

MCWD 2015

Mid-Year Highlights



*Late August evening on Lake Harriet
by Stan Waldhauser*

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) is a local unit of government responsible for managing and protecting the water resources in one of the largest urban watersheds in the state of Minnesota. There are eight major creeks, 129 lakes, and thousands of wetlands within the MCWD.

IN PURSUIT OF A BALANCED URBAN ECOLOGY

Recognizing the relationship between our natural and built environments, the MCWD works in partnership with the public, private and civic sectors to help protect and improve our natural systems, make wise investments in public infrastructure and improve the quality of water and quality of life in our communities. The District pursues this work under three guiding principles:

- » We will join with others in pursuing our watershed management goals
- » We will intensify and maintain our focus on high-priority projects
- » We will be flexible and creative in adapting our practices to those of our partners

KEEP UP WITH US

We think it's important to keep our partners and residents in the loop about what's going on at MCWD. In addition to the mid-year and annual newsletters, you can stay up to speed with us on our Splash e-newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and at minnehahacreek.org



Key Highlights

MINNEHAHA CREEK PRESERVE

Construction is complete on a boardwalk and paved trail along a restored stretch of the creek P.2

CHRISTMAS LAKE

Cutting-edge work to eradicate zebra mussels from Christmas Lake P.3

MINNEHAHA CREEK CLEANUP

Record-breaking crowd collects record amount of trash! P.4

NEW ADMINISTRATOR

Lars Erdahl takes the helm P.5



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

PROJECTS



MINNEHAHA CREEK PRESERVE

MCWD finished building 2,200 feet of boardwalk and 4,600 feet of paved trail around a restored section of Minnehaha Creek, in partnership with the City of St. Louis Park and Clean Water Fund. The new trail system opens the creek to the public where it had previously been hidden and offers a place to experience and learn about the creek.

RESULTS

- Creates access to more than 39 acres of green space that was previously inaccessible
- Manages polluted stormwater from an 80 acre area
- Brings more than 600 housing units within walking distance of transit connections
- Creates outdoor education area for area schools and community groups

LONG LAKE CREEK CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

The District restored a former wastewater treatment pond connected to Long Lake Creek into a healthy wetland with a meandering stream running through it. The project provides critical wildlife habitat and restores the previously-ditched stream to its natural function. Long Lake Creek is a known carrier of excess sediment and nutrients into Lake Minnetonka, and the project is the first of several restoration projects planned along the stream.



HIGHWAY 101 CAUSEWAY

MCWD is working with Hennepin County and others on the re-construction of Highway 101, which crosses Lake Minnetonka between Gray's Bay and Wayzata Bay. The District is working to enhance the shoreline where the road crosses the lake to reduce erosion, infiltrate stormwater and provide habitat.

ARDEN PARK / WEST 54TH ST

The District coordinated with the City of Edina's reconstruction of West 54h Street to install clean-water landscaping at Arden Park and is exploring options for additional restoration along Minnehaha Creek.

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS)

CHRISTMAS LAKE RESPONSE

The District continued to partner with MN DNR, City of Shorewood, MN AIS Research Center and the Christmas Lake Homeowners Association on the response to the discovery of zebra mussels near the public launch last summer. The treatments last fall appeared successful in the area treated, as no zebra mussels were found in the enclosed area this spring. However, a comprehensive search of the lake found several more zebra mussels, all located just outside of the treatment area. With the chance of additional zebra mussels still in the bay, an 11-acre area was treated in June and early July and will be closely monitored all season.



GRANT AWARDS

MCWD was awarded two major grants to pursue innovative AIS prevention and management work. Funded by a grant from Hennepin County, the District will study hybrid milfoil in District lakes in partnership with the University of Minnesota and Montana State University. A grant from the Initiative Foundation would help explore other ways to prevent the spread of AIS by watercraft.

SIX MILE CREEK CARP ASSESSMENT

The District is in the second year of an extensive assessment of the common carp population in the Six Mile Creek chain of lakes, in partnership with the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center. This assessment is the first step toward sustainably managing common carp in this area.

DATA



ECOSYSTEM EVALUATION PROGRAM (E-GRADE):

Staff is developing a new grading system that evaluates the watershed based on the health of the entire ecosystem, rather than a few water quality parameters. Staff are currently developing the metrics, meeting with a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of experts in the field, and collecting data in three test subwatersheds.

AIS EARLY DETECTION MONITORING

The District is ramping up its monitoring for the presence of invasive species in lakes at higher risk for infestation, allowing staff to respond quickly to new infestations. Forty-five water bodies are being monitored in 2015. MCWD is also looking for volunteers to help monitor their nearby lake; for more information on that program, visit www.minnehahacreek.org/detectors.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH



EDUCATION AT MINNEHAHA CREEK PRESERVE

Staff produced a robust educational experience at the Minnehaha Creek Preserve, including a series of eight large signs detailing the history of the area, how land use changes in the area have affected Minnehaha Creek, and what users can do to help protect and improve our lakes and streams. Staff built partnerships with local organizations to bring a variety of groups to the Preserve for educational purposes.

MINNEHAHA CREEK CLEANUP

A record-breaking 1,600 volunteers collected a staggering 4 tons of trash at the ninth-annual Minnehaha Creek Cleanup in July. The new “Eco-Education Zone” featured about 20 groups hosting activities and information about clean water and environmental issues.



PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

MCWD conducted a District-wide survey of residents to understand attitudes around water quality, priorities and concerns of residents, and actions residents take to protect clean water. Among the many findings, the results showed widespread concern for the lakes, streams and wetlands throughout the District –98 percent of residents consider protecting clean water either “very” or “somewhat” important. The full results are available on the District website.

GRANTS

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:

MCWD is working to help fund clean-water landscaping projects that catch polluted runoff or otherwise help improve water quality while raising awareness about water quality issues. Staff responded to at least 75 inquiries, conducted 35 site visits, and finalized a number of previously funded stormwater management projects. The program’s criteria and scoring system was updated to encourage outreach and visibility of projects. Due to 2014’s flooding, the program has handled a record number of inquiries about shoreline restoration.



CYNTHIA KRIEG WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP FUND:

The Cynthia Krieg Watershed Stewardship Fund helps pay for programs that use education to protect clean water. Ten projects are underway. A few projects that were wrapped up this spring include: Two videos that highlight rain gardens and the flow of water in the Minnehaha Creek watershed, a Lake Minnetonka Shoreline Gardening guide, and an outdoor learning center for youth in Minnetonka.

WATERCRAFT INSPECTION:

The District helped fund inspectors at public launches across the District with a variety of partners: Carver County, Lake Minnetonka Conservation District, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, City of Shorewood and Three Rivers Park District. The grants and contracts will help provide 17,500 hours of inspectors in 2015.



OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION

WELCOMING ADMINISTRATOR LARS ERDAHL

After a nationwide search that attracted a pool of more than 50 applicants, the MCWD Board of Managers named Lars Erdahl as the new MCWD Administrator in January. Erdahl comes to the District with a wealth of leadership and public service experience, most recently at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and Minnesota Zoo.

CREDIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED

The District added an electronic credit card system to allow the District to accept credit cards as payment for permit applications.

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

MCWD digitized and archived a variety of District documents dating back more than two decades.

PERMITTING

PERMITTING AND INSPECTIONS

The District handles permits on behalf of many of its communities for a variety of activities that can impact water resources. The District received 329 permit applications in the first half of 2015 and conducted regular inspections of construction sites across the watershed.

WETLAND BANK

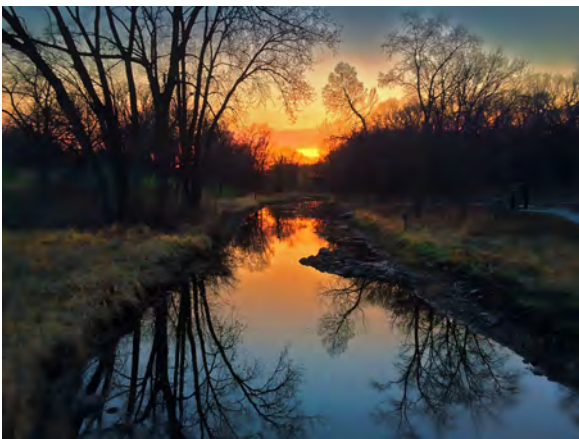
Staff worked with a Minnetrista landowner to identify a large wetland restoration opportunity that could be eligible for “wetland banking” credits. It would be the first wetland bank within the MCWD.



PHOTO CONTEST

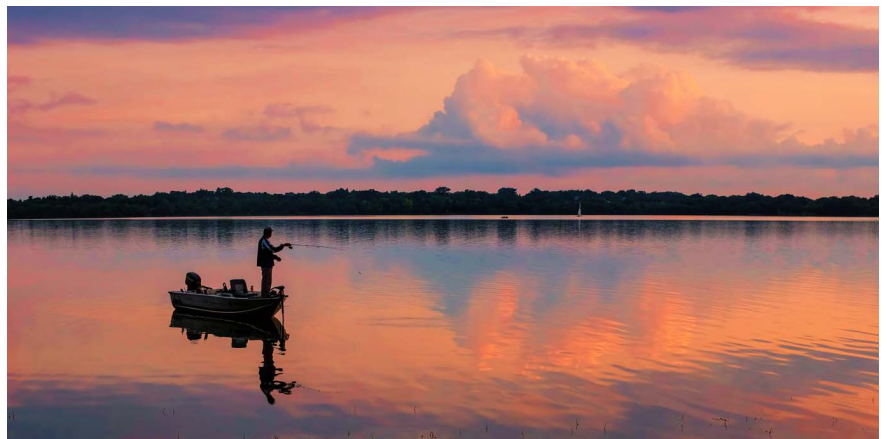
This spring saw the first annual MCWD Earth Day photo contest, showcasing the beauty and varied landscape of the watershed. There were more than 100 submissions. Check out the full list of winners at www.minnehahacreek.org/2015-contest.

1ST PLACE, LANDSCAPE CATEGORY



Sunset on Minnehaha Creek at Burwell Park in Minnetonka, by Aldo Abelleira

1ST PLACE, RECREATION CATEGORY



Late August evening on Lake Harriet, by Stan Waldhauser

A LOOK AHEAD

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Staff is preparing to update the MCWD's Comprehensive Plan, due for adoption in June 2017. The plan update focuses on a "two-track" approach that will allocate District resources to their highest and best use in protecting water resources and addressing flooding throughout the watershed. The District hosted three kickoff meetings across the watershed and established three advisory committees to advise the District as the plan is developed. Learn more about the plan and how to get involved at www.minnehahacreek.org/2017.

COTTAGEVILLE PARK:

Construction is expected to wrap up in September on a major makeover of Cottageville Park in Hopkins, which will expand the park into a community amenity that will feature a restored Minnehaha Creek. The first phase will add a new playground, trails, lawn area, community garden and educational exhibits. The project is a partnership between the MCWD, City of Hopkins, the Blake Road Corridor Collaborative and the Clean Water, Land & Legacy Fund.



REALTOR WORKSHOPS

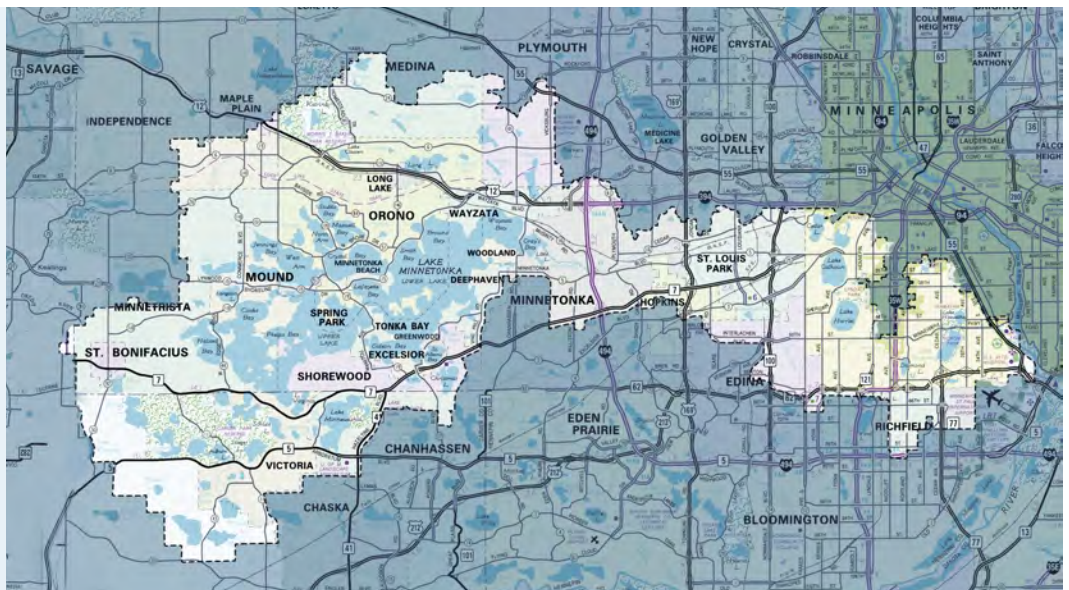
The District is creating a workshop for realtors and developers about watershed districts, the resources they provide and the benefits of working together. The course will be offered as a continuing education course in the spring of 2016.

EVENTS

CLEAN WATER SUMMIT -- SEPTEMBER 15: This annual conference at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum for stormwater professionals and others interested in clean water will focus on the relationship between surface water and groundwater in 2015.

WATERSHED HEROES -- OCTOBER 1: The awards ceremony honors individuals and organizations who work to provide and protect clean water. This year's event is planned at the Bayview Event Center in Excelsior.

The **MCWD** is responsible for 181 square miles of land and water that drain into Minnehaha Creek and ultimately the Mississippi River. It includes all or part of 27 cities and two townships in Hennepin and Carver Counties.



AIS Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Christmas Lake Rapid Response

- The three treatments that occurred in 2014 appeared to be successful, a survey within the treatment area in April of 2015 did not find any zebra mussels, and mortality monitoring that occurred concluded with 100% mortality.
- MCWD organized an intensive search in May of 2015 to look for the presence of zebra mussels in the rest of the lake. 18 divers searched the entire shoreline out to 6 feet water depth for a total of 5 hours, and 2 zebra mussels were found just outside of where the previous treatment sites took place. Additional monitoring found 16 more zebra mussels in this area. This area was treated with Potash in early June, and an expanded treatment of 10 acres in the Bay is planned for late June.

Watercraft Inspection Cost-Share Grants and Roaming Inspector Programs

- MCWD awarded several cost-share grants with area partners to perform watercraft inspections in the District. Partners include: Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Carver County, Lake Minnetonka Conservation District, City of Shorewood and Three Rivers Park District.
- Supporting a pilot project from the City of Shorewood and DNR looking at more stringent decontamination procedures to improve AIS prevention at public boat launches. The pilot will occur at the public boat launch on Christmas Lake.

AIS Grant Awards

- MCWD in partnership with the University of Minnesota and Montana State University, was awarded a grant from Hennepin County to study Hybrid Milfoil in District Lakes.
- MCWD pursued and was authorized a grant from the Initiative Foundation to look at an alternative way to perform watercraft inspections on District waterbodies. We are working with partners to determine the feasibility of the proposal, and how the program will ultimately take shape.

Early Detection and Baseline AIS Monitoring in District Lakes

- Early detection monitoring for new infestations of AIS began in May with zebra mussel monitoring, but comprehensive searches for additional species will begin in July. 45 waterbodies are planned for 2015.
- Baseline monitoring for AIS in District waterbodies continues throughout the summer, with Aquatic Plant Surveys planned on 30 to 40 waterbodies. These plant surveys along with the Early Detection Monitoring will assess what AIS species are already present in waterbodies across the District, as well as identify new infestations that may occur.

Upcoming activities for balance of 2015

Report from the Zebra Mussel Study on Lake Minnetonka

- Analysis and completion of two publication-grade research papers from the zebra mussel study on Lake Minnetonka, which started in 2011, will continue to be further developed in 2015. These papers will discuss the ecological impacts of zebra mussels on Lake Minnetonka thus far, and another paper will focus on zebra mussel population estimates and management options using veliger and plate sampling.
- An abstract was also submitted to the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) on the zebra mussel study for its 2015 Conference, which will be held in November of 2015 in New York. The abstract focuses on the impacts we have seen so far on Lake Minnetonka. The impacts seem to be different on individual bays in the lake, and seem to be dictated by current water quality conditions. Changes in water clarity has been significant in some bays to change the trophic status from eutrophic to mesotrophic. In some bays, phosphorus and chlorophyll *a* have increased, and in other bays there has been little change. At the bay scale, other trophic changes have occurred with pelagic production changing to benthic production. Densities of zebra mussels range from 0 in Halsteds Bay to over 200,000/m² in Wayzata Bay.

Christmas Lake Rapid Response

- A final, expanded area will be treated on Christmas Lake in late June. The site will encompass 10 acres of the NW Bay in the lake, which is where the infestation occurred. No zebra mussels have been found outside of this bay, providing for this one final treatment to control any additional zebra mussels in this area. This response effort is a coordination between the MCWD, DNR, City of Shorewood and Christmas Lake Homeowners Association.
- Ongoing monitoring for zebra mussels will continue in Christmas Lake with additional searches and veliger monitoring from July to September.

AIS Volunteer Monitoring Program

- An AIS volunteer monitoring program was created in 2015, and we have received several volunteers so far. A guide-book is being created that is likely to be completed by the end of June, and will be handed out to volunteers and provide an easy how-to on monitoring for a variety of AIS, as well as identifying them. MCWD staff will continue working with volunteers, provide demonstrations to interested groups, and continue building this program and our volunteer network.

Ongoing focus

Continue development of AIS Grant with Initiative Foundation

- Staff is continuing to work with partners across the District to implement some AIS prevention pilot programs. The direction of this program will become clearer in the next month or two.

Communications Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Public Opinion Survey

- Commissioned a District-wide survey of residents
- The survey was conducted to gain insight into how residents perceive water quality issues, priorities and concerns that residents believe should be addressed as well as information about actions residents take to protect clean water
- The survey results will help guide the District's programs and priorities and help inform the development of the 2017 Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan
- Among the findings:
 - 98 percent of residents consider protecting water quality either "very" or "somewhat" important
 - 99 percent said preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and finding a solution to get of AIS is either "very" or "somewhat" important
 - A majority of respondents said they take action to protect water quality, including preventing waste from entering storm drains.
 - 97 percent of respondents consider the MCWD a credible source of information about water quality issues
 - 93 percent said it is a good idea to have a single-purpose agency like the MCWD charged with protecting water quality
- The survey, which has a margin of error plus or minus 4.1 percentage points, was conducted by the Morris Leatherman Company in February 2015. Full results are available at www.minnehahacreek.org.

Photo Contest

- Launched District's first-ever photo contest using the website and the District's newest social media site Instagram to collect entries
- Using Earth Day as a theme, we solicited entries in two categories - landscape and recreational – and received nearly 100 submissions
- Using ranked-choice voting, District staff selected the first, second and third place winners in each category which were announced on the District's digital communications channels – website, Splash e-newsletter, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter
- The outcomes of the photo contest were three-fold:
 - Expanded and updated the District's photo library
 - Increased number of users of the District's new Instagram page
 - Increased awareness of MCWD

Cottageville Park Groundbreaking:

Coordinated with the City of Hopkins on a media availability announcing the start of construction on Cottageville Park in Hopkins. Among the media outlets that covered the event were the Star Tribune, KSTP TV, Minnesota Public Radio and the Sun Sailor newspaper.

Comp Plan Outreach

Developed informational flyer and poster boards and provided promotional support for open houses

Upcoming activities for balance of 2015

Minnehaha Creek Restoration Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Video

- Coordinating an event to mark the restoration of Minnehaha Creek in St. Louis Park and the opening of the boardwalk and trail system
- The event will feature a number of speakers from a cross-section of organizations who were instrumental in the project's success
- A video featuring the project's history and implementation will be unveiled at the event

Creek Cleanup

- Additional improvements are planned at the 2015 cleanup, including an expanded educational area at Lake Hiawatha site, more interactive features including paddleboard demonstrations and a consolidated trash/recycling/composting area with scales to weigh each volunteer's trash
- Leveraged District resources with sponsorship support from 10 additional businesses, including 1-800-Got Junk, Accenture, KIND and Wenck Associates
- Added third location in Minnetonka for St. David's Center for Children and Families and St. David's Episcopal Church
- Added Freshwater Society as a non-profit partner
- The District will produce a video of the event in 2015

Cottageville Park Open House

- Will work with the City of Hopkins on an open house event marking the completion of the Cottageville Park expansion project
- Will coordinate with the District's Education Program on interpretive signage at the site

Watershed Heroes

- Moved date to first Thursday in October to avoid conflict with MEA weekend
- Chose nominees from a broad range of individuals and organizations across the District from Minneapolis to Laketown Township

Crisis Communications Plan and Social Media Policy

Will update the District's Crisis Communications Plan which will account for a number of scenarios. Also plans to develop a social media policy which will guide the management of the District's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube accounts.

Interactive Map

- Will complete the development of an interactive map that's embedded in the District's website
- The map will incorporate more user-friendly features and a look that's consistent with the rest of the website

Realtor workshop

- Will complete the development of a realtor workshop on watershed districts that will be offered as a continuing education course by the Minneapolis Area Association of Realtors in the spring of 2016
- Is working with the education, planning and permitting programs to design the workshop
- Input from focus groups involving representatives of the real estate, development and landscape design industries, among others, will be considered

Ongoing focus

Website

- Works on a daily basis to ensure content is updated and fresh
- Continually strives to improve functionality to ensure a satisfactory user experience

Messaging

- Works with all District programs to tell the District's story through news releases, newspaper columns, the Splash e-newsletter, social media accounts and city/neighborhood/lake association newsletters
- Purchases advertising in outlets that connect with target audiences
- Creates and distributes Year in Review and Mid-Year Highlights reports

Program Support

- Creates fact sheets, postcards, posters and other materials as needed
- Provides proofreading and writing assistance
- Assists in the development of special program activities including signage, social marketing activities and incentive programs

Cost Share Program

Activity/Progress to Date

- In February of 2015, the MCWD Board of Managers accepted a new program structure and set of evaluation criteria for staff to use in the review and recommend funding of projects
- Cost Share Staff has addressed 75 or more inquiries about the Cost Share Program
- Staff has done 35 onsite consultations with interested participants
- Staff has conducted closeout inspections of previously funded projects, and reimbursed property owners for a 2015 amount of \$24,830.
- Staff has brought 5 projects to the Board of Managers for approval, 5 of which have been approved for funding
- Staff has presented 14 projects to the Citizens Advisory Committee and the committee has recommended cost share funding for 13 of the 14 projects
- 6 of the 14 projects are within the Community Engagement Grant category, which include multiple BMP's and an outreach plan to educate the community on clean water.
- Staff attended multiple raingarden workshops and living green expos promoting the District and the Cost Share Program, where many people were introduced to District resource opportunities
- A MN GreenCorps member has served with MCWD and helped the cost share program to develop an interactive map and conduct site inspections on cost share funded BMP's throughout the district.

Upcoming activities for balance of 2015

- Staff anticipates to bring several more homeowner, Master Water Steward, and Community Engagement projects forward for funding approval this year
- The District's MN GreenCorps Member intends to follow-up with maintenance needs on all past approved projects.
- Staff is working with the Master Water Stewards program to fund construction of approximately 18-20 of their capstone stormwater management projects by the end of fall 2015.
- As a result of high water levels last year, staff has been engaged with cities and residents on more shoreline/streambank/ravine stabilization projects than any prior year of the cost share program.
- MN GreenCorps member is developing an interactive map for the public showing all cost share funded BMP's and their associated pollution reductions.

Ongoing focus

- Cost Share Program will be focusing on keeping funds available Districtwide, but will also emphasize outreach and incentives in priority subwatersheds that the rest of the District will be focusing on. It is important to focus education, incentivize private property owner participation in stormwater management and create behavior change within communities where the District is focusing water quality initiatives.

- With the new grant criteria, there is an emphasis on reporting community outreach. The Districts goal is to collect and analyze this data to quantify the impact of outreach within the community.

Education Program

1. Districtwide Signage Standards:

Year to date: Completed work with Barr Engineering and MCWD staff to develop a package of design elements and templates to further MCWD's educational goals through consistent messaging, fresh design and brand reinforcement.

Remainder of 2015: Use the District signage inventory included in the Master Plan as a foundation for initiating sign replacements and improvements.

2016: Continue to implement new signage across the District according to recommended replacement schedule in the Master Plan.

2. Minnehaha Preserve (Reach 20) Interpretive Signage & Educational Programming in the Urban Corridor:

Year to date: Completed the development of eight interpretative signs for the Minnehaha Preserve. The signs will be the anchor for the education area on site. In addition the interpretative signs several welcome and wayfinding signs are being developed.

Continued to cultivate and stewarded relationships with new and current partners (University of Minnesota, Master Water Stewards, Meadowbrook Collaborative, Friends of Minnehaha Creek, area neighborhoods and local naturalists) to support educational programming efforts.

Remainder of 2015: Work with MCWD staff and sign designer to develop directional and additional interpretive signs at the restoration site as well as Cottageville Park and the Japs Olson property.

Continue to offer experiential learning opportunities for Meadowbrook Collaborative in addition to neighborhoods and environmental organizations. Assist with July ribbon cutting event that officially recognize the completion of the project.

2016: Strategize and implement additional educational programming opportunities around the Minnehaha Creek Greenway. Develop signage at additional projects in the greenway as they are developed.

3. Minnehaha Creek Signage and Canoe Landing Improvements:

Year to date: Completed worked with Barr Engineering and MCWD staff to develop cohesive way-finding signage and canoe landing standards to improve the recreational use experience on Minnehaha Creek. This project was spurred by a recommendation from the Friends of Minnehaha Creek which identified a need for consistent way-finding signage along the 22-mile length of creek to improve access and increase safety.

Remainder of 2015: Meet with City partners and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to discuss landing improvement opportunities and signage opportunities along the creek and begin implementation

4. Minnehaha Creek Clean-Up Educational Offerings:

Year to date: What a natural opportunity for goal alignment with some of our partner organizations! Education staff has been working on expanding the education area at the 2015 Minnehaha Creek Clean Up event. Invitees include: Hennepin County Environmental Services Master Recyclers-Composters Program, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Master Gardeners, Master Water Stewards, Master Naturalists, MetroBlooms, and Great River Greening.

Remainder of 2015: The Creek Clean-Up is scheduled for July 26, 2015.

5. MS4 Permit Education Requirements:

Year to date: Continue to support watershed-wide education and outreach activities that support the MS4 requirements.

Remainder of 2015: Assist west-metro NEMO team will planning for upcoming education programs including: July – Workshop on the Water, September – Green Infrastructure for Clean Water and Clean Water Summit, and October – Chloride and Winter Road Management.

6. Master Water Stewards Program:

Year to date: A third cohort of approximately 35 MWS candidates are working on coursework and are currently designing and implementing run-off prevention capstone projects coupled with outreach campaigns to increase awareness and encourage friends and neighbors to take action to protect clean water. Coordinated watershed tour for the current class of stewards in addition to supporting several of the classroom sessions.

The program, which is in its third year will have over 80 Master Water Stewards in the watershed. Plans are underway for the fourth year of the program. The Master Water Stewards will be expanding to other watersheds throughout the Twin Cities metro area and statewide.

Remainder of 2015: Stewards will install up to 15 stormwater best management practices in the ground with cost share funding from MCWD and will launch innovative behavior change campaigns. The stewards will also be playing an active role in the 2015 Minnehaha Creek Clean-up event.

2016: Support the implementation of the fourth year of the pilot program, with a strong emphasis on nurturing the pool of 80+ certified Stewards as “ambassadors” for the District. Also, MCWD and the Freshwater Society will continue strategizing with other interested organizations to expand the program to other watersheds and develop an online coursework component for organizations with limited staff/resources to administer the program.

7. Watershed Association Initiative:

Year to date: Partner with Freshwater Society consultant on providing support to lake and river organizations in the watershed. Assisting Bass Lake and Friends of Minnehaha Creek organizations by providing a WAI mini grant for organizational and development activities.

Remainder of 2015: Host fall Lakes and Rivers Summit in the watershed to focus on current topics for lakes and river organizations.

8. Cynthia Krieg Watershed Stewardship Grants:

Year to date: Ten projects are currently underway. Assisted applicants with initiating projects during the current year. Following up with past grant recipients to ensure final reports and other supporting materials are provided to the watershed district. A few projects that were wrapped up this spring include: creation of two watershed videos that highlight rain gardens and the Minnehaha Creek watershed, Lake Minnetonka Shoreline Gardening guide, and development of an outdoor learning center for youth in Minnetonka.

Remainder of 2015: Update materials and website, promote 2015 grant cycle, open pre-application round in mid-September. Follow up with 2014 recipients concerning wrap-up and evaluation of projects.

9. WET: Weather Extreme Trends - NOAA Stormwater Adaptation Study:

Year to date: Worked with MCWD staff along with consultant and Minnesota Landscape Arboretum to complete and an Executive Summary for broader public distribution. With funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), MCWD staff teamed up with climate researchers from Syntectic International, Antioch University and the University of Minnesota to determine the adequacy of existing stormwater infrastructure under current and future land-use scenarios in the Cities of Minneapolis and Victoria.

Remainder of 2015: Support outreach efforts by Communications staff. Partnering with Climate Generation (formerly Will Steager Foundation) on fall Climate Generation Workshop in Minnetonka. Executive summary also will be shared with area communities.

10. MCWD Landscape Demonstration Design

Year to date: Collaborated with MCWD staff to discuss opportunities for signage and photos inside the building educating visitors about the benefits of the stormwater management and showcasing the watershed district.

Remainder of 2015: Continue to explore the development of signage, photos and displays throughout the building.

11. Workshops and Trainings:

Year to date: Collaborated with various partners to plan and implement a number of trainings for different audiences, including:

- Shallow Lakes Forum – The Role of Plants at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

12. Targeted Community Engagement Programs:

Year to date: Youth programs involved working with schools in south Minneapolis and the Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures Program through Wilderness Inquiry. Participated in community events and programs that highlighted the projects and programs of the watershed district including: Cargill Earth Day, Eco Fun Fest (Minnetonka), Organic Living Workshop (St. Louis Park) and neighborhood events.

Partnered with Communication Department to sponsor the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum – Nature Connects LEGO exhibit. The partnership involves working with the Arboretum throughout the summer during the LEGO community building events.

Remainder of 2015:

-Collaborate with Minnetonka Center for the Arts and the Art in the Garden exhibit. Present on rain gardens and stormwater management and arrange for presentation on shoreline gardening.

-Assist with development of Realtor/Developer training to be implemented in 2016.

Permitting Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Executive Summary:

Through 2015, the Permitting Department has made efforts to organize the program around efficient administration of permits, field compliance, and achieving a greater degree of natural resource outcomes through partnerships, rather than sole reliance on regulation alone. These efforts and initiatives refocus the department and the permitting approach, and will be carried into the future, framing Permitting as an extension of the Planning Department. This focus has led to various partnerships and understanding with municipal authorities, developers, and applicants to coordinate permitting and bridge the land-use water governance gap.

Permit Applications

- Thus far, the District has received 385 permit application in 2015.
- Overall building and development trends have continued to increase over the last three years (table 1). Staff continues to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of permit administration, while focusing on outstanding customer service.

Year	# of Permits
2012	476
2013	532
2014	626
2015 (Year to Date)	385

Table 1

Wetland Conservation Act

- The District continues to administer the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) for 19 of 30 cities. The District has processed 164 WCA application in the past three years, which accounts for approximately 20% of the WCA applications within the five county area.
- The District is currently exploring delegation agreements with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to streamline the permitting process, improve inter-agency efficiency and encourage public private partnerships that achieve greater degrees of natural resource improvement than through regulation alone

Inspections

- District staff is actively inspecting project sites and bring non-conforming sites into compliance.
- Staff is has developed preliminary partnerships with large development companies to enhance compliance monitoring and initiatives to achieve a greater natural resource benefit.

- Staff has actively engaged Mattamy Homes, a large developer with several active project sites throughout the District, in discussions regarding improvements to the compliance process, and conducting self-inspections.

City Coordination

- District staff has been working closely with cities to help assist with the permitting process, coordinate inspections, and collaboratively address compliance issues.
- Edina, Orono, and Victoria have been the areas of focus in 2015. The District has developed prosperous relationships with City staff in efforts to address continuing development and redevelopment pressures and associated compliance issues.
- District staff has coordinated closely with the City of Victoria, and adopted a Memorandum of Understanding, memorializing the two agencies intention of collaboratively addressing water resource and compliance issues.

Rule & Policy Revisions

- Staff, working in conjunction with our legal department, have developed policies that have been adopted to bring the District into compliance with MS4 rule revisions.

Mader Bank

- Staff. Working with the Mader family and the City of Minnetrista, have developed a 42 acre wetland bank that integrated land-use planning with natural resource protection and wetland restoration.
 - The wetland bank would be the first of its kind within the MCWD, reversing a trend that for many years led to a net loss of wetlands within the District.
 - The project continues to serve as an example of the new partnership based focus of the Permitting Department.

MCES 1-344 Tunnel Interceptor Improvements

- Staff continues to work in close coordination with Metropolitan Council Environmental Services and associated consultants to develop a project that will protect Camp Coldwater Spring and rehabilitate a deteriorating sanitary sewer line.

Ongoing focus

Echoing the refocused initiatives of the Permitting program, the department will continue to focus on bridging the gap between land-use and water governance, efficient administration of permits, field compliance, and achievement of natural resource protection through partnership. Moving forward, staff will focus on developing a robust understanding of focal geographies and project initiatives,

regulatory rules of other agencies, and project management to efficiently and effectively identify projects presenting opportunities for partnership and greater natural resource benefits.

Permits

- Continue efficiently and effectively administering District rules and processing permits.
- Provide proactive guidance to applicants, streamlining the permitting process.
- Develop a robust understanding of focal geographies and project initiatives to flag incoming permits within targeted areas for potential partnership.
 - Continue coordinating closely with the Planning, Education, and Communication Departments to capitalize on opportunities presented through the administration of District rules and the permitting process.
 - Continued exploration of opportunities for wetland mitigation throughout priority management areas.
- Refine and revise permit application materials on the District website for improved accessibility and efficiency.

Collaborative & Partnership Driven Permitting Approach

- Develop partnerships with builders operating in large-scale development projects within the District to achieve a greater degree of compliance.
- Develop cooperative agreements with other regulatory agencies to allow the District to assist applicants in moving through permitting processes involving multiple agencies.
 - Create, develop, and foster relationships with applicants to achieve greater natural resource benefits that would otherwise be required by strict adherence to District rules.
 - The District has actively engaged the USACE and MDNR in conceptual discussions, exploring the possibility of operating under a general permit, thereby facilitating a streamlined permitting process for applicants.

Southwest Light-Trail

- Continue working with SWLRT project managers to explore opportunities for stormwater management at proposed station locations throughout the project.
- Staff and the SWLRT Project Office are continuing to work in partnership to develop a wetland mitigation strategy that will retain wetland resources within the District.

Rule Revisions

- Continue to refine and revise rules as issues surface with current rule language.

Database & Interactive Map

- Link the database and interactive map to create a functional layer that provides detailed permitting and inspection information to staff District wide.

Planning & Projects Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Comprehensive Plan Update

- Initiated public outreach for the Comprehensive Plan update with three kickoff meetings. The meetings were well attended and positive feedback was received on the proposed scope, two-track approach, and public process.
- Conducted self assessment with staff and Board of Managers to reflect on the District's performance and progress over the last plan cycle to inform development of the next Plan.
- Established Policy and Technical advisory committees, comprised of staff and policymakers from municipalities, counties, and local and state agencies, to advise the District throughout the Plan development process.
- Facilitated policy discussions with the Planning and Policy Committee to obtain policy direction on the implementation framework, two-track approach, and financing principles.

Minnehaha Creek Greenway

- Blake Road Corridor Study –
 - Staff is directly involved in the Blake Road Corridor study as a representative of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), assisting the City of Hopkins and Hennepin County in the concept development for a new Blake Road.
- SW LRT –
 - Ongoing participation in station area planning, trail connections, stormwater management, wetland impacts, groundwater interaction, waterbody crossings and continued evaluation of partnership opportunities throughout the proposed transportation corridor.
- Blake Station Area Planning –
 - Collaborating with the City of Hopkins and Hennepin County to advance transit-oriented development at the Blake Road station area and adjacent publicly owned properties. Also remaining involved in other initiatives such as the LISC Corridor Development Initiative exercise and the future Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Panel process.
- Minnehaha Creek Greenway Preserve (Reach 20 Restoration) –
 - Construction of the trail system at the Reach 20 Restoration was abruptly interrupted in early June, 2014, due to extensive rains and early summer flooding. Stream conditions remained high throughout 2014, inundating the majority of the site and allowing for only minor boardwalk work to be completed. Construction efforts were reinitiated in 2015 to complete construction activities for the remaining 4,600 feet of bituminous trail. Final trail and boardwalk elements will be finalized in June, 2015, with a ribbon cutting ceremony scheduled for July, 2015.
 - Completion of the project, when combined with downstream Methodist Hospital efforts, will:

- Create access to over 39 acres of greenspace through 1.5 miles of trail along 1 mile of restored Minnehaha Creek;
 - Manage over 85 acres of regional stormwater
 - Bring over 600 housing units within walking distance of LRT
 - Provide recreation and environmental education opportunities;
 - Connect parks, housing, transit and employment
- Powell Rd-Meadowbrook Rd –
 - Building on the Letter of Understanding with Japs Olson Company, the District has been working with the private business and the City of St. Louis Park on design development concepts that meet the goals laid out in a multifaceted approach. The partnership is building on an opportunity for area wide stormwater management to catalyze private business expansion, create 150 new jobs, reclaim 3 acres of riparian greenspace, while expanding and connecting the Minnehaha Creek Greenway to the SW LRT Cedar Regional Trail.
- 325 Blake Rd –
 - Initiated construction of the Powell Road pipe diversion project (Phase I of the 325 Blake Road Stormwater Initiative) and continued collaborative design efforts with Metropolitan Council Environmental Services to design and construct the Lake Street pipe diversion. Phase I (Powell Road) has received final approval and has an executed grant agreement with Public Facilities Authority, the first installment of over \$1.4-million in grant funds.
 - Continued efforts to complete demolition planning for the site, including establishing a work plan for contaminant remediation and identifying environmental cleanup funding sources through our ongoing partnership with Hennepin County Environmental Services.
 - Executed an agreement with the City of Hopkins and Hennepin County and initiated the process to advance transit-oriented development planning in a collaborative effort for the Blake Station Area.
- Knollwood Mall cooperative agreement
 - Began working with the new mall owners, Heitman, to advance efforts under the cooperative agreement framework that leverages \$1.6 Million in private capital to explore opportunities for over 150 acres of regional stormwater management, flood mitigation and expansion of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway.
- Cottageville Park
 - Construction of Phase 1 on the north side of Minnehaha Creek including a newly accessible creek frontage, greenspace and community garden will be complete in September 2015.
- Meadowbrook Golf Course
 - In 2014, MPRB properties, including Meadowbrook Golf Course, experienced significant damage due to the record flood flows and prolonged inundation. Catalyzed by past analyses of golf operations and the 2014 flood damages, the MPRB identified the need to conduct conceptual master planning for Meadowbrook Golf Course to explore a potential range of golf and non-golf uses, their respective revenue generation models and flood resilience. In March 2015 the District and MPRB executed a cooperative

agreement to establish a framework for collaborative planning around Meadowbrook District and MPRB staff have been working closely in exploration and development of conceptual alternatives for a range of golf and non-golf uses for the Meadowbrook site. These alternatives continue to be evaluated for relative flood resilience, golf operations, ecological improvement and connectivity.

- Hiawatha Golf Course
 - In 2014, MPRB properties, including Hiawatha Golf Course, experienced significant damage due to the record flood flows and prolonged inundation. Catalyzed by past analyses of golf operations and the 2014 flood damages, the MPRB identified the need to conduct conceptual master planning for Hiawatha Golf Course to explore a potential range of golf and non-golf uses, their respective revenue generation models and flood resilience. In June 2015 the District, City of Minneapolis and MPRB executed a cooperative agreement to establish a framework for collaborative planning around Hiawatha. The three entities are in the beginning phase of exploring alternatives to improve Hiawatha from a flood resilience standpoint as well as golf operations and ecological integrity.

Six Mile Creek Planning

- Mud Lake Assessment
 - Received \$39,960 Clean Water Fund grant to conduct an assessment of the drainage area to the northwest of Mud Lake to identify solutions to address nutrient loading, erosion, and flooding. Initiated assessment work.
- Zumbra Study
- Pierson/SMC-1
- Victoria MOU
- Wasserman wetland restoration

Painter Creek

- Johnson MOU

Long Lake Creek Corridor –

- Completed construction of the Long Lake Creek Phase II project to remediate the site of the former Long Lake Wastewater Treatment Pond, restoring a meandering stream and mixed type wetland; improving water quality, habitat and flood storage. The project was completed in partnership with the City of Long Lake and the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services.

Highway 101 Causeway

- Project was ordered in March to carry out the interagency partnership with Hennepin County to implement vegetated shoreline in conjunction with the major reconstruction of CSAH 101.
- Obtained letters of support from the City of Minnetrista and residents near the Minnetrista floodplain/wetland creation site; and a resolution of support from the City of Wayzata.

Arden Park/West 54th St.

- Worked with City of Edina to incorporate stormwater BMPs into Arden Park neighborhood road reconstruction with funding assistance through the District's Cost Share program.
- Following discovery of the loss of the standing wave at West 54th St., abandoned plans for fish bypass channel in favor of pursuing removal of the 54th St. grade control structure and restoration of Reach 15 of Minnehaha Creek.
- Obtained letters of support from the City of Edina and Rapids Riders paddling group for the larger-scale stream restoration effort.

Upcoming activities for balance of 2015

Comprehensive Plan Update

- Conduct meetings with the Policy, Technical, and Citizen advisory committees to obtain input on the proposed implementation framework, two-track approach, role of LGUs, regulatory framework, and other topics.
- Facilitate discussions with the Planning and Policy Committee on mission, vision, and goals; role of LGUs; subwatershed plans; and other topics.

Minnehaha Creek Greenway Planning

- 325 Blake Road – Finalize demolition planning, continue efforts related to redevelopment planning and transit oriented development, continue stormwater design efforts with Met Council, and explore opportunities to mitigate environmental remediation through County and State grant funding opportunities.
- Meadowbrook Golf Course – Complete conceptual master planning efforts and determine District and MPRB partnership framework and involvement as the project moves into design development and construction planning.
- Hiawatha Golf Course – Complete conceptual master planning efforts and determine District and MPRB partnership framework and involvement as the project moves into design development and construction planning.
- Powell Rd-Meadowbrook Rd – Continue advancing partnership opportunities with Japs Olson to catalyze redevelopment opportunity to address area wide stormwater management, wetland restoration and connectivity.
- Knollwood Mall cooperative agreement – Advance efforts with Heitman to finalize feasibility of regional stormwater management, flood mitigation and expansion of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway in the area of Knollwood Mall.
- Cottageville Park – Complete construction activities and open the new Cottageville Park to the community.
- Reach 20 Trails – Complete construction activities for the trail system surrounding the restored creek and greenway and open the project to the community through a celebratory ribbon cutting event.

Six Mile Creek Planning

- Initiate subwatershed implementation planning process

- Mud Lake Assessment
 - Continue assessment work to identify solutions to address nutrient loading, erosion, and flooding for the drainage area to the northwest of Mud Lake.
- Zumbra Study
- Pierson/SMC-1
- Victoria MOU
- Wasserman wetland restoration

Long Lake Wastewater Treatment Pond

- The majority of project planting efforts will be completed mid-Summer. Invasive species management will continue in the fall, including removal of buckthorn from neighboring properties. The District is also monitoring vegetation establishment and water levels to determine if the opportunity exists to establish a native stand of wild rice. If conditions appear favorable, this planting will occur in the fall of 2015.

Arden Park/West 54th St.

- Develop concept plan for removal of the grade control structure and restoration of Reach 15 of Minnehaha Creek.
- Hold neighborhood meetings to obtain input on concept plan.

Taft-Legion Lake Improvements

- Coordinate with the City of Richfield to oversee construction of the final phase of Taft-Legion Lake Improvement Project.

Database

- Coordinate with other departments to develop a comprehensive scope for a District database that will organize District project, permit, and water quality data so that it is integrated and easily accessible; track metrics and progress toward District goals; and allow for more efficient and informed decision making.

Ongoing focus

Comprehensive Plan Update

- Continue to develop the update to the Comprehensive Plan which is due for adoption in June 2017.
- Hold local subwatershed meetings to obtain input on local priorities and plans.
- Plan drafting and review.

Minnehaha Creek Greenway Planning

- 325 Blake Rd –
 - Complete construction of Powell Road pipe diversion in 2015 and the Lake Street diversion in 2016. Continue pre-development planning for 325 Blake Rd site.
- Powell-Meadowbrook – Coordinate design and construction efforts for potential stormwater and natural resource improvements with the redevelopment efforts of Japs Olson
- Meadowbrook Golf Course – Continue partnership efforts related to final design and construction for a restored and improved golf course.
- Hiawatha Golf Course – Continue partnership efforts related to final design and construction for a restored and improved golf course.
- Knollwood Mall – Continue partnership efforts with Heitman and St. Louis Park to design and implement a regional stormwater solution
- Long Lake Creek Corridor – Continue efforts to deliver land rights for construction of the Long Lake Creek Restoration Phase I projects.

Six Mile Creek Planning

- Finalize the implementation framework for the subwatershed in coordination with communities and other local partners and begin project development and implementation based on the established framework.

Arden Park/West 54th St.

- Order project with revised scope
- Pursue grant funding
- Design and construct stream restoration in coordination with City of Edina

Highway 101 Causeway

- Pursue grant funding
- Design and construct vegetation shoreline in coordination with Hennepin County and the City of Wayzata
- Design and construct floodplain/wetland creation in coordination with the City of Minnetrista

Database

- Develop a District database that will organize District project, permit, and water quality data in an easily accessible and useable format

Project Maintenance & Land Management Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Coordination

- Managed the application for federal flood repair funding and the extensive follow-up involved in documenting damage and associated repairs.
- To date FEMA has approved funding to remove debris and perform flood damage repairs at 75 sites, totaling nearly \$400,000 in FEMA funding.

2014 Flood Report

- Assembled and managed an interdepartmental team to aggregate and synthesize data gathered throughout the flooding event to assess impacts across the watershed. The flood report will document the flooding event, discuss the effects of high water across the District, discuss the organizational impact across District departments, summarize agency coordination, and will be used to inform a Response Plan which will define the District's role during future flooding events.
- Presented 2014 Flood Report draft and received direction on refining and expanding the report.

USGS Partnership-Lake Minnetonka level gauge

- Extended existing relationship with USGS to install a permanent lake level gauge above the Gray's Bay Dam on Lake Minnetonka.
- Provides the public with real time water level data on Lake Minnetonka.

Conservation Easements

- Executed two Memorandums of Understanding (Stonegate & Rechelbacher) for the future conveyance of two conservation easements totally more than 130 acres and provided technical assistance to the landowners to restore and conserve the land.

Great River Greening MOU

- Executed a Memorandum of Understanding with Great River Greening to partner on:
 - Minnehaha Creek Urban Corridor: community capacity collaboration, restoration planning
 - Six-Mile Creek Corridor: building community capacity, developing sources for external funding
 - Land Restoration: financing and implementing natural resource management plans on District lands
 - Streambank Stabilization: responding to flood-related streambank destabilization
 - Partnerships: work together to build broader partnerships towards achieving water resource goals
- Applied for \$249,000 in grant funding through the Outdoor Heritage Fund for land restoration work on District properties.

Project Maintenance Oversight

- The Project Maintenance and Land Management program oversees the long-term maintenance of past District capital projects, infrastructure and land.
- Completed spring inspections of over 60 capital projects and district lands. Followed-up on sites requiring maintenance or repair due to 2014 flooding.
- Coordinated sediment surveys on 10 of the District's 28 stormwater facilities and began coordination for required maintenance on 3 of those ponds.
- Managed the vegetation maintenance and overall function of 17 past capital project sites and 25 current capital project sites.

Capital Projects in Active Construction

- Provided construction oversight guidance for planting plans and oversaw vegetation installation and management for Reach 20, Long Lake Creek Wastewater Treatment Pond Restoration, and Cottageville Park.

Upcoming activities for balance of 2015

FEMA Repairs

- Coordinate with FEMA to determine repair eligibility for an additional 51 sites across the District, totaling over \$818,445 in FEMA funding.

Operations & Maintenance Update

- Initiated the update and revision of the Operations and Maintenance Manual to reflect the current project suite and new approaches to the maintenance of projects and overall land management.

Capital Reinvestment Plan

- Develop a Capital Reinvestment Plan for District projects, facilities, and lands which will lay out a schedule for repairs and maintenance which will help plan and track the cycle of reinvestment into District projects and facilities.

Land Management Plans

- Continue drafting management plans for District lands which will consider focal geographies, goals, access, land use, development pressures, water quality improvement opportunities, District projects, and trails. Project Maintenance & Land Management Staff will synthesize this information into recommendations and communicate the intent for each focused geography.

Flood Report/ Emergency Response Plan

- Finalize the 2014 Flood Report to incorporate additional data and information.
- Through the completion of the 2014 Flood Report, create an emergency response plan to guide action in the event of future flooding.
- Expand coordination with Hennepin County Emergency Management Services (HCEM) and the National Weather Service to fully utilize external resources and inform emergency response.
- Participate as part of the planning team with HCEM in updating their Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan.

Stormwater Facility Program

- Explore the creation of a District-wide stormwater facility maintenance program to monitor and maintain public and private stormwater ponds and provide technical assistance in specific maintenance.
- Develop a framework for a program that aims to identify, prioritize, and maintain public and private “legacy” stormwater infrastructure throughout the District.

Ongoing focus

Vegetation Management

- Pursue innovative approaches to vegetation management.
- Incorporate new advancements such as rotational grazing and haying to reduce herbicide use.

Capital Reinvestment Plan

- Utilize Capital Reinvestment Plan to perform maintenance on District lands and infrastructure.
- Use information gained through process to estimate long-term O&M for various elements of future District capital projects.

District Signage and Canoe Landing Improvements

- Coordinate with the District’s Education Department to implement signage and canoe landing improvements and retrofits.

Implement Stormwater Facility Maintenance Program

- Begin surveying “legacy” stormwater facilities that the District does not have maintenance obligation over. Develop positive relationships with landowners/HOA/cities to develop declaration/ covenants to ultimately perform maintenance.

Support Services Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Activity 1 : Human Resources

- Since the first of the year, supports services has orchestrated hiring and assisted in onboarding for 12 positions
- Assisted Springsted in orchestrating the final stages of the Administrator interviews and mapping out the onboarding process as well as identifying key contacts and facilitating introductions.
- Worked with Springsted Inc. to update the District's employee handbook to update the 2004 document with local/state/federal regulation compliance and to fit the Organizational culture. Worked with Legal to verify no overlapping of policies in other documents. Will be presented to the Board with recommendation for approval at the June 18, 2015 Board meeting and subsequently dispersed to staff and implemented.
- Benefit renewals complete

Activity 2 : Finances

- Added an electronic credit card system to allow the District to accept credit cards as payment.
- Completed a financial operations assessment with the assistance of an outside finance manager and implemented changes to promote greater transparency and to align with best management practices.
- Restructured and implemented the chart of accounts creating better understanding for staff and simplifying the AP process
- Created clear definition of the District's deposit practices and staff roles, ensured proper insurance to protect the District.
- The District performed the 2014 Audit with Redpath and received a clean audit report.

Activity 3: Building, Operations and IT

- Completed the Safety manual with assistance of Safe Assure.
- Successfully completed processing into Laserfiche the following documents:
 - 2012 – June 2015 Board Packets
 - 2010 -2013 Accounts Payable Documents
 - 1992 – 2014 Annual Financial Reports
 - 2009 – 2014 General Account Check Registers
 - 2010 – 2015 Request for Leave Documents
- Installed wall mounted touch screen panel and volume adjustment for back row speakers in Board Room
- Insurance renewals complete
- Purchased outdoor patio furniture and bike rack for building

Upcoming activities for balance of 2015

Activity 1 : Finances

- Working with all departments to further streamline the budgeting process for the District. Including mapping out the timeline and expectations to ensure understanding
- Creating all presentation materials in relation to the budget and levy.
- Centralizing organizational budget items into one fund for simplicity and easy tracking.

Activity 2 : Building/Operations and IT

- The District is required to send out RFP's for consultants we work with. Staff have been collaborating with legal to determine the correct process, define timelines, determine criteria identifying services that are susceptible and create scopes to be included in the RFP ensuring compliance with regulations.
- As an ongoing effort to better the efficiency and practices of the District, support services will also be auditing the IT infrastructure, checking for holes, areas of improvement and ease of use among other variables. Upon completion of the IT audit, support services will collaborate with staff and consultants to address any inadequacies that may be pinpointed as quickly and effectively as possible. Findings will be addressed in the requirements for the MSP RFP
- Databases: assisting in facilitating discussions on an organization-wide database, assessing specific department needs against current electronic resources in comparison to offerings databases provide. Nearly completed the foundation of the contact database project with implementation for testing to be introduced to key staff to demo and assess before organizational roll-out

Activity 3: Human Resources

- Continuing to onboard and assist in training of new hires, New Planner starts next week
- Starting the interviewing process with Permitting Lead position
- Assessing budgeting considerations for all personnel
- Switching providers for LTD, STD and Life for Staff, Q&A training will be provided
- EAP was added

Ongoing focus

Activity 1: Human Resources

- Launching of the Employee Review process will begin this fall
- Benefit Q&A training session to be scheduled
- Onboarding Permitting Lead upon approval of Administrator in hiring

Activity 2: Finances

- 2015 Audit Prep
- Recoding invoices to reflect changes made in new chart of accounts

Activity 3: Building/Operations and IT

- Security cameras for outside of building purchased and installed
- All mandatory staff safety trainings for the remainder of the year have been scheduled.
- Working with audio/video vendor to troubleshoot issues that have been consistent, working on a proposal to perhaps replace existing equipment with a better system

Research and Monitoring: Water Quality Program

Activity/Progress to Date

Ecosystem Evaluation Program (E-Grade)

- Development of the metrics
- District staff and consultant have met with a Technical Advisory Committee for comments and support on the developing metrics
- Collecting data to complete data gaps in the three test subwatersheds – Minnehaha Creek, Schutz and Six Mile Marsh

Baseline Monitoring

- Lake water quality and lake level monitoring
- Stream water quality, discharge and water level monitoring
- Precipitation Monitoring
- Volunteer Lake and Precipitation Monitoring

Projects/Reports

- Released the 2014 Water Quality and Technical Reports on the District's website
- Released the 1st Subwatershed Reports in 2014 on the website
- Released the 2014 Lake Water Quality Grades

Upcoming Activities for the Balance of 2015

E-Grade Program

- Continued development of the metrics
- Testing the scoring break points with known and newly collected data

Continued Collection of Baseline Monitoring Data

- Data submittal to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in November
- Analyze the data for means, trends, loads and water quality grades

Partner Coordination

- Working with MPRB to investigate the carp population in the Lake Nokomis system
- Working with MWMO on providing joint watershed grants to fund watershed related research
- Working with USGS to provide real-time water level readings of Lake Minnetonka and real-time flow and stormwater monitoring on Minnehaha Creek

Ongoing Focus

Monitoring Coordination

- Collaborating with TRPD, Met Council's CAMP, and MPRB to collect lake nutrient data

Transitioning the Department's Reporting and Messaging

- Highlighting the connection among the waterbodies and the adjacent landscape
- Analyzing data to better identify stressors in the watershed

Data Management

- Enhance our ability to store, analyze, and share data