



Title: Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed Update

Prepared by: Name: Rachel Baker & Kailey Cermak
Phone: 952.651.4522 / 952.641.4501
rbaker/kcermak@minnehahacreek.org

Purpose:

At the May 28, 2026 Policy and Planning Committee (PPC) meeting, staff will provide an update on multiple planning and project opportunities within the Six Mile Creek–Halsted Bay subwatershed.

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. While MCWD continues to track progress in this management unit and remains open to additional opportunities as timing and partnerships align, planning and implementation efforts have increasingly shifted toward downstream management units and remaining impairments.

MCWD has already begun advancing the next phase of downstream work, with recent efforts including the design and construction of the East Auburn wetland restoration project to reduce phosphorus export to impaired East Auburn Lake. In parallel, 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. As this work matures, MCWD staff are also exploring project options in the lower Parley–Mud–Halsted Bay system, where the scale and complexity of downstream impairments warrant focused evaluation of load reduction strategies.

Summary:

At the May 28, 2026 PPC 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 emerging opportunities within the Turbid–Lundsten and the Parley–Mud–Halsted Bay management units. The discussion will highlight key variables, ongoing uncertainties, and emerging decision points associated with these efforts, while also forecasting anticipated Board touchpoints and project efforts through the remainder of 2026.