



2025 Annual Report



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

CELEBRATING 65 YEARS



The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) manages water and natural resources in the south metro, following the Minnesota River from Carver to Mendota Heights and parts of Lilydale. In a highly developed area of the Twin cities, that are both concealed and central to the region. From cold-water trout streams to rare calcareous fens, the LMRWD includes important ecological areas to protect and offers unique recreational opportunities.



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

THE RIVER WILL NOT WAIT



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

The Area 3 project stabilizes roughly 1,200 feet of actively eroding Minnesota River bank in Eden Prairie and addresses a key source of sediment loading by combining bank stabilization with storm water system improvements.

The LMRWD completed a comprehensive research initiative in the Savage Fens using machine learning and drone technology for identifying invasive species. This research provided massive amounts of high resolution images to help identify and eliminate invasive species.

The LMRWD adopted a policy that establishes a comprehensive framework for financial oversight, internal controls, and procedural integrity designed to ensure compliance with Minnesota Statutes, align with local government best practices, promote efficiency, and protect public funds from fraud, waste, or misuse.



A NOTE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

2025 was a year of highlights for the LMRWD. First, I want to thank Linda Loomis for her years of service as Administrator and for her guidance in transitioning me into the role as the new Administrator. Linda helped lead the District with skill and perseverance and it is a better organization because of her. As we move into my first full calendar year as Administrator, I'm thankful for Linda, the District Board, the staff and the collaboration we've built with our partners.

Secondly, 2025 marked the 65th year of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District. Since 1960, the District has been instrumental in preserving and improving the river, the water quality and banks of the Minnesota River. Just as importantly, the District has worked tirelessly to educate residents, business owners, stakeholders about the high value resources the river offers.

The District is framing 2026 with "The River Will Not Wait" — a critical moment highlighting the Minnesota River's immediate need. This important undertaking will provide framework for how the LMRWD will address water resources management over the next decade. The Plan includes management standards and procedures for addressing surface water and wetland, as well as groundwater and navigation issues. Natural resources management, erosion control, floodplain management, and commercial and recreational use all play a vital role in the health of the river and the surrounding areas. This ten year plan and our continual work, are instrumental in bringing this vision to life.

I would love to hear from you! If you would like to share your perspectives, experiences, concerns or vision for the future of the LMRWD, please reach out to me directly at Will.Lytle@lowermnrriverwd.org

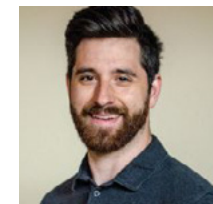
Will Lytle, PhD

Administrator, Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

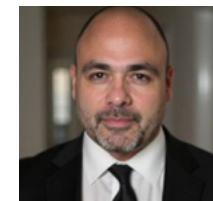
The Board of Managers met on the third Wednesday of every month at the Carver County Government Center. The location will vary in 2026 and the public is welcome to attend. Learn more at lowermnrriverwd.org/meetings

BOARD OF MANAGERS

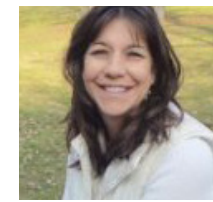
The Board of Managers oversees the direction of watershed management, bringing representation from each county within the LMRWD. The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) is a voluntary advisory group appointed by the Board to engage citizens in community actions. The election of officers was held at the October Board of Managers meeting.



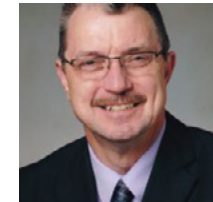
Carter Mcnew
Vice President,
Scott County
Term Expires: 3.1.2029



Joseph Barisonzi
President,
Hennepin County
Term Expires: 2.28.2027



Theresa Kuplic
Secretary,
Dakota County
Seat Vacant beginning 3.1.2026

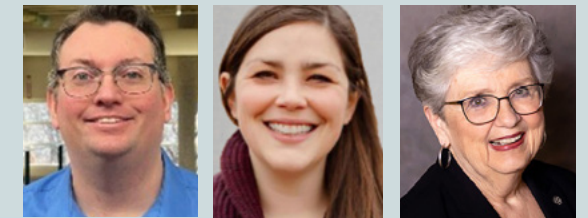


Kyle Bakkum
Carver County
Term Expires: 3.1.2029



Vinatha Viswanathan
Hennepin County
Term Expires: 3.1.2029

A Sincere "Thank You!"



In 2025, Managers Apollo Lammers, Lauren Salvato and Janet Williams all stepped down from their roles with the District. Each of these individuals contributed greatly to the success of the LMRWD. Their project management, grant writing and knowledge of water resources was instrumental in strengthening our efforts. Apollo, Lauren and Janet, we appreciate all you've done for the LMRWD. We wish you the best of luck in your new adventures!

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The CAC is a voluntary advisory group appointed by the Board to engage citizens in community actions. View the Education and Outreach section to learn more about the CAC's work in 2025 and how to get involved. The LMRWD thanks founding member Judy Berglund for her service when she retired in October 2025. Thank you for your participation:

Greg Genz	Jay Hoekstra*
Holley Wlodarczyk	Judy Berglund+
Kati Johngrass	Lee Peterson
Kathryn Zebrev	Patty Thomsen
Kyle Bakkum*	Meah Vogel

Partner Organizations

[Three Rivers Park District](#)
[Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community](#)
[Metropolitan Airports Commission](#)
[Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources](#)
[Metropolitan Council Environmental Services](#)
[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#)
[Minnesota Department of Transportation](#)
[Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#)
[US Army Corps of Engineers](#)
[US Fish and Wildlife Service](#)

Technical Advisory Committee

[Carver Soil and Water Conservation District](#)
[Dakota Soil and Water Conservation District](#)
[Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District](#)

Carver County	Bloomington	Eden Prairie
Dakota County	Burnsville	Lilydale
Hennepin County	Carver	Mendota
Scott County	Chanhausen	Mendota Heights
Area WMO and WDs	Chaska	Savage
	Eagan	Shakopee



Auditing

Andy Hering
[Redpath and Company](#)
4810 White Bear Parkway
White Bear Lake, MN 55110



Legal

John C. Kolb
[Rinke Noonan](#)
1015 Germain St. Suite 300
St. Cloud, MN 56303



Legislative

Joe Birkholz & Molly Jansen
[Park Street Public](#)
525 Park Street
St. Paul, MN 55103



Accounting

Christopher Knopik
[Clifton Larsen Allen, LLP](#)
220 South Sixth Street,
Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55402



Engineering/ Technical

Della Schall Young
[Young Environmental
Consulting Group, LLC](#)
6040 Earle Brown Drive,
Suite 306
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430



Dredge Site Operations

Taylor Luke
[LS Marine](#)
300 Centerville Rd.
Suite D



2025 WORK PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2025 has been an incredible year of significant accomplishments and noticeable improvements all along the Minnesota River. From Stabilization in Area 3 of Eden Prairie to Fen Management and Conservation in Savage, the LMRWD has been hard at work ensuring these areas along the river are cared for and improved for future generations.

And we didn't do it alone! The LMRWD partners with many respected agencies to ensure success on every project. Our partners include but are not limited to:

Federal & State Government: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (for the 9-foot navigation channel), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BOWSR).

Local Municipalities: Cities within the district's boundaries, such as Eden Prairie, Savage, Lilydale, Bloomington and Shakopee, to conduct water quality and sediment feasibility studies.

Neighboring Watershed Organizations: Groups like the Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed District and various county Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).

Nonprofits & Advocacy Groups: The Minnesota River Congress, Friends of the Minnesota Valley, the Minnesota Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, and the Conservation Corps of Minnesota.

Thank you to all who partnered with LMRWD in 2025!



Fen Stewardship Program

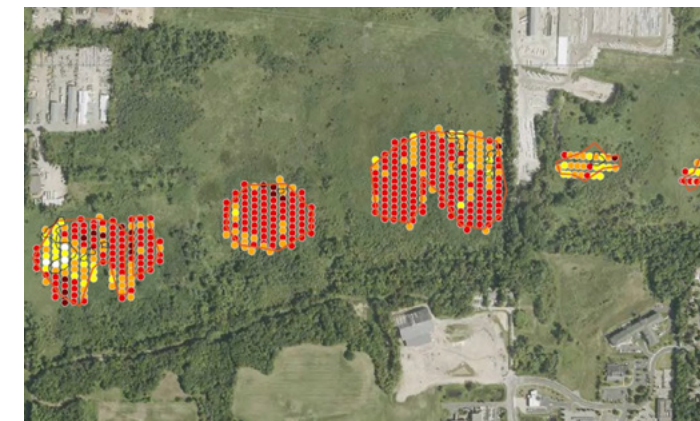
The LMRWD completed the following items within the 2025 Work Plan:

1. Fen Drain Tile Mapping (Savage, Nicols, Seminary and Gun Club North & South)
2. Technical Work Group Coordination
3. Invasive Species Management Program Development

The drain tile memo focuses on identifying and mapping existing drain tile infrastructure within five priority fens to evaluate whether the remaining tiles are influencing fen hydrology and ecological function. Staff used desktop analysis of historical aerial imagery and targeted field reconnaissance during the months of March and April 2025.

The Fen Technical Work Group met twice last year. The group is comprised of local, state and federal members as well as non-profits interested in preserving and protecting this important natural resource.

The LMRWD contracted MNL to develop the Invasive Species Management Plan which provides a framework for protecting and restoring calcareous fen within the LMRWD and outlined strategic long-term initiatives. Using high-resolution drone imagery and field verification collected in 2025, the plan maps the location and severity of key invasive species including common reed, buckthorn, reed canary grass, and cattails. The data is used to identify high-quality "fen pockets", prioritize management areas and tailor site specific strategies to protect rare plant communities.



The research for the training of deep learning models for invasive species detection allows computers to take in massive amounts of high resolution images. Ariel drones captured pictures with half centimeter pixels which can be applied to UAVs, sensors, and satellites to zoom in and recognize patterns, textures, and colors to show us what plants are living where. This information is extremely actionable as farmers, ecologists, construction crews, and infrastructure developers are able to act decisively to reduce invasive species, enhance productivity, and protect critical ecosystems.



Gully Inventory and Condition Assessment

In 2025, the LMRWD advanced its gully restoration efforts through a comprehensive program of feasibility studies, field surveys, and targeted design work. Building on the 2023 reassessment of 315 gullies and the identification of additional sites in 2024, the project focused on evaluating priority gullies for restoration while expanding the district's gully inventory. This work will help the district better understand erosion drivers, refine restoration priorities and coordinate with municipal and agency partners to ensure alignment with local goals.

The LMRWD conducted feasibility studies for two high-priority gullies, including desktop analyses, field assessments, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, and the development of conceptual restoration designs. These studies documented site conditions, erosion causes, and recommended stabilization practices supported by cost estimates and modeling outputs.



Nine-Foot Channel Maintenance

The nine-foot navigation channel is at the cornerstone of LMRWD's work, dredging and removing sediment from the Minnesota River in coordination with the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE). The LMRWD maintains the navigation channel using the USACE Dredged Material Management Plan for reaches of the Minnesota River upstream of the I-35W bridge.

The Cargill East River site received approximately 72,194 cubic yards of dredged material in 2025, marking it as a key location for future monitoring and coordination.

The LMRWD also works with local industry to temporarily store material dredged from private barge slips. The dredge site is an important component of successfully maintaining the channel of the Minnesota River, making it a working river that is key to local and national industry.



Spring Creek Site Stabilization

In 2022, the LMRWD began investigating erosion along Spring Creek after residents reached out regarding impacts to private property at three sites along the creek in Carver, Minnesota.

In 2023, the LMRWD advanced two of the sites for bank stabilization practices, which were designed to the 60 percent level. The LMRWD submitted a wetland delineation to the US Army Corp of Engineers. The LMRWD will continue to work with the homeowners, by providing a steep slopes management plan for the site.

Construction took place in 2024 and was completed in November. In 2025, vegetation planting and integration was ongoing to reestablish the site through project inspections and a final closeout memo.



Quarry Lake Sustainable Management

In 2025, the LMRWD led a process to evaluate the condition of the Quarry Lake shoreline using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's Score your Shore protocol. The assessment helped showcase that the shoreline is heavily altered in many areas, showing steep, eroded banks, sparse vegetation, and signs of human disturbance. Several locations exhibit active erosion, gullying and sediment deposition, while invasive species are widespread across upland zones.

The memo recommends targeted actions to protect shoreline stability and water quality, including the development of a vegetation management plan for eroded banks. This involved coordination with both the City of Shakopee and Bituminous Roadways, Inc. to address severe gullying in one area of the lake. Long-term recommendations include limiting certain recreation uses during sensitive ecological periods.



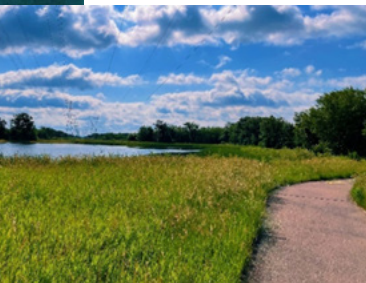
Watershed Management Plan Launch

The LMRWD announced the launch of its formal planning process to update the District’s Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) — the foundational document that will guide strategic priorities and actions through 2028 and beyond.

The LMRWD also led a visioning phase through the Minnesota River boat tour. This facilitated session invited residents, partners, and river champions to share their vision for the future of the Minnesota River, hearing their unique stories and experiences. The event was formally kicked off in October 2025 and the official process was driven by Minnesota statute.

Ongoing Monitoring Program

The LMRWD collaborates with local partners within soil and water conservation districts to obtain current monitoring data. The watershed district is home to many urban lakes, rivers and streams, calcareous fens, and trout waters. Water quality monitoring helps identify trends that inform management strategies and protection and improvement of valuable waterbodies.



Education & Outreach Programs

An important part of our work is educating residents and businesses about the challenges faced and opportunities to enjoy the rare resources that make the LMRWD so unique. The Education & Outreach Program uses several tactics including cost-share grants, signage, media channels, and special events to engage the public and partners in resource protection.



Municipal Permit Program

The LMRWD issues municipal permits to partner cities within the watershed district, which allows them to issue permits and manage actions as the primary permitting authority. The LMRWD frequently leads municipal coordination efforts to ensure that city regulations are working in parallel with the LMRWD rules and standards. The LMRWD leads periodic audits of municipal permittees to determine areas of excellence and opportunities for enhancements.



LMRWD Launches Visioning Phase for 2028 Watershed Management Plan

2025 was a big year for recognizing change. The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District launched a powerful system-wide initiative to focus on and improve the Minnesota River watershed.

“The river will not wait. Not for our politics. Not for our process. Not for our patience,” said Minnesota Izaak Walton League Vice President Joseph Barisonzi at the 17th Minnesota River Congress.

The Minnesota River Congress is a citizen-led organization focusing on natural resources and economic health of the Minnesota River basin. Its mission is to promote citizen participation from all communities of interest and take cooperative action to protect, conserve and improve the Minnesota River system.

The LMRWD announced the launch of its formal planning process to update the District’s Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) — the foundational document that will guide strategic priorities and actions through 2028 and beyond.

“Look at the price tags,” he said. “The Henderson flood wall and road raise-\$26 million. Shakopee’s flood protection plan and storm water management projects-over \$10 million. The Rapidan Dam breach emergency response and clean-up-over \$25 million so far, with long-term repairs likely to cost \$100 million or more.”

Barisonzi said the project improvement planning framework needs to change. He said the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) requires watershed plans center on implementation tables, listing projects prioritized for funding, not on system resilience or policy change.

[Read the Full Article in The New Ulm Journal](#)

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: AREA 3 EDEN PRAIRIE

Timeline: Summer 2020 - Spring 2026

Cost: \$5.8 million (Construction)

Area 3 in the City of Eden Prairie is located at a sharp bend in the Minnesota River, in an area of very steep slopes. Portions of the slope of the bluff are steeper than 1H:1V, which means the height of the rise is higher than the length of the slope, creating stability concerns. Reaches of the lower Minnesota River are impaired for nutrients and turbidity, and the river has a documented history of excessive erosion and sediment concerns.

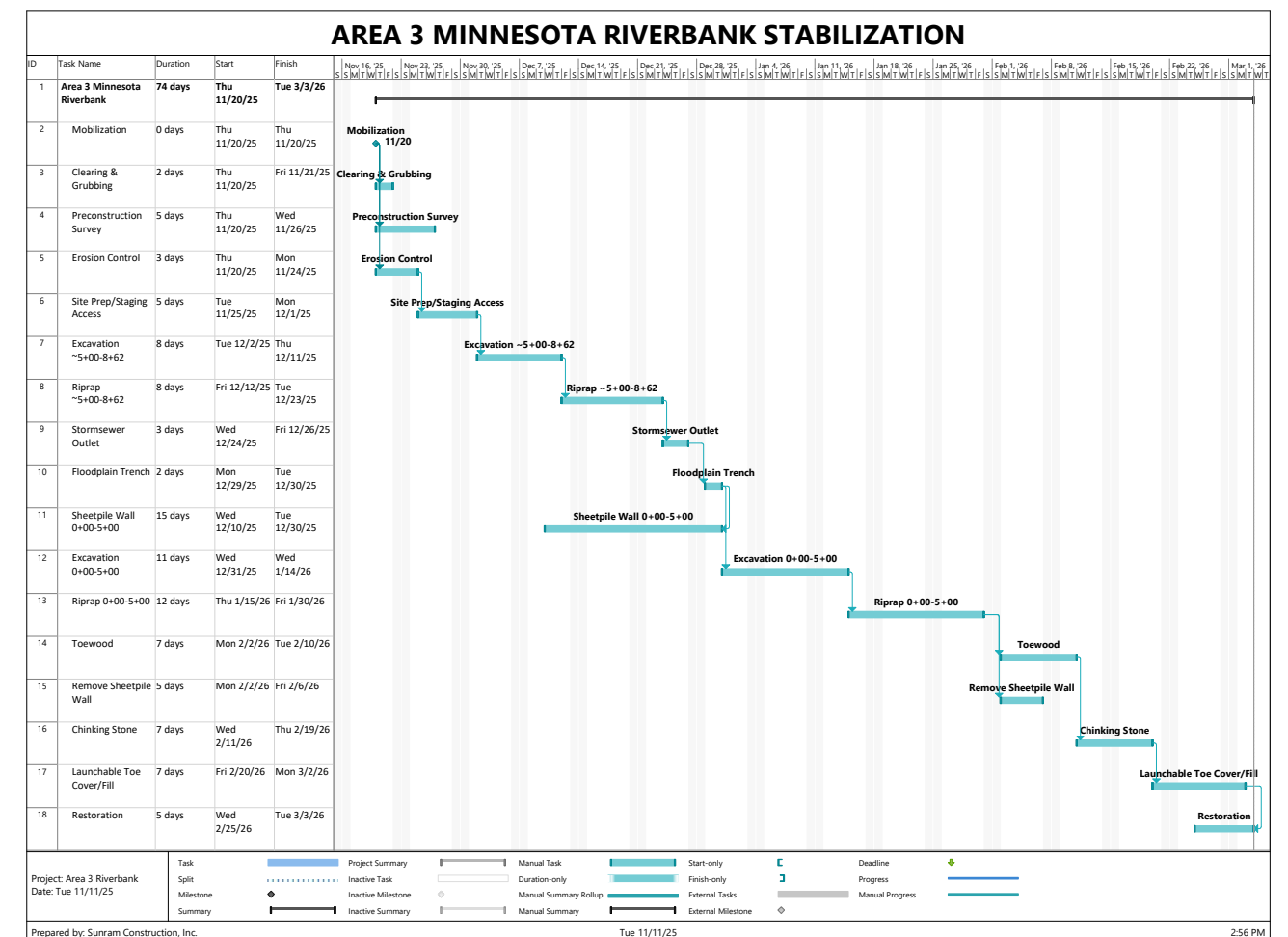


The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) and the City of Eden Prairie have been aware of the need for site stabilization since 2008. Several studies have been conducted to select and recommend stabilization measures. In 2018, the Minnesota River Study Area 3 Bluff Stabilization Project was incorporated into the District's Capital Improvement Project List as a project that will be funded in whole or in part by the LMRWD. The project addresses the stabilization of approximately 1,200 feet of actively eroding bluff toe on the outside bend of the Minnesota River and stabilize the meander bend to prevent further migration and erosion downstream. In 2021, the LMRWD began work with Inter-Fluve to evaluate previous recommendations to stabilize this area.

A watershed-based funding grant from the Clean Water Land & Legacy Fund was awarded to the District in 2021. Additional funding was secured as part of the 2023 Legislative session. In 2024, project development advanced through 60 percent design and the completion of archaeological, boundary, and legal surveys.

During the 90% design phase, Barr Engineering and Houston Engineering, Inc. were onboarded to finalize designs for bank stabilization as well as the decommissioning of a City stormwater pond, which was found to have a contributing impact on the erosion rate and severity.

The project was completed in May of 2026 and will reduce a significant amount of erosion and reduce the risk to bluff properties. Project success is measured by quantifying the total amount of sediment lost to date and by comparing it to the amount of sediment stabilized by the project.





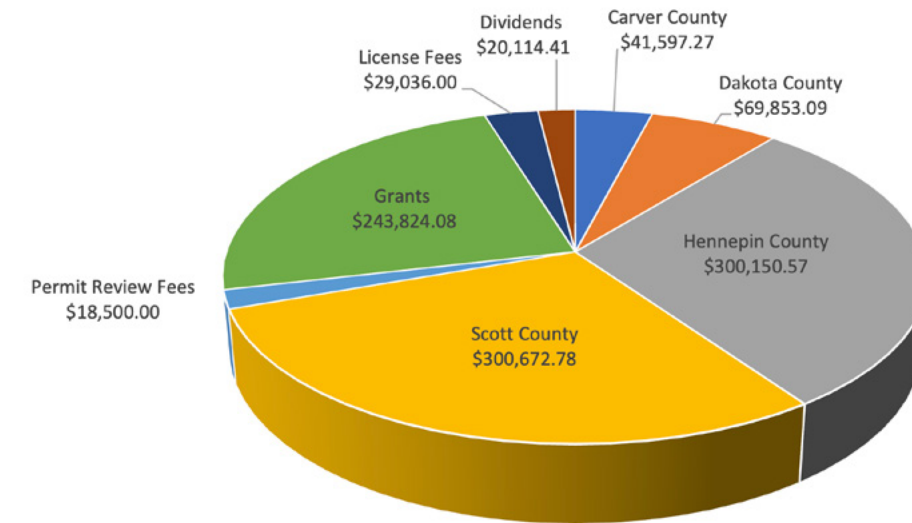
HOW FUNDS ARE ALLOCATED

At the close of 2025, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District undertook a careful review of its financial position and operational priorities. Board members and staff worked together to tighten expenditures and conduct a Zero-Based Budget (ZBB) review, evaluating programs, services, and administrative functions from the ground up. Rather than relying on historical spending patterns, each activity was reassessed based on its relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with the District's statutory responsibilities and strategic goals. This process helped identify areas where resources could be streamlined, redirected, or strengthened to better support the District's mission.

The result of this effort is a restructured 2026 budget designed to focus the District's limited resources on the roles where it can provide the greatest regional value. The updated framework prioritizes core governance, regulatory oversight, watershed planning, and collaborative initiatives that address water quality, water quantity, and long-term river system resilience. By aligning expenditures with clearly defined outcomes, the District aims to operate more efficiently while ensuring it remains an effective partner in helping the Minnesota River region meet its environmental, economic, and community goals.

We are still assembling the year end close out of income and expenses, which will be available with greater detail in the 2025 audit. The table below reflects the LMRWD's midyear budget amendment as it continues its work on programs and projects defined in the Watershed Management Plan.

2025 Revenues



2025 spending in all watersheds within all counties in Minnesota

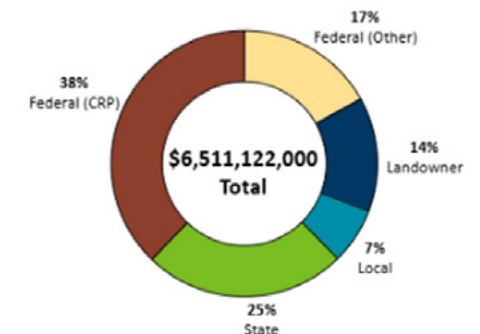
Selected watershed: Selected County:

All watersheds within all counties

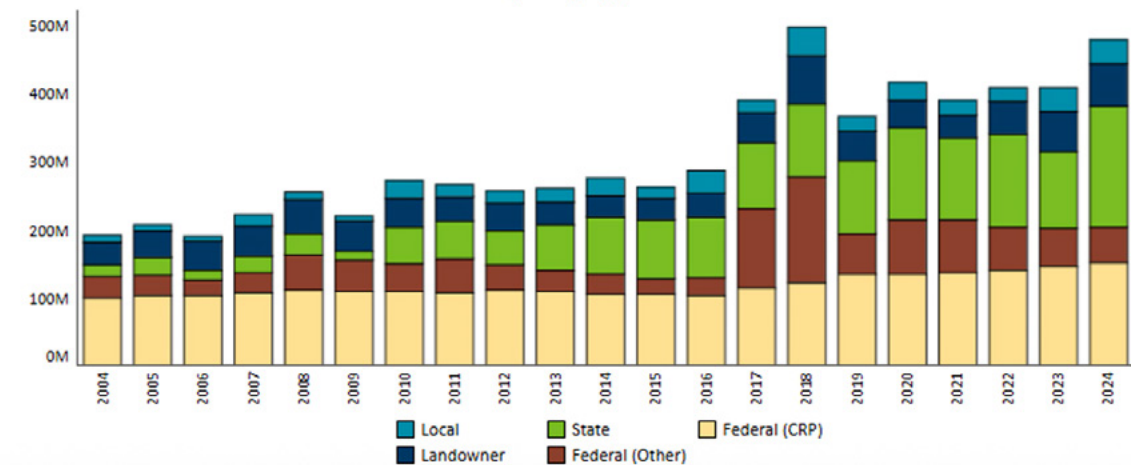
Spending by pollution type



Spending by funding source



Spending by year





PROGRESS ON GOALS

The LMRWD has defined nine goals within its Watershed Management Plan. Each annual work plan includes programs and projects that are prioritized to advance progress on each of these goals.



1 Organizational Management



2 Surface Water Management



3 Groundwater Management



4 Unique Natural resources Management



5 Wetland Management



6 Floodplain & Flood Management



7 Erosion & Sediment Control



8 Commercial & Recreational Navigation



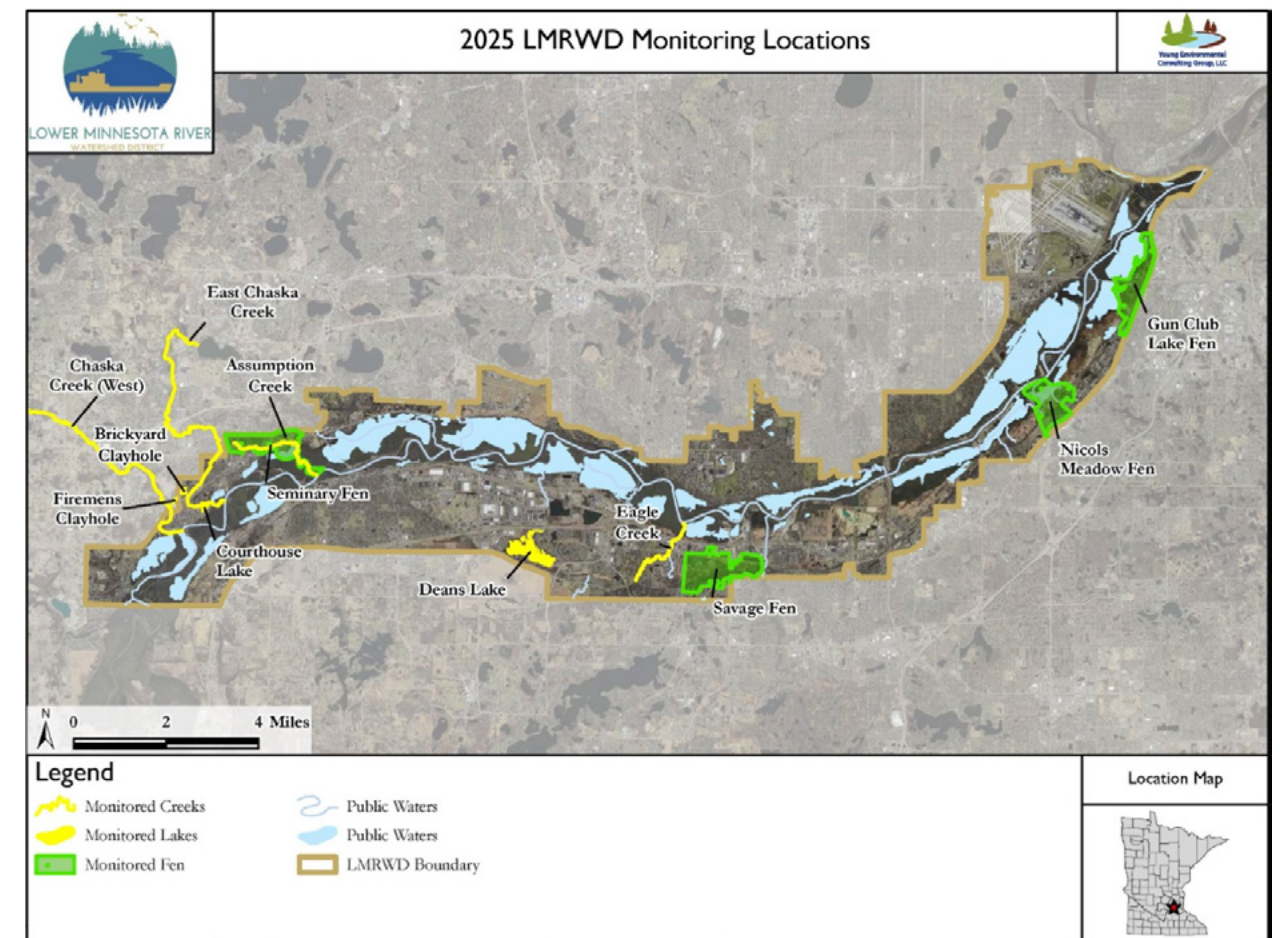
9 Public Education & Outreach

Goals	Strategies	Short-Term Metric	Long-Term Metric	2025 Progress
Goal 1: Organizational Management	<p>Cooperate with local, state, and federal government; other agencies; and nongovernment organizations on issues affecting the District's resources.</p> <p>Provide public information services.</p> <p>Perform periodic assessments and program reviews.</p> <p>Use short-term and long-term metrics to measure progress.</p>	<p>Completion of scheduled activities</p> <p>Annual local government units (LGU) audits</p> <p>Number of dollars from other agencies and property owners</p>	<p>Formation of a Minnesota River Basin Organization</p> <p>Legislative funding support</p>	<p>Continued collaboration with partners on water and natural resources projects</p> <p>Hosted municipal/LGU coordination meetings</p> <p>Managed legislative funds for dredge material management</p>
Goal 2: Surface Water Management	<p>Provide strategic resource evaluation and management.</p> <p>Develop a High-Value Resources Area overlay district.</p> <p>Create watershed management standards.</p> <p>Promote disconnected stormwater management and low-impact development.</p> <p>Develop a cost-share incentive program.</p> <p>Lead water quality restoration programs.</p> <p>Modify and continue the monitoring program.</p> <p>Complete detailed data assessments.</p> <p>Coordinate with other agencies and water quality programs.</p> <p>Develop steep slopes standard.</p> <p>Develop a vegetation management standard/plan.</p>	<p>Number and types of projects completed as part of the cost-share incentive program and water quality restoration programs</p> <p>Number of targeted studies and projects completed</p>	<p>Positive trends in water quality parameters identified for monitoring efforts</p>	<p>Continued surface water management programs</p> <p>Continued monitoring program</p> <p>Continued water quality cost-share incentive program</p> <p>Targeted studies and projects that focus on surface water management.</p>
Goal 3: Surface Water Management	<p>Provide strategic resource evaluation and management.</p> <p>Modify and continue the monitoring program.</p> <p>Support wellhead protection efforts.</p> <p>Develop infiltration standard.</p> <p>Promote conservation and wise use of groundwater.</p> <p>Monitor groundwater.</p> <p>Perform regional modeling.</p>	<p>Number of targeted studies and projects completed</p>	<p>Positive trends in water quality parameters identified for monitoring efforts</p>	<p>Continued monitoring lakes, streams, and fens</p> <p>Completed the monitoring program</p>
Goal 4: Unique Natural Resources Management	<p>Provide strategic resource evaluation and management.</p> <p>Modify and continue monitoring.</p> <p>Acquire and manage data.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance.</p> <p>Provide educational opportunities.</p> <p>Develop a mechanism for identifying and acquiring high-value conservation easements.</p> <p>Encourage wildlife connectivity projects that achieve multiple goals, such as water quality improvements and fen and steep slopes protection.</p> <p>Develop a vegetation management standard/plan.</p>	<p>Number of targeted studies and projects completed</p> <p>Development and completion of the Fen Stewardship Plan</p> <p>Development of groundwater model for fen management</p>	<p>Number and acreage of unique natural resources protected, restored, or enhanced</p> <p>Acquisition of high-valued easements</p> <p>Sustained protection of the fens and trout waters</p>	<p>Drafted and adopted Fen Management Plans</p> <p>Further studied gullies throughout the watershed district</p> <p>Created website content to showcase recreational opportunities at natural resource sites</p>

Goals	Strategies	Short-Term Metric	Long-Term Metric	2025 Progress
Goal 5: Wetland Management	<p>Provide strategic resource evaluation/management.</p> <p>Develop a mechanism for identifying and acquiring high value conservation easements.</p> <p>Delegate Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) to LGUs.</p> <p>Require LGUs to conduct wetland inventories and complete wetland management plans.</p> <p>Review WCA notices as received.</p> <p>Develop a wetland standard.</p> <p>Develop a vegetation management standard/plan.</p>	Completion of scheduled activities	Number and acreage of wetlands protected, restored, or enhanced	<p>Continued support to LGU partners regarding Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)</p> <p>Drafted and adopted Fen Management Plans</p>
Goal 6: Floodplain and Flood Management	<p>Develop floodplain and drainage alteration standard.</p> <p>Develop infiltration and peak flow standards.</p> <p>Manage localized flooding.</p> <p>Adopt infiltration and peak flow standards.</p>	Completion of scheduled activities	<p>Number of structures damaged and value of flood damages</p> <p>Preservation of floodplain resources</p>	Completed the updated Minnesota River Floodplain Mode
Goal 7: Erosion and Sediment Control	<p>Develop watershed management standards.</p> <p>Develop steep slopes standard.</p> <p>Support the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System general permit.</p> <p>Develop erosion and sediment control standard.</p> <p>Develop a vegetation management standard/plan.</p> <p>Provide streambank and mainstem erosion assessment.</p> <p>Continue gully erosion repair.</p> <p>Promote and encourage shoreland protection.</p> <p>Develop a shoreline and streambank standard.</p>	<p>Completion of scheduled activities</p> <p>Reduction in streambank and ravine bank and slope failures</p>	<p>Positive trends in water quality</p> <p>Protection and preservation of Minnesota River Bluff</p>	<p>Continued to manage steep slopes through the permit program and projects such as Minnesota River Study Area 3—Bluff Stabilization Project</p> <p>Continued gully studies to reduce erosion and sediment load to the Minnesota River</p> <p>Completed Spring Creek Restoration project</p>
Goal 8: Commercial and Recreational Navigation	<p>Promote safety education.</p> <p>Manage existing Cargill East River (MN-14.2 RMP) dredge material site.</p> <p>Create a beneficial use plan for dredge materials.</p> <p>Develop a funding structure to ensure proper maintenance and improvement along the river.</p>	<p>Completion of scheduled activities</p> <p>Number of targeted studies and projects completed</p>	<p>Secure regular congressional and state legislative funding for the nine-foot channel</p>	<p>Continued to manage dredged material at the Cargill East River site to maintain a nine-foot navigation channel</p> <p>Explored options for sale of dredged materials</p>
Goal 9: Public Education and Outreach	<p>Provide public information services.</p> <p>Provide educational opportunities.</p> <p>Promote safety education.</p> <p>Maintain Citizen Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Develop an outreach program.</p> <p>Engage volunteers.</p> <p>Provide opportunity for public input.</p> <p>Produce scientific studies and work products.</p> <p>Promote a variety of education programs.</p> <p>Use of multiple outlets to distribute information.</p>	<p>Number and types of sponsored events</p> <p>Number of participants at events</p> <p>Number of articles, press releases, and pamphlets developed and printed</p> <p>Number of volunteers</p>	Same as short-term metrics	<p>Attended local events to promote awareness of the LMRWD</p> <p>Led public relations and media outreach</p> <p>Executed a Public Listening Session within the community</p> <p>Facilitated an educator mini-grant program</p> <p>Continued to maintain CAC and recruited new members</p> <p>Maintained website and social media presence</p>

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT TRENDS IN MONITORING DATA

The LMRWD partners continue to monitor data at locations across the watershed.



FACT: the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District monitors data to guide water resources management. The district monitors water quality, including fens, springs, lakes, and streams, often partnering with the DNR, Metropolitan Council, as well as many local, state and federal agencies.



ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

In addition to ongoing communication from the LMRWD to constituents through website updates and public meetings, the annual report serves as a formal communication tool. The annual report provides a snapshot of ongoing projects, goal progress, and day-to-day activities. Please join us in watershed management by visiting our website.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The LMRWD leads a dynamic education and outreach program to work with the community. Here are a few of the tools the LMRWD uses to reach out to stakeholders throughout the year.



Citizen Advisory Committee

The LMRWD maintains an advisory committee of citizen volunteers who participate to raise awareness of the LMRWD while educating themselves and others about a wide range of water and natural resources topics and best practices. The CAC also creates outreach materials and represents the LMRWD at community events.



In 2025, the CAC met monthly and hosted guest speakers including Carrie Jennings (Freshwater Society), Joel Wurscher (Sibley County Soil and Water Conservation District), and Jennifer Ehlerts (Metro Blooms). The CAC attended educational tours at Ike's Creek with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, of cost-share projects around the LMRWD, and Quarry Lake. In the fall of 2025, the CAC held a workshop for visioning and planning what to accomplish and focus on in the upcoming year.

Schools Engagement

The LMRWD continues to provide education and outreach with students by providing a mini-grant program. The program provides up to 10 grants per school year, each up to \$500, to help cover the cost of materials and programming that focus on water resources. If you are an educator interested in grants, learn more at www.lowermnriverwd.org. In 2025, the LMRWD awarded grants to the following schools:



- Hiawatha Academics (\$500)
- Integrated Arts Academy (\$340)
- Poplar Elementary (\$500)
- Shakopee Area Catholic School (\$500)
- Pilot Knob STEM Magnet School (\$225)



OUTREACH EVENTS

The LMRWD expanded its participation in outreach events, exploring new ways to share the mission and work of the organization.

Community Tabling Events

The CAC planned and staffed tables at a number of conservation-themed events. CAC members designed tabling kits which include helpful outreach materials, custom made art to show native plant roots and icebreakers.

Public Listening Session

On January 8, 2025, the LMRWD hosted a public listening session aimed at gathering testimony and developing solutions for identified problems related to floodplain management and climate impact mitigation. During the event, several participants shared comments, including members of the LMRWD CAC and partner organizations.

Following the listening session, the Board of Managers discussed the testimonies at their January monthly meeting. The Minnesota Legislative Session opened on January 14, 2025, creating urgency for the LMRWD's legislative advisor to quickly mobilize efforts on several key priorities. The testimony will also be instrumental to the next Watershed Management Plan update and will guide decisions for funding, projects and programs.

Metro Children's Water Festival Sponsorship

The LMRWD continued its support for and participation in the Metro Children's Water Festival, a unique and vibrant event with tailored educational content for fourth grade students in the Twin Cities. The LMRWD provided our annual sponsorship to engage students with this important education. Learn more about this great event at www.event.org.



Minnesota River Barge Tour

The Minnesota River barge tour was an initiative to connect the public and key decision-makers to the river. Taking place on August 14, 2025, guests included elected officials, local government partners, community organizations, businesses, and members of the public. The tour served the public kickoff to LMRWD's upcoming 10-year Watershed Management Plan, driven by the district's urgent call to action: "The River Will Not Wait". In the wake of major flooding in 2024 and continued threat of sedimentation, the district used this event to unveil a community-driven vision for the river's future.

River Watch Program Sponsorship

The LMRWD partnered with Friends of the Minnesota Valley by providing funding for the River Watch Program. The program encourages students who live in the Minnesota River Basin to maintain data collection equipment and gather water quality samples from areas throughout the river basin. The program succeeds by obtaining monitoring data and inspiring the next generation of science leaders. Learn more about River Watch at www.RiverWatchMN.org

Scott County Water Education Partnership

The LMRWD supports Scott County as it brings conservation to the classroom within the watershed district. The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District offers educational programming and brings free classroom visits to all schools within the county. Learn more about the program at www.scottswcd.org/education

2025 Salt Symposium Sponsorship

As part of the ongoing efforts to raise awareness about chloride pollution, the LMRWD sponsored the 2025 Salt Symposium. As a Bronze Level Sponsor, the LMRWD helped to ensure the event, filled with local and international experts, was successfully executed. To learn more about the Salt Symposium and future events. [click here](#).

Cost-Share Incentive and Water Quality Restoration Grant Program

The LMRWD provides a program for residents, businesses, neighborhoods, and communities to apply for matching funds for projects intended to improve water quality and provide public education. This program requires a 50% match. In 2025, four applications were received for cost-share grants:

- 9839 Pleasant Avenue South, Bloomington, MN — \$2,500
- 5120 102nd Street West, Bloomington, MN — \$7,500
- 12209 102nd Ave Circle South, Bloomington, MN — \$1,846
- 7061 West 110th Street/11045 Oregon Circle - Sutton Place - \$7,500

Residents within the LMRWD also have access to technical assistance provided by the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District to implement similar water quality projects on the landscape.



Cost-Share Incentive and Water Quality Restoration Grant Programs provide financial and technical assistance to property owners for implementing conservation practices. Available in the Edina, MN area through local watershed districts and counties, these programs reimburse up to 50%–75% of eligible material and labor costs for projects including rain gardens, shoreline restorations, and permeable pavers.

Grants are available for projects that protect and improve water and natural resources within the Lower Minnesota River Watershed. For more information and to apply, visit: www.lowermnriverwd.org/reports-documents/grants-cost-sharing

SOLICITATION FOR CONSULTANT PROPOSALS

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 103B.227 Subd. 5, “a watershed management organization shall, at least every two years, solicit interest proposals for legal, professional, or technical consultation services before retaining the services of an attorney or consultant or extending an annual services agreement.” In 2025 the LMRWD did not release a solicitation for consultants. The LMRWD is always willing to review and consider collaboration opportunities on an ongoing basis.

Consultant opportunities are advertised at lowermnriverwd.org/news/requests-proposals



HIGHLIGHTED PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 2015** — **MSP & Flying Cloud Airports**
In May, both airports revised their stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPPs)
- 2017** — **Burnsville**
In November, Burnsville adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- 2018** — **Chanhassen**
In January, Chanhassen adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- Bloomington**
In June, Bloomington adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- Mendota Heights**
In July, Mendota Heights adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- Carver**
In December, Carver adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- 2019** — **Eagan**
In January, Eagan adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- Shakopee**
In November, Shakopee adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- 2020** — **Eden Prairie**
In December, Eden Prairie adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- 2023** — **Chaska**
In May, Chaska adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- Lilydale**
In August, Lilydale adopted its Local Surface Water Management Plan
- 2024** — **Metropolitan Airports Commission**
In 2024, Metropolitan Airports Commission updated their water standards

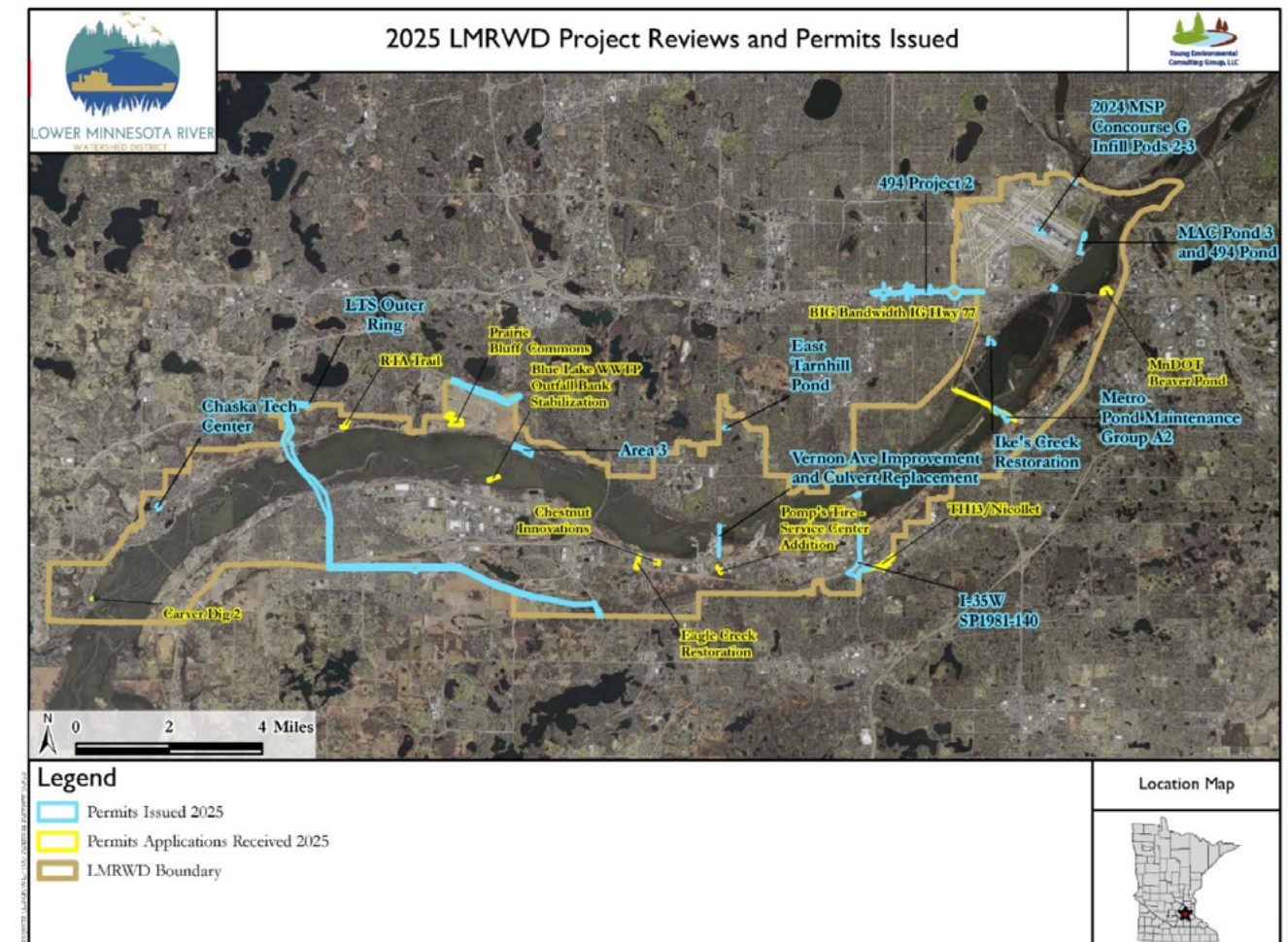
LOCAL WATER PLAN APPROVAL

The timeline to the left shows local water plan adoption over the past decade of water management and collaboration. Each city developed their Local Surface Water Management Plan (LSWMP) to provide direction concerning the administration and implementation of water resource management. Each city plan was designed to meet the requirements for a local water management plan as required by the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act (Chapter 103B) and conform with Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Rules Chapter 8410.



SUMMARY OF PERMITS AND VARIANCES

The LMRWD continues to oversee a permitting program to ensure that new development in the community complies with watershed district rules. In 2025, the LMRWD transitioned from using Gmail (Google) to Microsoft Outlook for permitting inquiries and communications. This change was made to allow the LMRWD to own and manage its email domain and to promote improved file organization and retention and stronger connectivity between the permitting account, the administrative account, and the technical consultant's accounts.





STATUS OF LOCALLY ADOPTED ORDINANCES

The LMRWD first adopted rules in 2020, which were amended in October 2022. Local governments that wish to obtain a municipal permit must highlight how they intend to implement and enforce rules through official controls (i.e., ordinances).

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) LGU permit was revised and reissued on January 15, 2025. Additionally, on December 17, 2025, the City of Savage submitted draft code language for LMRWD review with the intent of pursuing an LGU permit in 2026.

Municipal permits for the cities of Eagan, Mendota Heights, and Bloomington had an original expiration date of December 22, December 22 and December 17, 2025, respectively. Because the LMRWD's rules had not changed since each of these LGU permits were issued, each permit was extended for an additional two years. The LMRWD has initiated the drafting of a new watershed management plan and, as a result of the plan update, the LMRWD rules are also subject to the revision process. As rules are updated and requirements of the watershed management plan are delineated, the District will establish lines of communication with each LGU permittee and make sure expectations are clearly iterated.

Ongoing coordination is planned for 2026 with all our communities. We appreciate collaborating with our local partners to strengthen our watershed's protection of natural resources. Municipalities have the option to opt out of an LGU permit if they would like the LMRWD to continue leading the permitting. Eden Prairie has made the determination that it does not want permit authority.

Date	City	Ordinance	Status
2020	Eagan	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved
2020	Mendota Heights	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved
2020	Bloomington	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved, does not include permitting authority for Rule C—Floodplain and Drainage Alteration
2021	Carver	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved, does not include permitting authority for Rule C—Floodplain and Drainage Alteration
2021	Shakopee	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved, does not include permitting authority for Rule C—Floodplain and Drainage Alteration
2022-2023	Burnsville	Municipal LGU Permit	Conditionally Approved, does not include permitting authority for Rule C—Floodplain and Drainage Alteration
2023	Lilydale	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved
2024	Chaska	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved, does not include permitting authority within the HVRA, or for Rule C— Floodplain and Drainage Alteration, and Rule F—Steep Slopes
2024	Metropolitan Airports Commission	Municipal LGU Permit	Approved, does not include permitting authority for Rule C—Floodplain and Drainage Alteration, and Rule F—Steep Slopes



The LMRWD recognizes that control and determination of appropriate land use is the responsibility of the Local Governmental Units (LGU). The municipal permit allows municipalities to issue permits and manage actions as the primary permitting authority, provided they have adopted official controls necessary to bring local water management into conformance with the LMRWD Plan. For more information visit www.lowermnriverwd.org/regulatory-1/municipal-permit



2025 OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District honored Linda Loomis with the Outstanding Public Service Award in 2025. Awarded by the Board of Managers, this remarkable achievement recognizes the incredible contributions Linda has made not only to the Watershed District but to the water and natural resources management across the Twin Cities. Her tireless work exemplifies what it means to serve the public—guiding complex work with vision, building trust among partners, and ensuring that watershed management evolves to meet the needs of both people and ecosystems for generations to come.

Linda announced her retirement in 2025 after more than a decade of public service to the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District. She has stayed on to support a transition to the new Administrator and continues to provide experienced and steady leadership and oversight. Her practical and friendly approach has shaped many years of coalition building with partners all along the Minnesota River, both upstream and down.

Linda has offered our organization decades of experience, commitment, and thoughtful leadership to regional water management efforts. Based in Chaska, Linda has adeptly coordinated complex projects ranging from watershed planning and outreach to administration of contractors and complex multi-agency collaboration.

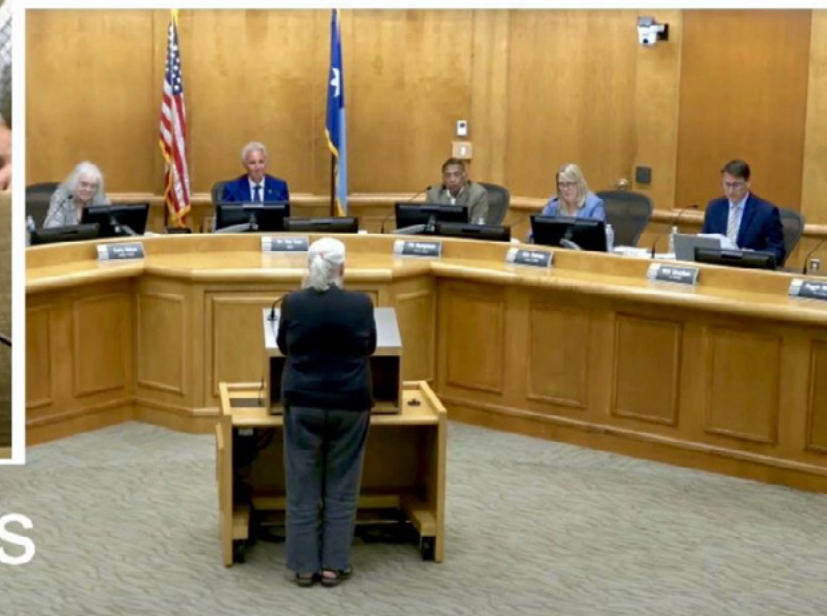
Before her role as Administrator, Linda Loomis served as mayor of Golden Valley, Minnesota for a decade—an officially part time role to which she brought full time dedication. During her tenure, she led transformative civic improvements, including the construction of 41 miles of streets, nearly eight miles of sanitary sewer mains, four and a half miles of water main, and over two miles of Bassett Creek stabilization. Under her thoughtful stewardship, Golden Valley also achieved a coveted Triple A bond rating.



Linda also chaired the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission, co-chaired a joint water governance task force with Minneapolis, and cultivated widespread citizen engagement through initiatives like Envision Golden Valley, the Community Foundation, Lilac Plantings, and more.

As a respected advisor to both technical committees and the Board of Managers, she has played a pivotal role in guiding policy and ensuring that the district's mission is informed by integrity, resilience, and sustainable outcomes. Her tireless advocacy and service have deeply influenced the health of the Minnesota River and the well-being of communities along its banks—making her a most deserving recipient of this award on the occasion of the District's 65th anniversary.

“Thank you, Linda, for your leadership, wisdom, and commitment in helping to make the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District a meaningful and effective organization.” — LMRWD Board of Managers



Linda Loomis



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

112 East 5th Street, #102

Chaska, Minnesota 55318

Administrator

William Lytle, PhD

Phone: 906.231.2556

Email: admin@lowermnriverwd.org

