



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Agenda Item

Item 5. D. – Report from the Citizen Advisory Committee

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

On July 2, 2024, the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) met virtually because of the Fourth of July holiday. The agenda for the meeting is attached for the Board's Information.

A postcard has been sent to residential addresses in Burnsville and Savage to recruit CAC members. A copy of the postcard is attached for the Board's information.

Attachments

July 2, 2024, CAC recruitment postcard

Recommended Action

Motion to receive and file report



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Agenda

Citizen Advisory Committee

Tuesday, July 2, 2024 | 4:30 p.m.

Virtual via WebEx

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Citizen Input on Non-agenda Items
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the June Agenda
4. CAC Discussion Items
 - a. 2024 Calendar Planning
 - Upcoming Outreach Events (i.e. group volunteering and tabling)
 - i. July 13th at Bloomington Farmers' Market
 - ii. August 11th at Savage Farmers' Market
 - iii. August 13th at Carver Farmers' Market
 - iv. August 7-11th at Carver County Fair
 - v. September 25th (Wednesday)- Metro Children's Water Festival
 - b. CAC Recruitment Updates
 - Survey sent to current CAC members on June 10, 2024. This survey was created to gauge current successes and areas of improvement for the committee in order to establish our recruitment efforts moving forward.
 - i. Discussion:
 1. Why did you join the CAC?
 2. What has been the most meaningful activity you have been involved in while serving on the CAC?
 3. What would you like to see more of?
 4. Is there anything you would like to see less of?
 5. Do you have any suggestions for future meetings?

- Post card has been created
 - i. Dean’s Lake and Savage Fen areas identified to have the most residents and will be prioritized for distribution
 - ii. Carver/Chaska will follow if second round of dispersals is applicable
- Discussion: What does recruitment look like outside of attending events and physical handout materials?
 - i. Offer alternate meeting times to accommodate different working schedules
 - ii. Host a “bring a friend” meeting
 - iii. Create a space for CAC members to publish member features (newsletter, social media posts, etc.)
 - iv. Create an invitation email template for current members to send to possible candidates
 - v. Tack on more promotional marketing (ex: videos, testimonials, etc.)
- c. Finalize Ideas for Fall/Winter Newsletter Newsletter Draft: Discuss and Prioritize
 - Introduce winter/dormant seeding (from late October through mid-November)
 - Provide information on native plants that bloom through the fall (different types of aster and goldenrod, brown-eyed Susan’s)
 - Provide information about keeping storm drains clean from leaf debris
 - Present brief project recaps for the year
 - Promote potential fall season cleanup events
 - Continue to repeat pet waste topic for any season.
 - Share information that’s unique to the Minnesota River – i.e. presentations on Minnesota Department of Natural Resources fisheries or fishing on the river.
 - Show new resource signage (Ike’s Creek)
 - Introduce nature viewing opportunities (fall color viewing opportunities, bird migrations, hiking trails)

5. Communications

- a. Administrator Report
 - Update on Watershed Activities
- b. CAC Report
 - Open Floor for Announcements and Information Sharing

6. Adjournment

Please RSVP to confirm a quorum



Established in 1960, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) is a local, special-purpose unit of government that works to solve and prevent issues related to water. Spanning approximately 80 square miles, LMRWD begins at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers and continues 32 miles upstream to the City of Carver.

What is Stormwater Pollution?

Stormwater is the rainwater that runs off urban landscapes such as streets, roofs, parking lots, sidewalks, and lawns and enters the nearest storm drain and, ultimately, local lakes and rivers. Stormwater contains chemicals, debris, and other pollutants, which are harmful to the environment. Many people do not know that even natural debris (leaves, grass clippings, road salt, and pet waste), can pollute the water. When these natural pollutants break down, they become food for algae, causing it to grow. Preventing stormwater from reaching local waters reduces our footprint and helps maintain healthy habitats for future generations.

How Can I Help Prevent Stormwater Pollution?

Do your part! Follow these simple steps to reduce the threat of urban stormwater contamination on surface waters:

- Replace turf grass or paved areas with native plantings.
- Choose deep-rooting native plants over exotic plants in your own yard.
- Capture rainwater in a rain barrel or other water reuse system.
- Create a rain garden to intercept stormwater (see the following page).
- Sweep up lawn clippings and yard waste (leaves, plant trimmings, etc.).
- Pick up and dispose of trash and debris before it is carried into drains.

Why Choose Native Plants?



While turf grass, such as Kentucky Bluegrass, is the most common landscape cover, it is not native to Minnesota and provides almost no ecosystem benefit compared to native plantings. Native plants are adapted to the local climate and soil conditions where they naturally occur and work well for many landscaping and wildlife habitat plantings. Once established, they seldom need watering, mulching, frost protection, mowing, or chemical fertilizers.

Native plants provide nectar, pollen, and seeds that serve as food for native butterflies, birds, and other animals. They also help stabilize the soil by rooting much deeper into the ground than turf grass, which is especially beneficial along steep slopes and shorelines to prevent erosion.

Keep in mind, lack of mowing and fertilizer application doesn't automatically qualify a lawn as native. In fact, unkept lawns may be a violation of city ordinances, so check in with your city before getting started.



Keeping Storm Drains Clean

Did you know that the storm drains along our city streets lead directly to Minnesota's lakes and rivers? This means that what goes in, must come out! Cleaning storm drains of debris and keeping an eye out for suspicious activity like dumping near storm drains is key to protecting the health of our surface waters.



Want to get involved? Try promoting the Adopt-a-Drain program throughout your community. The Adopt-a-Drain program asks residents to adopt a storm drain in their neighborhood and keep it clear of leaves, trash, and other debris to reduce water pollution.

For additional information, please visit their website at: <https://mn.adopt-a-drain.org/>



LEARN MORE





Create a Rain Garden

In developed areas, rain gardens are a great way to help water soak into the ground rather than running into storm sewers. Rain gardens are depressions filled with native plants, which serve as water filters, collecting polluted stormwater before it reaches our lakes and streams. Stormwater runoff is routed into the rain garden, where it is either used by native plants or allowed to infiltrate into the ground. Find resources below for help on rain garden design, construction, and long-term care.

Benefits of Rain Gardens

- They collect stormwater runoff before it enters the nearest storm drain.
- They act as a natural filter for pollutants before they enter groundwater.
- They promote soil stability and prevent erosion through deep roots.
- They attract wildlife, including pollinating species.
- They require little to no maintenance or watering once established.

Common Rain Garden Plants

- Red osier dogwood
- Purple coneflower
- Ironweed
- Goldenrod
- Blue flag iris
- Joe-Pye weed
- Golden Alexander
- Butterfly milkweed
- Black-eyed Susan
- Native grasses and sedges

Water-tolerant species, or wetland plants, are favorable to have in your rain garden. Check out www.bluethumb.org/native-plant-gardens, or the other listed resources below, to choose the right plants based on soil type, moisture tolerance, sun exposure, natural habitat, color, and bloom time.

Rain Barrels

Rain barrels provide a way to collect rainwater for personal irrigation use while reducing stormwater runoff.

Rain barrels reduce the use of municipal water, leading to lower water bill and less impact on drinking water sources. Many local watershed districts and soil and water conservation districts host annual sales, making rain barrels easier to acquire.

Cost-Share Program

The LMRWD has a cost-share program that provides funds to public or private landowners within LMRWD to carry out projects with an overall goal of protecting water quality. Rain gardens make for great cost-share projects! Visit the [Grants & Cost Sharing](#) page LMRWD's website for more information.

Not in the LMRWD?

Visit www.bwsr.state.mn.us/I2/ to find cost-share resources through Lawns to Legumes!

Resources

- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: [What is a native Plant?](#)
- Carver County Water Management Organization: [Funds available to add native plants to your yard](#)
- City of Shakopee: [Landscaping & Property Maintenance](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency: [Soak Up the Rain: Rain Gardens](#)
- University of Minnesota (U of M) Extension: [Building a rain garden](#)
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: [Minnesota Stormwater Manual: Rain gardens \(bioretention\) 101](#)
- U of M Extension: [Rain barrels in the home landscape](#)
- Blue Thumb: [Create a Rain Garden](#)



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT



UNIQUE RESOURCES IN YOUR BACKYARD

lowermnriver.org



Join our **Citizen Advisory Committee** and make an impact on your local community! You'll be part of a passionate team working to protect, improve, and maintain priceless water and natural resources. **SCAN THE QR CODE TO GET STARTED!**

What are water and natural resources?



Savage Farmers Market, Savage, MN



Savage Fen, Savage, MN



Dean Lake, Shakopee, MN



Eagle Creek, Savage, MN

The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) is a local, special-purpose unit of government that works to solve and prevent issues related to water.

From habitat for native species to commercial navigation on the Minnesota River, the LMRWD manages something special.

Scan the QR code to check in from your home location, find unique resources in your area, and learn where to meet our team this summer.

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District
112 5th Street East, Suite 102
Chaska, MN 55318



Protect. Improve. Maintain.



The Citizen Advisory Committee tours the CHS Plant in 2024. The LMRWD manages a dredge site along the river in Savage, which keeps the river navigable for important commerce.

START
PROTECTING
RESOURCES
TODAY!



This postcard was sent to residents within the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District who are located near a resource of importance. If you know someone who may also benefit from this information, please pass it on.