



**Lake of the Woods Watershed
Joint Powers Board**
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Lake of the Woods Watershed Mid-Point Evaluation

Lake of the Woods Watershed Implementation Committee.

Date: July 9, 2025

Introduction:

In 2017, the Lake of the Woods One Watershed One Plan planning partnership kicked off the watershed planning effort. This was the first round of plans after the BWSR pilot plans. This planning process included the five participating entities: Lake of the Woods SWCD, Roseau SWCD, Lake of the Woods County, Roseau County and the Warroad Watershed District. The partnership entities worked with the Red Lake Tribe, municipalities, state agencies, and federal agencies to start crafting the Lake of the Woods Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (LOW CWMP).

The plan was approved by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in September of 2019. The LOW CWMP is a 10-year plan that lays out specific actions to manage water quantity, and protect and restore water quality, natural habitat, recreational uses and drinking water sources in the watershed. The plan encompasses portions of Lake of the Woods and Roseau Counties and includes the entirety of the Warroad Watershed District. The planning partners formed the Lake of the Woods Watershed Joint Powers Board and began implementing the first Watershed Based Implementation Funding Grant in 2020.

In 2025, the plan partners completed a Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP). The PRAP showed the strengths of the partnership, including:

- Measurable goal tracking on an annual basis.
- 70% in-progress rate for all actions outlined in the plan.
- Successfully completion of Work Plan Assessments, showing that the partnership is focusing work on priorities outlined in the plan.

Implementation Progress

See attached PRAP Watershed Assessment on Progress Toward Plan Measurable Goals Table on the following pages.

 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 supplies (public and private) and continue to evaluate the prioritization of priority issue 1.1.1 based on filling of data gaps (MG-3)			
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 supplies (public and private) and continue to evaluate the prioritization of priority issues 1.1.2 based on filling of data gaps (MG-3)			
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 groundwater quality by gathering adequate data on groundwater quality and quantity to make informed decisions and prioritization			
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 planning region, using PTMap and the Bostic/Zippel watershed assessment to estimate the number and locations of BMPs necessary to meet the goal (50% of the long term goal)			
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 by planning region, using PTMap to estimate the number of locations of BMPs necessary to meet this goal (50% of the long term goal)			
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 International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Board to maintain lines of communication as necessary and provide stakeholder input to keep the group informed of current and ongoing impacts due to Lake of the Woods lake level fluctuations.

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 the watershed, or 3,668 total acre-feet of additional water retention (not including NWA)

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 bi-annually based on input from MnDNR and local planning partners. Achieve 3 miles of targeted in-channel projects, apportioned by planning region

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 concern for watershed streams and lakes. Address high priority strategies defined in the Lake of the Woods AIS management plan by completing 3,500 inspections per year by staffing access with watercraft inspectors for 2,000 hours

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 miles

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% of the total undeveloped shoreline (40 miles)

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 controlled public access along streams, rivers, and lakes by two access points

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 the amount of habitat protection by 640 acres through covenants like SFIA or CRP and other working land programs that are either temporary or permanent, or protection of unique habitat through public/private land swaps or acquisitions			
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 management on three drainage systems to improve water quality and flood reduction in tandem with the maintenance and repair of drainage systems			
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 modernization of the entire watershed			
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) identified to the compliance authority			
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 identify audiences to educate about water management and watershed issues. Host two events/training			
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 plan as a means of increasing use of cost share programs and delivering conservation, with 20% (300) landowners enrolling in a cost-share program			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of contacts/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 tools to increase local capacity			
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 ordinances and permit programs to provide more consistency across the watershed to benefit water quality			
Measurable Outcomes (Short term/plan goals)			
Metric	Goal	Total Progress (all actions)	Percent Progress Toward Goal
Number of joint discussions	10	0	0%

Recommendations:

The partnership evaluated completing either a minor amendment or a plan renewal amendment. Based upon several factors and needs of the partnership, it was decided to complete a plan renewal amendment. Below is a list of factors that led to this decision.

- **Need for plan simplification.**
 - The current plan is complex to track and evaluate because it includes 21 Measurable Goals, 35 Prioritized Issues, and 152 Actions.
 - BWSR has allowed newer versions of watershed plans to be simplified and less specificity.
- **Updates to the Plan**
 - Update new emerging issues that were not addressed in the initial plan.
 - Add new data including the Cycle II of the MN Pollution Control Agency's WRAPS Process completed in 2025.
- **Prioritization**
 - Clarify the prioritization of the plan. Current priorities are conflicting or have multiple ways to priorities which makes it hard to rank requests for funding. to clarify priorities.
- **Efficiency**
 - The current plan is 6 years old, with 4 years remaining. A renewal amendment will reset the clock to 10 years vs. completing an amendment with 2-3 years remaining before a new plan would be required.
 - The partnership's goals are to implement the new plan by year 8 of the original ten year plan and utilize the new plan for the 5th round of WBIF funding.
 - The partnership plans to utilize a BWSR midpoint grant to complete the plan renewal amendment.
- **Administration**
 - The partnership does not foresee any changes to the governance structure, or planning boundary.