



MEMORANDUM

To: MCWD Board of Managers

From: Anna Brown

Date: February 20, 2018

Re: Six Mile Creek-Halted Bay Habitat Restoration project update

Purpose:

At the February 22 Planning and Policy Committee, staff will provide an update on the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay (SMCHB) Habitat Restoration project work plan. The discussion will focus on the work being done in anticipation of the legislative approval of the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council's funding recommendation.

Background:

In 2014, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District adopted the SMCHB subwatershed as a priority focal geography due to its abundant natural resources, growth and development pressure, and connection to Halsted Bay. Following its adopting, the Board of Managers approved a two-fold analysis to understand the primary system drivers of declining water quality within this geography:

- The SMCHB Diagnostic Study, which analyzed nutrient dynamics across the subwatershed
- The SMCHB Carp Assessment, which, in partnership with the University of Minnesota, identified the population, reproduction dynamics, and age structure of common carp system-wide

The SMCHB Carp Assessment illuminated the primary role that common carp play in driving declining water quality within this priority geography. As such, the management of common carp is a principal strategy outlined in the SMCHB Subwatershed Plan, approved by the Board of Water and Soil Resources in December of 2017.

Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund

In May of 2017, the Board of Managers authorized staff to prepare an application to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for a system-wide carp management and habitat restoration program. The funding would be used to restore 2,488 acres of deep and shallow lake habitat

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across 14 deep and shallow lakes through the strategic use of barriers, winter aeration, and adult carp removal. Subsequent phases of the SMCHB Habitat Restoration would target the restoration of wetland and contiguous uplands to enhance and connect natural resource corridors.

In September of 2017, the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council recommended the SMCHB Habitat Restoration project for \$567,000 to the Minnesota Legislature. The Legislature will consider the funding bill in its upcoming session and, if adopted, funding will be available effective July 1, 2018.

SMCHB Habitat Restoration Program Work Plan Update

In order to most effectively position the District for successful implementation of the Lessard Sams funding, staff has commenced work that will facilitate an efficient start once the funds become available.

At the February 22 Planning and Policy Committee, staff will provide an update on both the work being done in anticipation of the July 1 start date, and the three-year work plan once the funding commences. Topics to cover include:

- Carp removal approach and permitting update
- Barrier design and proposed timeline
- Necessary land rights, including utility easements for aeration

If there are questions in advance of the meeting, please contact: Anna Brown at 952-641-4522 or ABrown@MinnehahaCreek.org.

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