



Title: NOAA and National Weather Service Recognition of MCWD as a Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador of Excellence

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Purpose:

At the December 15, 2022, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) Board of Manager’s meeting, staff from the National Weather Service (NWS) will present MCWD with a certificate recognizing MCWD as Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador of Excellence.

Background:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) vision is to develop a Weather-Ready Nation where society is prepared for and responds to weather, water, and climate-dependent events. NOAA recognizes that building a Weather-Ready Nation takes a whole-community approach, beyond what NOAA and the NWS can do alone. In 2014, NOAA and NWS created the [Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador](#) initiative to recognized organizations that share the goal of greater community resilience through improved ways to prepare, respond, and recover from extreme events. In 2017, MCWD was accepted as a NOAA Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador. Weather-Ready Nation Ambassadors are formally recognized as organizations committed to collaborating with NOAA, sharing preparedness messaging in outreach to the public, and serving as examples themselves by implementing resilience best practices.

Summary:

In 2017, NOAA began to recognize “[Ambassadors of Excellence](#)” through selecting Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador organizations that have made significant contributions to building a Weather-Ready Nation. By serving as change agents and leaders in their communities, Ambassadors of Excellence have:

- Inspired other to take action and become ready, responsive, and resilient
- Created innovative ways to engage their community, their workforce, and/or their social network
- Formed unique collaborations with NOAA and/or other ambassador organizations to achieve goals they alone could not meet
- Embraced building “a Weather-Ready Nation for All” by addressing vulnerable populations’ needs

Currently NOAA has over 12,000 Weather-Ready Nation Ambassadors across the United States, and in October 2022 selected 58 of them as “Ambassadors of Excellence”, which included MCWD. NOAA created [this storymap](#) to summarize the location of the 58 Ambassadors of Excellence selected in 2022. MCWD’s summary on this map notes:

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) is an exemplary Ambassador for a Weather-Ready Nation.

They have improved services for their constituents by partnering with us to improve communication that play a vital part in their dam operations, promoting that partnership within the hydrologic community, and utilizing NWS information when informing the public on upcoming significant water events.

Faced with a need to improve efficiency of their dam operation on Lake Minnetonka, they worked with NWS Twin Cities and the North Central River Forecast Center to not only improve operations, but also to provide increased preparedness information to their stakeholders on Minnehaha Creek.

The MCWD has promoted our partnership many times during conferences and in briefings throughout the state of Minnesota, and other districts have begun similar projects with us.

Also, during times of high or low water within the watershed, they communicate the relevant information with their communities by using NWS graphics, forecasts, and other information.

The MCWD was an early WRN Ambassador and are true partners in helping achieve a Weather-Ready Nation.