



Watershed-based Assessment

Lake of the Woods Partnership

Local Government Unit Partnership Review

Final Report

June 2025

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

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This report has been prepared for the **Lake of the Woods Partnership** by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.102, Subd.3.

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Watershed Based Report Summary

Lake of the Woods Partnership

What is a PRAP Performance Review?

The Board of Water and Soil Resources supports Minnesota's counties, watershed districts, and soil and water conservation districts that deliver water and related land resource management projects and programs. In 2007, the Board established a program (PRAP) to systematically review the performance of these local units of government to ensure their effective operation. Each year BWSR staff conduct routine reviews of several of these local conservation delivery entities. This document reports the results of one of those reviews.

Key Findings and Conclusions

The Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership is commended for their work in implementing actions identified within their Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Below is a summary of findings of the PRAP Performance Review.

Resource Outcomes

The Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan contains a total of 21 short-term goals. The partnership is commended for meeting or exceeding plan goals for nine of the 21 goals.

In addition to the goals the plan identifies 86 activities. The partnership is commended for having 60 of the 86 activities (70%) "in progress". The remaining actions (30%) have not started.

Basic Requirements:

- Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership reports achievement of 16 of 16 basic requirements

Action Items (required to address within 18 months):

- There are no required actions.

Best Standard/Practice:

- Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership reports achievement of 9 of 11 best performance standards/practices.

Commendations

- Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership is commended for meeting 8 of 8 high-performance standards.

Partnership Recommendations

Recommendation (Tracking): BWSR recommends that partnerships continue to track and share data with each other about implementation efforts that contribute to plan goals.

Recommendation (Reflecting): BWSR recommends that partnerships incorporate an adaptive management step into annual or biennial work planning sessions.

Recommendation (Evaluating): BWSR recommends that the partnership continue to compare the resource results associated with projects, practices, or programs to the stated resource goals/outcomes in the plan.

Recommendation (Sharing): BWSR recommends that the partnership communicates regularly to the public and stakeholders about their watershed management work.

Recommendation (Training): BWSR recommends that the partnership develop a formal training and orientation process for policy committee members and staff.

Recommendation (Communication): Increase communication between all partners.

Recommendation (Capacity): Consider Workload Assessments to Evaluate Staff Capacity.

Introduction

This is an informational document prepared by the staff of the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for the Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership. It reports the results of a routine performance review of watershed partnerships/organizations' implementation of their Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans, and overall effectiveness in delivery of conservation projects and programs.

The findings and recommendations are intended to give local government units (LGUs) constructive feedback they can use to enhance their joint and individual delivery of conservation services.

For this review, BWSR has analyzed the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, the Partnership's achievement of basic requirements, best standards/practices, and high-performance standards, and surveyed members of the Policy Committee, Planning Work Group, and Advisory Committee.

This routine performance review is neither a financial audit nor an investigation and it does not replace or supersede other types of governmental review of local government unit operations.

While the performance review reported herein has been conducted under the authority granted to BWSR by Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103B.102, this is a staff report and has not been reviewed or approved by the BWSR board members.

What is PRAP?

PRAP is an acronym for BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program. Authorized by the 2007 Minnesota legislature, the purpose of PRAP is to support local delivery of conservation and water management by periodically reviewing and assessing the performance of local units of government that deliver those services. These include soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, watershed management organizations, and the local water management functions of counties.

The PRAP program includes an Annual Statewide Summary, and three types of assessments. Depending on the program mandates and needs of the local government unit, review types include both routine and specialized. The Annual Statewide Summary annually tabulates all local governmental units' compliance with basic planning and reporting requirements.

Organizational Assessments, conducted by BWSR once every ten years for each local government unit, evaluate operational effectiveness, partner relationships, and whether the LGU has achieved county water plan, watershed management plan, and/or SWCD comprehensive plan implementation goals. This assessment also evaluates compliance with performance standards, and the Wetland Conservation Act, where applicable.

Watershed-based Assessments are routine reviews conducted with partnerships of local governments working together to implement Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans (CWMPs) developed through the One Watershed One Plan Program. This review evaluates progress on plan implementation and analyzes partners working relationships.

Special Assessments are conducted with LGUs experiencing significant obstacles or performance deficiencies and may include BWSR Board action to assign penalties as authorized by statute.

More details can be found on the BWSR PRAP webpage.

Executive Summary

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) staff met with the Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership to discuss an evaluation of the water management functions of the partnership that is actively implementing the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The findings in this document represent the data collected and the recommendations are a result of the observations and conclusions made based on that data. There are four distinct parts of a Watershed Based Assessment conducted via the BWSR Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) as authorized by M.S. 103B.102.

- Part 1: Evaluation of the progress made by water management entities toward goals stated in their approved and adopted local management or comprehensive plans.
- Part 2: Review of the entities' adherence to basic requirements, best standards and practices, and high-performance standards as directed by statutes, policies, and guidelines via a performance standards certification checklist.
- Part 3: Policy Committee, Planning Work Group, and Advisory Committee surveys to assess internal and external perceptions of performance, communication, partnerships, and delivery of conservation programs and customer service.
- Part 4: Review of the Assurance Measures, completed as part of the Watershed-based Implementation Funding (WBIF) policy.

After thorough review of the data, a list of actions and recommendations were developed to help guide the water management partnership in their continued growth of program delivery. This is done to ensure the partnership continues to work towards effective implementation of conservation practices. A list of commendations was also developed for the great work the partnership does in delivering conservation. Each of the above listed parts of the review are described in the findings section of this document, and the completed documents can be found in the notated appendices for further review. This report will be summarized in conjunction with other PRAP Assessments collected in 2025 to be used as the official BWSR PRAP report delivered to the legislature as part of our reporting requirement under M.S. 103B.102.

Key Findings and Conclusions

The Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership is commended for their work in implementing activities identified within their Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. In general, Advisory Committee members feel the partnership is doing an effective job in implementing projects on the ground to meet plan priorities.

Increasing communication with both the Policy and Advisory Committees will help improve conservation delivery in the watershed. A total of 20% of the Policy committee members indicated communication was good, but they could receive more. Similarly, a total of 18% of partners would like to be better informed. Focused implementation can also be increased through targeted marketing campaigns. 66.67% of Plan Work Group members stated that the partnership *sometimes* provided direct outreach to specific landowners. The local planning work group indicated that equal efforts to implement the plan are good at 50%, fair at 25%, and very good at 25%. Local efforts may be influenced by the amount of watershed area within each organizations work area. Staffing capacity and local budgets may also contribute to efforts made. Conducting a workload assessments at the organizational level would be helpful in understanding staffing needs.

The Partnership is commended for meeting 9 of 11 applicable best standards/practices, including reviewing the committee membership and updating annually, having current operational guidelines for fiscal procedures, and updating agency partners on accomplishments regularly.

The Partnership is also commended for meeting 8 of 8 high performance standards, a testament to the efforts made by the Lake of the Woods Watershed Planning Partnership.

Summary of Partnership Recommendations

Based on an analysis of the information and data collected during this review, BWSR staff developed several recommendations for the Partnership. BWSR relies heavily on our relationships with staff as well as the input of partners, staff, and board members to make sure recommendations provided are relevant, timely, and helpful for the partnership to implement and improve their operations. The full text of the recommendations can be found in the conclusions section.

Recommendation (Tracking): BWSR recommends that partnerships continue to track and share data with each other about implementation efforts that contribute to plan goals.

Recommendation (Reflecting): BWSR recommends that partnerships incorporate an adaptive management step into annual or biennial work planning sessions.

Recommendation (Evaluating): BWSR recommends that the partnership continue to compare the resource results associated with projects, practices, or programs to the stated resource goals/outcomes in the plan.

Recommendation (Sharing): BWSR recommends that the partnership communicates regularly to the public and stakeholders about their watershed management work.

Recommendation (Training): BWSR recommends that the partnership develop a formal training and orientation process for policy committee members and staff.

Recommendation (Communication): Increase communication between all partners.

Recommendation (Capacity): Consider Workload Assessments to Evaluate Staff Capacity.

Findings

This section describes what BWSR learned about the performance of the Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership via the various collection methods as outlined below.

Findings Part 1: Planning

The findings in this section describe the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, the planned actions or activities within the plan, and accomplishments made by the local water management entities.

These entities include six counties, six soil and water conservation districts, two watershed districts and a joint powers board. This partnership has been working together since 2016 to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan.

For planning and implementation purposes the partnership developed a list of priority resource concerns. These concerns are Priority Level A (Highest Priority), Priority Level B (Medium Priority) and Priority Level C (Lesser Priority). The following is a summary of the partnership's priority concerns.

"A" level concerns include:

1. Groundwater
 - a. Drinking Water – Priority Issues: 1.1.4, 1.2.2
 - b. Groundwater Supplies -Priority Issues: 1.1.2
2. Surface Water
 - a. Streams and Rivers -Priority Issues: 2.1.1, 2.1.4, 2.1.6
 - b. Lakes – Priority Issues: 2.2.1, 2.2.2
 - c. Surface Runoff – Priority Issues: 2.3.1, 2.3.2
3. Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Unique Natural Features
 - a. Aquatic Habitat for Fish, Macroinvertebrates, and Aquatic Life – Priority Issues: 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
 - b. Lake Shoreland and Stream Riparian Corridors – Priority Issues: 3.2.5
4. Water Resource Infrastructure
 - a. Drainage Ditch Systems – Priority Issues: 4.1.2, 4.1.5
5. Local Knowledge Base and Technical Capacity Priority Issues: 5.2.1

"B" level concerns include:

1. Groundwater
 - a. Drinking Water – Priority Issues: 1.1.1, 1.1.2
2. Surface Water
 - a. Streams and Rivers – Priority Issues: 2.1.2, 2.1.5
 - b. Wetlands – Priority Issues: 2.4.1
3. Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Unique Natural Features
 - a. Lake Shoreland and Stream Riparian Corridors – Priority Issues: 3.2.1, 3.2.4
 - b. Lands of Concern – Priority Issues: 3.3.1, 3.3.3
4. Water Resource Infrastructure
 - a. Drainage Ditch Systems – Priority Issues: 4.1.1, 4.1.4
 - b. Point Sources – Priority Issues: 4.2.1
5. Local Knowledge Base and Technical Capacity
 - a. Public Knowledge of and Behavior Relative to Water Issues - Priority Issues: 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3
 - b. Landowner and Producer Engagement in Water Management – Priority Issues: 5.2.2, 5.3.1
 - c. Technology, Tools, Funding, and Existing Capabilities – Priority Issues: 5.3.1, 5.3.2

“C” level concerns include:

1. Groundwater
 - a. Drinking Water – Priority Issues: 1.1.3, 1.1.5
 - b. Groundwater Supplies – Priority Issues: 1.2.1
2. Surface Water
 - a. Streams and Rivers – Priority Issues: 2.1.3,
 - b. Wetlands – Priority Issues: 2.4.2
3. Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Unique Natural Features
 - a. Lake Shoreland and Stream Riparian Corridors – Priority Issues: 3.2.2
 - b. Land of Concern – Priority Issues: 3.2.3, 3.3.2, 3.3.4
4. Water Resource Infrastructure
 - a. Drainage Ditch Systems – Priority Issues: 4.1.3, 4.2.2
 - b. Point Sources – Priority Issues: 4.2.3

As part of the assessment, partnership staff prepared a series of tables listing the accomplishments to-date that they have made towards short-term goals and planned actions or activities. The following is a summary of progress toward plan goals.

Goal Summary

A total of 21 short-term goals were provided to BWSR. The following tables document progress toward each short-term plan goal. The partnership is commended for meeting or exceeding plan goals for nine of the 21 goals.

 BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES		PRAP Watershed Assessment 2022 Progress Toward Plan Goals	
Assessment date: 2025			
Watershed Management Plan Name: Lake of the Woods			
Agency Preparing Table: LOW SWCD			
Goal Statement: (MG-1) Maintain or improve groundwater quality for nitrates in drinking water			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of Education Events	10	10	100%
Number of Practices	120	25	21%
Goal Statement: (MG-2) Maintain or improve groundwater quality for bacteria in drinking water			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of Education Events	10	10	100%
Number of Practices	120	25	21%
Goal Statement: (MG-3) Ensure the protection of groundwater quality and maintenance of			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of Clinics/Annual Events	10	10	100%
Number of Large-scale Efforts	3	2	67%

Goal Statement: (MG-4) Achieve the following stream sediment load reduction goal apportioned by

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Warroad tons/year	864	179.38	21%
Zippel tons/year	716	111	16%
Bostic tons/year	282	331	118%
Muskeg tons/year	11	241.92	2282%
NW Angle tons/year	-	0	n/a

Goal Statement: (MG-5) Achieve the following total phosphorus load reductions goal apportioned

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Muskeg lbs/year	4,086	437.48	11%
Zippel lbs/year	2,222	238.9	11%
Warroad lbs/year	1,119	489.09	44%
Bostic lbs/year	551	331	60%
NW Angle lbs/year	-	39	n/a

Goal Statement: (MG-6) Interact once annually with the Lake of the Woods Control Board and

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of stakeholder interactions	10	25	250%

Goal Statement: (MG-7) Achieve progress towards a water retention goal of 1/8" of water across

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Acre-feet of volume retained	3,668	1.8	0%

Goal Statement: (MG-8) Develop riparian and in-stream habitat protection and restoration priorities

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Count of Biannual Plans	5	1	20%
Warroad River - Miles	1	2	200%
Bostic Creek - Miles	0.9	2.75	306%
Zippel Creek - Miles	0.6	1	167%
Muskeg Bay -Miles	0.5	0.1	20%
Northwest Angle - Miles	-	0	n/a

Goal Statement: (MG-9) Draft AIS infestation susceptibility indices for existing and emerging AIS of

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Susceptibility indices completed	Complete AIS indices	1	100%
Number of inspections	35,000	43,901	125%
Number of inspections hours	20,000	12,326	62%

Goal Statement: (MG-10) Reduce the total amount of unprotected Lake of the Woods Shoreline by 2

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Feet of shoreline protected	10,560	630	6%

Goal Statement: (MG-11) Protect, restore, and maintain shoreline habitat (lake and stream) for 10%

Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Miles of shoreline	40	0	0%

Goal Statement: (MG-12) Maintain and improve exiting (seven) and increase number of legal and			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Maintained access	7	5	71%
Increased access	2	0.5	25%

Goal Statement: (MG-13) Develop prioritized areas for habitat protection and restoration. Increase			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Develop a prioritization method	1	0.5	50%
Acres protected/restored	640	1597	250%

Goal Statement: (MG-14) Develop and Implement a system for collecting tile drainage information			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Complete tile drainage info system	1	0.25	25%

Goal Statement: (MG-15) Coordinate with the ditch authorities to implement multipurpose drainage			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Multipurpose drainage practices installed	3 drainage systems	2	67%

Goal Statement: (MG-16) Update, complete, and maintain ditch inventory and drainage record			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Count of inventories/databases	2	0.25	13%

Goal Statement: (MG-17) Address and bring into compliance 100% of failing systems (SSTS)			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
LW County - septics upgraded	100	54	54%
Roseau County - septics upgraded	60	30	50%

Goal Statement: (MG-18) Annually set curriculum, establish education themes and topics, and			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Count of annual curriculum	10	6	60%
Number of events held	2	11	550%

Goal Statement: (MG-19) Complete 1,500 contacts and site visits combined over the duration of the			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of contacs/site visits	1,500	461	31%
Number of contracts with landowners annually (count is in the year completed)	300	68	23%

Goal Statement: (MG-20) Set training needs annually to better use emerging technologies and			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of Training Need Plans	10	0	0%

Goal Statement: (MG-21) Have one annual joint discussion with all jurisdictions that enforce			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of joint discussions	10	0	0%

The partnership also provided information on plan actions. A total of 86 actions are listed below. The following is a summary of planned activities and the status for each. The partnership is commended for having 60 of the 86 activities (70%) “in progress”. The remaining actions have not started (30%).

Planning Region and Management OR Structural	Funding Level	Actions	STATUS	NEXT STEPS
Bostic Creek - Structural				
BC-S	Baseline	Implement practices (e.g., buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways) within priority locations that reduce nutrient and sediment loading to waterbodies by treating surface and shallow sub-surface runoff before entering ditches and streams.	NOT STARTED	Working with the Sustainable Farming association to promote soil health practices.
BC-S	Baseline	Enhance erosion control methods on future projects on ditch systems. Utilize erosion control BMPs and vegetative cover.	NOT STARTED	
BC-S	Baseline	Implement practices to store excess water such as controlled drainage practices on tile-drained cropland.	NOT STARTED	
BC-S	Baseline	Implement practices to restore hydrologic function, water course morphology, and channel stability through completing restoration of altered streams or other in channel projects including Judicial Ditch 16 and 28.	IN PROGRESS	
BC-S	Baseline	Seal abandoned and unused wells, particularly those wells that may impact drinking water supplies.	IN PROGRESS	
Muskeg Bay - Structural				
MB_S	Baseline	Implement practices (e.g., filter strips, grassed waterways) within priority locations that reduce nutrient loading to waterbodies by treating surface and shallow sub-surface runoff before entering ditches and streams.	IN PROGRESS	7 sites (393 - 5 ac)) for Roseau (Pd with other funds.) No CRP practices in last 5 years.
MB_S	Baseline	Enhance erosion control methods on future projects on ditch systems. Utilize erosion control BMPs and vegetative cover.	IN PROGRESS	
MB_S	Baseline	Implement practices to store excess water such as controlled drainage practices on tile-drained cropland.	NOT STARTED	
MB_S	Baseline	Implement practices (e.g., side water inlets, rock chutes) to reduce erosion and improve water quality by stabilizing surface water outlets.	NOT STARTED	
MB_S	Baseline	Seal abandoned and unused wells, particularly those wells that may impact drinking water supplies.	IN PROGRESS	
MB_S	Baseline	Implement Lake of the Woods Shoreline protection projects for unstable shoreline by addressing the root cause of instability, as well as on-site implementation.	IN PROGRESS	
Northwest Angle - Structural				
NA_S	Baseline	Implement Lake of the Woods Shoreline protection projects for unstable shoreline by addressing the root cause of instability, as well as on-site implementation.	IN PROGRESS	
NA_S	Baseline	Seal abandoned and unused wells, particularly those wells that may impact drinking water supplies.	IN PROGRESS	
Warroad River - Structural				
WR-S	Baseline	Implement filtration practices (e.g., filter strips, grassed waterways) within prioritized locations to reduce sediment and nutrient loading to waterbodies by treating surface and shallow sub-surface runoff before entering ditches and streams.	IN PROGRESS	6 (393 - 8.25 ac) sites for Roseau (Pd with other funds.) No CRP practices in last 5 years .
WR-S	Baseline	Enhance erosion control methods on future projects on ditch systems. Utilize erosion control BMPs and vegetative cover.	NOT STARTED	
WR-S	Baseline	Implement protection practices with regards to ephemeral erosion of fields and grade control at field drain junctions with main ditches.	NOT STARTED	
WR-S	Baseline	Implement storage practices to store excess water such as controlled drainage practices on tile-drained cropland.	NOT STARTED	
WR-S	Baseline	Implement in-channel restoration projects on the Warroad River targeted utilizing information from the existing AIG studies and channel stability projects on public drainage systems.	IN PROGRESS	
WR-S	Baseline	Appropriately size and install culverts and road crossings on ditches, streams and rivers during replacement projects.	IN PROGRESS	
WR-S	Baseline	Inspect, maintain, and implement projects within the city of Warroad to improve the integrity of existing urban structures that route and treat stormwater runoff to improve water quality.	IN PROGRESS	
WR-S	Baseline	Seal abandoned and unused wells, particularly those wells that may impact drinking water supplies, and those found within the Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA).	IN PROGRESS	
WR-S	Baseline			

Zippel Creek - Structural				
ZC_S	Baseline	Implement practices (e.g., buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways) within priority locations that reduce nutrient loading to waterbodies by treating surface and shallow sub-surface runoff before entering ditches and streams.	NOT STARTED	Working with the Sustainable Farming association to promote soil health practices.
ZC_S	Baseline	Enhance erosion control methods on future projects on ditch systems. Utilize erosion control BMPs and vegetative cover.	IN PROGRESS	Hydroseeding for erosion control on Ditch 1
ZC_S	Baseline	Implement practices on the west branch of Zippel Creek with regards to ephemeral erosion of fields and grade control at field drain junctions with main ditches.	NOT STARTED	
ZC_S	Baseline	Implement practices to store excess water such as controlled drainage practices on tile-drained cropland.	NOT STARTED	
ZC_S	Baseline	Implement practices (e.g., side water inlets, rock chutes) to reduce ephemeral erosion and improve water quality by stabilizing surface water outlets especially in the West Branch of the Zippel.	IN PROGRESS	Progress on Ditch 1
ZC_S	Baseline	Pursue ditch abandonment projects to address altered hydrology.	NOT STARTED	
ZC_S	Baseline	Implement Lake of the Woods Shoreline protection projects for unstable shoreline by addressing the root cause of instability, as well as on-site implementation.	IN PROGRESS	
ZC_S	Baseline	Seal abandoned and unused wells, particularly those wells that may impact drinking water supplies.	IN PROGRESS	
Bostic Creek - Management				
BC_M	Baseline	Assist in the development and implementation of nutrient management plans for agricultural producers.	NOT STARTED	
BC_M	Baseline	Encourage the use of precision agriculture through education, technical, and financial assistance.	NOT STARTED	
BC_M	Baseline	Provide technical and financial assistance to livestock producers on management practices such as rotational grazing, water way exclusion fencing, feedlot runoff control and manure management.	IN PROGRESS	
BC_M	Baseline	Implement and maintain BMPs which are focused on maintaining soil health and soil organic content, including but not limited to conservation tillage and residue management, crop rotation methods, and the use of cover crops.	IN PROGRESS	
BC_M	Baseline	Establish conservation easements or programs on marginal, erodible or other lands with unique features of high public value.	NOT STARTED	
BC_M	Baseline	Manage beaver activity within waterways and drainage systems through the use of Clemson levelers, bounties, or control.	IN PROGRESS	LOW County has a bounty program
Muskeg Bay - Management				
MB_M	Baseline	Establish conservation easements or programs on marginal, erodible, or other lands with unique features of high public value.	NOT STARTED	
MB_M	Baseline	Assist in the development and implementation of nutrient management plans for agricultural producers.	NOT STARTED	
MB_M	Baseline	Encourage the use of precision agriculture through education, technical, and financial assistance.	NOT STARTED	
MB_M	Baseline	Provide technical and financial assistance to livestock producers on management practices such as rotational grazing, water way exclusion fencing, feedlot runoff control and manure management.	IN PROGRESS	
MB_M	Baseline	Implement and maintain BMPs which are focused on maintaining soil health and soil organic content, including but not limited to conservation tillage and residue management, crop rotation methods, and the use of cover crops.	IN PROGRESS	Note: RC landowners have implemented CC & use conservation tillage. Some not in programs. SFA workshop landowners.
MB_M	Baseline	Manage beaver activity within waterways and drainage systems through the use of Clemson levelers, bounties, or control.	IN PROGRESS	RC and LOW County have beaver bounty.
Warroad River - Management				
WR_M	Baseline	Establish conservation easements or programs on marginal, erodible, or other lands with unique features of high public value.	IN PROGRESS	Easement placed on a parcel on West Branch Warroad River (Cedarbend 14) after restoration project was completed so future landowners wouldn't tear out structure.
WR_M	Baseline	Assist in the development and implementation of nutrient management plans for agricultural producers.	NOT STARTED	NRCS doesn't have a TSP for this.
WR_M	Baseline	Encourage the use of precision agriculture through education, technical, and financial assistance.	IN PROGRESS	Through Ros NRCS - 6 landowners in last 5 years
WR_M	Baseline	Provide technical and financial assistance to livestock producers on management practices such as rotational grazing, water way exclusion fencing, feedlot runoff control and manure management.	IN PROGRESS	Through Ros NRCS - 2 landowners in last 5 years
WR_M	Baseline	Implement and maintain BMPs which are focused on maintaining soil health and soil organic content, including, but not limited to, conservation tillage and residue management, crop rotation methods, and the use of cover crops.	IN PROGRESS	Through Ros NRCS - 8 landowners in last 5 years; RSWCD - 1 landowner
WR_M	Baseline	Protect and restore forest areas, with focused effort on increasing native species populations and maintain contiguous forestlands for management through working with private forestland owners (Forest stewardship plans and SFIA).	IN PROGRESS	
WR_M	Baseline	Manage beaver activity within waterways and drainage systems through the use of Clemson levelers, bounties, or control.	IN PROGRESS	RC has beaver bounty. WWD has implemented control on river system.
WR_M	Baseline	Designation of the Warroad Harbor as a Regional Park to get additional partners to the table for the overall harbor project.	IN PROGRESS	Campground has been designated Regional Park. City is in progress on project.

Zippel Creek - Management

ZC_M	Baseline	Establish conservation easements or programs on marginal, erodible, or other lands with unique features of high public value.	NOT STARTED	
ZC_M	Baseline	Assist in the development and implementation of nutrient management plans for agricultural producers.	NOT STARTED	
ZC_M	Baseline	Encourage the use of precision agriculture through education, technical, and financial assistance.	NOT STARTED	
ZC_M	Baseline	Provide technical and financial assistance to livestock producers on management practices such as rotational grazing, water way exclusion fencing, feedlot runoff control and manure management.	IN PROGRESS	
ZC_M	Baseline	Implement and maintain BMPs which are focused on maintaining soil health and soil organic content, including but not limited to conservation tillage and residue management, crop rotation methods, and the use of cover crops.	IN PROGRESS	Working with the Sustainable Farming association to promote soil health practices.
ZC_M	Baseline	Manage beaver activity within waterways and drainage systems through the use of Clemson levelers, bounties, or control.	IN PROGRESS	LOW County has a bounty program

Planning Region Capital	Funding Level	Action ID	Actions	STATUS	NEXT STEPS
Improvement					
Muskeg Bay - Capital Improvement					

MB_C	High	MB C-01	Create one new Lake of the Woods public access within the Muskeg Bay Planning Region.	IN PROGRESS	
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Northwest Angle - Capital Improvement					
NA_C	High	NA C-01	Create one new Lake of the Woods public access within the Northwest Angle.	IN PROGRESS	

Warroad River - Capital Improvement					
WR_C	Moderate	WR C-01	Pending results of hydrology study for Beltrami Island State Forest and Scientific and Natural Areas impacts on the Warroad River system, restore natural hydrology to this area.	IN PROGRESS	
WR_C	High	WR C-02	Continue to implement stormwater infrastructure upgrades within the city of Warroad to reduce potential for flooding and improve water quality.	IN PROGRESS	
WR_C	High	WR C-03	Implement additional river restoration projects along the west branch of the Warroad River.	IN PROGRESS	
WR_C	High	WR C-04	Develop Warroad Marina project that will create an outlet channel/access to Lake of the Woods, make use of an existing 190 slip marina, act as a safe harbor, and provide flood control to keep high lake levels from back flooding Warroad.	IN PROGRESS	

Watershed Wide Action	Funding Level	Actions	STATUS	NEXT STEPS
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Ensure compliance with the state buffer law requirements.	IN PROGRESS	
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Administer adopted land use and zoning ordinances to manage possible sources of nitrate contamination and pathogenic bacterial contamination, and consider potential adverse effects within DWSMAs.	IN PROGRESS	LOW - in progress Roseau - in progress
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Meet all statutory requirements of the state of Minnesota shoreland rules.	IN PROGRESS	
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Use the floodplain management ordinance and land use and zoning approvals to minimize the likelihood of future flood damages.	IN PROGRESS	
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Implement the state feedlot program rules.	IN PROGRESS	LOW SWCD only currently. MPCA implements in R County
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Require Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans on all projects that reach the one acre threshold.	IN PROGRESS	LOW - in progress Roseau - not jurisdiction
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Annually meet and recommend changes to increase efficiency, reduce complexity, and provide sufficient protection to decision making authorities for applicable ordinances and enforcement across the watershed.	NOT STARTED	
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Implement and enforce applicable county ordinances and the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) to retain wetland quantity, function, and value.	IN PROGRESS	
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Work collectively with all partners through the Keep It Clean program to implement enforcement of existing rules to address littering and improper disposal of human waste on Lake of the Woods during winter ice fishing.	IN PROGRESS	
Regulation and Enforcement	Baseline	Implement Minn. R. Ch. 7080 and local ordinances related to septic systems	IN PROGRESS	
Data Collection and Monitoring	Baseline	Monitor precipitation by maintaining a network of volunteer rain gauge readers. Evaluate short- and long-term precipitation trends and their relationship to groundwater supplies and stream flow by comparing with HSPF and stream stats data.	IN PROGRESS	Note: MPCA has done some extra flow monitoring on the WR b/w 2020-2023
Data Collection and Monitoring	Baseline	Define areas subject to frequent flooding based on the 10-year storm event as the minimum riparian area to be managed on all rivers and streams. For public waters and public ditches, these areas will be targeted for additional BMP implementation.	NOT STARTED	LOW - Not Started Jeff - No Information
Data Collection and Monitoring	Baseline	Identify high priority wetland mitigation areas and appropriate actions eligible for credit to assist with watershed measurable goals. Identification of these areas will assist prioritization of wetland bank/wetland mitigation projects.	IN PROGRESS	LOW - In Progress Roseau - In Progress
Data Collection and Monitoring	Baseline	Complete a landscape stewardship plan to identify areas adjacent to existing public lands that include recreational and/or wildlife habitat features (wetlands, forests, etc.) and prioritize to utilize programs to protect these areas.	NOT STARTED	This has not been started in this watershed, large public land ownership in this watershed, plan is a low priority.

Education and Outreach	Baseline	Promote conservation programs that recognize and/or provide incentives to landowners for the multiple benefits resulting from implementation of BMPs that improve water quality, provide resilience against flood damage, and protect/enhance wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Target programs and types of media utilized will be decided on a biennial basis.	NOT STARTED	
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Implement Aquatic Invasive Species Plan.	IN PROGRESS	Plans in Lake of the Woods County are adopted on a five year basis.
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Interact annually with the Lake of the Woods Control Board (LWCB) and International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Board (IRLWWB) to maintain lines of communication as necessary and provide stakeholder input to keep the groups informed of current and ongoing impacts due to Lake of the Woods lake level fluctuations.	IN PROGRESS	Participation in meetings have been occurring and now there are LWCB updates at IRLWWB meetings and visa versa.
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Implement the Keep It Clean campaign on Lake of the Woods during the winter ice fishing season, promoting proper trash and waste management.	IN PROGRESS	
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Host a well testing clinic or provide resources to well users to have their water tested.	IN PROGRESS	
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Provide educational and financial assistance to promote compliant Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS).	IN PROGRESS	Note: Roseau and LOW Counties - provides financial assistance, Ordinance on website.
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Implement an education/outreach campaign for the responsible use, storage, and disposal of household hazardous wastes.	IN PROGRESS	Note: Roseau County HHW pickup does every year through radio, website (brochure), newspaper.
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Educate local public officials to include septic compliance inspections upon sale or transfer of property in local ordinances.	IN PROGRESS	LOW - In Progress Roseau - Not Started
Education and Outreach	Baseline	Increase enrollment in Ag Certification program and other existing programs including farm planning within the watershed.	IN PROGRESS	Promoted in newsletter and on website - RSWCD
Actions completed by Others	n/a	Obtain basic geomorphic characteristics for reference reaches including bank full discharge, channel cross sectional area, slope, and bed composition.	IN PROGRESS	
Actions completed by Others	n/a	Request Minnesota Geological Survey (MGS) and MnDNR to complete a Geologic Atlas, and provide technical and financial assistance as required.	IN PROGRESS	This process is started in LOW County, need to get the request for Roseau County

Findings Part 2: Performance Standards

BWSR has developed a set of performance standards that describe basic requirements, best standards/practices and high-performance standards related to the overall operation and function of an organization. The standards are different depending on the type of organization or LGU. The watershed-based performance standards address five specific performance areas of operation and groupings: 1) General Administration; 2) Policy Committee; 3) Advisory Committee; 4) Steering Committee; and 5) Communication and Coordination.

The basic requirements are items that are either statutorily required or required via policy. In these instances, if items are not completed, action items will be developed for the partnership to gain compliance. There is no action items required by the partnership.

The best standards/practices are those items that would be in the best interest of the partnership to complete. The partnership reports achievement of 9 of 11 best standards/practices.

The high-performance standards describe practices of high performing partnerships and are met less frequently. Partnerships will receive BWSR commendations for compliance with high performance standards. Any unmet high-performance standards can serve as stretch goals for performance improvement. The partnership reports achievement of 8 of the 8 high performance standards.

The performance standards checklists submitted and reviewed for the Lake of the Woods Water Planning Partnership is contained in Appendix B.

A list of high-performance achievements include:

- Project tracking systems used to track all work that contributes to plan goals
- Shared service opportunities are leveraged between partners
- Training efforts are made to inform on watershed related topics
- Technical advisory committee reviews members
- Agency members provide updates on agency initiatives, projects, and other information related to the watershed
- Water quality trends are tracked for priority water bodies
- Partnerships annually review progress toward water quality goals identified in CWMP
- Watershed partners have developed new partnerships with partners outside of the planning/implementation partnership

Findings Part 3: Internal and External Surveys

Part 3 of this performance assessment is based on responses to an online survey of individuals within the partnership as well as external partners. The survey consists of questions related to Communication, Initiative, Timeliness, Cooperation, Working Relationships, and Plan utilization during decision making.

The survey was given to three groups: the Policy Committee, Planning Work Group, and the Advisory Committee.

- The Policy Committee consists of one board member from each local water planning authority (ex. County, SWCD, and watershed district).
- The Planning Work Group consists primarily of local government staff (ex. Water Planners, SWCD Managers or District Technicians)
- The Advisory Committee consists of (but is not limited to) state agency partners, local nonprofits, municipalities, citizen based environmental groups, sporting organizations, drainage authorities, and agricultural/farm groups.

Because each group serves a different role, each of the three groups were asked different questions. Survey questions are designed to elicit information about successes and difficulties in implementing plan goals and objectives and assessing the extent and quality of the partnership during implementation.

Internal Surveys: Summary of Self-Assessments by Policy Committee Members

A total of 5 joint powers board members were invited to participate in the survey with 100% of the board members participating.

Please note: Information in this section has been analyzed and paraphrased to keep responses anonymous.

Policy Committee members were asked how frequently the committee meets. 60% stated that they meet *once every three months*, 20% *once every 4 months*, and 20% *once every month*. Of the meetings being held, 100% of the Committee stated that the number of meetings held was *About right*.

The policy committee members were asked to assess performance in five areas. Initiative, timeliness and follow-through, and cooperation received strongly agree ratings at 60% and communication and completing plan priorities received strongly agree ratings at 40%.

Performance Area	Policy Committee Ratings (percent)					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Communication: keep us informed and seek input	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%
Completing Plan Priorities: projects consistent with plan goals and objectives	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%
Initiative: willing to do what's needed to get work done, including initiate change	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%
Timeliness and Follow-through: reliable and meet deadlines	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%
Cooperation: easy to work with and seek opportunities to address priorities	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%

When asked how well-informed individuals are in partnership efforts, 80.0% stated *great* while 20.0% stated *good*, that they receive communication, but it could be more.

Internal Surveys: Summary of Self-Assessments by Planning Work Group Members

A total of 9 local government staff were invited to take the Planning Work Group survey and 8 individuals participated.

Survey respondents were asked if the partnership had a formal working agreement for implementation, 100% stated Yes.

Below is a summary of the respondents' assessment of the successes and challenges of their current organizational structure:

Most Successful Aspects of the Current Structure

- Partners seem to work well together. Projects are being completed in a timely manner.
- Partnerships, collaboration, and accomplishments.
- The ability for multiple counties, SWCD's and the Watershed to work together on priority projects for each entity.
- Communication between all parties.
- Setting goals and tracking our progress towards the goal has been a good addition. I do not feel like we did this under the water plan structure. It is now very easy to show what we've been doing and how it achieves progress toward the goal.
- I really like that this money is given to the locals and we as a group talk and pick projects vs the old grant application-based system. This is making it easier to get projects done.

Biggest Limitation or Challenge of the Current Structure

- Once roles are assumed, they are not easily transferred to the next due to paperwork, bureaucracy. One partner has control/trust/stubbornness issues.
- Limited funds to complete projects that are shovel ready.
- Too formal so that we need to spend WBIF on financial audits and insurance for a new entity. Difficult to prioritize funding if there are more funding requests than funds available.
- There are 5 agencies working together on project for all.
- Willing landowners and availability of contractors.
- Grant administration. We have 5 partners, and each partner request their own pot of funds. We've had as many as 15-16 mini grants that we are managing during a funding cycle. This structure has created a lot of extra financial and grant management and SWCDs seem to be getting tasked with keeping partners in line with Clean Water funding requirements.
- We are set on the amount of money each year.

When asked what kind of changes you would like to see made to make things work more smoothly and easily:

- Simplification of the plan, goals, actions. Also to have the plan interpreted by BWSR the same way it is being interpreted locally by those implementing it.
- BWSR should establish criteria for work plan evaluations as soon as the work plan is set up as a draft. We are currently being graded on criteria that we are not necessarily aware of because it's all done after the fact. Also, eLINK reporting would be more meaningful if we knew what information was needed to evaluate our performance. If we implement a grant and feel we are successful but then BWSR gives us poor marks, it seems like something is off... I think that every completed plan should have a table to

monitor progress towards the goal, and this should be updated on an annual basis. Actions should also be tracked (something we have not been doing but it makes sense to add it). This could be part of the grant reporting requirements and takes minimal effort when done in conjunction with eLINK reporting. I can't imagine waiting until the 5-year mark and must recreate all this information.

- Electronic transfers of WBIF grant payments from JPB fiscal agent to the watershed district.

Planning Work Group members were also asked to assess seven performance areas.

Communication and coordination and sharing resources received the highest marks with 25.0% and 12.5%, *excellent*.

Accomplishing plan goals and addressing plan priorities also ranked *high* with 87.5% and 75%, *very good*. When ranking Equal efforts made by partners

and sharing resources, 25.0% ranked *fair* or *good*, 50% which some explained was due to the variable percentages of the watershed within individual counties or related to staff capacity.

Performance Area	Planning Work Group Ratings (percent)				
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Accomplishing stated plan goals	0.0%	0.0%	12.50%	87.50%	0.0%
Addressing plan priorities	0.0%	0.0%	25.00%	75.00%	0.0%
Communication and Coordination	0.0%	0.0%	37.50%	37.50%	25.00%
Equal Efforts made by partners	0.0%	25.00%	50.00%	25.00%	0.0%
Timelines and Follow-through	0.0%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.0%
Sharing Resources	0.0%	0.00%	37.50%	50.00%	12.50%
Willingness to Accept and Incorporate new Data	0.0%	12.50%	12.50%	57.00%	0.00%

Additional Comments regarding Performance Areas:

- *I think the mid-point review and an amendment will allow the planning and implementation to be more effective by simplifying and clarifying goals and actions for the plan.*

Regarding the Day-to-Day implementation of the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, 44.4% of responses indicated the CWMP was consulted or reviewed only *as needed*, 22.22% *monthly*, and 11% *weekly*, *annually*, or *biannually*.

Day to Day Work in Implementing Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan	Planning Work Group Ratings (percent)				
	Weekly	Monthly	Biannually	Annually	As Needed
How often you consult the CWMP	11.11%	22.22%	11.11%	11.11%	44.44%
How often are priority projects discussed	11.11%	22.22%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%
How often do non-priority projects get implemented	0.0%	11.11%	0.00%	11.11%	77.78%
How often is the policy committee consulted on project funding decisions	0.0%	11.11%	44.44%	0.0%	44.44%
How often are policy documents and bylaws reviewed and updated	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	44.44%	55.56%
How often are plan goals or outcomes reviewed	0.0%	0.0%	11.11%	66.67%	22.22%
How often are new data and trends discussed	0.0%	0.0%	22.22%	11.11%	66.67%

Planning Work Group members indicated that plan goals or outcomes are reviewed *annually* (66.67%), and *as needed* (22.22%). Planning Work Group members discussed new data and trends, with 66.67% stating that happened *as needed*, and 33.33% stated they discussed *annually/biannually*.

Most planning Work Group members indicated that priority projects are discussed *as needed* 33.33% of the time or biannually, 22% monthly, and 11% weekly.

Responses from Planning Work Group members and policy members indicated an increased utilization of grant funds including BWSRs Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF). The survey included questions about projects funded using WBIF. Most respondents indicated projects were located within the highest priority areas, with 66.67% stating *often*, and 11.11% stating *sometimes* and 22.22% stating *always*. Of those projects, 55.56% stated that cost effectiveness was considered *often*, while 33.33% stated *sometimes*, and 22.22% *always*. If cost effectiveness is not considered with each project, this is an area of potential improvement (see table below).

Projects Funding by WBIF Only	Plan Work group Ratings (percent)				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Are projects located within the highest priority areas	0.0%	0.0%	11.11%	66.67%	22.22%
Is cost-effectiveness considered before implementing a specific project	0.0%	0.0%	33.33%	55.56%	11.11%
Do you provide outreach to specific landowners	0.0%	0.0%	66.67%	11.11%	22.22%
Do you adjust cost-share rates based on priority levels	55.56%	22.22%	22.22%	0.0%	0.0%
Do you have any shared services with other partnerships	0.0%	0.0%	50.00%	37.50%	12.50%

Survey responses of particular interest included the question related to outreach, with 66.67% stating outreach was *sometimes* provided to specific landowners. This is an area of potential improvement for the partnership. According to the survey as well, the partnership *rarely* (22.22%) or *never* (55.56%) adjusts cost-share rates based

on priority levels. This is something the partnership may want to evaluate and/or ask adjacent watersheds for examples.

One item of accolades in survey responses would be utilization of shared services within the partnership, with 50% stating that the partnership often or always utilizes shared services to accomplish mutual goals.

External Surveys: Advisory Committee Members (Agency Partners and Local Stakeholders)

A total of 17 partners were invited to take the survey and 13 participated. When asked the frequency of interaction with the planning partnership, 61.54% stated a *few times* a year, 23.08% *several times* a year and 15.38% *not at all*. Of those interactions, 75% stated the amount of Advisory Committee meetings held was *about right*. Regarding consultation, 90% of the Advisory Committee felt the level of consultation was *about right*.

Advisory Committee members provided ranking in six performance areas. Regarding Communication, 45.45% stated they *agree* that they were kept informed, and the members seek input from them, but 18.18% disagree or strongly disagree

Performance Area	Advisory Committee Ratings (percent)					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Communication: keep us informed and seek input	9.09%	9.09%	18.18%	45.45%	18.18%	0.0%
Completing Plan Priorities: projects consistent with plan goals and objectives	9.09%	0.0%	18.18%	45.45%	27.27%	0.0%
Equal Efforts made by Partners: Everyone's willing to pull their weight	9.09%	27.27%	27.27%	36.36%	0.0%	0.0%
Initiative: willing to do what's needed to get work done, including initiate change	1.11%	0.0%	1.11%	55.56%	22.22%	0.0%
Timeliness and Follow-through: reliable and meet deadlines	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%	70.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Cooperation: easy to work with and seek opportunities to address priorities	11.11%	0.0%	11.11%	55.56%	22.22%	0.0%

and feel communication needs to be better. A total of 45.45% *agree* the partnership is Completing Plan Priorities, consistent with the plan goals and objectives and 55.56% *agreed* that the partnerships are willing to do what's needed to get work done (Initiative) and are easy to work with (Cooperation).

Additional thoughts on how well the CWMP process has worked for the watershed at this stage of implementation:

- Good process!
- The plan implementation has gone well. This plan was the first cohort of plans after the pilots. The upcoming mid-point assessment provides an opportunity to clarify and simplify the plan. In addition, the opportunity exists for partners to re-commit to implementation of the updated plan.
- As a partner I could and should be more involved than I have been the past couple of years. I will be working to improve on that.

Full partner survey responses are in Appendix C.

Findings Part 4: Assurance Measures/Watershed-based Implementation Funding

Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) is an alternative to BWSRs traditional competitive funding process. Once the entities within a partnership have a BWSR Board Approved and Locally Adopted Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan meeting the requirements of the One Watershed One Plan Program, they are eligible for WBIF to fund eligible activities identified within their plan. In the Twin Cities metro, approved plans may include the Metropolitan Surface or Groundwater Management Plan.

The Watershed Based Implementation Funding Policy includes four assurance measures that BWSR uses to supplement the existing grants accountability system. Assurance measures are designed to define expectations for how these large, non-competitive grants are used and to demonstrate to key audiences that WBIF dollars are being spent effectively to address the highest priority clean water needs in the watershed. The four Assurance Measures are:

1. Prioritized, targeted, and measurable work is making progress toward achieving clean water goals.
2. Programs, projects, and practices are being implemented in priority areas.
3. Grant work is on-schedule and on-budget.
4. Leverage of non-state funds.

BWSR staff most recently reviewed these Assurance Measures for the FY20 WBIF Grant (C20-9994) and WBIF Grant (C22-2978). Documentation of the Assurance Measure review is found in Appendix D of this report.

As a result of the most recent Assurance Measures, BWSR staff identified that the partnership is making measurable progress towards plan goals utilizing the Watershed Based Implementation Funding. A summary of the review and recommendations are provided below:

Assurance Measure 1 – PTM Efforts Making Progress to Clean Water Goals

Measurable outcomes proposed in the grant work plan were achieved 90% or more of the time for WBIF grants. The partnership is commended for meeting or exceeding several outcomes including: sediment reduction, phosphorus, stormwater management, forestland protection, ditch, streambank, and shoreland stabilization, nonstructural practices, locating wells, septic system treatment systems, private well testing, and the Keep it Clean special project.

Based on these findings the partnership is encouraged to develop a process to ensure tracking is completed in a consistent manner. This will ensure a consistent process is used to measure progress towards plan goals as it relates to WBIF funding and all other work that contributes to plan goals.

Assurance Measure 2 – Programs, Projects, and Practices Implemented in Priority Area

The partnership is commended for directing project development efforts in priority areas 90% or more of the time and for implementing projects (outcomes) in priority areas 70% to 90% of the time.

Based on these findings the partnership is encouraged to continue to use a process to prioritize, measure, and target program and project activity.

Assurance Measure 3 – Grant Work is On-Schedule and On-Budget

The partnership is commended for completing planned activities (outcomes) on time and on budget. 100% of both WBIF grants was spent.

The partnership is encouraged to conduct annual work planning exercise to ensure that projects continue to be targeted in priority areas, on time, and on budget.

Assurance Measure 4

The partnership is commended for applying for and receiving \$215,000 of additional grants and for leveraging approximately \$350,000 from County State Aid Highway (CSAH) funds and SWCD aid funds to support projects and staff capacity.

The partnership is encouraged to apply for non-state funds to support the implementation of plan goals.

General Conclusions

After a thorough review of the provided information including the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan implementation progress, the watershed-based performance standards checklist, and analysis of survey results, BWSR staff have developed some recommendations for the partnership.

In brief review, the Lake of the Woods Partnership reports achieving 16 of 16 basic performance standards, 9 of the 11 best standards or practices, and 8 of 8 high performance standards. The partnership has clearly demonstrated effectiveness in implementation of best management practices within the landscape. The Partnership would benefit from continuing annual work planning and discussions related to priority areas and where to focus future implementation efforts. Targeting outreach to priority areas would be beneficial and assist the partnership in making meaningful water quality reductions in areas where little or no implementation has occurred to date. Both the Policy Committee and Advisory Committee also feel additional communication with the partnership would be beneficial.

The Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan contains 21 goal statements and 86 planned activities. The partnership has met or exceeded nine (43%) of the 21 goal statements. The partnership is commended for having 60 (70%) of planned 86 activities underway/in-progress. The remaining 26 (30%) were identified as *Not Started*. The partnership is doing an excellent job making progress toward plan goals and activities and for meeting assurance measures related to Watershed Based Implementation Funding.

Commendations

Commendations are based on achievement of BWSR's high performance standards (see Findings, Part 2 and Appendix B). These practices reflect above average operational effectiveness and level of effort.

The Lake of the Woods Partnership is commended for:

- Project tracking systems used to track all work that contributes to plan goals
- Shared service opportunities are leveraged between partners
- Training efforts are made to inform on watershed related topics
- Technical advisory committee reviews members
- Agency members provide updates on agency initiatives, projects, and other information related to the watershed
- Water quality trends are tracked for priority water bodies
- Partnerships annually review progress toward water quality goals identified in CWMP
- Watershed partners have developed new partnerships with partners outside of the planning/implementation partnership

Action Items

Action items are based on compliance with BWSR's basic requirement performance standards (see Findings, Part 2 and Appendix B). Action items address lack of compliance with statutory requirements.

Lake of the Woods Partnership does not have any required actions.

Partnership Recommendations

This section contains recommendations offered by BWSR to the Lake of the Woods Partnership. The intention of these recommendations is to enhance the organization's delivery of effective water and related land resource management and service to the residents of the watershed. BWSR financial assistance through the Performance Review and Assistance Program grant program may be available to support the implementation of some of these recommendations. See BWSR website for more information: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/prap-grants>.

Recommendation (Tracking): BWSR recommends that partnerships continue to track and share data with each other about implementation efforts that contribute to plan goals.

Consistently tracking implementation information and sharing it allows for a holistic picture of work completed to implement a shared plan. The implementation information should be used for reflection and evaluation of progress toward plan goals. This information should be shared with funders and stakeholders on a regular basis. Shorter intervals may be easier to compile and will keep information fresh and current.

Recommendation (Reflecting): BWSR recommends that partnerships incorporate an adaptive management step into annual or biennial work planning sessions.

This reflection should focus on previous work plans, whether those are specific to a funding source such as WBIF or an organization-specific or partnership/shared work plans. Reflection should include a determination of whether the same activities should be continued, or if adjustments in the implementation approach(es) are needed, and a commitment to take action to make those adjustments.

Your existing plan has a long list of goals and activities. Plans with long lists of priority concerns, multiple management areas and numerous goals can be difficult to achieve within the plan timeframe and make progress tracking difficult. Updating your plan to simplify priority concerns, management areas, goals, and activities may make the plan more achievable.

Reflecting could be done by individual entities, who share their results, or as a group. This is a good time to convene the advisory and policy committees to check-in on progress and partnership function. Discuss and use the information to make capacity, program, and partnership adjustments as necessary.

Recommendation (Evaluating): BWSR recommends that the partnership continue to compare the resource results associated with projects, practices, or programs to the stated resource goals/outcomes in the plan.

As time goes on and more data is available, more robust evaluations will be possible. Also, public expectations of progress will increase over time as more funding is allocated for implementation. Thorough and frequent evaluations will help the partnership determine if the work they are doing is achieving their resource goals and decide whether to shift their activities or amend/update their plan. Conducting an evaluation allows the partners to consider whether new data or information should be incorporated into the plan and if it would result in the need to shift priority locations, issues, or activities. The partnership is encouraged to conduct another evaluation as the plan nears the ten-year mark.

Recommendation (Sharing): BWSR recommends that the partnership communicates regularly to the public and stakeholders about their watershed management work.

Tell your stories about accomplishments and progress made toward plan goals through local communications such as press releases, presentations, newsletter, annual reports, and state communications such as BWSR Snapshots, and Clean Water Fund Stories. Do this to disseminate the results of public investments in water management, to communicate about successes, or challenges, in implementing the plan, and to maintain public support for watershed work and legacy funding overall. Local partners can also generate local participation in conservation work by promoting or reporting on programs and events.

Recommendation (Training): BWSR recommends that the partnership develop a formal training and orientation process for policy committee members and staff.

Developing, implementing, and tracking training/orientation needs for policy members and staff, on a regular basis, will reinforce the purpose of comprehensive watershed management plans.

Recommendation (Communication): Increase communication between all partners

Based upon input from the partnership, there are some challenges with communication. To facilitate better communication, the partnership is encouraged to spend time talking about communication and how it happens. This effort could help clarify what information needs to be shared, who is responsible for sending it, the frequency it happens, and the method(s) to be used. Effective communication involves both the sender and the recipient, and each has a responsibility to communicate with each other. The partnership should identify ways to ensure the sender's message is received and that the recipient understands and acts/responds as expected.

Recommendation (Capacity): Consider Workload Assessments to Evaluate Staff Capacity

BWSR recognizes that there are differences in the partnership's efforts toward plan goals. Local budgets, staff capacity, and workloads associated with multiple plans may affect an organization's ability to participate. Insufficient staffing, or lack of staff at the organizational level can result in time delays related to tracking progress and sharing information. It also presents challenges with day-to-day communications within the partnership. The partnership will work best when staffing levels are sufficient to meet workload needs. For these reasons, we encourage each organization to conduct a workload assessment to better understand staff capacity needs based on the work they are responsible for. Workload Assessments are eligible for PRAP grant funding.

LGU Comments and BWSR Responses

The Lake of the Woods Partnership was invited to comment on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations in the draft version of this report.

No comments were provided.

Appendix A. Performance Standards

PRAP Watershed-Based Assessment Part 2-Performance Standards

2025

Watershed-Based Performance Standards

Watershed Partnership Name: Lake of the Woods

Performance Area	Performance Standard	Level of Review	Rating		
			Yes, No, Unsure or N/A		
			YES	NO	Unsure or N/A
General Administration	★ High Performance standard	I Annual Compliance			
	■ Best Standard/practice	II BWSR Staff Review & Assessment			
	● Basic Requirement				
	● Each participating member has adopted the comprehensive watershed management plan	I	x		
	● Coordinator or lead staff person(s) identified for the partnership	II	x		
	■ Operational guidelines for fiscal procedures exist and are current	II	x		
	■ Financial Reports provided to Policy Committee on annual basis	II	x		
	● eLINK Grant Report(s): submitted on time (annual or biannual if funds exceed \$500,000)	I	x		
	● Assurance Measure 1: Prioritized, targeted, and measurable work is making progress toward achieving clean water goals	II	x		
	● Assurance Measure 2: Programs, projects, and practices are being implemented in priority areas	II	x		
	● Assurance Measure 3: Grant work is on-schedule and on-budget	II	x		
Policy Committee	● Assurance Measure 4: Leverage of non-state funds	II	x		
	★ Project tracking system is used by watershed partnership to track all work that contributes to plan goals	II	x		
	★ Shared service opportunities are leveraged between partners	II	x		
	● Conflict of Interest policy exists and is reviewed/signed by the JPE or fiscal agent	II	x		
	● The policy committee or board is involved in project funding discussions or decision making, as defined by an implementation agreement	II	x		
	● Committee membership is reviewed/updated annually	II	x		
	■ Training: Orientation on comprehensive watershed management plans is provided to new policy committee members	II		x	
	★ Training: efforts are made to inform on watershed related topics	II	x		
	■ Reviewed governing documents (bylaws, formal agreements) within the last 5 years (if applicable)	II	x		
	● Technical advisory committee participates in plan development, implementation, and amendments	I	x		
	■ Advisory committee members meet at least once annually	II	x		
Advisory Committee	■ Water quality, hydrologic, and monitoring trends are used to evaluate progress towards plan/resource goals	II	x		
	★ Technical advisory committee reviews members	II	x		
	★ Agency members provide updates on agency initiatives, projects, and other information related to the watershed	II	x		
	★ Water quality trends tracked for priority water bodies	II	x		
	● Steering committee meets at least four times a year and reviews plan goals and actions	II	x		
	● Staff has open (2-way) communication about comprehensive watershed management plan activities with policy committee and local boards/councils	II	x		
Steering Committee	● Steering committee coordinates a mid-plan review to evaluate progress toward plan goals	I	x		
	■ Watershed partners solicit stakeholder input within the last year	II	x		
	■ An annual work plan (outside of WBIF grant) is developed and implemented	II		x	
	■ Individual partner governing boards/councils are updated on annual workplan activities	II	x		

PRAP Watershed-Based Assessment Part 2-Performance Standards

2025

Communication & Coordination	★	Partnership annually reviews progress towards water quality goals identified in the CWMP	II	X		
	●	Partnership website(s): contain board meeting information, partner contact information, committee membership, and annual eLINK reports – also prominently displays the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Logo and a link to the Legislative Coordinating Commission website (LOWWjpb.org)	I	X		
	●	Partnership website(s) host a current copy of the plan and is maintained and updated regularly	I	X		
	■	Communication pieces sent that highlights work and program opportunities	II	X		
	■	Public education materials are watershed focused and reinforce high priority issues and actions to address plan goals	II	X		
	★	Watershed partners have developed new partnerships with partners outside of the planning/implementation partnership – <i>sustain farm group; UIC board; Keep it Clean</i>	II	X		

Appendix B. Summary of Survey Results

Internal Survey: Lake of the Woods Policy Committee Questions and Responses

The Policy Committee meets every:	
Month	20.0%
Two Months	0.0%
Three Months	60.0%
Four Months	20.0%
Six Months	0.0%
Other	0.0%

The amount of meetings we hold is:	
Not enough, we could meet more often	0.0%
About right	100.0%
Too much, we meet more than necessary	0.0%
Other (please specify)	0.0%

Based on your experience, indicate your level of agreement about the partnership in the following areas:						
Performance Characteristic	Rating (percent of responses)					Don't Know
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Not Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Communication (<i>they keep us informed and seek our input</i>)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%
Completing Plan Priorities (their projects are consistent with plan goals and objectives)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%
Initiative (they are willing to do what is necessary to get work done, including initiating change)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%
Timelines and Follow-through (they are reliable and meet deadlines)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%
Cooperation (they are easy to work with and seek opportunities to address priorities)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%

When selecting projects, which statement best describes the partnership's attempt to select projects in priority areas:	
All the time- the partners focus on priority areas for implementation	40.0%
Some of the time- the partners try to get projects in the priority area	60.0%
Not actively- the partners fund based off landowner interest with location as secondary	0.0%
Unsure- we are not involved	0.0%

Overall, which best describes how well informed you are on partnership efforts:

Great, we are kept well informed and know what's happening	80.0%
Good, we receive communication, but we could receive more	20.0%
Poor, we have no idea what's happening	0.0%
Unsure	0.0%

How often do you report back to your board on the partnership's efforts:

Monthly	40.0%
Twice Annually	0.0%
Quarterly	60.0%
Annually	0.0%

Overall, how would you rate the working relationship of the LGU partners:

Strong, they work well together most of the time	100.0%
Good, there are clearly some minor issues they occasionally work through that may cause issues	0.0%
Poor, they have some clear issues that impact their ability to function as a unit	0.0%
Non-existent, there are major breakdowns that need to be addressed	0.0%

At this stage of plan implementation, do you have any additional thoughts on how the partnership could improve

No additional comments provided

Internal Survey: Lake of the Woods Planning Work Group (Local Government Staff) Questions and Responses

Question: Does the Partnership have a formal working agreement for implementation:

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%

Day to Day Work in Implementing Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan:	Planning Work Group Ratings (percent)				
	Weekly	Monthly	Biannually	Annually	As Needed
How often you consult the CWMP	11.11%	22.22%	11.11%	11.11%	44.44%
How often are priority projects discussed	11.11%	22.22%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%
How often do non-priority projects get implemented	0.0%	11.11%	0.0%	11.11%	77.78%
How often is the policy committee consulted on project funding decisions	0.0%	11.11%	44.44%	0.00%	44.44%
How often are policy documents and bylaws reviewed and updated	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	44.44%	55.56%
How often are plan goals or outcomes reviewed	0.0%	0.0%	11.11%	66.67%	22.22%
How often are new data and trends discussed	0.0%	0.0%	22.22%	11.11%	66.67%

Projects Funding by WBIF Only:	Planning Work Group Ratings (percent)				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Are projects located within the highest priority areas	0.0%	0.0%	11.11%	66.67%	22.22%
Is cost-effectiveness considered before implementing a specific project	0.0%	0.0%	33.33%	55.56%	11.11%
Do you provide outreach to specific landowners	0.0%	0.0%	66.67%	11.11%	22.22%
Do you adjust cost-share rates based on priority levels	55.56%	22.22%	22.22%	0.00%	0.00%
Do you have any shared services with other partnerships	0.0%	0.0%	50.00%	37.50%	12.50%

External Survey: Lake of the Woods Advisory Committee (Agency Partner and Local Stakeholders) Questions and Responses

Question: How often have you interacted with the planning partnership:

Not at all	15.38%
A few times	61.54%
Several times a year	23.08%
Monthly	0.0%
Weekly	0.0%
Daily	0.0%

Question: The amount of advisory committee meetings held is:

Not enough, we could meet more often	16.67%
About right	75.0%
Too much, we meet more than necessary	8.33%
Other (please specify)	0.0%

Based on your experience working with the partnership, please indicate your level of agreement with the statements:

Performance Characteristic	Rating (percent of responses)					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree not Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Communication (they keep us informed and seek our input)	9.09%	9.09%	18.18%	45.45%	18.18%	0.0%
Completing Plan Priorities (their projects are consistent with plan goals and objectives)	9.09%	0.0%	18.18%	45.45%	27.27%	0.0%
Equal efforts made by partners (everyone's pulling their weight)	9.09%	27.27%	27.27%	36.36%	0.0%	0.0%
Initiative (they are willing to lead the charge)	11.11%	0.0%	11.11%	55.56%	22.22%	0.0%
Timelines and Follow-through (they are reliable and meet deadlines)	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%	70.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Cooperation (they are easy to work with and seek opportunities to address agency priorities)	11.11%	0.0%	11.11%	55.56%	22.22%	0.0%

Is the Advisory Committee consulted:

Too much, they rely too heavily on the committee to make local decisions	0.0%
About right, they keep us informed and request assistance when needed	90.0%
Not enough, we could provide more expertise on certain issues	10.0%
Never, they do not ask for outside assistance	0.0%

How would you rate the working relationship of the LGU partners from an outside perspective:

Strong, they work well together most of the time	50.0%
Good, there are clearly some minor issues they occasionally work through that may cause issues	30.0%
Poor, they have some clear issues that impact their ability to function as a unit	20.0%
Non-existent, there are major breakdowns that need to be addressed	0.0%

Appendix C. Assurance Measures Documentation



WBIF Assurance Measures Documentation

Watershed: Lake of the Woods Fiscal Year: 2020 WBIF Grant Number: C20-9994

Filled Out By: J. Westerlund On (date): 12/5/2023

Assurance Measure 1: Prioritized, targeted, and measurable work is making progress toward achieving clean water goals

Proposed Measurable Outcomes *{insert from WBIF Application. This is what was reported to [the Legislative Coordinating Commission \(LCC\)](#):*

"Projects will accomplish: reduction of 28 T/Year Sediment in the Warroad River, completion of 1 stormwater plan for City of Warroad, implementation of 200 acres of non-structural ag management, protection of 1600 acres of forestland."

Metric: *Report the percentage of measurable outcomes proposed in [the current/amended grant work plan](#) that were completed as reported in the Grant Summary Report. (Use the final indicators summary for load reductions. Focus on the proposed outcomes as reported to LCC. You may need to scan the report for other outcomes not described in the LCC narrative. Add outcomes as appropriate).*

Date of Work Plan used to populate fields below: 11/22/2022



#	Outcome or Output Indicator (units)	Proposed (work plan)	actual (grant progress report)	percent
1	Sediment reduction (tons/yr)	94.08	250.58	266%
2	Phosphorus reduction (pounds/year)	61.2	408.2	667%
3	Stormwater management (plan) {product was a stormwater retrofit analysis for city of Warroad}	1	1	100%
4	Nonstructural ag management (acres)*	n/a	n/a	n/a
5a	Forestland protection (Develop a targeting strategy for cost share program)	1	1	100%
5b	Acres of forest management plans	n/a**	337	n/a
6	Lake of the Woods County Ditch 1 (miles stabilized)	1	1	100%
7	Locate wells for MN Geologic Atlas (wells)	635	770	121%
8	Special Projects – Keep it Clean (miles of shoreline cleaned)	10	10	100%
9	Streambank and Shoreland Projects (linear feet)	855	466	55%
10	SSTS Cost Share (program developed)	1	1	100%

11	Private Well Testing (# of tests)	50	54	108%
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*funding for this activity shifted to Lake of the Woods County Ditch 1. This activity was carried over to the FY22 grant.

**10-year plan goal is 1600 acres total. The work plan does not indicate a goal for # of acres for the grant period.

Overall Indicator Selection (select one. The BC will also need to report this selection in eLINK from the drop down menu. That information will be reported on the LCC website):

- ☒ Achieved proposed outcomes (achieved 90% or more of what they proposed)
- ☐ Achieved most proposed outcomes (achieved between 70% and 90%)
- ☐ Achieved some proposed outcomes (achieved between 50% and 70%)
- ☐ Did not achieve proposed outcomes (achieved 49% or less of proposed outcomes)

Justification for indicator selection*:

They definitely exceeded their sediment and phosphorus reduction goals. They did not complete the planned linear feet of shoreline projects, but I placed more weight on the load reductions than linear feet. They also completed project and program development items as proposed.

Nonstructural land management was removed because funding was shifted to a larger ditch project – items that were not ready to go were moved over to the other project.

Relevant information found in All Details Report / additional context (optional):

“Twenty forest stewardship plans, at 80 acres per plan, or 1600 acres total is the target goal for the 10-year planning period.”

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):

Context Questions (optional, if needed):

- What helped or hindered the partnership in achieving the goals of the grant work plan?
- Is there anything else you want BWSR to know about implementation in this grant period?

*include relevant information about discrepancies in calculators, etc. This information can be included in the actual outcomes narrative for LCC (see above).

Assurance Measure 2: Programs, projects, and practices are being implemented in priority areas

Metrics

Category A: Report the proportion, type, and quality of project development effort made in priority areas (even if contacts did not result in a project) Project development was geared investigations that will help target water storage and stormwater retrofit projects. Also focused on developing programs for cost share and cover crops; less geographic targeting and more program development.

Category B: Report the proportion of outcomes achieved in priority areas. Add outcomes if needed.

Outcome 1: Phosphorus: 87%

Outcome 2: Sediment: 74%

See excel spreadsheet for more information.

Overall Indicator Selection (select one from each category):

Category A

- ☒ Project development was in priority areas (90% or more)
- ☐ Most project development was in priority areas (between 70% and 90%)
- ☐ Some project development was in priority areas (between 50% and 70%)

Category B

- ☐ Outcomes were achieved in priority areas (90% or more)
- ☒ Most outcomes were achieved in priority areas (between 70% and 90%)
- ☐ Some outcomes were achieved in priority areas (between 50% and 70%)

Context Questions (optional, if needed):

- Does the partnership (or individual LGUs in the partnership) have a landowner contact tracking system?
- If more information is needed about project development: What was the level of effort in high priority areas?
 - Who and how many landowners did you contact?
 - What kind of contact was used, and which methods were the most successful?
 - How did partners contribute (time, money, etc.) to the implementation effort?
 - How did landowners become engaged in actions related to water issues?
 - What have you done to better understand what motivates the landowners in your area?
 - What was the rationale for implementing actions in areas not designated as high priority?
- Are there other practices, projects and programs the groups would like to highlight that were not directly funded by WBIF?

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):

Assurance Measure 3: Grant work is on-schedule and on-budget

Metrics

Category A: Whether or work plan activities were completed within the original grant time frame

Category B: Whether or not funds were returned.

Indicator (select one from each category):

Category A (on schedule)

☒ Work plan activities were completed according to the original [schedule](#)

☐ Work plan activities were completed with extra [time](#)

☐ Work plan activities were not completed, even with extra [time](#)

Category B* (on budget)

☒ Funds were not [returned](#)

☐ Funds were [returned](#)

**{if a very small proportion of funds were returned, "funds were not returned" can be selected and the dollar amount noted. The purpose of this indicator is to demonstrate when groups are unable to spend significant amounts of the funding and we choose not to extend the grant}*

Context Questions (optional, if needed):

- How much money was encumbered when the grant was extended?
- If there were changes to the work plan schedule or budget, what was the context/primary cause?
- What did the partnership do to set itself up for success (e.g. staffing plans, landowners lined up, communication plans, studies already completed for targeting)?
- What lessons were learned that will influence the next grant work plan?

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):

Assurance Measure 4: Leverage of non-state funds

Metrics:

- Number of additional grants pursued: 0
- Number of additional grants secured: 0
- Dollar amount of additional grants secured: 0

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):

CSAH match funding for ditch project (~\$350K), local capacity covers staff time.

Reporting Note: Partnerships must document required match in eLINK. Efforts to pursue additional funding and actual leveraged dollars beyond the required match don't need to be reported in the same detail as the required match (associated with specific practices), but BWSR recommends documenting their leveraging efforts via a narrative summary in eLINK reports.

Measurable Outcomes Narrative For LCC

Complete this after all measures have been analyzed. This will show up on the LCC's website, along with the "proposed measurable outcomes (see AM 1) and the drop-down selection of the extent to which outcomes were achieved.

Measurable Outcomes: This project funded implementation of 5 waterbody (ditch, stream, lakeshore) stabilization projects resulting in reduction of 250 tons/year of sediment and 404 pounds/year of phosphorus in the Lake of the Woods watershed.

Funds also covered project work to determine optimal locations for future stormwater retrofits, water storage and private forest management as well as develop programs and policies for agricultural best management practices including nonstructural land management and subsurface sewage treatment systems. Other funded activities included private well testing, well location and validation for use in the county geologic atlas, and a Keep it [Clean](#) initiative which included a cleanup of 10 miles of Lake of the Woods shoreline. Most outcomes were achieved in priority areas as defined by the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

The work was completed on time and on budget. Other state funds (county state aid highway and SWCD aid) contributed to project completion and staff time.

Procedure

This procedure will be used, starting in 2023, for 1-3 years as BWSR staff learn how to consistently apply assurance measures. The procedure will be revisited after the end of the 2024 reporting season.

- 1) **Grant completion.** BC: notify the 1W1P/WBIF program coordinator that the grant is closed (or all funds are spent if prior to grant agreement expiration date)
- 2) **Assurance measures analysis and final measurable outcomes write-up.** 1W1P/WBIF program coordinator initiates WBIF assurance measures analysis and documentation; coordinator and BC work together to finalize assurance measures. During this time, the BC checks in with the partnership to share our findings and give the partnership an opportunity to provide additional information and context.
- 3) **eLINK documentation.**
 - a. BC copies the final measurable outcomes write-up into the text box in [eLINK](#)
 - b. In the Progress Report, BC selects the appropriate choice from the drop-down menu under “did the grantee achieve the proposed measurable outcomes?” according to the determination in Assurance Measure 1.
 - c. BC attaches the assurance measure documentation report (word document) in eLINK. This can be done after the final report is approved if needed.



WBIF Assurance Measures Documentation

Instructions for incorporation into eLINK are in the 'Procedure' section at the end of this document. Red text is example language

Watershed: Lake of the Woods Fiscal Year: 2022

WBIF Grant Number: C22-2978

Filled Out By: J. Westerlund On (date): 12/30/2024

Assurance Measure 1: Prioritized, targeted, and measurable work is making progress toward achieving clean water goals

Proposed Measurable Outcomes (insert from WBIF Application. This is what was reported to the Legislative Coordinating Commission (LCC)):

Outcomes include over 1 mile of streambank shoreland protection, reducing flows in Ditch 1 by 15%, reaching over 5,000 winter anglers to encourage lake stewardship, preparing 8 shovel-ready plans for water storage in the upper Warroad watershed.

Metric: Report the percentage of measurable outcomes proposed in the current/amended grant work plan that were completed as reported in the Grant Progress Report. (Use the final indicators summary for load reductions. Focus on the proposed outcomes as reported to LCC. You may need to scan the report for other outcomes not described in the LCC narrative. Add outcomes as appropriate).

#	Outcome or Output Indicator/units	Proposed (work plan)	actual (grant progress report)	percent
1	Agricultural Practices (side water inlets)	0 (work plan was amended)	0	-
2a	Forest Stewardship – Plans (acres)	1600 acres of forest	14 plans (2155 acres)	134%
2b	Forest Stewardship – New acres enrolled in SFIA	management plans	{1800 estimated total acres enrolled in SFIA}	113%
3	Nonstructural management practices (acres/year)	200*2=400 ("acre / years")	(50*1)+(160*3)=530	133%
4a	Education – Keep It Clean	5,000 winter anglers	Messaging reached 250,00 through geofence. Promotional	Exceeded

January 2025

			materials were all distributed.	
4b	Education - Targeted Outreach	2 direct mailings; 2 workshops	2 workshops and associated mailings	100%
5a	Streambank or Shoreline Protection (LW CD1) – flow reduction	15% flow reduction	Project built as designed	100%
5b	Streambank or Shoreline Protection (LW CD1) – lbs/yr phosphorus reduced	230	230	100%
5c	Streambank or Shoreline Protection (LW CD1) – tons/yr sediment reduced	100	100	100%
6	Project development – ag specialist/program coordinator	Work plan was amended to shift from project development to education via SFA plus stormwater assessment	Two workshops; field visits; two presentations; stormwater treatment assessment	100%
7	SSTS Cost Share	One system	Portions of 2 systems	100%
8a	Streambank and Shoreland - # projects	1+4+2=7	12	171%
8b	Streambank and Shoreland – linear feet	300+400+75= 775	65+86.4+450+125+129.2+45+150+260+50+50+88+500=1999	258%
8c	Streambank and Shoreland – lbs/yr P	297	658	222%
8d	Streambank and Shoreland – tons/yr sed	180	352	196%
9	Engineering and Technical Assistance – survey/design # peatland waters storage sites	8	Feasibility Report completed and decision was made not to proceed with shovel ready plans.	50%

Indicator Selection (select one. The BC will also need to report this selection in eLINK from the drop-down menu. That information will be reported on the LCC website):

- ☒ Achieved proposed outcomes (achieved 90% or more of what they proposed)
- ☐ Achieved most proposed outcomes (achieved between 70% and 90%)
- ☐ Achieved some proposed outcomes (achieved between 50% and 70%)
- ☐ Did not achieve proposed outcomes (achieved 49% or less of proposed outcomes)

Justification for indicator selection:

include relevant information about discrepancies in calculators, etc. This information can be included in the actual outcomes narrative for LCC (see above).

Relevant information found in Grant Progress Report / additional context (optional):

You may decide to pro-rate certain outcomes for linked projects. Factors in that decision could include the proportion of the activity paid for by this grant, the proportion of outcomes from the activity grant relative to the overall grant, and which funding source(s) were linked. See previously completed examples: Yellow Medicine FY20, Bois de Sioux – Mustinka FY21.

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):**Context Questions (optional):**

- What helped or hindered the partnership in achieving the goals of the grant work plan?
- Is there anything else you want BWSR to know about implementation in this grant period?

Assurance Measure 2: Programs, projects, and practices are being implemented in priority areas

Metrics

Category A: *Report the proportion, type, and quality of project development effort made in priority areas (even if contacts did not result in a project) Click or tap here to enter text.*

Indicator Selection *(select one from each category):*

Category A

- ☒ Project development was in priority areas (90% or more)
- ☐ Most project development was in priority areas (between 70% and 90%)
- ☐ Some project development was in priority areas (between 50% and 70%)

Category B: *Report the proportion of outcomes achieved in priority areas. Add outcome categories if needed.*

{To the extent practicable, BWSR staff determine if each project (mapped or described in narrative) is located in a priority area (high or medium-high /Tier 1/etc.) according to the comprehensive watershed management plan. The sum of outcomes from priority areas are compared to the total outcomes for each indicator.}

Outcome 1: Nitrogen: 100% the NSLM practices.

Outcome 2: Sediment: 98% for structural practices

Outcome 3: Forest stewardship plan locations followed locally developed Policy

Indicator Selection *(select one from each category):***Category B**

- ☒ Outcomes were achieved in priority areas (90% or more)
- ☐ Most outcomes were achieved in priority areas (between 70% and 90%)
- ☐ Some outcomes were achieved in priority areas (between 50% and 70%)

Justification for indicator selection:

PART A: Outreach efforts for SFA workshops included high priority areas of the plan. The City of Warroad stormwater assessment was also considered a priority in the plan. These two efforts could have been considered education/information and technical/engineering assistance.

PART B: A very high percentage of the work was completed in priority areas of the plan described in the budgets and priority maps. We used inference/weight of evidence to justify that work was done in priority areas {e.g., JD 22 in Muskeg Bay is among the highest sediment loading areas (page 2-17) and the three shoreline projects on Muskeg Bay were in a Zonation Hotspot (page 2-12)}

The streambank projects reported on the Warroad River did include projects outside the targeted map (page 4-45) found in the plan. We considered that projects not in targeted reaches were still in a priority area. BWSR recommends that the Watershed District consider revising the targeting strategy and attempt to scale up results rather than implementing smaller projects based on landowner interest.

Currently some aspects of the plan appear to contradict one another. BWSR recommends amending the plan to facilitate better coordination of planning language with reporting results. The plan should clarify priority issues, resources and locations for future work.

Context Questions (optional):

- Does the partnership (or individual LGUs in the partnership) have a landowner contact tracking system?
- If more information is needed about project development: What was the level of effort in high priority areas?
 - Who and how many landowners did you contact?
 - What kind of contact was used, and which methods were the most successful?
 - How did partners contribute (time, money, etc.) to the implementation effort?
 - How did landowners become engaged in actions related to water issues?
 - What have you done to better understand what motivates the landowners in your area?
 - What was the rationale for implementing actions in areas not designated as high priority?
- Are there other practices, projects and programs the groups would like to highlight that were not directly funded by WBIF?

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):

The Warroad River WD reached out to landowners of targeted streambank projects during the grant.

The stormwater retrofit was done in a priority area.

Assurance Measure 3: Grant work is on-schedule and on-budget

Metrics

Category A: Whether or work plan activities were completed within the original grant time frame

Category B: Whether or not funds were returned.

Indicator (select one from each category):

Category A (on schedule)

- ☒ Work plan activities were completed according to the original schedule
- ☐ Work plan activities were completed with extra time
- ☐ Work plan activities were not completed, even with extra time

If the work plan activities were not completed according to the original schedule, indicate how much extra time was given.

Category B (on budget)

- ☒ Funds were not returned
- ☐ Funds were returned

Document the dollars returned. If a very small proportion of funds were returned, "funds were not returned" can be selected.

Context Questions (optional):

- How much money was encumbered when the grant was extended?
- If there were changes to the work plan schedule or budget, what was the context/primary cause?
- What did the partnership do to set itself up for success (e.g. staffing plans, landowners lined up, communication plans, studies already completed for targeting)?
- What lessons were learned that will influence the next grant work plan?

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional):

Assurance Measure 4: Leverage of non-state funds

Metrics:

- Leveraged Funds Documented in eLINK: \$72,163
- Number of additional grants pursued: 1
- Number of additional grants secured: 1
- Dollar amount of additional grants secured: \$215,000

How many dollars in the documented eLINK match were from the grants noted above? 0

Additional information from the BC or Partnership (optional): Funding through the International Joint Commission of U.S and Canada

Reporting Note: Partnerships must document required match in eLINK. Efforts to pursue additional funding and actual leveraged dollars beyond the required match don't need to be reported in the same detail as the required match (associated with specific practices), but BWSR recommends documenting their leveraging efforts via a narrative summary in eLINK reports.

Measurable Outcomes Narrative For LCC

Complete this after all measures have been analyzed. This will show up on the LCC's website, along with the "proposed measurable outcomes (see AM 1) and the drop-down selection of the extent to which outcomes were achieved.

Measurable Outcomes: This project funded implementation of stream and ditch stabilization projects and cover crops in the Lake of the Woods Watershed. The work resulted in a reduction of 2,159 pounds/year of nitrogen, 775 pounds/year of phosphorus, and 507 tons/year of sediment.

Funds paid for outreach, including the Lake of the Woods – Keep it Clean program, forest stewardship planning and forest protection and subsurface sewage treatment systems, Funds also covered technical and engineering costs. Work was done in priority areas and addressed sediment and phosphorus which are priority issues in the plan.

Work was completed on time and on budget. Clean Water Funds provided leverage for the partnership to pursue and secure additional funds totaling \$215,000 from the International Joint Commission of U.S. and Canada.

Procedure

This procedure will be used, starting in 2023, for 1-3 years as BWSR staff learn how to consistently apply assurance measures. The procedure will be revisited after the end of the 2024 reporting season.

- 1) **Grant completion.** BC: notify the 1W1P/WBIF program coordinator that the grant is closed (or all funds are spent if prior to grant agreement expiration date)
- 2) **Assurance measures analysis and final measurable outcomes write-up.** 1W1P/WBIF program coordinator initiates WBIF assurance measures analysis and documentation; coordinator and BC work together to finalize assurance measures. During this time, the BC checks in with the partnership to share our findings and give the partnership an opportunity to provide additional information and context.
- 3) **eLINK documentation.**
 - a. BC copies the final measurable outcomes write-up into the text box in eLINK
 - b. In the Progress Report, BC selects the appropriate choice from the drop-down menu under "did the grantee achieve the proposed measurable outcomes?" according to the determination in Assurance Measure 1.

- c. BC attaches the assurance measure documentation report (word document) in eLINK. If the final report has already been approved:
 - i. Click on the Journal tab under Manage Grant Details and click the *Add a new journal entry* button it will open the "Add New Journal" page.
 - ii. Pick the Correspondence Type and type something in the Journal Entry field click "Save."
 - iii. The "Add Attachment" button will become active. Add the document.

Appendix D. Comment Letter

No comments letter provided.

Appendix E. Program Data

Time required to complete this review

Lake of the Woods Partnership: 18 hours

BWSR Staff: 40 Hours

Schedule of Watershed-based Assessment

BWSR PRAP Performance Review Key Dates

- January 2025: Initial meeting with Plan Work group staff
- January 2025: Survey of Lake of the Woods Policy Committee, Local Government staff and Partners
- April 2025: Presentation of Draft Report to Lake of the Woods TAC
- April 2025: Presentation of Final Report to JPE

NOTE: BWSR uses review time as a surrogate for tracking total program costs. Time required for PRAP performance reviews is aggregated and included in BWSR's annual PRAP report to the Minnesota Legislature.