program can continue to deliver the District’s vision of a Balanced Urban Ecology moving into 2026.

**Background:**

The Permitting Program entered 2025 following a period of staffing transition, with a focus on:

- Strengthening internal systems to improve quality control
- Transitioning institutional knowledge and growing staff capability
- Building team cohesion and a culture of ownership and accountability
- Delivering consistent positive experiences for partners
- Cultivating insights that inform the strategic trajectory of MCWD permitting

**February 26, 2026, Policy and Planning Committee Presentation:**

During the February 26 presentation, staff will present an overview for the committee on:

- Efforts taken to improve program efficiency and quality
- The growth in team capability and culture
- Watershed wide permitting metrics and insights
- Case studies in relationships
- Initial vision and strategy for 2026-2027

This presentation is intended to broadly summarize areas of progress in 2025, to generate initial discussion by the Policy and Planning Committee.

To facilitate committee discussion, please consider the following questions:

1. What should clearly distinguish MCWD’s permitting approach from other watersheds by 2027?
2. Where do you see central tensions in the MCWD’s permitting program that create risk or opportunity?
3. What would it look like to maintain standards while being a preferred partner of the land use community?
4. How might permitting more intentionally generate strategic value beyond rule compliance?

**Next Steps:**

Reflections, questions and suggestions from the committee will be synthesized by staff, alongside insights from 2025 and an external scan, to inform the vision and strategy of a 2026-2027 workplan, for future discussion.