MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

Meeting: Board of Managers
Meeting date: 4/9/2026
Agenda Item #: 7.1
Board Consent Item

Title:	Authorization to Submit Annual Activity Report to the Board of Water and Soil Resources and Department of Natural Resources
Resolution number:	26-036
Prepared by:	Name: Kate Moran Phone: 952.641.4520 kmoran@minnehahacreek.org
Reviewed by:	Name/Title: Becky Christopher, Director of Policy Planning

Summary:
The attached report has been prepared to satisfy the District's annual reporting requirement to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103D.351 requires watershed districts to file an annual report with BWSR and the DNR, and for metro watershed districts, the report must meet the requirements described in Minnesota Rules 8410.0150. The annual activity report includes information on Board members and staff, the previous and current years' work plans, biennial progress toward goals, water quality trends, communication activities, solicitation of consultant services, local plan adoption and implementation, and permits and violations. The annual activity report is due to BWSR and the DNR within 120 days of the end of each calendar year.

The District is also required to submit a copy of its annual audit report to BWSR, the DNR, and the state auditor's office within 180 days of the end of the District's fiscal year. The District's audit is submitted directly to these agencies by the District's auditor.

MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 26-036

Title: **Authorization to Submit Annual Report to the Board of Water and Soil Resources and Department of Natural Resources**

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 103D.351 requires that an annual report be submitted to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the financial conditions of the watershed district, the status of all projects, the business transacted by the watershed district, other matters affecting the interests of the watershed district, and a discussion of the managers' plans for the succeeding year; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Rule 8410.0150 further defines the reporting requirements and deadlines for metropolitan watershed districts, including the submittal of an annual activity report within 120 days of the end of the calendar year and an annual audit report within 180 days of the end of the watershed district's fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (District) staff has prepared a 2025 Annual Activity Report meeting these requirements; and

WHEREAS, District's audit report will be submitted directly to these agencies by the District's auditor;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the District's Board of Managers accepts the 2025 Annual Activity Report and authorizes its release to BWSR and DNR.

Resolution Number 26-036 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___abstentions. Date: April 9, 2026

_____ Date: _____
Secretary

MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

2025 ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared to satisfy the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's (MCWD or District) annual reporting requirements set forth in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103D.351, which requires watershed districts to file an annual report with the Board of Water and Soil Resources and the Department of Natural Resources. Metropolitan watershed districts are required to follow reporting requirements described in MR 8410.0150.

BOARD MEMBERS

Below is a list of the District's current Board of Managers, including the designated officers and the county that appointed each member.

Table 1
Current Board of Managers

Manager	County	Contact Information
Sherry Davis White, President	Hennepin	swhite@minnehahacreek.org
Bill Olson, Vice President	Carver	bolson@minnehahacreek.org
Eugene Maxwell, Treasurer	Hennepin	emaxwell@minnehahacreek.org
Arun Hejmadi, Secretary	Hennepin	ahejmadi@minnehahacreek.org
Ricardo Bonner	Hennepin	rbonner@minnehahacreek.org
Steve Sando	Hennepin	ssando@minnehahacreek.org
Janet Schaefer*	Hennepin	jschaefer@minnehahacreek.org

**Manager-Designate as of report submission date.*

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

The District currently employs 22 staff. The names, job titles, and contact information for all staff can be found on the District website at https://minnehahacreek.org/about-the-district/our-people. The contact information for the District Administrator is provided below.

James Wisker, District Administrator
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
15320 Minnetonka Blvd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345
Phone: 952-641-4509
Email: jwisker@minnehahacreek.org

ASSESSMENT OF 2025 WORK PLANS

In 2025, the majority of activities identified in the work plan were completed or work was initiated and continues into 2026. Expenditures for each of the District's programs and projects are included in the audit report (provided separately by the District's auditor).

Many of the District's capital improvements span multiple years to plan and implement, due to their complexity. MCWD's Multi-Year CIP Program creates close coordination with its public and private partners, aligning plans and resources prior to advancing implementation.

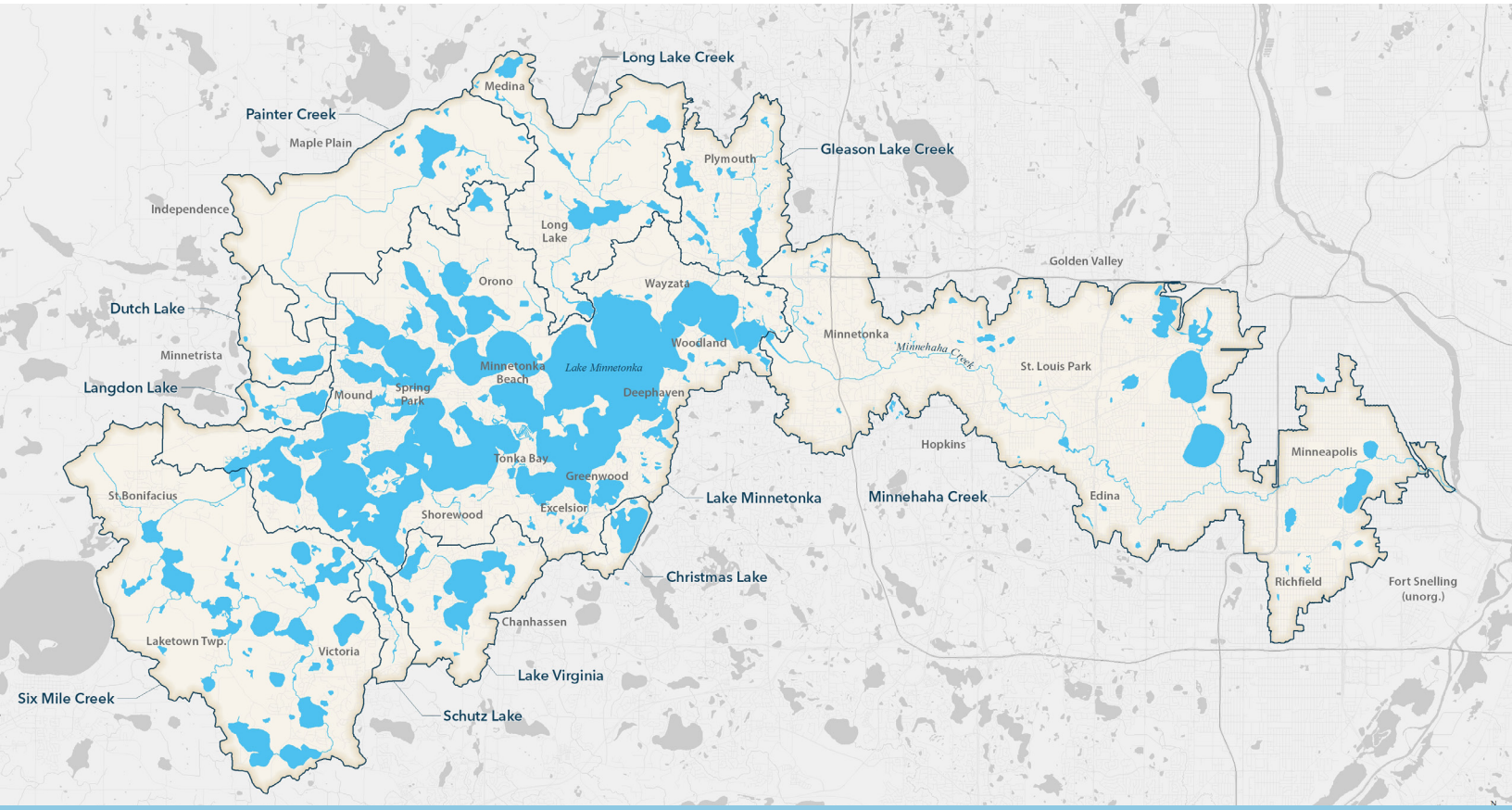
A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

To effectively manage water resources across the watershed, MCWD takes a focused and strategic approach, targeting geographies of highest need to deliver measurable results for the region as a whole.

MCWD's watershed-wide initiatives and opportunity-driven partnerships complement the District's targeted work in its focal geographies, which include the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay, Minnehaha Creek, and Painter Creek Subwatersheds.

MCWD BY THE NUMBERS

- 178 Square Miles
- 129 Lakes and 8 Major Streams
- 29 Communities
- 300,000+ Residents



FOCAL GEOGRAPHIES

SIX MILE CREEK-HALSTED BAY SUBWATERSHED

In the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed, the following work was conducted in 2025.

MCWD completed design and bidding for the East Auburn Wetland Restoration Project in Victoria, which includes a sheetpile weir to improve water quality flowing to impaired East Auburn Lake. MCWD also partnered with the City of Victoria to incorporate improvements to the public boardwalk that crosses the wetland. Construction was completed in early 2026.

Located downstream of Wassermann Lake, the East Auburn Wetland Restoration began construction in 2025.

The Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Habitat Restoration Program's Carp Management Project continues ongoing efforts to maintain minimal carp populations and monitor the efficacy of carp management.

Small area and management unit planning efforts continue in the Turbid-Lundsten Corridor. MCWD has continued to explore feasibility for the first project opportunity, a 44-acre wetland restoration draining directly to impaired Turbid Lake.

MCWD continues to explore partnership opportunities with the City of Victoria to proactively align natural resource restoration

Turbid Lake is impaired for excess nutrients.

planning with future land use planning ahead of the orderly annexation and development in Laketown Township, as reflected in the parties' current Memorandum of Understanding. MCWD initiated project opportunity exploration with private landowners north of Piersons Lake, aiming to identify and assess a water quality improvement project at the headwaters of Six Mile Creek.

In addition, MCWD continues to evaluate the next phase of capital project work in two project areas: the Parley-Mud Lake watershed load reduction area and Six Mile Marsh-Halsted Bay on Lake Minnetonka.

Six Mile Marsh

MINNEHAHA CREEK SUBWATERSHED

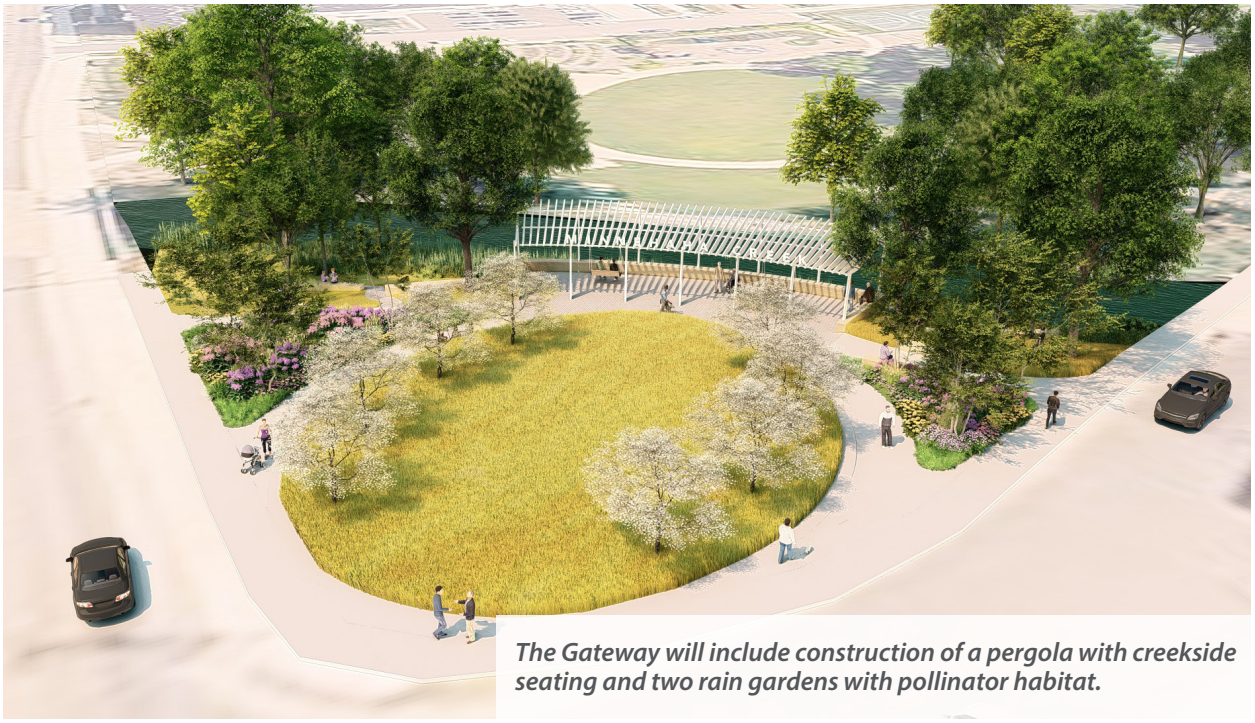
In the Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed, the following work continued in 2025.

In coordination with the City of St. Louis Park, Met Council's SWLRT project, and Hennepin County, the Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Restoration Project design reached 60% and is scheduled for completion in Spring 2026, allowing for bid and construction in Summer or Fall 2026.

The project includes streambank restoration along Minnehaha Creek and the construction of a pedestrian trail that will expand public access to greenspace and regional transportation systems.

The Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection will increase access to Three Rivers Park District's Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail and upcoming SWLRT Green Line Extension stations.

The 325 Blake Road Restoration and Redevelopment (325 Blake Road) Project has reached 100% design, plans, and specifications, and is ready for construction, in coordination with MCWD's development partner. The Gateway to the Greenway, a portion of the Cottageville Park Phase II Project, was separated from the larger 325 Blake Road project and final construction documents were produced for bid and construction in 2026.



The Gateway will include construction of a pergola with creekside seating and two rain gardens with pollinator habitat.

MCWD executed a cooperative agreement with the City of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) in April 2024. The cooperative agreement memorialized a joint effort between the three agencies to improve natural and water resources around Minnehaha Creek, the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes, Lake Nokomis, and Lake Hiawatha through coordinated planning and aligned capital. The agreement also established Phase I project priorities along the Minnehaha Parkway and prescribed the development of a framework for long-range capital project planning.

To formalize the partnership, support project and long-range planning communications, and guide development of a shared website, the partners established a name in 2025: the Minneapolis Thriving Waters Partnership (MTWP). Alongside the name, a brand identity, including a Partnership logo, was also instituted. MTWP staff plan to develop and launch a Partnership website in 2026.

MINNEAPOLIS THRIVING WATERS PARTNERSHIP

In partnership, MCWD completed feasibility for the Minnehaha Parkway Phase I project opportunities, which focused on the first three project priorities partners identified from the MPRB's Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan. A stormwater project at Cedar Avenue and Minnehaha Parkway was ultimately selected in 2025 as the first project to move forward into design. The project has potential to improve water quality flowing to Minnehaha Creek and impaired Lake Hiawatha, increase local flood storage, and enhance public greenspace and trails along the Parkway. Design is expected to be completed in 2026, and the project received BWSR grant funding to support design and construction.

In 2025, the Partnership also advanced its Long-Range Planning Framework by drafting the first Management Unit (MU) Plan, focused on Cedar Lake. The MU approach organizes planning around receiving waterbodies to better integrate land use, infrastructure, and water resource strategies, and to position projects for coordinated capital improvement planning and grant opportunities. In parallel, ongoing monitoring of the Cedar Meadows regional stormwater facility continued in 2025 to assess system performance and inform potential retrofit strategies to incorporate into the Cedar Lake MU Plan.

Cedar Lake is the headwaters of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes.

PAINTER CREEK SUBWATERSHED

In the Painter Creek Subwatershed, the following work began in 2025.

With support from the City of Minnetrista, MCWD acquired an 11.4-acre property along Painter Creek, located at 6300 Painter Road, to support capital project implementation for water quality improvements in Painter Creek and downstream impaired bays on Lake Minnetonka, including Jennings, Harrisons, and West Arm.

The 6300 Painter Road property offers opportunities to restore the ditched creek and improve water quality downstream.

MCWD continues to strengthen public and private relationships in the subwatershed to explore early partnership opportunities in advance of more formal subwatershed partner engagement in late 2026. In addition, MCWD initiated subwatershed assessment work, which will continue through 2026 and support setting a comprehensive management strategy for inclusion in the 2027 Watershed Management Plan.

WATERSHED-WIDE WORK

LONG LAKE CREEK SUBWATERSHED

MCWD continues its work with the cities of Orono, Long Lake, and Medina and the Long Lake Waters Association around the common goal of improving water quality within the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed. The completion of the Long Lake Creek Roadmap, released in January 2023, includes findings of a subwatershed assessment, an evaluation of costs and benefits of project opportunities, and a coordinated implementation strategy.

The Roadmap identified the County Road 6 Pond Retrofit Project in the City of Orono as a priority regional stormwater treatment opportunity. In 2025, MCWD completed design and initiated construction of the retrofit, which will improve water quality flowing into impaired Long Lake. Construction was completed in early 2026.

Located upstream of Long Lake, the County Road 6 Pond Retrofit began construction in 2025.

With support from partners, MCWD also applied for and received grant funding from BWSR to conduct a feasibility study for Holbrook Park, a site identified in the Roadmap as a potential regional treatment location. MCWD expanded the study area to include Nelson Lakeside Park and the downtown Long Lake area. MCWD initiated feasibility for these project areas in Fall 2025, and feasibility will conclude in early 2026.

The downtown Long Lake area contributes the highest proportional nutrient load to Long Lake.

Additionally, MCWD continues to engage with key landowners to explore feasibility of other public and private project areas identified in the Roadmap. The Subwatershed is planned to be designated a focal geography in the 2027 Watershed Management Plan (Plan), and this engagement will support setting a comprehensive management strategy in the 2027 Plan.

LAND & WATER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

In 2024, MCWD formally launched its Land and Water Partnership (LWP) Program, which provides technical and financial support to public or private partner-led projects that provide significant, regional water resource benefits. The LWP Program was created to complement MCWD's focused project implementation approach by operating as a flexible program that is responsive to partner needs and opportunities throughout the watershed. MCWD has worked collaboratively with multiple partners through the LWP Program.

The City of Deephaven and MCWD worked together to identify opportunities for significant, regional stormwater management and in 2024, the City advanced feasibility work for the most cost-effective of these opportunities, the Montgomerie Avenue Stormwater Management Project. The project received Hennepin County and LWP funding support in 2023 and 2024, respectively, and in 2025, the City was awarded BWSR funding. The City initiated project design, which will be finalized in early 2026, with construction anticipated to start in Spring 2026.

The City of Medina and MCWD partnered on the Morningside Stormwater Improvement Project to support regional stormwater treatment and stabilization of three ravines, reducing phosphorus loading to Lake Katrina and impaired Jennings Bay on Lake Minnetonka. In 2025, the project received BWSR grant funding to support implementation, and the City began construction, which is anticipated to be completed in Spring 2026.

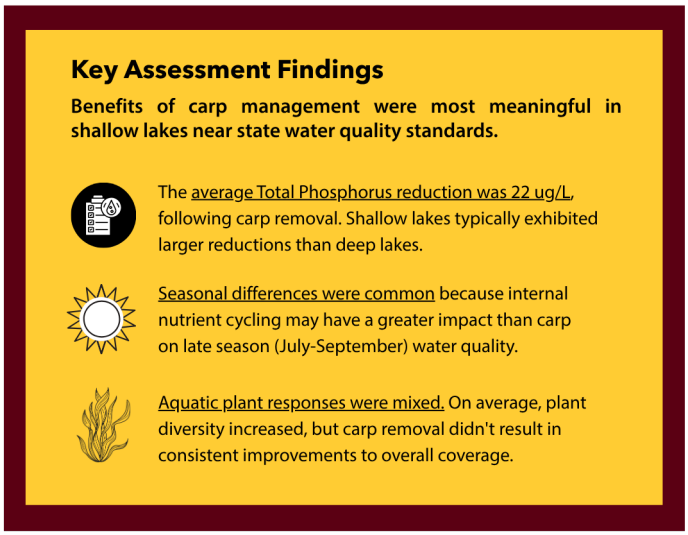
The Morningside Stormwater Improvement Project includes construction of a stormwater pond and stabilization of three eroding ravines.

STATEWIDE CARP MANAGEMENT STUDY

In 2024, MCWD initiated a partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) to conduct Minnesota's first statewide study of carp management effectiveness.

The study compiled data from 90 different lakes and analyzed changes in water quality and aquatic plants following carp removals, to determine how effective carp management was at improving lake conditions.

The study's findings demonstrated where and when carp management is most effective as a lake restoration strategy, enhancing the industry's ability to set data-driven guidance and prioritize effective lake management strategies. A final report was released in Fall 2025.



CLIMATE ACTION

MCWD's Climate Action Framework guides its climate action work leading up to the 2027 Watershed Management Plan. MCWD initiated the 2D watershed-wide model build in May 2024, which will be completed in early 2026. The model will help MCWD characterize and quantify vulnerabilities within the watershed and support scenario planning as part of the engagement process to develop MCWD's 2027 Watershed Management Plan.

FLOOD RESPONSE PLAN

In October 2025, MCWD adopted a Flood Response Plan to strengthen regional resilience by integrating real-time monitoring and predictive modeling to support proactive communication and coordinated action with public and private partners. The plan defines MCWD's role and responsibilities in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from flood events within the broader emergency response framework of the watershed's cities, counties, emergency managers, and residents.

REAL-TIME SENSOR NETWORK

Throughout 2025, MCWD also continued to refine RESNET, its network of remote sensors, which provides real-time data on water levels, flow, and pollutant loading across the watershed.

2026 WORK PLANS

For 2026, the District prepared one comprehensive work plan encompassing activities in its three focal subwatersheds—Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay, Minnehaha Creek, and Painter Creek—as well as its watershed-wide programming to promote land and water partnerships. This document includes a summary of the District's 2026 budget and can be found on the District website and in Appendix A of this report.

2026 Budget and Work Plan: https://minnehahacreek.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2026-Budget-Workplan_FINAL-1.pdf

EVALUATION OF PROGRESS ON GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

In January 2018, the District adopted its 2018-2027 Watershed Management Plan. Section 3.7 of the Plan describes the District's framework for setting goals and evaluating progress through a sequential process that begins with MCWD's four strategic goals and associated long-range targets, and progresses through subwatershed and project-specific targets, performance measurements, and evaluation.

Consistent with this framework, MCWD evaluates progress toward its strategic goals by linking long-range targets to subwatershed implementation and project outcomes. Long-range targets include achieving water quality standards for impaired waters, preventing increases in stormwater runoff volume and rate, and maintaining or increasing wetland acreage and ecological integrity.

Implementation of the Watershed Management Plan through 2025 has resulted in measurable progress toward long-range targets, while supporting thriving communities through integrated planning and project implementation.

Projects are achieving anticipated water resource benefits across focal geographies through MCWD's planning and capital projects program, and ongoing planning continues to support coordinated and effective project delivery. To date, implementation has been focused within the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay and Minnehaha Creek Subwatersheds, while the Painter Creek Subwatershed is undergoing assessment and early-stage planning to inform future project implementation.

To complement capital projects in focal geographies, the District has also advanced opportunity-driven projects watershed-wide through coordinated planning and partnership-based project delivery.

The below tables reflect achieved metrics for completed projects and estimated metrics for ongoing projects in focal geographies and watershed-wide, demonstrating progress toward long-range targets. Based on this evaluation, MCWD's implementation approach is functioning as intended. MCWD will continue to refine and adapt its work through ongoing evaluation and future planning processes.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Water Quality

Water Quantity

Ecological Integrity

Thriving Communities

The next section evaluates monitoring data trends to assess how these implementation efforts are influencing water resource conditions across the watershed. MCWD will continue to improve this tracking and reporting through ongoing refinement.

Table 2
Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed Project Outcomes

Project	Project Status*	Key Metrics
East Auburn Stormwater Enhancement Project	Completed - 2019	28 lbs/year of TP reduced to East Auburn Lake
Halsted Bay Land Conservation (Land Acquisition)	Completed - 2019	5.15 acres acquired • 1.25 acres of upland • 3.9 acres of wetland Future treatment potential of 1,400 lbs/yr TP reduction to Halsted Bay on Lake Minnetonka
Wassermann West External Load Reduction (Alum Treatment)	Completed - 2021	Early monitoring shows 75 lbs/yr of TP reduced to Wassermann Lake • Exceeded pre-project estimate of 39 lbs/yr
Wassermann Lake Preserve	Completed - 2021	370 linear feet of stream channel restored Restoration of 1.56 acres of prairie, 1.62 acres of oak savannah, and 2.14 acres of wetland fringe 3,838 cubic feet of stormwater treated
Wassermann Lake Alum Treatment	Completed - 2022	2 alum applications (2021-2022) 374 lbs/yr of TP reduced to Wassermann Lake
SMCHB Subwatershed Habitat Restoration Project	Ongoing	4 carp barriers installed 3 aeration systems installed 306,958 lbs of carp removed
East Auburn Wetland	In Progress - Construction	Estimated outcomes: • 11 acres of wetland restored • 45 lbs/yr of TP reduced to East Auburn Lake • 150-foot boardwalk rehabilitation

**This column reflects project status as of December 31, 2025.*

Table 3
Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed Project Outcomes

Project	Project Status*	Key Metrics
325 Blake Road Demolition	Completed - 2018	Removed mercury and asbestos Recycled/salvaged >65% of site materials
Arden Park Restoration	Completed - 2020	88 acres of stormwater treated 33 lbs/year of TP and 18,000 lbs/year of TSS reduced to Minnehaha Creek 1.2 acre-feet of storage added 2,154 linear feet of streambank restored 17 acres of upland and 6.7 acres of wetland restored 7,000 feet of new trails added
Minnehaha Creek FEMA Flood Damage Repairs	Completed - 2020	500 linear feet of streambank repaired
325 Blake Road	In Progress - Design	Exploring filtration and circulation system to further increase TP removal to Minnehaha Creek Estimated future potential: • 175.3 lbs/yr of TP reduced to the Creek (74.1% of inflow) • 42,924 lbs/yr of TSS reduced to the Creek (99.9% of inflow) • 1,200 feet of new trails • 1,000 feet of riparian restoration • 12 acres of mixed-use development
Gateway to the Greenway	In Progress - Design	Estimated future potential: • 150 feet of streambank restored • 2 rain gardens with pollinator habitat installed for onsite stormwater treatment • Creekside pergola and seating constructed to enhance public access to greenspace

**This column reflects project status as of December 31, 2025.*

Table 3
Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed Project Outcomes

Project	Project Status*	Key Metrics
Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Restoration	In Progress - Design	Estimated future potential: • 1,800 feet of streambank restored • Continuous pedestrian network from Blake Road to Excelsior Boulevard created • Expanded access to Minnehaha Creek Greenway and regional transportation
Cedar Avenue Stormwater Management	In Progress - Design	Feasibility completed for stormwater treatment and storage, and public realm enhancements at Cedar Avenue and Minnehaha Parkway Estimated outcomes: • 26-38 lbs/yr of TP reduced to Minnehaha Creek and Lake Hiawatha • 3,100-6,300 CY of storage added • Pedestrian trails added and enhanced

**This column reflects project status as of December 31, 2025.*

Table 4
Painter Creek Subwatershed Project Outcomes

Project	Project Status*	Key Metrics
6300 Painter Road (Land Acquisition)	In Progress - Planning	11.4 acres acquired to support future water quality improvements for Painter Creek and downstream Jennings, Harrisons, and West Arm Bays

**This column reflects project status as of December 31, 2025.*

Table 5
Watershed-Wide Project Outcomes

Project	Project Status*	Key Metrics
Long Lake Creek Subwatershed		
County Road 6 Stormwater Pond Retrofit	In Progress - Construction	Estimated outcomes: • 40 lbs/yr of add'l TP reduced to Long Lake • Improved weir structure to increase storage • Restored vegetation and improved access
Long Lake Creek Partnership	Ongoing	54 projects evaluated and 37 recommended
Downtown Long Lake Stormwater Management	In Progress - Planning	Feasibility underway for Holbrook Park, Nelson Lakeside Park, and downtown Long Lake area
Land and Water Partnership Program		
Maple Creek Pond Improvement	Completed - 2023	19 lbs/yr of TP reduced to Gleason Lake
Montgomerie Avenue Stormwater Management	In Progress - Design	Estimated outcomes: • 5.7 lbs/yr of TP reduced to lake Louise and Robinson's Bay on Lake Minnetonka • Localized flooding reduced
Morningside Stormwater Improvement	In Progress - Construction	Estimated outcomes: • 76 acres of stormwater treated • 30.3 lbs/yr of TP reduced to Lake Katrina and Jennings Bay on Lake Minnetonka • 400 feet of ravine stabilized
Stormwater Pond Maintenance		
Bde Maka Ska Cell 1	Completed - 2019	2,000 CY of unregulated sediment removed
Pamela Park	Completed - 2019	1,800 CY of contaminated sediment removed
Twin Lake Park	In Progress - Construction	Estimated outcomes: • 3,900 CY of contaminated sediment removed

**This column reflects project status as of December 31, 2025.*

TRENDS IN MONITORING DATA

The Research and Monitoring program evaluates trends for long-term ("anchor") lake and stream monitoring stations throughout the District. Data for these anchor lakes is largely sourced from and collected by MCWD, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Three Rivers Park District.

LAKES

In total, 22 lake stations were assessed for trends in surface water quality for the past 10 years (2016-2025). Sampling events outside the growing season of June through September were not included in the analysis, since the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's water quality standards apply to the growing season average.

Trends were computed using the Mann-Kendall test on total phosphorus (TP), water clarity (secchi disk), and algal abundance (chlorophyll-a) in the lake surface water to determine if an increasing or decreasing trend exists for each lake. The lake trends are displayed in Table 7.

STREAMS

For streams, 11 anchor monitoring sites were assessed with the Mann-Kendall test to compute stream trends on flow-corrected concentrations for both TP and total suspended solids (TSS). To minimize the impact of sampling duration changes, sampling events outside April through October were not included. A locally weighted scatterplot smoothing (LOWESS) residual was calculated between the parameter of interest (TSS or TP concentrations) and flow.

MCWD staff used the Mann-Kendall test to determine if a significant trend existed for TSS or TP at each of the anchor monitoring sites.

All statistical analyses were computed using R-studio statistical packages to assess for trends (i.e., no trend, improving, or degrading). An alpha of 0.05 was used to determine if the p-value was significant. The stream trends are displayed in Table 8.

SIX MILE CREEK-HALSTED BAY SUBWATERSHED

The majority of Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed monitoring locations did not demonstrate significant trends in 2025, with the exception of degrading water clarity in Steiger Lake (Table 7) and an improving TP trend at the outlet of Mud Lake (Table 8). Changes in carp populations across the Subwatershed provide additional context for interpreting these observed water quality trends.

Carp population estimates across the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay system indicate substantial reductions in biomass since 2016, when MCWD began a comprehensive carp management program in the Subwatershed. The most notable decreases have been observed in Mud, Parley, and Wassermann Lakes (Table 6).

Population estimates increased slightly between 2023 and 2025 in some lakes, which is likely attributable to variability in survey methods and estimation techniques. MCWD will continue to refine population estimates, including additional assessment planned for Parley Lake in 2026.

Table 6
Six Mile Creek-Halted Bay Carp Population Change (2016-2025)

Lake	Est. Number of Individuals		
	2016	2023	2025
Mud	5,148	1,553	1,028
Parley	16,167	9,755	13,784
West Auburn	7,201	736	491
East Auburn	6,121	1,592	1,322
Turbid	2,273	NA	NA
Wassermann	10,031	350	3,950
Piersons	3,580	2,728	1,357
Steiger	2,886	1,163	1,438
Zumbra	5,953	3,640	3,674
Total	59,360	21,517	27,044

Since 2019, Mud Lake has been targeted for ongoing carp management, and the findings from the Minnesota Carp Management Effectiveness Assessment indicate continued management is likely to generate water quality benefits. Monitoring data of the Lake's carp biomass and TP concentrations over the past several years support this management decision for Mud Lake.

Carp biomass in Mud Lake has declined substantially following management actions, and TP concentrations at the outlet demonstrate reduced variability in recent years, following the substantial decline in carp biomass (Figure 1). These observations suggest effective carp management may be contributing to localized improvements in water quality at Mud Lake, while other sites in the Subwatershed demonstrated no significant trend.

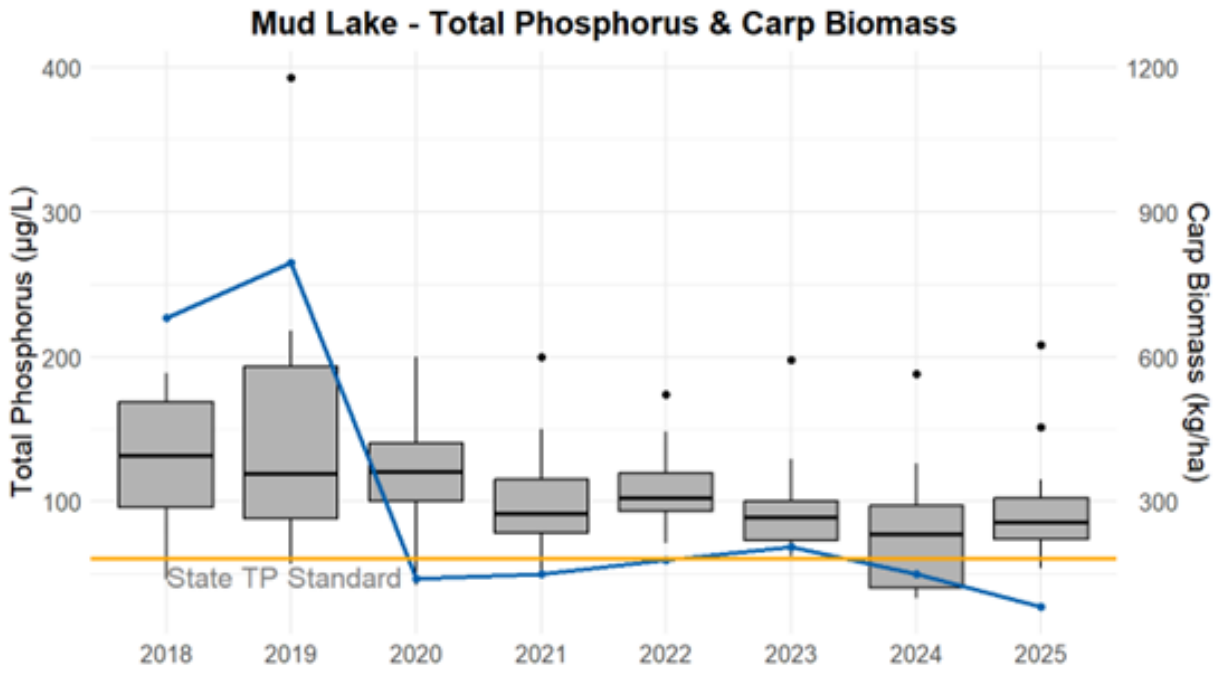


Figure 1. Mud Lake's average annual total phosphorus concentration with declining carp biomass (blue line), since 2018.

While current estimates suggest carp biomass has been reduced to below or near the recommended 100 kg/ha threshold across 14 of the Subwatershed's connected lakes, most of the lakes did not demonstrate a significant trend toward improving TP concentrations in 2025. Findings in the Minnesota Carp Management Effectiveness Assessment indicate carp biomass may not be the primary water quality driver in most of these lakes, and future management should focus on strategies to reduce external or internal nutrient loading.

MINNEHAHA CREEK SUBWATERSHED

The only significant trends observed in the Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed included degrading chlorophyll-a and water clarity in Lake Hiawatha (Table 7). No significant trends were observed for streams (Table 8).

Even with overall degrading trends in chlorophyll-a and water clarity, 2025 saw improved water quality metrics in Lake Hiawatha compared to the back-to-back drought conditions MCWD experienced in 2021, 2022, and 2023. The inverse relationship between water quality and flow in the creek is counterintuitive, since most lakes experience poor water quality in years with high stormwater runoff.

There is a delicate balance between watershed loading and lake residence time that can greatly impact how a lake cycles nutrients. For example, high phosphorus concentrations have been observed in Lake Hiawatha during 2012 and 2021 - 2023 (drought years), while lower concentrations were observed in higher flow years, such as 2025. Furthermore, there has not been a significant increase in stream TP concentrations in Minnehaha Creek upstream of Lake Hiawatha (Table 8).

Lake Hiawatha

Both of these trends suggest watershed loading may not be the primary contributor to elevated phosphorus and chlorophyll-a concentrations in Lake Hiawatha. Continued refinement of Lake Hiawatha's nutrient budget under low and high flow conditions will help MCWD and partner agencies identify the balance of watershed and internal load reductions necessary to continue progress toward meeting state water quality standards in Lake Hiawatha.

OTHER SUBWATERSHEDS

In the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed, Tanager Lake demonstrated a significant trend for degrading chlorophyll-a. While the Lower South Bay in the Lake Minnetonka Subwatershed also displayed a degrading trend for chlorophyll-a, it is still well below the state's standard.

The Lake Virginia Subwatershed was the only subwatershed with a significant trend in improving water quality. No recent projects have been implemented in this Subwatershed, which suggests other factors such as variability in annual precipitation may be driving changes.

Table 7
Significant Trends for Lakes within the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Subwatershed	Lake	Total Phosphorus	Chlorophyll-a	Secchi Disk
Long Lake	Long	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Tanager	No Trend	Degrading	No Trend
Six Mile Creek	Parley	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Wassermann	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Steiger	No Trend	No Trend	Degrading
	East Auburn	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Zumbra	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
Minnehaha Creek	Bde Maka Ska	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Cedar	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Lake of the Isles	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Powderhorn	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Nokomis	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Harriet	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Hiawatha	No Trend	Degrading	Degrading
Lake Minnetonka	Carman Bay	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Crystal Bay	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Forest	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Grays Bay	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Halsted Bay	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Jennings Bay	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend
	Lower Lake South	No Trend	Degrading	No Trend
	Stubbs Bay	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend

Table 8
Significant Trends for Streams within the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Subwatershed	Stream Station	Total Phosphorus	Total Suspended Solids
Dutch Lake	Dutch Lake: Lake Outlet	No Trend	No Trend
Langdon Lake	Langdon Lake Outlet	No Trend	No Trend
Lake Virginia	Lake Virginia Inlet	No Trend	Improving
Schutz Creek	Smithtown Bay Inlet	No Trend	No Trend
Minnehaha Creek	Minnehaha Creek I-494 Ramp	No Trend	No Trend
	Minnehaha Creek W. 34 St.	No Trend	No Trend
	Minnehaha Creek Excelsior Blvd	No Trend	No Trend
	Minnehaha Creek: 21st/Minnehaha Pkwy	No Trend	No Trend
	Minnehaha Creek: Hiawatha Ave	No Trend	No Trend
Painter Creek	Painters Creek: W. Branch Rd	No Trend	No Trend
Six Mile Creek	Six Mile Creek: Auburn Lk East Inlet	No Trend	No Trend
	Six Mile Creek: Mud Lake Outlet	Improving	No Trend

ANNUAL COMMUNICATIONS

MCWD's 2017 Watershed Management Plan guides its outreach. The goal of MCWD's communication efforts is to increase integration of land use and water planning by raising awareness within the land use community about the benefits of partnering with MCWD. Primary audiences include staff and elected officials at municipalities, counties, and other public agencies, as well as private developers.

To reach both of these target audiences, as well as members of the general public, MCWD distributes a range of communication products throughout the year. These include customized communications with policymakers, targeted engagement events, media relations, print and digital publications, and MCWD's website. MCWD also issues regular communications to partners and interested residents through email newsletters, including water level updates to provide timely information on flood risk, recreation conditions, and Gray's Bay Dam operations, as well as project area updates to highlight project progress, upcoming events, and other public engagement opportunities across MCWD's focal geography areas.

In addition to ongoing communications throughout the year, MCWD produced two primary annual publications distributed to residents, partners, and member communities: the annual budget and work plan publication (Appendix A) and an end-of-year "Year in Review" newsletter, to build awareness of MCWD's approach and showcase project highlights from 2025.

2025 COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

In 2025, MCWD conducted several outreach efforts to raise awareness of the benefits of increased integration between land use and water planning, as well as share information about the District's key projects and initiatives.

MCWD produced numerous factsheets and print materials to educate target audiences and members on MCWD's projects, policy initiatives, and operations, including updated multi-page brochures on each of the District's project implementation areas; a 2027 Plan Kickoff Publication mailed to member communities; a Flood Response Factsheet to define roles and emergency management procedures; and a factsheet summarizing findings from the Statewide Carp Management Effectiveness Study led by MCWD and MAISRC, in partnership with the MNDNR and MPCA.

MCWD worked with regional and local news media to profile key projects and initiatives advanced with partners. Some examples include:

- "Pond Retrofit Aimed at Keeping Phosphorus Out of Long Lake", Laker Pioneer
- "Commissioners Wade into Water Issues", Laker Pioneer
- "A 'C' ranking for the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes is a triumph of environmental restoration", Star Tribune
- "Future of $330M Hopkins housing development uncertain amid developer's financial woes", Star Tribune

Staff also engaged the District's 14-member Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) throughout the year, to review and provide input on several of MCWD's initiatives, including the District's capital improvement plan, annual budget, policy initiatives, and the scope of the 2027 Watershed Management Plan, which will be developed with the watershed's communities.

Members of MCWD's CAC discuss the District's planned work for 2025 during the January 15, 2025, CAC meeting.

MCWD staff across programs presented for or connected with several community and regional organizations throughout the year to share MCWD's integrated approach to watershed planning and investment. Additionally, MCWD convened and participated in multi-agency meetings and events to advance collaborative projects between MCWD, staff and policymakers at other public agencies, and private developers. Some examples of these activities include:

- Annual coordination meetings and presentations to staff and policymakers from each of MCWD's member communities.
- A Spring Flood Response Summit with Hennepin County and the National Weather Service to support coordinated, informed flood response and emergency management across the watershed.

- Three public meetings to share information and collect feedback from the community on active capital projects.

An MCWD staff member explains the Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection Project to a member of the public at a September 30, 2025, open house.

- Introductory presentations to interested community organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, the Tangletown Neighborhood Association, and the MN Department of Veterans Affairs' Sustainability Workgroup, among others.
- Participated in the Long Lake Waters Association's annual meeting to outline MCWD's data-driven strategy for lake restoration in the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed.
- Policy Steering Committee meetings with delegated policymakers from MCWD, the City of Minneapolis, and the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board.

Members of the Minneapolis Thriving Waters Partnership discuss partnership updates and next steps at the July 14, 2025, policy steering committee meeting.

SOLICITATION OF SERVICES

In accordance with MN Statutes 103B.227, the District solicits proposals for legal, professional, or technical consultant services at least every two years. Below are the solicited proposals, including upcoming associated RFPs:

- *Accounting Services* – Current contract solicited in October 2025
  - Contract expires October 31, 2027
  - RFPs will be requested August 2027
- *Audit Services* – Existing contract, solicited September 2024
  - Contract expires October 31, 2026
  - RFPs will be requested August 2026
- *Engineering Services* – Current contract solicited in November 2025
  - Contract expires February 29, 2028
  - RFPs will be requested December 2027
- *Government Relations Services* – Current contract solicited in October 2025
  - Contract expires December 31, 2027
  - RFPs will be requested September 2027
- *IT Managed Services* – Existing contract, solicited December 2024
  - Contract expires February 28, 2027
  - RFPs were requested December 2026
- *Legal Services* – Existing contract, solicited July 2024
  - Contract expires August 31, 2026
  - RFPs will be requested June 2026

STATUS OF LOCAL PLANS

MN Statutes § 103B.235 and MN Rules § 8410.0160 grant watershed districts the authority to review and approve local water management plans (LWMPs). Under this framework, watershed districts can assign responsibilities to local government units (LGUs) for carrying out implementation actions defined in the watershed plan. The LWMP is a required element of the LGU comprehensive land use management plan, which LGUs were required to update by the end of 2018.

The primary focus of the LWMP requirements set forth in the District's 2017 Watershed Management Plan is on improving the integration of land use and water planning. To effectively integrate the goals of MCWD and its LGUs in a way that maximizes community benefits and effectively leverages public funds, the District has invited a partnership framework with its communities.

In addition to the legally required elements of LWMPs, as defined in State statute and rules, the Watershed Management Plan requires communities to develop a coordination plan that describes how the LGU and MCWD will share information and work together to integrate land use and water planning. To date, 27 of the District's 29 communities have received approval of their LWMP. The two remaining communities are Laketown and Watertown Townships, which rely on Carver County as the land use planning authority.

STATUS OF LOCALLY ADOPTED ORDINANCES

The District's 2017 Watershed Management Plan did not establish any requirements for local ordinances.

PERMITS, VARIANCES, AND VIOLATIONS

In 2025, MCWD reviewed and processed 603 permit applications. Thirteen permits were brought before the MCWD Board of Managers: 6 upon public request, 2 District projects, 1 upon Administrator request, 1 variance request, and 3 exception requests. All permits brought before the Board were approved. Through approval of 2025 exception requests, MCWD gained approximately 5,000 square feet of additional wetland buffer, 3.9 acres of wetland restoration, and 2 acre-feet of floodplain storage.

By working in partnership with the Burl Oaks Golf Club in Minnetrista, MCWD achieved a nearly 4-acre wetland restoration through the permitting process.

Approximately 200 field inspections were completed in 2025, and non-compliant sites were resolved through MCWD inspection reports to permittees, onsite meetings to discuss corrections, and solutions to site-specific issues. MCWD issued five Notice of Probable Violations in 2025, three of which were resolved through voluntary compliance, while the other two remain in the process of being resolved. Three Wetland Conservation Act violations occurred in 2025. One violation was resolved voluntarily, one is in the process of being resolved through a Restoration Order, and one was unable to be resolved due to a change in property ownership. The MCWD Board of Managers did not issue any formal enforcement actions in 2025.

APPENDIX A - MCWD 2026 BUDGET AND WORK PLAN

MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

2026 MCWD BUDGET & WORKPLAN

Pursuing a balanced urban ecology with capital projects and policy

2026 BUDGET & WORKPLAN

At the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), we are committed to the belief that clean water and a healthy natural environment are essential for creating and maintaining thriving communities. To realize this vision, we partner with others to deliver meaningful capital projects and develop policies that integrate land use with water resource planning.

Impactful projects that benefit both the watershed and our communities often require multi-year efforts to plan, develop, and implement. Each budget cycle, therefore, presents an opportunity to align strategic priorities, assess upcoming investments, and plan for the future. This work plan outlines our 2026 annual budget and highlights progress being made throughout the watershed.

CONTENTS

OUR APPROACH: IN PURSUIT OF A BALANCED URBAN ECOLOGY

We believe sustainable, thriving communities are built on a balanced relationship between the natural and built environments. Within the Minnehaha Creek Watershed, natural resources create a strong sense of place—contributing to local identity, enhancing economic value, and improving quality of life.

To bring this to life, we collaborate with our communities to integrate natural systems into the fabric of the built environment. Working with our partners, we target areas of high need to deliver meaningful, measurable impacts, while staying responsive to oppurtunities throughout the watershed.

Balanced Urban Ecology in action at the Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park: Park Nicollet and MCWD partnered to remeander a degraded section of Minnehaha Creek and restore floodplain wetlands, improving water quality and flood storage in an urbanized corridor. The hospital installed a boardwalk to provide access to the restored creek, allowing patients to connect with nature as they heal.

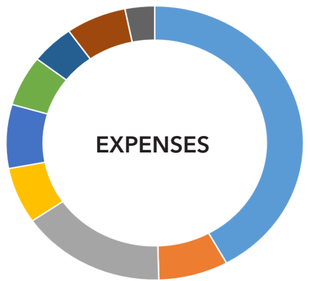
2026 BUDGET BREAKDOWN

Projects, activities, and services highlighted in this publication are derived from the listed expenses below. Our work is supported by an annual tax levy, funds levied in past years for multi-year capital projects (projects fund balance), funds reallocated from programs delivered under budget (programs fund balance), grants and partner funds, interest, and permit fees.

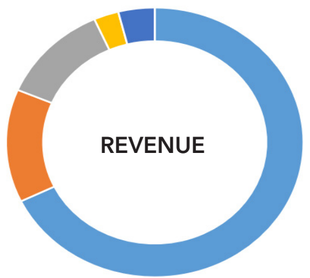
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

MCWD is maintaining a flat levy in 2026. MCWD has increased the levy only 2% over the past seven years. Grants and partner funds have provided significant contributions to District expenses in recent years: MCWD has secured over $6.7 million in grants and partner funds since 2020, supporting 6.5% of expenditures.

EXPENSES	2025	2026
Capital Projects	$6,053,478	$6,100,256
Debt Service	$1,098,218	$1,100,668
Operations & Support Services	$2,147,337	$2,287,828
Research & Monitoring	$1,372,103	$962,872
Project Planning	$1,031,505	$1,097,847
Policy Planning	$643,884	$857,920
Project & Land Maintenance	$677,441	$685,673
Permitting	$925,663	$947,431
Outreach	$470,817	$466,193
TOTAL	**$14,420,445**	**$14,506,688**



REVENUE	2025	2026
Levy	$9,869,513	$9,869,513
Projects Fund Balance	$3,332,992	$1,973,572
Programs Fund Balance	$0	$1,695,664
Grants & Partner Funds	$692,940	$392,940
Interest & Fees	$525,000	$575,000
TOTAL	**$14,420,445**	**$14,506,688**



OUR PATH FORWARD

Every ten years, MCWD updates its Watershed Management Plan (Plan) to guide our work over the coming decade.

Over the next two years, MCWD will engage its 29 communities and other partners, aligning local goals with water resource priorities, to guide future implementation.

BALANCED URBAN ECOLOGY

Our Balanced Urban Ecology policy was foundational to our 2017 Plan, which emphasized partnerships that deliver high-impact capital projects in focal geographies and advance policy initiatives to integrate land and water planning across the watershed.

Since then, MCWD has put this integrated approach into action, investing in projects that generate regional water resource improvements, expand access to greenspace, and support broader community goals in economic development, transportation, housing, and other areas.

Recognizing the success of this approach, MCWD's 2027 Plan will build on the foundation of partnership and integrated planning central to the 2017 Plan, to meet the needs of the future.

2026 BUDGET: $225,000

Funding from the Policy Planning and Outreach program budgets supports the Plan convening process, analysis and planning, as well as public outreach efforts in 2026.

BUILDING RESILIENCE WITH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

To continue advancing MCWD's vision of Balanced Urban Ecology, the primary focus of the 2027 Plan update will be the development of a strategy to build flood resilience as our communities experience the impacts of climate change.

We've learned from past projects that when we work with our partners to integrate the built environment with restored natural systems, we can provide a range of benefits for our communities, including flood resilience; water quality improvements; recreation opportunities; as well as contribute to a sense of place. As we plan for the future, we'll work alongside our communities to find new ways to integrate nature-based solutions into the watershed's built environment.

Record-breaking precipitation in 2014 resulted in high water levels and significant flooding across much of the watershed. Building flood resilience will be critical to mitigate the impacts of these events as they become more frequent and unpredictable.

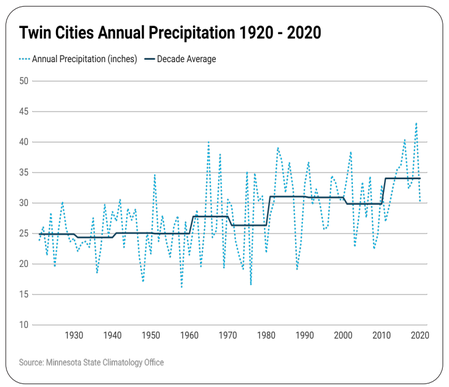
2027 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

FROM PAST TO PRESENT

MCWD was established in 1967 in response to a series of extreme flood events that impacted communities along Minnehaha Creek. As the lower watershed developed, historic land use decisions left these areas highly vulnerable to flooding.

Since our inception, these events have increased in both intensity and frequency, driven by changing precipitation patterns. According to the MN Department of Natural Resources Climatology Office, both Minnesota and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed are projected to continue becoming warmer and wetter.

Record-setting rainfall in 2014, combined with the wettest seven-year period on record from 2013 to 2019, followed by subsequent drought cycles, highlight that the watershed is already experiencing disruptions to precipitation patterns, increasing flood risk.



Between 1940 and 2020, Twin Cities annual rainfall has been increasing.

REGIONAL PLANNING

Due to a range of factors, the effects of changing precipitation patterns can impact communities differently. Water does not follow political boundaries, and upstream decisions can have downstream implications. This complex interplay underscores the benefits of a coordinated watershed-scale approach to build resilience in ways that generate shared benefits.

As a regional water resource agency, MCWD is committed to bringing communities together to build a data-driven understanding of natural systems, align priorities, and collaborate with partners to integrate improvements into the changing landscape.

In 2023, municipal officials gathered for a partner climate briefing.

LOOKING AHEAD

Working with our partners, over the next two years, we will develop a shared implementation framework that supports our communities as they work to adapt and respond to a changing climate. MCWD will leverage a new 2-D model that incorporates current and projected precipitation, land surface, and municipal stormwater data to support this effort.

FOCAL GEOGRAPHY APPROACH

MCWD covers 178 square miles across 29 communities, serving more than 300,000 residents. To effectively manage water resources across the watershed, MCWD takes a focused and strategic approach, targeting geographies of highest need to deliver measurable results for the region as a whole.

Within focal geographies, we build partnerships to identify water resource issues, understand local needs, and deliver projects that improve our environment while supporting community goals.

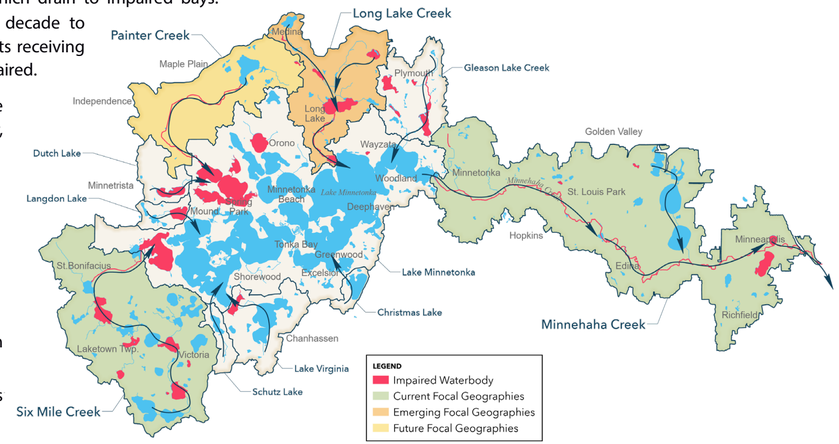
A DECADE OF PROGRESS

MCWD's 2017 Plan introduced this focal geography approach, leveraging a data-driven understanding of the watershed to identify two key areas for project implementation: the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed and the Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed.

To generate regional benefits, in the upper watershed, MCWD focuses on the largest tributaries to Lake Minnetonka, which drain to impaired bays. Downstream, MCWD has worked for over a decade to improve its namesake, Minnehaha Creek, and its receiving water body, Lake Hiawatha, which are both impaired.

By focusing in these two areas, MCWD has made measurable improvements for the region's water, resulting in:

- 300 acres of new greenspace
- 695 pounds/year nutrient pollution reduction
- 154 acres of restored wetlands
- 2.5 miles of restored streambank
- De-listing of Brownie Lake
- Wassermann Lake on track to be removed from state impaired waters list
- Minnehaha Creek Chlorophyll-a concentrations that meet state standards



See pages 7-10 for more information on our work in these geographies.

For more information on our focal geography approach: minnehahacreek.org/projects/focal-geographies/

EXPANDING OUR FOCAL GEOGRAPHIES

As MCWD outlines priorities and project opportunities for the 2027 Plan, we are preparing to expand our portfolio of focal geographies to implement high-impact projects in new areas, magnifying regional water resource benefits. Over the next two years, we will bring partners together in two new geographies to guide long-range implementation.

LONG LAKE CREEK SUBWATERSHED OPPORTUNITIES

Since 2018, MCWD has partnered with the cities of Medina, Long Lake, and Orono, and the Long Lake Waters Association to identify water quality improvement opportunities in the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed, resulting in the Long Lake Creek Roadmap.

The Long Lake Creek Subwatershed includes a mix of land use, including residential and commercial development, as well as agricultural lands, large wetland complexes, parks, and undeveloped natural spaces. The Subwatershed includes five impaired lakes and ultimately drains to Tanager Bay on Lake Minnetonka. The Long Lake Creek Roadmap outlines an implementation strategy and a suite of projects to restore the Subwatershed's resources.

In 2026, MCWD is advancing two projects in the subwatershed:

- A retrofit of the County Road 6 Stormwater Pond to improve treatment capacity.
- A feasibility study to identify regional stormwater treatment projects in Long Lake's downtown area.

"This partnership goes beyond our city, looking at the entire system to determine projects that will improve and protect Long Lake. The feasibility study is a critical next step to identify cost-effective opportunities for measurable, lasting benefits in our community."

- Charlie Miner, Mayor of Long Lake

2026 BUDGET: $808,583

Funding from the Capital Projects, Project Planning, Outreach, and Research & Monitoring program budgets supports ongoing diagnostic monitoring and planning efforts in new focal areas.

Painter Creek, flowing into Jennings Bay on Lake Minnetonka.

PAINTER CREEK SUBWATERSHED OPPORTUNITIES

The Painter Creek Subwatershed, a new focal area, is wetland-rich and ultimately drains into impaired Jennings Bay on Lake Minnetonka. The highly agricultural Subwatershed includes portions of Medina, Orono, Maple Plain, Independence, and Minnetrista.

In 2026, MCWD will complete diagnostic work started in 2025, which involved monitoring water quality at key sites across the Subwatershed to identify pollutant sources. Preliminary monitoring data estimates that Painter Creek contributes up to 50% of the total annual phosphorus load to Jennings Bay. Leveraging diagnostic findings, MCWD will engage the Subwatershed's communities to develop a project implementation plan for the 2027 Plan.

SIX MILE CREEK - HALSTED BAY SUBWATERSHED OVERVIEW

The SMCHB Subwatershed is a water resource-rich system that forms the headwaters of Lake Minnetonka and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed. Halsted Bay is the most degraded bay on Lake Minnetonka, and five lakes within the SMCHB Subwatershed are listed as impaired for excess nutrients.

CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP

MCWD has been partnering with communities in the SMCHB Subwatershed to support local development, infrastructure, and recreational planning goals while preserving and protecting the area's unique natural resources. Whether through wetland restoration or innovative stormwater projects, our partnerships with Carver County, Laketown Township, Minnetrista, St. Bonifacius, Victoria, and private developers have resulted in measurable improvements across the Subwatershed.

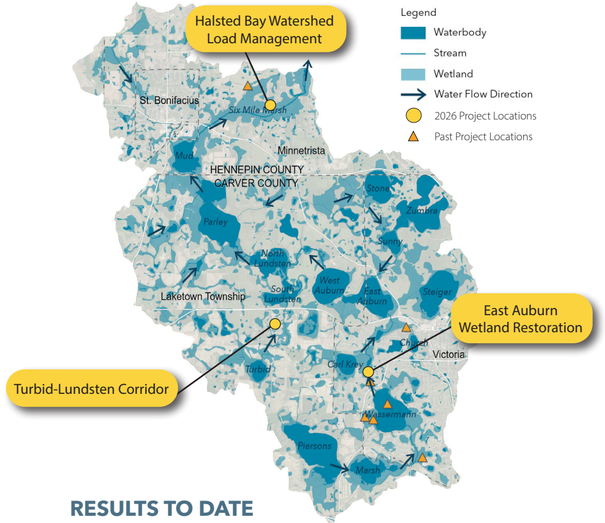
To continue this legacy of meaningful collaboration, MCWD recently signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Victoria, which outlines a shared vision to preserve green space and ecological corridors as the City's Western Growth Area develops.

"As Victoria grows, we're committed to ensuring our natural systems remain central to our identity as the City of Lakes and Parks. This partnership with MCWD strengthens our ability to integrate green space, water resources, and sustainable infrastructure into every step of our planning."

- ***Dana Hardie, Victoria City Manager***

WORK TO DATE

Thanks to our strong partnership with the region's communities, we have made major strides in improving Wassermann Lake and surrounding waterbodies in the SMCHB Subwatershed. Together, we have restored a 20-acre wetland with a private developer, revitalized over 210 acres of prairie and marshland, treated both Wassermann Lake and a nearby pond with alum, and implemented a systemwide carp management plan.



RESULTS TO DATE

124 ACRES of restored wetland	**1 MALL OF AMERICA** worth of wetland restored
545 POUNDS of Phosphorus removed	**272,500 POUNDS** of algae prevented
306,958 POUNDS of Common Carp removed	**2,488 ACRES** of lake habitat restored
190 ACRES of accessible greenspace	**144 FOOTBALL FIELDS** of new greenspace

SIX MILE CREEK - HALSTED BAY SUBWATERSHED 2026 ACTIVITIES

2026 BUDGET: $1,081,000

Funding from the Capital Projects, Project Planning, Outreach, and Research & Monitoring program budgets supports the implementation of capital projects in the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay (SMCHB) Subwatershed.

TURBID-LUNDSTEN CORRIDOR PLANNING

MCWD is exploring restoration efforts in the Turbid-Lundsten Corridor, which includes Turbid and South Lundsten Lakes. This corridor contains a degraded wetland system, which presents significant nutrient reduction opportunities. Wetland restoration and in-lake treatment projects in the corridor could reduce phosphorus by up to 95 pounds per year. However, the scope and scale of projects will be shaped through collaboration with local landowners and informed by comprehensive feasibility studies.

High phosphorus concentrations pollute Turbid and South Lundsten lakes. This wetland corridor presents opportunities for ecological restoration and nutrient load treatment.

The East Auburn Wetland complex, located between Wassermann and East Auburn Lakes, is a major source of nutrients in the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Subwatershed.

EAST AUBURN WETLAND RESTORATION

MCWD recently completed the design of the wetland restoration between Wassermann and East Auburn Lakes. Construction of this project in 2026 will restore the wetland's hydrology with the installation of a sheet-pile weir, which is expected to reduce annual phosphorus loads to East Auburn Lake by 50 percent.

HALSTED BAY WATERSHED LOAD MANAGEMENT

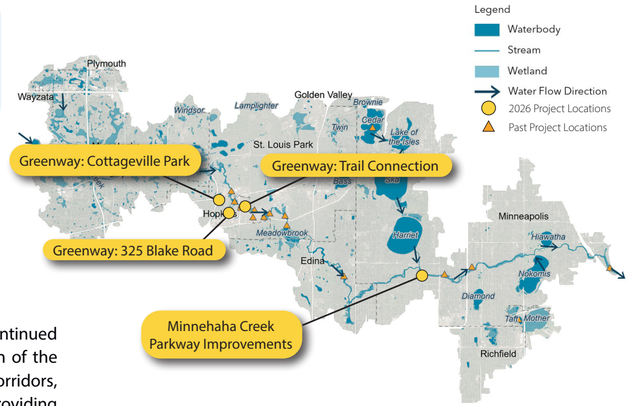
MCWD is exploring a range of nutrient reduction methods to improve water quality in Halsted Bay on Lake Minnetonka, including a water treatment facility, upstream wetland restorations, and in-lake nutrient reduction treatments, among others. MCWD is conducting diagnostic monitoring to inform future project identification.

MINNEHAHA CREEK SUBWATERSHED OVERVIEW

2026 BUDGET: $3,979,273

Funding from the Capital Projects, Project Planning, Outreach and Research & Monitoring program budgets supports the implementation of capital projects in the Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed.

The Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed, or lower watershed, contains several iconic waterbodies, including Minnehaha Creek and the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes. Minnehaha Creek flows nearly 23 miles through the Subwatershed, from Lake Minnetonka over Minnehaha Falls and into the Mississippi River, collecting stormwater from the cities of Edina, Hopkins, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Richfield, and St. Louis Park.



CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships with the lower watershed communities have facilitated continued improvements across the Subwatershed. As an urban, developed portion of the watershed, project efforts have been focused on restoring riparian corridors, mitigating flooding, managing pollution from stormwater runoff, and providing new access to greenspace.

In this subwatershed, MCWD has been advancing projects in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway along the most degraded stretch of the Creek between Hopkins and St. Louis Park. A new partnership between the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) will expand investments downstream in the Minneapolis segment of the Minnehaha Creek corridor, to improve the Creek and downstream Lake Hiawatha.

WORK TO DATE

Over the past decade, MCWD has collaborated with local partners to restore and enhance sections of Minnehaha Creek, while meeting the unique demands of a highly urbanized subwatershed. MCWD has partnered to remeander Minnehaha Creek at Methodist Hospital, restore streambank and floodplain wetlands at the Minnehaha Creek Preserve with Japs-Olson, resulting in the creation of 150 skilled labor jobs, and integrated stormwater management solutions into park expansions at Arden Park in Edina, and Cottageville Park in Hopkins.

RESULTS TO DATE

109 ACRES of accessible greenspace	**82 FOOTBALL FIELDS** of new greenspace
1.5 MILES of restored streambank	**10 WELLS FARGO TOWERS** laid end-to-end of restored streambank
30 ACRES of restored wetlands	**2.5 U.S. BANK STADIUMS** worth of restored wetlands
2.3 MILES of constructed trails	**600 HOUSING UNITS** connected to transit

MINNEHAHA CREEK SUBWATERSHED 2026 ACTIVITIES

A PARTNERSHIP FOR THRIVING WATERS IN MINNEAPOLIS

Working with the City of Minneapolis and MPRB, MCWD is developing a shared implementation framework for the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan, a 30-year vision to enhance recreation, restore the ecological function of the Creek, address flooding, and improve water quality in Minneapolis.

The partners identified three projects from the Parkway Master Plan to provide significant, cost-effective water resource benefits in the Minnehaha Creek Corridor. The first priority project, located west of Cedar Avenue, will advance into design in 2026. The project will capture and treat stormwater runoff from 115 acres, restore streambanks to enhance water quality and reduce localized flooding, as well as provide new recreation opportunities along Minnehaha Creek.

As the first project progresses in 2026, the partners will also be working to analyze water resource issues, restoration strategies, and project opportunities across the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes to develop a long-range implementation plan that can support future investment to improve water quality, flood resilience, and ecosystems in the City of Lakes.

PROGRESS IN THE GREENWAY

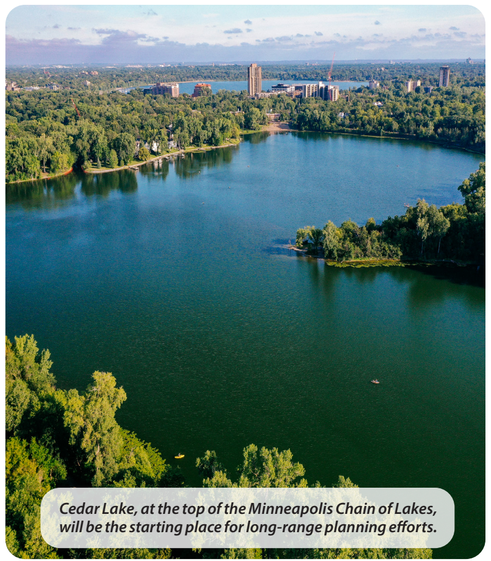
Over the past decade, MCWD has implemented a series of projects in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, a 2-mile stretch of continuous green space between Hopkins and St. Louis Park.

In 2026, MCWD will be leading a project to connect the Greenway to the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail, in partnership with Hennepin County, the Metropolitan Council, the City of St. Louis Park, and Three Rivers Park District. The project will establish a 1,000- foot trail connection linking Minnehaha Creek Preserve, the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail, and planned investments at 325 Blake Road, while repairing riparian buffers and restoring 1,000 feet of streambank along Minnehaha Creek.

While work advances to connect investments on the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, MCWD remains committed to delivering significant water quality benefits and recreation opportunities at 325 Blake Road. Despite delays in the development, in 2026, MCWD plans to advance its improvements on the adjacent parcel near Cottageville Park, creating a Gateway to the Minnehaha Creek Greenway.

"This partnership unites our agencies for a stronger, coordinated approach to water resource stewardship. By aligning efforts, we're making smart investments to protect water quality, reduce flood risk, and deliver lasting community benefits. Minnehaha Creek, a vital community asset, will get the attention it deserves."

- Cathy Abene, P.E., MPRB President



Cedar Lake, at the top of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes, will be the starting place for long-range planning efforts.

LAND AND WATER PARTNERSHIPS

OUR COMMITMENT TO SHARED BENEFITS

MCWD launched the Land & Water Partnership (LWP) Program in 2024, grounded in the belief that meaningful, early coordination with the land use community leads to better outcomes for our water resources.

The LWP Program provides technical and financial assistance for partner-led projects that provide regional water resource benefits by adding these projects into MCWD's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Eligible partners include cities, counties, developers, and others who implement large-scale capital projects within the watershed. By strengthening relationships with partners across the watershed and working together to integrate land and water planning, we are supporting regional water resource improvements that contribute to thriving, sustainable communities.

SUPPORTING PARTNER PROJECTS

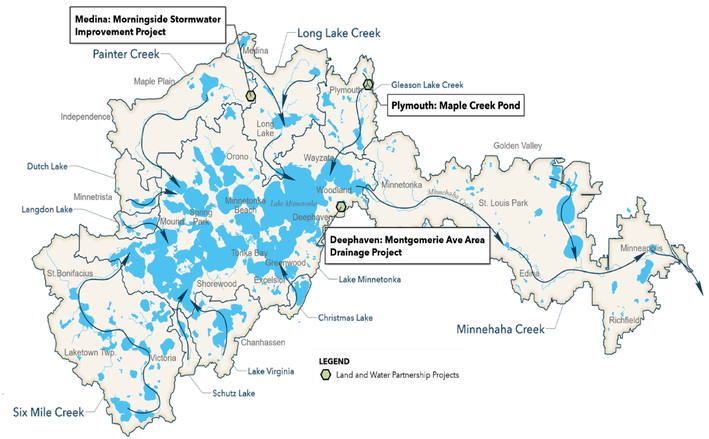
In its first year, the LWP Program has improved early coordination, resulting in projects that provide significant water resource benefits. Currently, three capital projects supported by the program are projected to remove 62.8 pounds of phosphorus per year in three communities across three subwatersheds.

In 2026, the LWP Program is supporting the Morningside Stormwater Improvement Project, led by the City of Medina. The project includes the stabilization of three eroding ravines and the construction of a stormwater pond to remove 30 pounds of pollutants annually, improving water quality in Lake Katrina and downstream Jennings Bay.

MOVING FORWARD

As MCWD advances planning for the 2027 Plan, we will be working with our partners to build new tools and systems that support land use and water integration and early coordination.

MCWD is developing a map of regional opportunity areas to better support LWP project identification, as well as an interactive mapping tool to allow partners to highlight upcoming projects, planning efforts, and initiatives, enabling MCWD and its partners to align priorities for shared investment outside of the District's focal geographies.



2026 BUDGET: $109,500

Funding from the Policy Planning and Outreach program budgets supports partner-led capital projects through the Land & Water Partnership Program, as well as related technical anlysis, planning, and outreach efforts.

LAND AND WATER PARTNERSHIPS

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH PERMITTING

MCWD's permitting program also provides unique opportunities to build innovative partnerships, shape land use changes, and identify creative pathways to protect and improve water resources. By proposing innovative water resource solutions, MCWD has been able to shape projects that achieve greater water resource benefits than those achieved with regulation alone.

When Burl Oaks Golf Club in Minnetrista applied for a permit to redesign its golf course, it initiated a cooperative process to align the redesign with both state and MCWD regulations. MCWD staff worked closely with the Golf Club's team, helping them navigate regulatory requirements, while advancing the Club's vision, resulting in a course design that achieves greater water resource benefits than what would have been realized solely through compliance.

"Our plan review and permitting process with the MCWD team was a truly collaborative effort, focused on finding solutions that supported both our golf course design goals and MCWD's objectives for water quality management and wetland restoration. Through close coordination with our Architect Jason Blasi, Course Superintendent Nathan Peters, Construction committee and Anderson Engineering, we successfully delivered an outstanding golf course design that also enhances water quality, habitat, native vegetation, and flood storage—ultimately benefiting our members and the broader Lake Minnetonka area community for generations to come."

- Dave Link, Burl Oaks Board Vice President & Construction Committee Chairman

Whether it's through our permitting or LWP Program, when MCWD is at the table early, we can work to understand our partners' goals and identify mutually-beneficial solutions that benefit the environment and the community.

Construction on the Burl Oaks Golf Club redesign is projected to wrap up in 2026.

PLANNED WATER RESOURCE BENEFITS

3.93 ACRES of restored wetland	**3 FOOTBALL FIELDS** worth of restored wetland
1.51 ACRES of wetland buffers	**10 SUBURBAN HOME LOTS** of wetland buffers
3,266 CUBIC YARDS of floodplain storage	**651,702 GALLONS** of water storage

WATERSHED-WIDE SERVICES

To serve partners and residents across the watershed's 178 square miles, we provide a variety of services that complement our work in focal geographies and through land and water partnerships.

SERVICES

- **Research and Monitoring:** collecting and analyzing data across the watershed to identify resource needs to inform project planning and implementation
- **Permitting:** reviewing and overseeing construction activities, in coordination with our partners, to protect natural resources and build positive relationships with the watershed's communities
- **Outreach:** connecting people to information they value and engaging residents, agencies, and private sector partners to ensure our work is integrated with the goals of our communities
- **Project Maintenance and Land Management:** maintaining our projects and land to ensure their continued function and value, as well as operating Gray's Bay Dam to reduce the risk of flooding and balance the water budget throughout the watershed

Learn more about the Minnehaha Creek Watershed, our partners and projects, and volunteer opportunities on our website.

2026 BUDGET: $1,467,180

Funding from the Capital Projects, Permitting, Policy Planning, Outreach, Project Maintenance & Land Management, and Research & Monitoring program budgets supports the delivery of critical services across the watershed.

Residents paddling on Cedar Lake in Minneapolis.

CONNECT WITH US

MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

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