

MIDDLE ST. CROIX WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Lakeland

Prepared by:

MIDDLE ST. CROIX WMO BOARD OF MANAGERS
APPROVAL DATE: February 13th, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization encompasses approximately 19.8 square miles and is located in the east-central part of Washington County. A distinction exists between the Middle St. Croix watershed and the other watersheds of Washington County in that the Middle St. Croix watershed has many small, parallel watersheds that all flow to the St. Croix, whereas the other watersheds in the County generally have one major drainage with a headwaters and outlet. Land use in the watershed is evenly distributed between agricultural uses, rural residential, high-density residential and commercial land uses.

The Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) is a Joint Powers Watershed Management Organization composed of ten St. Croix Valley communities that was established under State Statute 103B to cooperatively manage water resources within the watershed. The ten member communities of the MSCWMO are: Afton, Bayport, Baytown Township, Lakeland, Lakeland Shores, Lake St. Croix Beach, Oak Park Heights, St. Mary's Point, Stillwater, and West Lakeland Township.

In general, the purposes of a Watershed Management Organization (WMO) are to conserve natural resources through land use planning, flood control, and other conservation projects in order to ensure continued public health and welfare. The specific purposes of a watershed management organization are:

- Cooperatively manage water resources in the watershed.
- Inventory and assess the resources of the watershed.
- Monitor the water quality of lakes and streams in the watershed.
- Provide education on water related issues in the watershed.
- Review development plans for stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, and provide wetland and shoreland protection.
- Plan and implement capital improvement projects that enhance the water resources of the watershed.

The mission of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization is to jointly and cooperatively manage the water resources of the watershed. The ten member communities will do so to conserve and protect the water resources in an efficient and effective manner.

ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET

MSCWMO Board of Managers

Each member municipality or township within the MSCWMO appoints one member to the MSCWMO Board. The 2024 representatives from each participatory community are listed below.

Annie Perkins
4042 River Road S.
Afton, MN 55001
651.592.3007

Tom McCarthy
16455 20th St. S.
Lake St. Croix Beach, MN 55043
651.436.7031

Brian Zeller (Chair)
84 St. Croix Trail S
Lakeland, MN 55043
612.325.3038

Beth Olfelt-Nelson
2990 Itasca Ave. S.
St. Mary's Point, MN 55043
612.417.5394

Carly Johnson
14418 57th St N
Oak Park Heights, MN 55082
651.261.5801

Avis Peters
13045 53rd Street Pl.
Stillwater., MN 55082
651.430.8163

Ryan Collins
1467 Benson Blvd E
Stillwater MN 55082
651.246.8264

Dave Millard
16051 Quality Ct
Lakeland, MN 55043
651.408.3483

Rachel Dana
2235 Oakgreen Ave N
West Lakeland Township, MN 55082
612.751.7583

John Dahl
775 3rd Ave N.
Bayport, MN 55003
651.439.7312

MSCWMO Contract Support Staff

The MSCWMO does not employ staff but does contract with several organizations for professional services. The organizations providing these services are listed below.

Administrator
Matt Oldenburg-Downing
Washington Conservation
District
455 Hayward Avenue
Oakdale, MN 55128
651.796.2227

Attorney
Troy Gilchrist
1250 Wayzata Boulevard E
Unit #1065
Wayzata, MN 55391
612.234.7539
troy@townlawcenter.com

Recording Secretary
Washington Conservation
District
455 Hayward Avenue
Oakdale, MN 55128
651.330.8220 Ext. 2225

Table 1: 2024 Budget

Administration Budget	Community Contributions
Administration - General	\$ 32,095
Accounting	\$ 1,600
Legal Fees – General	\$ 900
Audit	\$ 2,800
Insurance	\$ 2,600
Office supplies/equipment/postage	\$ 625
Minutes/Clerical	\$ 1,215
Copying/printing	\$ 625
Subtotal	\$ 42,460
Project Budget	
Project Contingency	\$ 2,000
Engineering - Project	\$ 5,500
Development Plan Reviews	\$ 5,200
Erosion Monitoring Program	\$ 2,315
BMP Program Tech. Assistance	\$ 28,600
BMP Program Cost Share	\$ 20,000
Community TA	\$ 3,000
Water Resource Educator	\$ 6,700
Website	\$ 900
Inspection and Tracking Database	\$ 900
Water Monitoring	\$ 23,000
Water Monitoring Equip. Savings	\$ 750
2025 WMP Update	\$ 5,000
Subtotal	\$ 103,865
TOTAL	\$ 146,325

Table 2: 2025 Budget

Administration Budget	Community Contributions
Administration - General	\$ 33,000
Accounting	\$ 1,800
Legal Fees – General	\$ 500
Audit	\$ 5,500
Insurance	\$ 2,600
Office supplies/equipment/postage	\$ 400
Minutes/Clerical	\$ 1,400
Copying/printing	\$ 400
Subtotal	\$ 45,600
Project Budget	
Project Contingency	\$ 2,000
Engineering - Project	\$ 4,000
Development Plan Reviews	\$ 7,000
Erosion Monitoring Program	\$ 2,400
BMP Program Tech. Assistance	\$ 32,000
BMP Program Cost Share	\$ 15,000
Community TA	\$ 3,000
Water Resource Educator	\$ 6,700
Website	\$ 900
Inspection and Tracking Database	\$ 900
Water Monitoring	\$ 23,000
Water Monitoring Equip. Savings	\$ 750
2025 WMP Update	\$5,000
Subtotal	\$ 102,650
TOTAL	\$ 148,250

AUDIT REPORT

Michael Peterson, Certified Public Accountant & Consultant, has been contracted to complete an audit of the financial management of the WMO for the year 2024. At the time of writing this report the audit process is underway. The audit will be presented to the State of Minnesota and posted to the MSCWMO website upon completion.

2024 PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

2024 Implementation of Performance Standards

The mission of the MSCWMO is to jointly and cooperatively manage water resources within the WMO and to provide effective and efficient services to the residents of the watershed. To work to meet this goal, the MSCWMO adopted Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) developed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The watershed also provided assistance to member communities to integrate MIDS into local ordinance. Rather than create its own separate permit program, the MSCWMO reviews projects that meet the criteria listed in section 7.0 of the 2015-2025 Watershed Management Plan. Member communities do not issue permits until the project has met all applicable watershed performance standards.

Table 3: MSCWMO Project Reviews and Total Phosphorous Load Reductions of Permanent Stormwater Best Management Practices Estimated with the MIDS Calculator.

Year	Total Projects Reviewed	Total BMP Estimated TP Reduction (lbs./yr.)	Redevelopment BMP Estimated TP Reduction (lbs./yr.)
2016	19	26.7	25.6
2017*	19	133.6	124.7
2018	18	25.8	17.2
2019	13	17.9	6.0
2020	11	51.7	0.2
2021	13	14.0	7.6
2022	18	7.2	7.2
2023	22	13.0	11.1
2024	12	45.52	5.44

*2017 includes the permanent stormwater BMPs installed as part of the St. Croix Crossing project.

2024 Projects Implementation

The MSCWMO 2015-2025 Watershed Management Plan targets goal reductions of Total Phosphorus to each of the three major watersheds draining to impaired surface waters listed on the State of Minnesota 303 D list: Lake St. Croix, Lily Lake, and Perro Creek. From 2015 to 2023, table 6.6 of the MSCWMO Watershed Management Plan identifies a total target of 197.1 lbs of total phosphorus load reduction to be completed by voluntary retrofitting. To date, 86 water quality improvement projects have been installed totaling an estimated annual total phosphorus reduction of 289.8 lbs. Thirteen projects were installed in 2024.

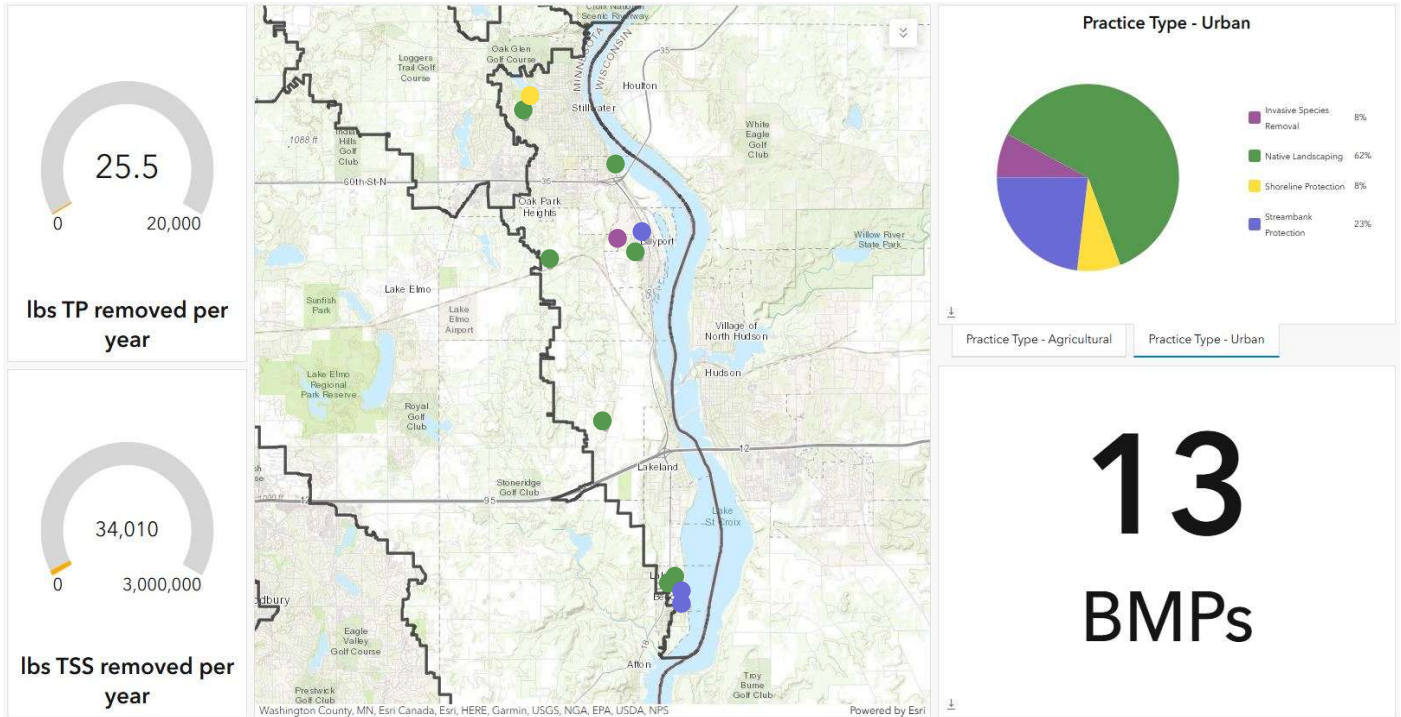


Figure 1. 2023 Installed Practices with Total Phosphorus (TP) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) Reductions

Table 4: MSCWMO Water Quality Retrofits and Total Phosphorous Load Reductions of Permanent Stormwater Best Management Practices Estimated with the MIDS Calculator.

Year	Total Projects Installed	Total BMP Estimated TP Reduction (lbs./yr.)	Targeted Subwatersheds
2015	17	17.3	Lake St. Croix and McKusick
2016	3	48.8	Lake St. Croix and Perro
2017	5	10.1	Lake St. Croix and Lily
2018	6	56.3	Lake St. Croix and Lily
2019	7	39.4	Lake St. Croix and Lily
2020	4	0.8	Lake St. Croix and Perro
2021	4	65.3	Lake St. Croix and Lily
2022	12	8.0	Lake St. Croix and McKusick
2023	15	18.3	Lake St. Croix, Lily, and McKusick
2024	13	25.5	Lake St. Croix, Perro Creek, McKusick

Best Management Practices and Subwatershed Implementation Program

The MSCWMO continues to seek partnerships to construct high-performing and low-cost stormwater best management practices identified in its subwatershed analyses. In 2024, four projects were completed that were either identified in a subwatershed analysis or located in priority direct drainages that were part of these analyses. These projects received state and local funding to design and construct:

Projects that were installed in 2023:

- Lake St. Croix Beach South Beach Streambank Protection, Lake St. Croix Subwatershed.
- Lake St. Croix Beach Section 5 Streambank Protection, Lake St. Croix Subwatershed.
- Perro Creek Streambank Protection, Perro Creek Subwatershed.
- Barkers Alps Woodland Restoration, Perro Creek Subwatershed.

The following is a summary of work that was completed in 2024:

Lake St. Croix Beach South Beach Streambank Protection:

This project leveraged funding and technical support from multiple sources to address ongoing bank stability and erosion concerns on the St. Croix, enhance 0.13 acres of high-quality native buffer habitat, and restore 0.12 acres of native upland buffer habitat south of the Lake St. Croix Beach levee and swimming beach. Funds from the MSCWMO and Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) contributed to:

1. A prescribed burn to promote native prairie vegetation in existing buffer areas,
2. Interseeding of existing buffer areas for increased forb diversity, and
3. Seeding and establishment of native vegetation in disturbed or degraded areas dominated by non-native cool season grasses with low forb diversity.

Long-term efforts will include management of new or existing native buffer areas to control noxious weeds and promote native species beneficial to the rusty patched bumble bee and other endangered or at-risk insects.



[Above] Section 5 stabilization, upland buffer restoration.

Lake St. Croix Beach Section 5 Streambank Protection:

In summer of 2024 the City of Lake St. Croix Beach requested \$5,000 in cost-share funding through the WMO to stabilize a 90 linear-foot stretch of riverbank immediately north of the LSCB levee where recent flooding & tree mortality had caused bank instability and substantial soil loss. The City completed the stabilization work in July of 2024 with assistance from WCD staff to restore the upland buffer between the existing pedestrian trail and riprap bank stabilization.



[Above] South Beach stabilization before (left) and after (right)

Perro Creek Streambank Protection:

In September of 2024 the City of Bayport requested \$5,000 in cost-share through the WMO to stabilize a 300 linear-foot stretch of Perro Creek at Perro Park to reduce soil loss, restore native habitat, and prevent anticipated bank failure upstream of the Perro Creek diversion. Stabilization techniques included a combination of rock toe armoring and upland buffer restoration to protect banks from high flows while enhancing habitat for wildlife. The project was pursued in partnership with the Washington Conservation District under an FY22 Clean Water Fund grant. WMO funds were used to help cover the cost of seed and streambank stabilization materials in support of the project, which was completed in October of 2024.



[Above] *Perro Creek Streambank stabilization and buffer restoration before (left) and after (right)*

Barkers Alps Woodland Restoration, Bayport:

In 2023, the City of Bayport received funding from the Metro Conservation Partners Legacy Grant (part of the Outdoor Heritage Fund and part of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment) to enhance 24 acres of buckthorn dominated woodland in Barker's Alps Park due to a grant from. The WCD assisted in project development, grant writing, RFP development, and is a consultant on the project. The City of Bayport contracted with Landbridge Ecological to restore and enhance Phase 1 (17.30 acres) and phase 2 (6.8 acres) of buckthorn dominated woodland in. June 30, 2027 is the anticipated project completion date. To date the invasive woody species removal and canopy thinning has been completed.



[Above] *Barkers Alps buckthorn removal and tree canopy editing in progress.*

Middle St Croix Mini-Grant Cost Share program:

The Middle St Croix WMO offers mini-grants (up to \$500) to qualifying landowners to install low-cost BMPs in priority areas. The program saw 9 installations and 24 inquiries (likely future applicants). These projects included one native shoreline buffer enhancement on Lake McKusick, and eight native landscaping projects for wildlife benefit.



[Left] *Our Savior Lutheran Church pollinator planting.* [Right] *Siegler shoreline restoration on Lake McKusick*

Erosion Monitoring Program

The MSCWMO erosion control inspection program was developed to ensure that the policies and performance standards of the MSCWMO were implemented on the ground for qualifying projects. Staff continue to inspect active projects, which were reviewed by the MSCWMO board. The MSCWMO coordinates its inspection program with its member communities and their building/permit inspectors.

In 2024, 12 erosion control inspections were conducted at 6 sites. Overall construction activity was lower than in previous years, although there were several rip rap installations along the St. Croix which were not inspected. Compliance over the year was good, with 33.3% of inspections receiving an A grade, 41.7% a B, 16.7% a C, 8.3% a D, and 0% an F. Compliance rates were slightly lower than recent years due to very wet conditions through most of 2024, before moving into drought conditions in late summer and fall. For the purposes of this summary, compliance rates for inspection items were only considered when the item was marked “compliant” or “non-compliant”, and all “not inspected” and “under review” items were removed from the total number of inspections for each inspection item. The most common non-compliant items noted on sites were lack of maintenance for damaged or missing perimeter controls (37.5% of inspections) and soils lacking stabilization where active work was paused longer than seven days (36.4% of inspections). The items with the highest compliance rates were maintenance of previously stabilized soils (100% of inspections), perimeter controls being properly installed on downgradient areas of the site prior to construction (87.5% of inspections), properly stabilized construction accesses installed (87.5% of inspections), and sweeping of sediments tracked onto paved surfaces (87.5% of inspections). Other notable items found to have a high rate of compliance were protection of installed stormwater treatment practices (80% of inspections), and preservation of vegetated buffers around lakes, streams, wetlands, and bluffs (66.7% of inspections). No sediment discharges to water resources were recorded on any inspection in 2024. However, one site was identified to have removed significant amounts of turfgrass, and replaced with landscaping and irrigation lines within the designated St. Croix River bluffline setback on both the permitted property and adjacent parcel. The site was remediated and fully stabilized, and performance standards will be clarified in the watershed management plan update to call for no land disturbing activity within bluffline setbacks.

Other activities conducted in 2024 intended to improve compliance were distribution of “reminder flyers” to project contacts in the spring and fall to prepare sites for wet conditions, and more critical inspections of permanent stormwater treatment features, such as rain gardens, to ensure they meet design and function standards. Improved communication and on-site meetings with project contacts regarding expected siting and function of features helped ensure proper construction in order to minimize any modifications or reconstruction of features.

BMP Inspections and Maintenance

The MSCWMO BMP Inspection and Tracking Database was developed to ensure that the installed practices are meeting functional and aesthetic expectations. In 2024, 151 MSCWMO projects were inspected. Utilizing the Washington Conservation District Maintenance Crew, Minnesota Conservation Corps, and volunteer effort, maintenance was performed on BMPs that are municipalities’ responsibility to maintain.

The watershed also worked in partnership with the East Metro Water Resource Education Program, Cities, Sustainable Stillwater, the Friends of Lily Lake, and the Stillwater Foundation to implement an Adopt a Raingarden Program in Stillwater, Oak Park Heights, Bayport, Lake St. Croix Beach and West Lakeland Township. The program will continue in 2025 under volunteer management.



Groundwater

The MSCWMO continued to recognize the Washington County Groundwater Plan during 2024 and continued to participate in County wide technical advisory committee meetings to prioritize implementation and identify responsible parties for specific activities. The MSCWMO also participated in the Washington County Groundwater Plan Update process in 2024.

Local Government Controls

The MSCWMO continued to work with its member communities to strengthen water quality and natural resource management. Through a Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation grant the MSCWMO assisted its member communities to update their local controls. In 2018 all communities except Stillwater adopted Minimum Impact Design Standards (MIDS) into local ordinance and code. All communities will continue to participate in the MSCWMO's project review program. The City of Stillwater has adopted MIDS standards by resolution in 2019 but has not codified.

One Watershed One Plan

In 2023, the MSCWMO has worked collaboratively with 15 local governments participating in the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The MSCWMO will continue to work collaboratively to implement a coordinated management plan on the large HUC 8 basin scale.

Information and Education Program

Shared Water Resource Educator

MSCWMO continues to participate in the East Metro Water Resource Education Program (EMWREP), as well as the Lower St. Croix Partnership Education Program (LSCP). The partnerships were formed in 2006 and 2021 respectively to educate community residents, businesses, staff, and decision-makers about issues affecting local lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and groundwater resources and to engage people in projects that will help to protect and improve the health of these water resources.

Education programs and activities completed in partnership with EMWREP in 2024 included:

Stakeholder Engagement for the MSCWMO 10-Year Management Plan Update

Throughout the year, EMWREP and MSCWMO staff worked to engage community residents in the plan update process through a variety of strategies, including an online survey for the general public, in-person meetings, a mailed survey to riverway landowners, and an e-newsletter delivered three times per year to 114 community volunteers.

Middle St. Croix WMO Riverway Landowner Survey

In June 2024, EMWREP worked with Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) to conduct a mailed survey of 476 riverway landowners in Bayport, Lakeland, Lakeland Shores, Lake St. Croix Beach, St. Mary's Point, and West Lakeland. The goal of the survey was to assess landowners' experiences, ideas and opinions related to shoreline and bluffland issues and to identify opportunities for collaboration to reduce erosion, improve habitat for fish and wildlife, and protect/improve water quality.

79 people completed the mailed survey (17% response rate). Riverway landowner said they care about seeing wildlife, maintaining clean and clear water, and avoiding algae blooms. They are also concerned about terrestrial invasive species and shoreline erosion. Happily, nearly 70% of riverway landowners who responded to the survey say they are or might be interested in working with the MSCWMO to improve riverway habitat and reduce bluff erosion. In particular, they are interested in free site visits, cost-share grants, and landscape design templates that they can use on their own. MSCWMO board members discussed the survey responses and next steps for landowner outreach at their Oct. 10 board meeting.

Read the [full survey results](#).



Above: MSCWMO recently surveyed landowners on the St. Croix River in Bayport, Lakeland, Lakeland Shores, Lake St. Croix Beach, St. Mary's Point, and West Lakeland.

Workshops and events focused on native landscapes and habitat restoration:

- **March 19 – Gardening with native plants webinar** (50 participants)
- **May 28 – Caring for your woodlands workshop in Afton** (70 participants)
- **Sat., May 11: Raingarden clean-up event** in Stillwater, in partnership with Sustainable Stillwater (30 participants)
- **Saturday, Sept. 7: Prairie seed collection in Bayport** at the site of the future Anderson Elementary School (20 participants)

St. Croix learning series for local leaders – June 24, Aug. 7, Sept. 30

Last year, EMWREP expanded its always-popular St. Croix River Workshop on the Water and offered three unique opportunities for community leaders to network and access support to protect water resources in our area. This learning series was designed for city councils, planning commissions, township boards, county commissioners, SWCD and watershed board members, and other local leaders. Additional partner who helped to make these events happen include the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership, National Park Service, Minnesota DNR, Wisconsin DNR, Polk County, St. Croix County, Washington County, Chisago SWCD, Isanti SWCD, Washington CD, Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix WD, and Middle St. Croix WMO. A total of 140 local leaders from Minnesota and Wisconsin participated.

- **Mon., June 24: 16th Annual St. Croix River Workshop on the Water (WOW)**
The June 24 workshop focused on actions local communities can take to protect their shorelines, as well as strategies to ensure better development and redevelopment projects. The boat traveled the section of river that passes through the Middle St. Croix WMO. Daniel Peterson, Supervisory Park Ranger with the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway was the keynote speaker.



Above: The 16th Annual St. Croix Workshop on the Water focused on actions communities can take to protect shorelines, strategies for dealing with sticky issues and variance requests, and Better Site Design for development and redevelopment projects

Adopt-a-Drain

The Adopt-a-Drain program engages community residents in helping to prevent stormwater pollution by cleaning leaves, litter and other debris off of storm drains near their homes. Volunteers get reminders via text or email and are asked to report their actions on-line so that cities can track the program's impact. The Adopt-a-Drain program was created by Hamline University's Center for Global Environmental Education on behalf of Watershed Partners, a metro area collaborative with 60+ partners.



During 2024, EMWREP continued to partner with Sustainable Stillwater to promote the Adopt a Drain program. To date, volunteers have adopted 189 storm drains in the Middle St. Croix WMO, including:

- 15 in Bayport
- 20 in Oak Park Heights
- 146 in Stillwater
- 8 in West Lakeland Twp.

EMWREP also helped the MSCWMO communities of Stillwater, Oak Park Heights, Bayport and Afton to meet their MS4 stormwater education requirements by delivering public education related to chloride (salt), pet waste, stormwater pollution, erosion and sediment control, lawn care best practices, and illicit discharge detection and elimination (IDDE) through a variety of communication platforms. Two larger-scale stormwater education campaigns included:

- **Chloride education** – EMWREP mailed education packages to private contractors, hosted a SMART Salt Certification training for snow plow drivers at local cities and townships, and share information with the general public during winter months.
- **Stormwater education for HOAs (homeowners associations):** During 2023-24, EMWREP conducted a survey and focus groups with HOA board members and property managers and used responses to develop a new education toolkit with 12 one-page factsheets. The education team also hosted a mini conference for HOA members at the Stillwater Area Library.

Presentations for community groups:

- **Monday, March 11:** Presentation to University Women's Group in Oak Park Heights. Angie talked about the State of the Water, PFAS, and wetlands.
- **Thu., Aug. 22:** Presentation to Stillwater Noon Rotary
- **Tue., Sept. 17:** State of the Water. Presentation to Zvago Community in Stillwater.
- **Tue., Oct. 1:** Groundwater & PFOS. Presentation to Stillwater Lions Club
- **Thu., Oct 10:** Presentation to Middle St. Croix WMO Board

Community events:

- **Sat., April 27:** Valley Eco Fair at Pioneer Park in Stillwater
- **July 31 – Aug. 4:** Washington County Fair
- **Thu., Oct. 10:** Leadership in the Valley, Agriculture & Environment Day in Bayport
- **Tue., Oct. 22:** Lakeview Hospital Green Week in Stillwater

Media and communications:

Angie Hong has published a weekly column for the Valley Life – Stillwater Gazette since 2006. The articles are also posted on-line at www.eastmetrowater.org. While all share information about watershed topics, the following articles also highlighted MSCWMO projects:

- **Local officials set sail to learn about shorelines and development** (July 5, 2024) “This year’s workshop focused specifically on St. Croix Riverway Rules, strategies for dealing with sticky issues and variance requests, and better site design for development and redevelopment projects.”
- **Will derby ducks sail on a cleaner creek in 2025?** Last year, the City of Bayport restored a 300ft stretch of degraded stream along 3rd Ave. N near Perro Park, in partnership with Middle St Croix WMO and the Washington CD. The goal of the project is to stabilize the streambank, reduce the amount of sediment and phosphorus flowing downstream to the St. Croix River, and improve habitat along Perro Creek. Read more: [Will derby ducks sail on a cleaner creek in 2025?](#)

In addition, EMWREP maintains a robust presence on social media through its @mnnature_awesome accounts.

Find detailed information about education programming completed by the EMWREP partnership in its [2024 Annual Report](#).

Website

The MSCWMO continued to update its website in 2024. The website contains up to date meeting dates, agendas, minutes, annual reports, water monitoring information, contact information and more. In addition, the website also contains a section for grant reporting which highlights projects completed as part of the BWSR Clean Water Legacy Program. Project review applications can be submitted online, as well as all necessary information on the MSCWMO’s project review process and status of submitted project reviews. The MSCWMO website can be viewed at the following link:

<http://www.mscwmo.org>

2024 Data Collection Program

Water Quality Monitoring Program

In 2024, the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) continued condition monitoring and water quality and elevation biweekly on McKusick Lake and Lily Lake, with the addition of collecting chloride samples to assess baseline chloride concentrations. Additionally, in 2024 macrophyte surveys were conducted on both McKusick Lake and Lily Lake. Information from the Brown's Creek Diversion Drainage which flows to McKusick Lake is monitored by the Brown's Creek Watershed District, but resulting information is also provided to the MSCWMO for use in management planning. In 2022 a permanent, fully automated monitoring station was established on Perro Creek to better characterize loading from Perro Creek to the St. Croix. The MSCWMO monitored volume and concentration of discharge for both base flow and storm flows from Perro Creek in 2024.

Full water monitoring reports can be viewed on our website. The 2024 monitoring report will be available in May of 2025.

<http://www.mscwmo.org/water-monitoring>

2025 WORKPLAN

Best Management Practices Program

The MSCWMO will continue to promote its Best Management Practices Program in 2025. The MSCWMO will continue to work to engage landowners in the Lily Lake, McKusick Lake, Perro Creek, Lake St. Croix Direct Discharge North and South subwatersheds.

Watershed Management Plan Update; Subwatershed Analyses and Implementation

In 2025 the MSCWMO will continue working with the City of Stillwater, City of Bayport, City of Lake St. Croix Beach, other member communities, MnDOT, and private landowners to design and install targeted stormwater quality best management practices identified in subwatershed analyses. As part of the management plan update, the MSCWMO will re-analyze existing subwatershed analyses and implementation to determine what practices are outstanding or are in need of retrofit or reinstallation.

Water Monitoring

The MSCWMO will continue water quality condition monitoring program for Lily and McKusick Lakes and Perro Creek. The MSCWMO will be conducting macrophyte surveys on Lily and McKusick Lakes. The MSCWMO has contracted with the Washington Conservation District to complete monitoring and reporting again in 2025. The MSCWMO is planning to apply for funding to monitor the volume and concentration flowing out from the Mulberry Ravine and select stormwater outfalls in the City of Stillwater discharging directly into Lake St. Croix.

Public Education and Outreach Programs

The MSCWMO will continue to participate in the East Metro Water Resource Education Program. The activities and programs offered through this partnership will help MSCWMO meet its goals for education and outreach.

Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan

The MSCWMO will continue to work collaboratively with 15 units of government charged with water governance in the Lower St. Croix HUC8 watershed to implement a coordinated management plan.

Development Plan Reviews and Erosion Control Inspection Program; MSCWMO Policies and Performance Standards

The MSCWMO will continue to review qualifying projects for consistency with the 2015 Watershed Management Plan, and will continue to coordinate its review process with its member communities. Staff will also continue to inspect current and past projects to ensure erosion control practices are implemented, and stormwater management features are functioning as planned. The MSCWMO will promote trainings and events that will improve performance on future projects.

Website Update and Maintenance

The MSCWMO continues to update and maintain its website.

APPENDIX A

2024 Annual Communications

AFTON

The City of Afton is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Afton to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the MSCWMO watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Annie Perkins, the City of Afton appointed MSCWMO Board Manager at 651-592-3007.

BAYPORT

The City of Bayport is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Perro Creek and Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Bayport to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering Perro Creek and the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Council Member John Dahl, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 651-439-7312.

BAYTOWN TOWNSHIP

Baytown Township is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to Baytown Township to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Township Board Member Avis Peters, the Township appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 651-430-8163.

LAKELAND

The City of Lakeland is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Lakeland to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington

Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Councilman Dave Millard, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 651-408-3483.

LAKELAND SHORES

The City of Lakeland Shores is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Lakeland Shores to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Brian Zeller, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 612-325-3038.

LAKE ST CROIX BEACH

The City of Lake St. Croix Beach is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Lake St. Croix Beach to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Mayor Tom McCarthy, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 651-436-7031.

OAK PARK HEIGHTS

The City of Oak Park Heights is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Perro Pond and Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Oak Park Heights to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering Perro Pond or St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Council Member Carly Johnson, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager and the Treasurer for the watershed, at 651-261-5801.

ST. MARY'S POINT

The City of St. Mary's Point is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake

MIDDLE ST. CROIX WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of St. Mary's Point to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Council Member Tom Grahek, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 612-209-5771.

STILLWATER

The City of Stillwater is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lily Lake, Lake McKusick, and Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to the City of Stillwater to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering Lily Lake, Lake McKusick, or the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at molding@mnwcd.org or Council Member Ryan Collins, the City appointed MSCWMO Board Manager, at 651-246-8264.

WEST LAKELAND TOWNSHIP

West Lakeland Township is one of ten member communities of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) that collectively works to improve the water quality of Lake St. Croix. The MSCWMO provides educational, technical, and financial assistance to West Lakeland Township to effectively manage water resources. They also partner with the Washington Conservation District to provide design and cost share assistance for voluntary conservation projects on private lands that reduce sediment and phosphorous pollution entering the St. Croix River. If you are considering a conservation project on your property or have any questions about the watershed please contact Matt Oldenburg-Downing, Administrator of the MSCWMO at moldenburg-downing@mnwcd.org or Board Member Rachel Dana, the Township appointed Board Manager, at 612-751-7583.