



Title: Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed Planning Update

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Purpose:

At the September 10, 2026 Operations and Programs Committee (OPC) meeting, staff will provide an update on key planning and project opportunities within the Six Mile Creek–Halsted Bay subwatershed, with a particular focus on the emerging restoration strategy for Turbid Lake.

Background:

Since 2014, the Six Mile Creek–Halsted Bay (SMCHB) subwatershed has served as a focal geography for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District’s (MCWD) planning and implementation efforts. The subwatershed was identified as a priority geography due to the concentration of high-value natural resources and significant water quality impairments, its complex multi-jurisdictional setting, and the strong opportunity for partnership-driven implementation in the context of anticipated growth and land use change.

Building on this designation, MCWD and its partners developed a coordinated subwatershed implementation strategy through the 2017 Watershed Management Plan (WMP), organizing SMCHB into distinct management units to align restoration efforts with specific natural resource issues, drivers, and implementation opportunities. Over this first decade of work, a wide range of planning, partnership, and implementation efforts have advanced across the broader subwatershed. One area of concentrated investment was in the Pierson–Marsh–Wassermann management unit, with efforts directed at addressing the system’s most upstream impairment at Wassermann Lake. This sustained focus has resulted in measurable water quality improvements and strengthened interagency partnerships.

In preparation for the 2027 Watershed Management Plan, MCWD is taking stock of the work accomplished over the past decade, assessing where additional work remains in the headwaters system, and refining priorities and implementation strategies for the next ten years of work in the subwatershed. This process includes (1) evaluating current conditions and new information, (2) stress-testing long-identified project opportunities to refine their potential impact and role within the broader subwatershed strategy, and (3) working with partners to identify new areas of opportunities for natural resource improvements.

Through this process, the Turbid-Lundsten corridor will continue to be a priority area for project planning and implementation. Ongoing coordination with the City of Victoria under the Victoria Chain of Lakes Greenway Policy and the 2024 Memorandum of Understanding has continued to guide project opportunity exploration and long-range implementation planning within the Turbid–Lundsten management unit. Current project opportunities show the potential to address both external and internal phosphorus loading to Turbid Lake, positioning the lake to meet water quality standards while also providing downstream water quality benefits to impaired South Lundsten Lake.

Summary:

At the September 10, 2026 OPC meeting, staff will provide an update on ongoing planning, partnership coordination, and project development efforts across the Six Mile Creek–Halsted Bay subwatershed, with particular focus on project opportunities within the Turbid–Lundsten Management Unit. The discussion will highlight the proposed Turbid Lake restoration strategy, including the anticipated water quality benefits, partnership structure, ongoing uncertainties, and potential decision points.