LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

March 2019 Administrator report
From: Linda Loomis, Administrator
To: LMRWD Board of Managers

In addition to items on the meeting agenda, work continues on the following District projects and issues:

Meeting agenda and packet
At one time the Board directed that all projects be placed on the agenda and remain there until completed, so that they did not become forgotten. This has created a very long agenda. Some of the items are not active and may only have periodic actions, like the Eden Prairie Bank Stabilization. Staff asks that the Board consider removing all the projects and projects reviews from the agenda unless Board action is necessary. Updates on projects that do not require board action can be provided through the Administrator's monthly report.

Bloomington City Open House
The LMRWD has been invited to have a table at the city's open house 9:00am to 1:00pm Saturday May 19, 2019. I have a conflict that day, however, if any of the Managers would be available to staff a booth, I can make sure there are handout and other information to share with resident.

Site Specific Standard
MPCA has notified the LMRWD that it will issue a site specific standard for Selenium in a segment of the Minnesota River. The segment of the Minnesota River that will be subject to the standard is from the outfall from the Seneca Waste Water Treatment Outfall to the confluence with the Mississippi River. This standard will allow the Metropolitan Council Environmental Service to exceed the general value for Selenium. Public comment began March 4, 2019 and will remain open until April 18, 2019, 4:30pm.

More information can be found in the attached Public Notice.

TH 41 River Crossing
MnDOT would like to remove the New Jersey barriers that line the roadway of TH 41 between the City of Chaska and TH 169. In order to do this, they need to improve the Right of Way (ROW) of the highway in order to maintain safety. The reason the barriers have been installed is to prevent vehicles that might leave the roadway from ending up in the Minnesota River. MnDOT is required to remove the barriers whenever the river rises to allow for the free flow of water through the floodway. Removal of the barriers is time consuming and it is not always easy to forecast when removal of the barriers will be required.

City of Eden Prairie Arbor Walk/Green Fair
The City of Eden Prairie invited the LMRWD to participate in its annual Arbor Walk Green Fair, Saturday, May 4, 2019 from 9:00am to Noon at Round Lake Park. There is no cost to the LMRWD to participate in this event. Estimated attendance last year was 500 people. This event coincides with National Arbor Day and there will be a tree climbing competition going on during the event. It is an opportunity for the LMRWD to meet with people in the community. I am available that day, however, Managers are more than welcome to attend.

Barr Engineering/Flint Hills
Barr Engineering who has been consulting for the LMRWD on the Vernon Avenue Dredge Management site informed the District that they have been retained by Flint Hills Engineering to assist them with flood-proofing its facilities in Savage. Staff thanked them for the notice and indicated that we do not see a conflict with the work they are performing for the LMRWD.

Scott WMO
The Scott WMO invited the LMRWD to make a presentation to the Scott Watershed Planning Commission. President Hartmann and I will attend the April 22nd meeting of the Commission to update them on the work the LMRWD is doing, with an emphasis on initiatives in Scott County.

Remote participation in Board meetings
Staff has found a consultant that was used by the Rice Creek Watershed District to evaluate how to include Managers in Board meetings from a remote location. I am working to schedule a meeting with the consultant. I have also spoken with the District Administrator from the Pelican Rapids Watershed District. Pelican Rapids has a policy for remote participation by Managers and has also been doing this for a while. I have asked them for their policy and also any other information they can share about how they do this.

I have also asked Carver County if they are able to have County Commissioners participate remotely and if not, does the A/V equipment in the County Board room allows for it.

Freshwater Society Ice Out Loon In
A table for 8 at the Freshwater Society Ice Out Loon In has been purchased for the LMRWD. The event is scheduled to take place at the Metropolitan Ballroom, in 5418 Wayzata Boulevard, Golden Valley on Saturday, May 4th. Doors open and the Silent Auction begins at 5:00pm. Please let me know if you want to attend, so I can inform Freshwater.

Scott County Emergency Management Planning
Scott County is beginning work to update its emergency management plan. The LMRWD has been invited to participate in this planning and I attended a kick-off meeting on March 14th.

Hennepin County Emergency Management/Flood Insurance Outreach
Hennepin County Emergency Management requested that we disseminate information about flood insurance give the high risk of flooding this spring. Information from FEMA has been posted on the LMRWD website under news articles.

Nine Mile Creek WD/Eden Prairie Adopt a Storm Drain
On March 15th, I attended a meeting to discuss the rollout in Eden Prairie of a program called Adopt-a-drain. This is an educational program begun by the Capitol Region Watershed District and Watershed Partners. Watershed Partners is a coalition of water management organizations that is run out of the Center for Global Environmental Education at Hamline University. The LMRWD has not been a partner of Watershed Partners.

The Eden Prairie Adopt-a-drain program is ready to be rolled out and the LMRWD was invited to be a partner and contribute to the cost of the program. The cost of the program would involve the LMRWD becoming a member of Watershed Partners. Membership fees for Watershed Districts are based on the Annual Budget and ranges from $350 to $2,999 per year. There is then a cost to implement the program which ranges from $3,519 to $4,554 depending on who would distribute the information to participants in the program. The implementation cost is based on 100 participants. There would be an ongoing annual cost to sign up participants in the program.

The program consists of residents signing up to adopt one or more storm drains. By adopting a storm drain residents commit to monitoring the drain and keeping if clear of trash and debris. The goal of the

program is to get people to make the connection between storm drains and waterways. The added benefit is the amount of trash and debris that is kept out of the waterways.

Watershed Partners intends to roll this program out throughout the 7 county metropolitan area. Cities can choose whether or not to participate. If a city chooses not to participate, then water management organization would fund the implementation. If a city chooses to not participate, they would not be able to access the information collected through the program, nor would they be able to take credit for the program under theMS4 Permit program.

Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit
The latest update for the Orange Line is attached.

Upcoming meetings/events

- Upper Mississippi River Waterway Association - Thursday, March 21, 2019, 11:30am Lilydale Pool & Yacht Club
- 2019 Izaak Walton League Watershed Summit:Ecosystems Approach to Water Management - Saturday, March 23, 2019; 8:30am -4:00pm: Normandale Community College, Garden Conference Center
- Water Storage Forum - Thursday, April 4, 2019, 10:00am - 3:30pm, Kato Ballroom 200 Chestnut Street, Mankato, MN
- Metro MAWD- Tuesday April 9, 2019, 7:00pm, Capitol Region Watershed District, 595 Aldine, St. Paul, MN
- Moos Family Lecture Series: Dr. David Montgomery - A New Case for Agriculture, April 16, 2019, Plymouth Creek Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth MN, public reception 5:30pm, Lecture 7:00pm
- USACE River Resource Forum - April 23-24, 2019 (more information will be provided as it becomes available)
- Ice Out/Loon In - Freshwater Annual Gala, May 4, 2019, Metropolitan Club & Ballroom
- 2019 Water Summit-Bridging Science and Society - May 9-10, 2019, 8:30am-4:30pm, Science Museum of Minnesota
- 12th MN River Congress - Thursday, May 16, 2019, St. Peter Minnesota (more information will be provided as it becomes available)

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division

Notice of Availability of the Draft Minnesota River Selenium Site-Specific Standard and Request for Comment

Public comment period begins: March 4, 2019

Public comment period ends: April 18, 2019, 4:30 pm

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is requesting comments on the proposed site-specific (SSS) selenium water quality standard for the lower Minnesota River and associated floodplain lakes in Hennepin and Dakota counties. For more information about the site-specific standard, see https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/site-specific-water-quality-standards.

Background

The MPCA designates beneficial uses for all waters of the state (as defined in Minn. Stat. § 115.01, subd. 22) and develops water quality standards to protect those uses. Most streams, rivers, drainage ways, lakes, ponds, wetlands, etc. in Minnesota are designated Class 2. Class 2 protects: 1) the ability to swim in and boat on the water (recreation); and 2) the organisms that live in or on the water or aquatic substrates as well as the organisms that depend on aquatic habitats to fulfill any part of their life cycle (aquatic life). The proposed change to the selenium standard is for the Class 2 standard.

The current Class 2 selenium standard applied state-wide is 5 µg/L total selenium, as a one-day average (chronic standard), and 20 µg/L total selenium, as a four-day average (maximum standard). This standard is over 30 years old, and much has been learned about selenium toxicity since the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed this criterion in 1987.

Excess selenium can harm the aquatic life use by accumulating up the food chain and into fish tissue, which results in reproductive effects. The EPA studied the effects of selenium on aquatic organisms, and published an updated water quality criterion for selenium in 2016. The new science and criterion show that the most harmful effect of selenium on aquatic organisms is due to its bioaccumulative properties. These longer-term effects are observed at lower concentrations than acute (short-term) effects.

Accumulation of selenium occurs primarily through the diet of aquatic organisms, rather than through exposure to selenium in the water. Selenium that accumulates in the organism can be transferred to the eggs, causing reproductive effects. EPA's document also points out that the accumulation of selenium varies on a site-specific basis. This updated information is not included in Minnesota's current state-wide standard for selenium, which was based on EPA's 1987 criteria guidance and adopted in Minnesota Rule in 1990. The state's existing selenium standard can be found in Minn. R. 7050.0222.

As acknowledged by the EPA, site-specific data can show that different standards are appropriate to protect aquatic life and recreation in a specific water body. In these cases, the MPCA can modify existing standards with a site-specific standard approved by the EPA. Such a modification requires public notice, a public meeting and the opportunity for comment.

Minnesota River site

The Minnesota River runs 320 miles east across southern Minnesota until it flows into the Mississippi River. The upper 80 miles of the river are periodically dammed and the lower 240 miles are free-flowing through a highly developed (agriculture and residential) watershed.

A lead-acid battery recycler, Gopher Resource, LLC (Gopher) discharges effluent containing selenium to the Seneca wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), which ultimately discharges treated wastewater that contains selenium to the lower Minnesota River. Gopher collected water column and fish tissue data from the site to utilize in the development of an updated site-specific standard that takes into consideration the additional knowledge about selenium toxicity.

The extent of the site-specific standard is a six-mile reach that runs from the Seneca WWTP effluent outfall on the Minnesota River (AUID 07020012-505) in Dakota County to the confluence with the Mississippi River (AUID 07010206-505). The standard also applies to the two connected floodplain lakes (Long Meadow Lake and Gun Club Lake) and oxbow habitats since these still-water systems are connected to the Minnesota River at high flows when the floodplain is flooded.

Proposed site-specific standard

The proposed standard (see table below) contains the fish tissue concentrations from EPA's 2016 criterion, given as egg/ovary, whole body, and muscle tissue. Additionally, two water column values that are protective of the tissue concentrations in two habitat types were developed, based on site-specific conditions, using the methodology outlined in EPA's 2016 criterion guidance.

Selenium generally accumulates to a greater degree in still water than in flowing water. Therefore, a water column value that protects the main channel was developed separately from the value that protects the oxbow and floodplain lakes areas, where fish tissue concentrations were higher. To assess compliance with these criteria, fish tissue or water column data can be collected, but the fish tissue data will supersede any water column data.

Media type	Fish tissue[1]		Water column[4]
Criterion element	*Egg/ovary*[2]	*Fish whole body or muscle*[3]	*Monthly average exposure*
Magnitude	15.1 mg/kg dw	8.5 mg/kg dw whole body or 11.3 mg/kg dw muscle (skinless, boneless filet)	11 µg/L in river main channel 5.6 µg/L in oxbows and floodplain lakes
Duration	Instantaneous measurement[5]	Instantaneous measurement[5]	30 days[6]
Frequency	Not to be exceeded	Not to be exceeded	Not more than once in three years on average

1. Fish tissue elements are expressed as steady-state.
2. Egg/ovary supersedes any whole-body, muscle, or water column element when fish egg/ovary concentrations are measured.

3. Fish whole-body or muscle tissue supersedes water column element when both fish tissue and water concentrations are measured.
4. Water column values are based on total selenium in water and are derived from fish tissue values via bioaccumulation modeling. Water column values are the applicable criterion element in the absence of steady-state condition fish tissue data.
5. Fish tissue data provide instantaneous point measurements that reflect integrative accumulation of selenium over time and space in fish population(s) at a given site.
6. The bioaccumulation of selenium into fish tissue occurs over a longer time period than with typical acute or chronic toxic effects to aquatic life. Therefore, a longer duration for the averaging period is appropriate for the selenium SSS. Additionally, because of this longer averaging period, the minimum stream flow (see Minn. R. 7053.0205, subp. 7) for which wastes must be controlled to meet the SSS will be the $30Q_3$ flow.

Basis and rationale for site-specific standard

The Clean Water Act, federal regulations, Minnesota's State Water Pollution Control Act (Minn. Stat. Ch. 115) and Minnesota's Rules establish opportunities to use site-specific approaches. Site-specific options allow the MPCA to consider data on local characteristics to apply more precise numeric standards to protect the beneficial uses of an individual water body.

Minnesota Rule chapter 7050 provides water quality standards for waters of the state as well as the legal basis for consideration and adoption of site-specific water quality standards (Minn. R. 7050.0220, subp. 7).

The MPCA considered the following in developing the SSS:

- The current selenium standard found in Minn. R. 7050.0222 is based on outdated science. Effects of selenium on fish have been demonstrated to be caused by its bioaccumulative properties, with toxicity primarily occurring as reproductive effects, after transfer of selenium to offspring in the eggs. The 2016 EPA criteria document uses the more recent information about selenium toxicity to develop criteria values for selenium concentrations in fish tissue, as well as a translation into a water column criterion. The document also outlines methods for developing site-specific water column standards for selenium.
- The tissue criterion elements outlined in EPA's 2016 criteria document are appropriate for Minnesota, as the values are based on fish species found in the state.
- Where site-specific data are available, translating the fish tissue values into a protective water column value can protect the aquatic life designated use at the site. Considerable data were collected to develop the SSS, and the data were used to derive a water column value for the site using EPA's updated methods.
- The Minnesota River site consists of flowing and still-water habitats. These two types of habitats can result in differing amounts of selenium accumulation into fish tissue. Therefore, water column values that are protective of the different habitat types were developed.

For further detail and explanation regarding this proposal, see the supporting technical document "Technical Justification for Draft Minnesota River Site-Specific Selenium Standard" available on the MPCA's site-specific standards webpage (https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/site-specific-water-quality-standards) and at the MPCA office at the address listed below.

Preliminary determination on the draft site-specific standard

The MPCA Commissioner has made a preliminary determination that the modification of the selenium standard is justified. Comments to the proposed site-specific selenium standard will be considered before being sent to the EPA for approval.

Submit written comments

To submit written comments on the proposed site-specific selenium standard for the lower Minnesota River and associated floodplain lakes, you must include:

1. A statement of your interest in the proposed site-specific standard;
2. A statement of the action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to sections of the proposed site-specific standard that you believe should be changed; and
3. The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the Commissioner to investigate the merits of your position.

Written comments on the proposed site-specific standard must be postmarked or received by the MPCA contact person listed below by 4:30 pm on April 18, 2019.

Attend a public meeting

A public meeting is a formal meeting that the MPCA is required hold to solicit public comment and statements on matters before the MPCA and to help clarify and resolve issues. A public meeting on the proposed selenium site-specific standard for the Minnesota River will be held:

Where: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Rd N, St. Paul, MN 55155
When: April 11, 2019, at 6:00 pm.

The public meeting will also be available via WebEx. Information about connecting to the meeting through WebEx is available on the MPCA's site-specific standards webpage: https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/site-specific-water-quality-standards.

Agency contact person

Direct written comments and requests for more information to:

Laura Lyle
Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4194
651-757-2288
Toll free: 1-800-657-3864
Fax: 218-828-2594
laura.lyle@state.mn.us
TTY users may call the MPCA teletypewriter at 651-282-5332 or 1-800-657-3864.

Dated: March 4, 2019

METRO Orange Line Newsletter: March 2019

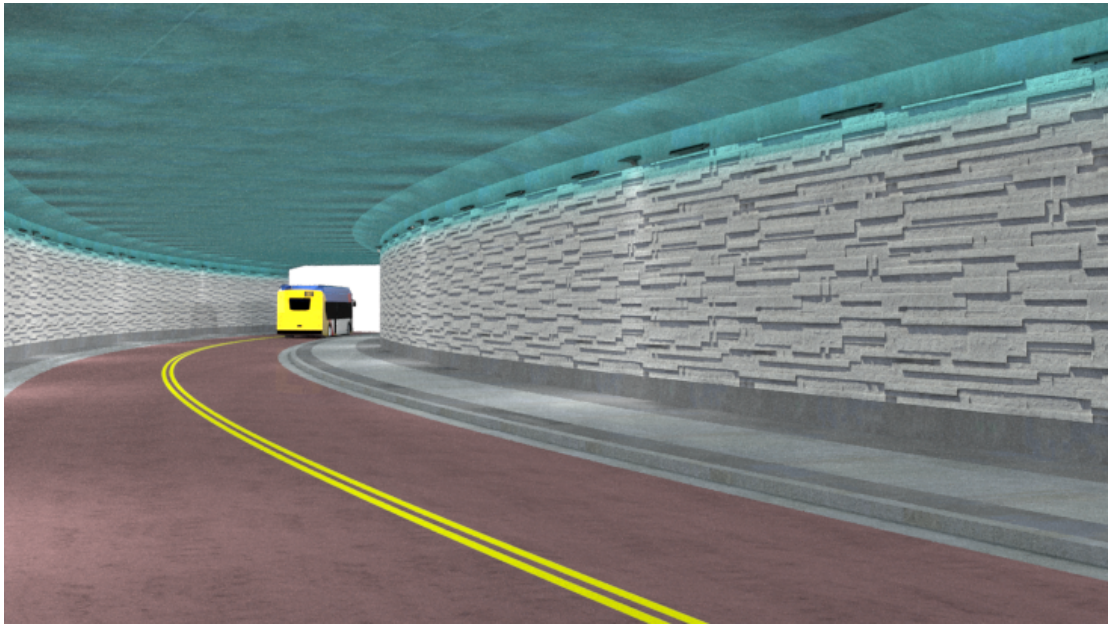
Juan Rangel <juan.rangel@metrotransit.org>
Reply-To: juan.rangel@metrotransit.org
To: Linda Loomis <naiadconsulting@gmail.com>

Thu, Mar 14, 2019 at 5:16 PM

METRO Orange Line

PROJECT UPDATE

Calling all Contractors for Knox Avenue Transitway Construction



With full project funding secured, the Metropolitan Council will advertise METRO Orange Line's Knox Avenue Transitway construction package to general contractors this month. The Council anticipates awarding the contract this spring.

The selected contractor will construct a new transitway tunnel beneath I-494 to connect Knox Avenue in Richfield and Bloomington, creating a fast, reliable connection for METRO Orange Line. Along with transit-only lanes, it will include a multi-use trail for pedestrians and bicyclists. The transitway will streamline Orange Line service, resulting in a trip that is 45-55% faster than the current conditions on the Route 535 in this area. View more images of the transitway on the **Orange Line website**.

Construction along Knox Avenue will span from just south of 76th Street near Best Buy Headquarters in Richfield to Knox Avenue & American Boulevard near Southtown Shopping Center in Bloomington. Building the transitway will entail excavation, utility work, and construction of the road, sidewalks, driveway access and retaining walls. The work is anticipated to begin in the summer 2019 and continue for two and a half years.

The Knox Avenue package is one of three construction contracts to build Orange Line infrastructure. ALS, the joint venture of Ames Construction, Lunda Construction Company and Shafer Contracting, began building components of the Orange Line in Minneapolis through the **35W@94: Downtown to Crosstown** project in 2017. A third contract, to construct Orange Line stations, will be advertised in the future.

Construction Career Fair

Ames Construction, Lunda Construction Company and Shafer Contracting, the joint venture building the 35W@94: Downtown to Crosstown project, will be holding a career fair along with their subcontractors 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on Friday, March 15 at Sabathani Community Center on 310 East 38th Street in Minneapolis. Attend to learn about careers in the highway construction industry and potential job openings within these companies.

Route 535 Weekend Service Changes

Metro Transit is planning to eliminate all Saturday and Sunday/holiday service on Route 535 effective June 8, 2019.

Weekend service was added to Route 535 on a portion of the future Orange Line in June 2018 during 35W@94 construction. Unfortunately, the number of weekend riders has remained well below the number required to maintain the service. Alternative Metro Transit service is available in the form

of Route 4 via Southtown, Lyndale or Penn Avenue and Route 18 via Nicollet Avenue, South Bloomington Transit Center.

Questions or comments about this recommended service reduction? Contact **Outreach Coordinator Juan Rangel** at 612-599-0459 by Monday, March 25th.

The METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project will connect Minneapolis, Richfield, Bloomington and Burnsville with fast, frequent and reliable all-day transit service along I-35W.

For details, visit metrotransit.org/OrangeLine or contact Project Manager Christina Morrison at **christina.morrison@metrotransit.org** or 612-349-7690.

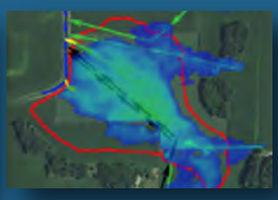
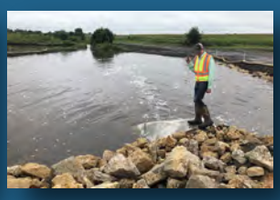
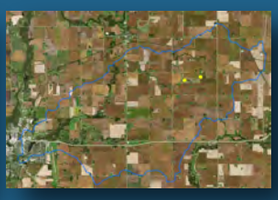
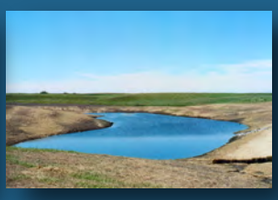
560 Sixth Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411

WATER STORAGE FORUM

Research shows the long-term solution to improve Minnesota River water quality is to reduce peak flows and store more water on the landscape. This can take many forms, including improved soil health, multi-purpose drainage management, upland impoundments, and urban rain gardens. Come learn about the latest research and regional case studies.

Thursday, April 4th, 2019

10:00 AM to 3:30 PM
Kato Ballroom, 200 Chestnut Street, Mankato, MN 56001
Registration Fee: $40 online or $50 at the door, includes lunch

AGENDA

Why Storage Matters	**Don & Becky Waskosky** Le Sueur River Watershed Network
Minnesota's Climatic Trends	**Dr. Kenneth Blumenfeld** Senior Climatologist, Minnesota State Climate Office
Hydrology, geomorphology, and the need for water storage	**Dr. Karen Gran** Associate Professor, University of Minnesota, Duluth
Diversity of water storage approaches	**Al Kean** Chief Engineer, BWSR
Multipurpose Drainage Management in Faribault County	**Merissa Lore & Dustin Anderson** Faribault County
Area II Floodwater Retention: History, Approach and Challenges	**Kerry Netzke** Executive Director, Area II MN River Basin Projects
Cedar River Watershed District Strategic and targeted storage areas to improve water quality and reduce downstream flooding and damages	**Cody Fox** Cedar River Watershed District
Water Storage and Soil Health	**Jennifer Hahn** Redwood SWCD, MN Soil Health Coalition Coordinator

FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO REGISTER

https://mrbdc.mnsu.edu/water-storage-forum
Emma Young, Minnesota GreenCorps, emma.young@mnsu.edu; 507-389-1218
Kimberly Musser, Kimberly.Musser@mnsu.edu; 507-389-5307
Water Resource Center, Minnesota State University, Mankato

THANK YOU

Many thanks to Minnesota GreenCorps, speakers, steering committee, and project collaborators for making this event possible. Funding for this event was provided in part by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).

WRC WATER RESOURCES CENTER MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
Minnesota GreenCorps
AMERICORPS MINNESOTA
MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO
LE SUEUR RIVER WATERSHED NETWORK
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND