



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

October 2024 Administrator report

From: Linda Loomis, Administrator

To: LMRWD Board of Managers

In addition to items on the meeting agenda, the following District projects and issues were addressed during the month:

Other Work

LMRWD Website Accessibility

The work revising the LMRWD website to meet accessibility standards is complete. Staff will begin to make sure that content posted to the website meets accessibility standards.

FY 2022 Financial Audit

Work on the 2022 LMRWD financial Audit continues. We hope to have it completed in November and ready for the Board to review in December.

Fen Recharge Report

Young Environmental Consulting Group has been working on preparing recharge reports for the calcareous fens within the LMRWD. Report for [Nicols Meadow Fen](#), [Savage Fen](#) and [Gun Club Fen](#) has been received and will be posted to the LMRWD website.

Extension of Agreement between LMRWD and Rinke Noonan

Before the September Board of Managers meeting, President Barisonzi asked if he had been presented with an agreement to extend the agreement between the LMRWD and Rinke Noonan, as approved by the Board at the August Board meeting. Since this is an extension of the legal services agreement already in place, there is not a need for a new agreement. The agreement will just be extended for one year as approved by the Board.

Ike's Creek Restoration Project update

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has completed an Environmental Assessment draft for this Project complete and is going to go out for public review hopefully next week. The LMRWD has been provided with a copy of the draft and asked to provide comment. The public comment period is for 30 days which tentatively will be through first week of November.

In addition, Interfluve and USFWS are working on finishing all the permits and should be done soon. The 106 group has been working on the cultural resources plan and figuring out what needs to be done with potential cultural resources and burial mounds in the area. At this time MIAC (Minnesota Indian Affairs Council) has said that no sampling is necessary, but monitoring for any artifacts during construction must be implemented. The 106 group will be taking the lead on that.

If the rest goes as planned, USFWS is still expecting to start tree removal this winter and start first part of construction in area A just after April 1, 2025, which will take the rest of its acquired

funding. The MN Valley Trust just applied for a CPL grant to complete the lower part of the creek restoration. If funded, the lower reach construction would begin in August 2025.

Eden Prairie Low Salt City Center

The City of Eden Prairie is preparing a grant request for the MPCA's Chloride Reduction Grant Program. The City is proposing to install a new parking lot at its City Hall complex that proposes to reduce the amount of salt needed to keep the parking lot ice free. The City has asked for the LMRWD to support the grant application, both in the form of a letter of support to include in the grant application and in the form of financial support. The LMRWD will provide a letter of support. I have asked the City for more information about the amount of financial support necessary to complete the Project and suggested that this might be a project that would qualify for funding under the Watershed Restoration Funding Grant Program. The deadline for application under the LMRWD Program will be at the end of February 2025. The City is fine with that deadline and will apply for the Watershed Restoration Funding if they are successful in obtaining a grant from the MPCA.

Other work ordered by the Board of Managers

This is the ongoing list of items the Board has requested. The AI generated from the recording of the Board meeting list of action items plus meeting notes from the Board meetings are used to populate this list:

- The status of the standing meetings.
Update: This item is on the agenda for the October 9th Board meeting.
- Follow-up on our Board orientation re: Open meeting law
Update: At the September 18th Board of Manager meeting, the Board determined to not hold this meeting before the October 9th meeting. It has been scheduled for the November 6th meeting. In addition, to the Open Meeting Laws, the Gift Ban and Campaign Finance Disclosure Laws will be presented.
- Permits option Review
Update: Staff has met a second time to discuss the suggestions made by President Barisonzi at the August Board of Managers meeting. Staff is planning to have this ready for the Board to review at the November 6th Board of Managers meeting.
- Education/Outreach contractor request to change/plan/meeting/rebid. We had a clear motion on this in July, but I guess they don't want to or don't know how to implement?
Update: Workplans for 2025 are being developed for presentation to the Board at the October Board meeting. The motion made at the July meeting was intended to be incorporated in the 2025 workplan.
- List of Committees/Board for Board representation
Update: This item is related to the Status of Standing Committees listed above.
- By-laws w/ Conflict of Interest policy?
Update: The by-laws were amended to address President Barisonzi concerns about the Conflict-of-Interest section in the LMRWD By-laws. In checking in with other watershed District which all have the language that was recommended all stated that they have

found that the State Statute is very broad and deals with personnel financial gain. They have all experienced issues that they felt eroded the public trust, because a manager held personal interests that were not necessarily financial that influenced votes on certain issues. That is the reason that the language was incorporated into the By-laws of other Watershed Management Organizations. This language has been removed from the LMRWD By-laws and now references MN Statute.

President Barisonzi has informed staff that he has other issues with the recommended revisions to the By-laws, so staff recommends tabling the adoption until the Board is satisfied with the language.

- There are items that were requested that just seem to have been dropped -- like my recommendation to contact MN-IWLA re: IKEs Creek signage. Have I ever signed the agreement re: MN River Congress? Or the Legal Agreement?

Update: Once we have a bid for the cost of the signs, a letter will be drafted to the Izaak Walton League asking to share in the cost of the fabrication of the signs. The agreement with the MN River Congress is with President Barisonzi, who asked to review the document before it was shared with others. The extension of the PSA between the LMRWD and legal counsel does not need any revised agreement, as the agreement is still in force until an action terminates the agreement. It will continue as agreed until that time.

- I had requested to speak at the first CAC meeting where the new members came, and I have yet to receive communications of when that will be.

Update: The Board of Managers will receive an invitation to meetings of the Citizen Advisory Committee meetings. President Barisonzi attended the October CAC meeting.

- Do you have a running list of these items?

Update: Webex has a meeting summary and action function which is being used to track items from Board meeting. These items are being shared with the Board.

- I am assuming that the third quarter update at the October meeting?

Update: The Q3 update is on the agenda of the October 9th Board meeting.

Watershed Plan Projects

LMRWD Water Resource Restoration Fund: There is no new information to report since the last update. A new grant cycle will begin after January 1, 2025. The deadline for the grant program will be the end of February 2025.

Eagle Creek Bank Restoration at Town & Country RV Facility: No new information to report on this project since last update.

Fen Private Land Acquisition Study: There is no new information to report since the last update on this project. This item was removed from the 2025 LMRWD Budget. If the LMRWD proceeds with land acquisition it will need to look for grants to fund the acquisition.

Spring Creek: Bids have been received for the construction of this project. Award of the project is on the October 9, 2024, Board of Managers meeting agenda.

Project website: <https://lowermnriverwd.org/projects/spring-creek>

Gully Inventory and Assessment: There is no new information report on this project since the last update.

Project website: <https://lowermnriverwd.org/projects/mn-river-corridor-management-project>

Minnesota River Study Area #3: An update on the Minnesota River Study Area #3 project is on the October 9, 2024, Board of Managers meeting agenda.

Project website: <https://lowermnriverwd.org/projects/study-area-3-eden-prairie>

Minnesota River Floodplain Modeling No new information to report since the last update.

Vernon Avenue Dredge Material Management: An update on this project is on the October 9, 2024, Board of Managers meeting agenda.

Geomorphic Assessments (Trout Streams): The final report has been prepared and receipt of the final report is on the October 9, 2024, agenda.

The following projects are projects that are planned by LMRWD partners. LMRWD partners are leading these projects, the LMRWD has agreed to contribute to the projects:

Seminary Fen Ravine Restoration Area C2: There is no new information to report on this project since the last update.

Here is a link to the [feasibility report](#) Area C-2.

Shakopee Riverbank Stabilization: LMRWD staff will be meeting with the City of Shakopee and its consultant to receive an update on this project. The meeting is scheduled for October 29th.

Project website: <https://www.shakopeemn.gov/living-here/street-infrastructure-projects/minnesota-riverbank-stabilization>

Carver Levee: There is no new information to report since the last update.

Project website: <https://www.cityofcarver.com/276/Levee-Certification>

Upcoming meetings/events

Managers are invited to attend any of these meetings. Most are free of charge and if not the LMRWD will reimburse registration fees. Please contact LMRWD administrator if you have any questions.

- Metro Watersheds – Tuesday, October 22, 2024, 7:00 pm, Capitol Region Watershed District offices, 595 Aldine, St. Paul, MN
- [Water Resource Conference](#) – October 15 & 16, 2024, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, St. Paul River Centre, 175 West Kellogg Boulevard, St. Paul, MN
- [Upper Mississippi Waterway Association Annual Meeting](#) – Thursday, October 17, 2024, 6:00 pm, Lilydale Pool & Yacht Club
- [Minnesota Stormwater Seminar Series](#) – October 23, 2024, 10:00 am, in-person at St. Anthony Falls Laboratory Auditorium, 2 Third Avenue SE, Minneapolis and virtual on [Zoom](#) (**note: if you attend in person, there is usually an opportunity for a tour of the St. Anthony Falls Lab**)
- For Love of a River Revival – Thursday, October 24, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm, Treaty Site History Center, 1851 N, Minnesota Avenue, (Hwy, 169), St. Peter, MN (see flyer attached to Administrator Report)

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- [BWSR Academy](#) – October 29 through October 31, 2024, Cragun’s Conference Center, 11000 Cragun’s Drive, Brainerd, MN
- LMRWD Citizen Advisory Committee meeting – Tuesday November 12, 2024 4:30 pm, virtual on Webex
- [MN Watershed Annual Conference](#) – December 4 through December 6, 2024, Grandview Lodge, 23521 Nokomis Avenue, Nisswa, MN