



Agenda

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

April 28, 2022, 1 p.m., in-person and teleconference via Zoom

- | | | |
|--|--------|---------|
| 1. Call to Order | | |
| 2. Roll Call | | |
| 3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
<i>(please limit audience comments to five minutes)</i> | | |
| 4. Consent Agenda | Action | |
| a. Approval of Agenda | | Page 1 |
| b. Approval of Minutes from the February 24, 2022, Meeting | | Page 3 |
| c. Acceptance of Treasurer’s Report | | Page 7 |
| d. Approval of Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Consultant List for 2022-2023 | | Page 8 |
| 5. Approval of Expenses | Action | Page 10 |
| 6. Business Items | | |
| a. Approval of proposed amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2022 Budget | Action | Page 12 |
| b. Authorization to submit 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) | Action | Page 21 |
| c. Delegation of a Limited Authority for Contracts and Purchase Agreements to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Administrator and Co-administrator | Action | Page 59 |
| 6. Staff Reports | | |
| 7. Adjourn | Action | |

Please note, the April 28, 2022 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board meeting will take place **in-person** in Conference Room A at the Extension and Conservation Center, 4100 220th Street West, Farmington Minnesota **and via teleconference** on the web-based application, Zoom.



Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://dakotacountymn.zoom.us/j/94964599772?pwd=YUU0K09hOHYrRmF6WWZRaGd6TXkrQT09>

Passcode: 923942

Or One tap mobile :

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Other Information

Next Meeting Date: **May 26, 2022**, at 1 p.m.

You will be notified if the meeting is cancelled due to an anticipated lack of quorum.



Meeting Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

February 24, 2022, 1 p.m., In-person and Teleconference using Zoom

Board Members in Attendance

Dakota County Commissioner Mike Slavik, Chair

Scott County Commissioner Tom Wolf, Vice Chair via teleconference

Dakota County Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg, Secretary/ Treasurer

Others in Attendance

Al Full, Citizen

Bruce Johnson, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District, Supervisor

Mary Hamann-Roland, Dakota County Commissioner, VRWJPB Alternate via teleconference

Mark Zabel, Dakota County, VRWJPO Administrator

Melissa Bokman-Ermer, Scott County, Watershed Co-administrator via teleconference

Travis Thiel, Dakota County, VRWJPO Senior Watershed Specialist

Mark Ryan, Dakota County, VRWJPO Watershed Engineer

Brita Moore-Kutz, Dakota County, VRWJPO Communications and Outreach Specialist

Paul Beaumaster, Dakota County, Assistant County Attorney

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Slavik, Holberg, and Wolf were in attendance.

3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

Al Full appeared and addressed the Board about his concern with drainage in the area around Biscayne Avenue and 190th Street. Chair Slavik indicated that the meeting will be short as the decision items are on Consent Agenda and that this issue could be addressed in staff reports.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the January 27, 2022, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Lakeville and Dakota County for Foxborough Park Sediment Reduction Project

- e. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with Dakota County for the Ravenna Ravines Stabilization Project
- f. Authorization to Execute a Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for a Clean Water Fund Grant for the Foxborough Park and Ravenna Ravines Projects

Res. No. VRW 22-03: Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve the consent agenda.

5. Approval of Expenses

Mark Zabel presented the current expenses for approval as shown on item 5.

Res. No. VRW 22-04: Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 roll call vote to approve the expenses totaling \$169,727.27 incurred between January 14, 2022 and February 15, 2022.

Staff Reports

Paul Beaumaster

Paul reported that he was present as counsel in replacement of Helen Brosnahan who had been appointed to the Washington County District Court Bench.

Mark Ryan

Mark reported that staff have been working on closing out some Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) grants and completing required reporting on grants. Mark also reported that he had sent letters to local units of government regarding updating ordinances and received some questions on clarifications but no requests for attending meetings. Mark is planning for the Township Officer's Meeting coming up next month and expects there may be some follow up after that meeting. Mark commented to Mr. Full's concerns in regard to the 190th Street and Biscayne area drainage that he met with Dakota County Planning to discuss any long-term planning for that area including any plans for access and drainage related to the Wetland Management Area. Chair Slavik asked Mark to look into information for clarification on the potential role of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers based on Mr. Full's comments on what he was hearing from Empire Township representatives.

Melissa Bokman-Ermer

Melissa reported on a situation involving a wetland in New Market Township. Melissa provided background on the issue stating that in 2020 there was an Adelman Farms Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) for the Adelman Property which is planned for development. The VRWJPO provided comment to the AUAR identifying that in 2014 the VRWJPO approved CIP dollars for wetland restoration toward development of a wetland bank. Since there appears to be substantial wetlands on the area to be developed comments suggested this may be an opportunity to explore. The City of Elko New Market responded that they will consider exploring this opportunity. The area in question is not expected to develop in the near term and so there is an opportunity to explore this further.

Travis Thiel

Travis reported that nine irrigation audits had been completed in 2021; six in Lakeville, three in Rosemount. The City of Apple Valley has expressed interest in the program and is planning for audits in 2022. The VRWJPO is tentatively planning for participation with twelve irrigation audits in 2022; up to six in Lakeville, up to three in Rosemount, and up to three in Apple Valley. Travis is still working through

coordination on this program and wanted to inform the Board as there may be consideration for these developments in budgeting.

Brita Moore-Kutz

Brita reported working on the “We Are Water” exhibit. Paula Liepold, Brita, and Lindsey Albright from the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District are working together with a Dakota County working group in coordinating development of the display(s) and events. Brita has been working on development of interpretive signs for projects coordinating with a design contractor on the project for completion of six interpretive signs. Completed signs will be placed at project sites in locations readily accessible to the public. Brita is also working on completing the Annual Activity Report for the VRWJPO to be submitted to BWSR at the end of April.

Mark Zabel

Mark reported having received a call from a consultant asking if the VRWJPO would be interested in participating in a large wetland bank project in the watershed. The potential wetland restoration area is a large area, approximately 100 acres. Mark indicated to the consultant that such a project may be too large for the VRWJPO alone and directed the caller to Dakota County Environmental Resources Department as there may be opportunity through their CIP program to develop water storage to reduce downstream flows. This would be another opportunity similar to what was discussed earlier in the Elko-New Market area. As these opportunities develop, we will need to look at our budget and consider to what level we may wish to participate. The area is a former sod farm off Blaine Avenue. Georg Fischer acknowledged having been contacted by the consultant and mentioned that Dakota County will entertain those opportunities as they arise and will evaluate restorations within programs and their fit to goals of Dakota County. Where wetland credits can be developed at reasonable cost to the County they may be pursued. Mark also mentioned that Brian Watson, Manager for the Dakota County SWCD, had mentioned that there is a private wetland bank that may be in development in the watershed which would be really great as it creates another wetland bank in the watershed.

Mark also mentioned that he would be sending a letter to all local units of government in the watershed that implement the requirements of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) informing them of the availability of wetland credits from the newly created wetland bank. Chair Slavik asked if the information provided regarding wetland banking differs between Cities and Townships. Mark Zabel responded that most of the Townships within the watershed have delegated authority for implementing WCA to the SWCD. The responsibility for actions implementing the requirements of WCA lie in whether the Township or City choose to retain that responsibility themselves or choose to delegate that to the SWCD. Chair Slavik then asked about water retention and storage asking what has been awarded and the source of those funds. Georg Fischer responded that Dakota County had applied for State funding from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund for programs managed through the Dakota County Land Conservation Program that could address water retention and storage. Chair Slavik asked about credits that have been developed through wetland banking and their status. Mark Zabel noted that 5.1066 acres credits have been allocated to the VRWJPO for public sale, and none have been sold to date. Georg indicated that almost all the credits available from the Jordan Bank (outside the Vermillion River Watershed) have been used by Dakota County mainly for Greenway projects. Georg indicated that credits from the Braun Bank (In the Vermillion River Watershed) have not been used yet. Mark indicated that the credits available are the first release and that more credits will become available as performance milestones are completed.

Chair Slavik noted that as of March 1, 2022 masks in County buildings become optional.

Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 1:39 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, March 24, 2022, at 1 p.m. in Conference Room A at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, 4100 220th Street West, Farmington, MN.

Respectfully submitted by

Mark Zabel
Administrator for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

Attest

Commissioner

Secretary/ Treasurer

Date



2022 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Treasurer's Report

April 2022 - Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

	<u>Budget Amounts</u>	<u>Expenses to Date</u>	<u>Expenses Pending</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>	<u>Budget Funding Sources</u>	
I. Administration & Operations (217002-0000)	\$ 240,500.00	\$ 25,426.55	\$ 14,972.40	\$ 200,101.05	Scott County Levy	\$ 32,500.00
II. Research & Planning (217002-0130)	\$ 15,600.00	\$ 93.85	\$ 2,050.87	\$ 13,455.28	Dakota County Levy	\$ 967,500.00
III. Monitoring & Assessment (217002-0230)	\$ 157,400.00	\$ 6,864.53	\$ 79.08	\$ 150,456.39	Expected 2019 Carryover (Fund Balance)	\$ 456,000.00
IV. Public Communications & Outreach (217002-0330)	\$ 161,150.00	\$ 16,650.04	\$ 15,902.87	\$ 128,597.09	Special Use Permit	\$ 1,000.00
V. Regulation (217002-0530)	\$ 55,900.00	\$ 5,187.21	\$ 4,793.31	\$ 45,919.48	CWF Grant (BWSR)	
VI. Coordination & Collaboration (217002-0531)	\$ 42,600.00	\$ 4,033.76	\$ 3,202.48	\$ 35,363.76	2019-2021 CWF Grant 1W1P (BWSR)	\$ -
VII. Feasibility/Preliminary Studies (217002-0631)	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 12,802.19	\$ 9,153.12	\$ 168,044.69	2020-2023 CWF Grant WBIF (BWSR)	\$ 243,600.00
VIII. Capital Improvement Projects (217092-0130)	\$ 391,850.00	\$ 2,564.02	\$ 2,721.98	\$ 386,564.00	Met Council Grant	\$ -
VIX. CWF Grant - South Branch (217002-0838)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	CIP Reserve	\$ 146,000.00
X. CWF Grant - Erickson Park St (217002-0841)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	CIP Reserve Grant Match	\$ 84,000.00
XI. CWF Grant - Aronson Park Storm (217002-0843)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Investment Earnings	\$ 12,000.00
XII. CWF Grant - Webster Wetland (217002-0844)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Total	\$ 1,942,600.00
XIII. CWF Grant - Technical Assistance (217002-0845)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
XIV. CWF Grant - Imminet Health T (217002-0846)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
XV. CPL Grant - South Creek at Hamburg (217002-0847)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
XVI. FY2019 - Watershed Funding Grant (217002-0848)	\$ 17,700.00	\$ 1,709.13	\$ 81.06	\$ 15,909.81		
XXXIII. CWF Grant - Middle Creak Restoration (217002-0852)	\$ -	\$ 81.06	\$ -	\$ (81.06)		
XXXIV. Irrigation and Audit (217002-0431)	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 30,450.00	\$ -	\$ (20,450.00)		
XXXV. WBIF Grant (BWSR) 2020-2023 North Creek Stabilization (217002-0853)	\$ 338,700.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 338,700.00		
XXXVI. WBIF Grant 2020-2023 Farmington Direct Drainage (217002-0854)	\$ 16,730.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,730.00		
XXXVII. WBIF Grant (BWSR) 2020-2023 Hastings Direct Drainage (217002-0855)	\$ 30,030.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,030.00		
XXXVIII. WBIF Grant (BWSR) 2020-2023 Ravenna Basins Restoration (217002-0856)	\$ 85,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85,000.00		
XXXIV. WBIF Grant (BWSR) 2020-2023 Rosemount Anti-icing (217002-0857)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
VRW JPO Budget Expense TOTAL	\$ 1,753,160.00	\$ 105,862.34	\$ 52,957.17	\$ 1,594,340.49		

4d. Approval of Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Consultant List for 2022-2023

Meeting Date: 4/28/2022
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Travis Thiel
Telephone: 952-891-7546
Prepared by: Travis Thiel



PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

- Approval of VRWJPO consultant list for 2022-2023

SUMMARY

In January 2022, Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) staff distributed and posted a request for qualifications (RFQ) for professional engineering, environmental services, and ecological restoration and management services. The Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) requires water management organizations to solicit qualifications from consultants on a biennial basis and provide a list of consultants that has been compiled. The VRWJPO may use the list of consultants to contract for services that watershed staff may not be able to perform because of limited technical expertise or time constraints. The ability to choose consultants based on their qualifications saves time by allowing staff to forego a request for proposal (RFP) process for every project (although it does not preclude use of the RFP process for specific projects).

All services performed by a consultant would require a contract with the VRWJPO, which would be submitted to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) for approval before being executed, unless the contract amount is less than \$50,000, which allows for limited approval authority by the VRWJPO Administrator. The list of consultants who submitted qualifications and have technical skills appropriate for future VRWJPO projects is included in the resolution.

The approved consultant list will remain valid for use by the VRWJPO until a subsequent consultant list is approved by the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the VRWJPB approve the VRWJPO consultant list for 2022-2023.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

No fiscal impact

RESOLUTION**4d. Approval of Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Consultant List for 2022-2023**

WHEREAS, the VRWJPO contracts with professional engineering, environmental services, and ecological restoration and management services for projects that require specialized expertise not available among staff or have time constraints that staff is unable to meet; and

WHEREAS, the VRWJPO's ability to contract for professional service from a pre-approved list of qualified vendors can provide advantages in project quality, timeliness, and efficiency; and

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. 103B.227, subd. 5, requires watershed districts or watershed management organizations to issue a biennial solicitation for professional or technical consulting services; and

WHEREAS, the VRWJPO distributed and posted a biennial solicitation/request for qualifications (RFQ) in January 2022 for professional engineering, environmental services, and ecological restoration and management services; and

WHEREAS, respondents to the RFQ provided qualifications, which were then evaluated to determine if they were sufficient and applicable to potential 2022-2023 VRWJPO projects; and

WHEREAS, a list of qualified professional engineering, environmental services, and ecological restoration and management services consultants includes:

Company	Address	City	State	Zip
Alliant Engineering, Inc.	733 Marquette Ave., Ste 700	Minneapolis	MN	55402
Barr Engineering Company	4300 Market Pointe Drive, Suite 200	Minneapolis	MN	55435
Davey Resource Group	1196 7th St. E.	St. Paul	MN	55106
Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc.	1919 University Ave. West, Suite 300	St. Paul	MN	55014
Geosyntec Consultants	100 S Washington Ave, #1590	Minneapolis	MN	55401
Houston Engineering	7550 Meridian Circle North, Suite 120	Maple Grove	MN	55369
Inter-Fluve	1539 Grand Avenue, 2nd Floor	St. Paul	MN	55105
KLJ	370 Wabasha St., Suite 300	St. Paul	MN	55102
Landbridge Ecological	670 Vandalia Street	St. Paul	MN	55114
Minnesota Native Landscapes, Inc.	8740 77th Street Northeast	Otsego	MN	55362
Moore Engineering, Inc.	Two Carlson Parkway, Suite 110	Plymouth	MN	55447
Native Resource Preservation	260 Wentworth Ave. E., Suite 155	West St. Paul	MN	55118
RES	20276 Deleware Avenue	Jordan	MN	55352
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.	3701 Wayzata Boulevard, Suite 100	Minneapolis	MN	55416
Stantec	7500 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 300	Golden Valley	MN	55427
WSB	701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 300	Minneapolis	MN	55416

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the VRWJPB approves the list of qualified professional engineering, environmental services, and ecological restoration and management services consultants for 2022-2023.



Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

4100 220th St. W., Suite 103, Farmington, MN 55024

Date: April 28, 2022
To: Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board
From: Staff
Subject: Joint Powers Organization Expenses

Agenda Item 5

Expenses from the invoices submitted between January 15, 2022 and February 15, 2022 totaled \$169,762.27

The invoices submitted between February 16, 2022 and March 15, 2022 are listed below:

<u>Invoice</u>	<u>Vendor</u>		<u>Amount</u>
	Dakota County Staff Time February 2022	\$	30,005.62
I151426800	Conserva	\$	875.00
I151426801	Conserva	\$	2,300.00
Total expense as approved on April 28, 2022			\$ 33,180.62

Action Requested: Approve all above expenses as presented on April 28, 2022



Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

4100 220th St. W., Suite 103, Farmington, MN 55024

Date: April 28, 2022
To: Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board
From: Staff
Subject: Joint Powers Organization Expenses

Agenda Item 5

Expenses from the invoices submitted between February 16, 2022 and March 15, 2022 totaled \$33,180.62

The invoices submitted between March 16, 2022 and April 12, 2022 are listed below:

<u>Invoice</u>	<u>Vendor</u>		<u>Amount</u>
	Dakota County Staff Time	\$	45,125.05
IN28095	Scott County	\$	1,436.62
22-104000-06	144Design	\$	95.00
22-147005	144Design	\$	95.00
1894001	Stantec	\$	1,255.50
2022-05	Tuhura Communications	\$	4,950.00
Total expense as approved on April 28, 2022		\$	52,957.17

Action Requested: Approve all above expenses as presented on April 28, 2022

**6a. Approval of Proposed Amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed
Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2022 Budget**

Meeting Date: 4/28/2022
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Mark Zabel
Telephone: 952-891-7011
Prepared by: Mark Zabel



PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

- **Approval of proposed amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2022 Budget**

SUMMARY

At its meeting on December 2, 2021, the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) adopted the Final 2022 VRWJPO Budget (Resolution No. VRW 21-18). The budget included expenses totaling \$1,753,160, total revenue of \$1,942,600, and an expected cash reserve of \$189,440.

A budget amendment is being proposed to: 1) adjust for the fund balance from under-spending and transfers in 2021 (see Attachment B); 2) reflect changes to several budget line items and the addition of several line items, including line items reflecting revenues and expenses for grant funded projects. The amendment would bring the total expenses in 2022 to \$2,464,010 and total revenue to \$2,693,350 with a cash reserve of \$229,340 (see Attachment A).

The Watershed Planning Commission reviewed the proposed amendments and recommended approval of the Draft Revised 2022 VRWJPO Budget to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve proposed amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2022 Budget.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

The amended budget increases planned expenditures by \$140,200 and includes additional grant funded commitments of \$482,950 and match of \$150,000. The total revised budgeted expenditures are \$2,464,010 with revenues of \$2,693,350, leaving a budgeted fund balance/cash reserve of \$229,340.

Supporting Documents:

Attachment A: VRWJPO Draft Revised 2022 Budget
Attachment B: Statement of Net Position 12/31/2021

Previous Board Action(s):

VRW 21-24; 12/2/2021

RESOLUTION

6a. Approval of Proposed Amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed

Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2022 Budget

WHEREAS, the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board adopted the Final 2022 VRWJPO Budget on December 2, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the budget included expenses totaling \$1,753,160, total revenue of \$1,964,600, and an expected cash reserve of \$189,440; and

WHEREAS, a budget amendment is being proposed to: 1) adjust for the fund balance from under-spending and transfers in 2021; 2) reflect changes to several budget line items and the addition of several line items, including line items reflecting grant funded projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board approves the amendment to bring the budgeted total expenses in 2022 to \$2,464,010 and total revenue to \$2,693,350 with a cash reserve of \$229,340.

VRWJPO Revised 2022 Budget

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget Items</u>	<u>2022 Draft Revised Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>	<u>2022 Final Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>
EXPENSES					
Administration and Operations -2170020000	1 Dakota County VRW Staff	\$180,500	6.7%	\$180,500	9.3%
	2 Scott County VRW Staff	\$15,000	0.6%	\$15,000	0.8%
	3 Other Dakota County Staff Time	\$12,000	0.4%	\$12,000	0.6%
	4 Legal Support	\$25,000	0.9%	\$25,000	1.3%
	5 Miscellaneous Expenses (per diems, mileage, postage, etc.)	\$6,000	0.2%	\$6,000	0.3%
	6 Training, Conferences, and Certifications	\$2,000	0.1%	\$2,000	0.1%
Subtotal Administrative		\$240,500	8.9%	\$240,500	12.4%
Research and Planning -2170020130	1 Dakota SWCD Incentive Program Policy Assistance	\$1,600	0.1%	\$1,600	0.1%
	2 Scott County Staff	\$2,000	0.1%	\$2,000	0.1%
	3 VRW Staff	\$15,000	0.6%	\$12,000	0.6%
Subtotal Research and Planning		\$18,600	0.7%	\$15,600	0.8%
Monitoring and Assessment -2170020230	1 Vermillion River Monitoring Network in Dakota Co.				
	1a Staff Time for Sample Collection, Equipment Installation, Maintenance	\$39,000	1.4%	\$39,000	2.0%
	1b Data analysis, database management, data reporting, FLUX modeling	\$17,000	0.6%	\$17,000	0.9%
	1c Water Quality Sample Analysis and QA/QC samples	\$19,000	0.7%	\$19,000	1.0%
	1d Equipment and Supplies	\$8,000	0.3%	\$8,000	0.4%
	2 Vermillion River Monitoring Network in Scott Co	\$9,800	0.4%	\$9,800	0.5%
	3 USGS Cost Share for Blaine Ave. Station	\$8,900	0.3%	\$8,900	0.5%
	4 DNR Flow Gaging Assistance	\$9,700	0.4%	\$9,700	0.5%
	5a Biological and Habitat Assessments	\$7,000	0.3%	\$7,000	0.4%
	5b Electrofishing	\$16,000	0.6%	\$16,000	0.8%
6 Monitoring Programs Review and Evaluation	\$15,000	0.6%	\$15,000	0.8%	
7 General GIS support (Dakota SWCD)	\$5,000	0.2%	\$5,000	0.3%	
8 Nitrate Treatment Practice Sampling	\$1,000	0.0%	\$1,000	0.1%	

VRWJPO Revised 2022 Budget

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget Items</u>	<u>2022 Draft Revised Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>	<u>2022 Final Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>
	9 Iron Enhanced Sand Filter Performance Sampling	\$2,000	0.1%	\$2,000	0.1%
Subtotal Monitoring and Data Analysis		\$157,400	5.8%	\$157,400	8.1%
Public Communications and Outreach	1 Communication and Outreach Staff	\$100,000	3.7%	\$100,000	5.1%
	2 Vermillion River Watch Program	\$6,000	0.2%	\$6,000	0.3%
-2170020330	3 Vermillion River Stewards	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
	4 Scott County Outreach Efforts	\$2,250	0.1%	\$2,250	0.1%
	5 Vermillion River Watershed Projects Signage and Map Updates	\$10,000	0.4%	\$5,000	0.3%
	6 Newsletter, Mailings, Website, General Communication Materials	\$10,000	0.4%	\$10,000	0.5%
	7 Landscaping for Clean Water Workshop Program (Dakota SWCD)	\$30,400	1.1%	\$30,400	1.6%
	8 K-12 Classroom Presentations (Dakota SWCD)	\$4,000	0.1%	\$4,000	0.2%
	9 Watershed Tours	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
	10 Local Standards/ Ordinance and Turf/ Salt Workshops	\$3,500	0.1%	\$3,500	0.2%
Subtotal Public Outreach and Communication		\$166,150	6.2%	\$161,150	8.3%
Regulation	1 Scott SWCD Assistance with Plan Review	\$900	0.0%	\$900	0.0%
-2170020530	2 Engineering Assistance and Review	\$35,000	1.3%	\$35,000	1.8%
	3 VRW Staff Local Program Assistance	\$20,000	0.7%	\$20,000	1.0%
Subtotal Regulation		\$55,900	2.1%	\$55,900	2.9%
Coordination and Collaboration	1 Coordination VRW Staff	\$32,000	1.2%	\$32,000	1.6%
	2 Wetland Health Evaluation Program Cost Share	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
-2170020531	3 Children's Water Festival Support	\$600	0.0%	\$600	0.0%
	4 Watershed Partners	\$5,000	0.2%	\$5,000	0.3%
	5 Master Water Stewards	\$5,000	0.2%	\$5,000	0.3%
Subtotal Coordination and Collaboration		\$42,600	1.6%	\$42,600	2.2%
Land and Water Treatment					
Capital Improvement	1 Cost Share Programs in Dakota County (SWCD)	\$80,000	3.0%	\$80,000	4.1%

VRWJPO Revised 2022 Budget

<u>Category</u>		<u>Budget Items</u>	<u>2022 Draft Revised Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>	<u>2022 Final Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>
Projects	2	Cost Share Programs in Scott County (SWCD)	\$31,300	1.2%	\$31,300	1.6%
	-2170920130	3 Cost-share	\$215,550	8.0%	\$215,550	11.1%
		4 WBIF match	\$70,000	2.6%	\$0	0.0%
Subtotal Capital Improvement Projects			\$396,850	14.7%	\$326,850	16.8%
Maintenance	1	Past projects maintenance/ repair	\$70,000	2.6%	\$40,000	2.1%
	-2170920130	2 CIP construction oversight, maintenance/ repair staff costs	\$25,000	0.9%	\$25,000	1.3%
Subtotal Maintenance			\$95,000	3.5%	\$65,000	3.3%
Feasibility/Preliminary Studies		Preliminary Design, Technical Assistance and Marketing for Capital Improvements (Dakota SWCD)	\$40,000	1.5%	\$40,000	2.1%
	-2170020631	2 Preliminary Design, Technical Assistance and Marketing for Capital Improvements	\$180,000	6.7%	\$150,000	7.7%
Subtotal Feasibility/Preliminary Studies			\$220,000	8.2%	\$190,000	9.8%
Irrigation Audit and Cost Share Program	1	Irrigation Audits	\$10,000	0.4%	\$5,000	0.3%
	2170020431	2 Irrigation Cost-Share	\$10,000	0.4%	\$5,000	0.3%
Subtotal Irrigation Audit and Cost Share			\$20,000	0.7%	\$10,000	0.5%
2020-2023 WBIF Grant (BWSR) North Creek	1	North Creek Stabilization	\$337,500	12.5%	\$288,700	14.9%
	-2170020853	2 VRWJPO cash match	\$50,000	1.9%	\$50,000	2.6%
Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant North Creek Stabilization			\$387,500	14.4%	\$338,700	17.4%
2020-2023 WBIF Grant (BWSR) Farmington Direct	1	Farmington Direct Drainage Assessment	\$26,700	1.0%	\$13,300	0.7%
	-2170020854	2 VRWJPO cash match	\$3,330	0.1%	\$3,330	0.2%
Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Hastings/ Farmington Direct Drainage			\$30,030	1.1%	\$16,630	0.9%
2020-2023 WBIF Grant (BWSR) Hastings Direct	1	Hastings Direct Drainage Assessment	\$26,700	1.0%	\$26,700	1.4%

VRWJPO Revised 2022 Budget

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget Items</u>	<u>2022 Draft Revised Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>	<u>2022 Final Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>
-2170020855	2 VRWJPO cash match	\$3,330	0.1%	\$3,330	0.2%
Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Hastings/ Farmington Direct Drainage		\$30,030	1.1%	\$30,030	1.5%
2020-2023 WBIF Grant					
(BWSR) Ravenna Basins	1 Ravenna Basins Restoration	\$59,000	2.2%	\$59,000	3.0%
-2170020856	2 VRWJPO cash match	\$26,000	1.0%	\$26,000	1.3%
Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Ravenna Basins Restoration		\$85,000	3.2%	\$85,000	4.4%
CWF Competitive Grant					
(BWSR) Foxborough TSS	1 Foxborough Park TSS Project	\$173,250	6.4%		
-2170020859	2 VRWJPO cash match	\$30,000	1.1%		
Subtotal CWF Competitive Grant Foxborough Park TSS Project		\$203,250	7.5%		
CWF Competitive Grant					
(BWSR) Ravenna Trail	1 Ravenna Trail Ravine Stabilization	\$247,500	9.2%		
-2170020860	2 VRWJPO cash match	\$50,000	1.9%		
Subtotal CWF Competitive Grant Ravenna Trail Ravine Stabilization		\$297,500	11.0%		
CWF Grant (BWSR)					
-2170020848	1 WBF Grant Admin	\$17,700	0.7%	\$17,700	0.9%
Subtotal WBF Grant Admin		\$17,700	0.7%	\$17,700	0.9%
Weland Bank	Wetland Bank Restoration Funds Reserve	\$0	0.0%		
2170020930					
Subtotal Wetland Bank Restoration Funds		\$0	0.0%		
Subtotal of Expenditures		\$2,464,010	91.5%	\$1,753,060	90.2%
Cash Reserve		\$229,340	8.5%	\$189,540	9.8%
TOTAL Annual Expenses		\$2,693,350	100.0%	\$1,942,600	100.0%

VRWJPO Revised 2022 Budget

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget Items</u>	<u>2022 Draft Revised Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>	<u>2022 Final Budget Amount</u>	<u>Budget % of Total</u>
REVENUE					
	Wetland Bank	\$0	0.0%		
	CIP Reserve	\$246,000	9.1%	\$146,000	7.5%
	CIP Reserve Grant Match	\$84,000	3.1%	\$84,000	4.3%
	Fund Balance from Underspending in Previous Year	\$686,000	25.5%	\$456,000	23.5%
	CWF Grant (BWSR) Competitive	\$420,750	15.6%	\$0	0.0%
	CWF Grant WBIF (BWSR) 2019-2021	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
	CWF Grant WBIF (BWSR) 2020-2023	\$243,600	9.0%	\$243,600	12.5%
	Fees for Permitting Activities	\$1,000	0.0%	\$1,000	0.1%
	Dakota County Levy	\$967,500	35.9%	\$967,500	49.8%
	Scott County Levy	\$32,500	1.2%	\$32,500	1.7%
	Investment Earnings	\$12,000	0.4%	\$12,000	0.6%
	TOTAL Annual Revenue	\$2,693,350	100.0%	\$1,942,600	100.0%

**DAKOTA COUNTY
MINNESOTA**

**GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCE SHEET AND
GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES - STATEMENT OF NET POSITION
VERMILLION RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT
DECEMBER 31, 2021**

Assets

Cash and investments	\$ 1,151,334
Taxes receivable	
Current	58,491
Prior - net	1,858
Due from other governments	185,479
	185,479
Total Assets	\$ 1,397,162

Liabilities

Current liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 137,586
	137,586
Total Liabilities	\$ 137,586

Fund Balance/Net Position

Unrestricted	\$ 1,259,576
	1,259,576
Total Fund Balance/Net Position	\$ 1,259,576
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance/Net Position	\$ 1,397,162

There are no capital assets nor long term liabilities. There is no difference to reconcile between modified and full accrual.

**DAKOTA COUNTY
MINNESOTA**

**GOVERNMENTAL FUND STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
AND GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES - STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
VERMILLION RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

Revenues		
Taxes	\$	972,251
License and permits		4,902
Intergovernmental		635,991
Investment earnings		13,473
Miscellaneous		18,619
		<hr/>
Total Revenues	\$	1,645,236
Expenditures/Expenses		
Current		
Conservation of natural resources	\$	1,530,220
		<hr/>
Net Change in Fund Balance/ Net Position	\$	115,016
Fund Balance/Net Position - January 1		<hr/> 1,144,560
Fund Balance/Net Position - December 31	\$	<hr/> 1,259,576

There are no capital outlays nor revenues that are not current financial resources. There is no difference to reconcile between modified and full accrual.

**6b. Authorization to Submit 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources**

Meeting Date: 4/28/2022
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Mark Zabel
Telephone: 952-891-7967
Prepared by: Brita Moore-Kutz



PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

- Authorization to submit 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

SUMMARY

According to Minnesota Rule (M.R. 8410.0150), watershed management organizations must submit an activity report, financial statement, and an audit report to BWSR within 120 days following the end of the watershed management organization's preceding fiscal year. The draft 2021 VRWJPO Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement has been prepared according to BWSR requirements and is included as Attachment A. The Audit Report is sent to BWSR separately when it is made available to the VRWJPO.

The 2021 Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement includes:

- List of 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board members, Watershed Planning Commission members, Technical Advisory Group stakeholders, and VRWJPO staff;
- Summary of water quality monitoring data;
- Recapitulation of outreach programs, education, and communication;
- Description of completed capital improvement projects and feasibility studies;
- Overview of the VRWJPO's 2022 Work Plan;
- Assessment of overall annual budget;
- Review of evaluation, regulation, and permit programs; and
- Board actions.

The report must be submitted to BWSR on or before April 30, 2022. Staff requests the VRWJPB review the final draft 2021 VRWJPO Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement, request changes if needed, and authorize staff to submit the final report to BWSR on or before the deadline.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

Supporting Documents:

Attachment A: DRAFT 2021 Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement

Previous Board Action(s):

- ;

RESOLUTION

6b. Authorization to Submit 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

WHEREAS, Minnesota Rule 8410.0150 requires watershed management organizations to submit an annual activity report and financial statement to the BWSR within 120 days following the end of the watershed management organization’s fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the VRWJPO staff has prepared a final draft 2021 Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement in compliance with Minnesota Rule 8410.0150 for review; and

WHEREAS, the draft 2021 Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement has been reviewed by the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB); and

WHEREAS, the Audit Report will be sent to BWSR when made available to the VRWJPO.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the VRWJPB authorizes staff to submit the final 2021 Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to BWSR on or before April 30, 2022.



2021 Activity Report and Financial Statement



Figure 1. The frozen Vermillion Falls in Hastings. Photo by Brita Moore-Kutz, who prepared this report.

The mission of the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization is to collaboratively provide education, science, and support to restore and protect the Vermillion River Watershed's natural resources for all who live, work, and play within its boundaries.

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Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

4100 220th Street, Suite 103

Farmington, MN 55024

Phone: 952-891-7000

Email: vrwjpo@co.dakota.mn.us

Website: www.vermillionriverwatershed.org



Introduction

The Vermillion River and its tributaries wind through rural, suburban, and urban landscapes from the headwaters in Scott County to two confluences with the Mississippi River near the cities of Hastings and Red Wing. The Vermillion River Watershed covers 335 square miles of land over all or portions of 20 cities and townships. It is the largest watershed in the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan area.

Approximately 49 miles of the Vermillion River's main stem and tributaries are Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) designated trout streams. The Vermillion River Watershed's self-sustaining population of brown trout makes the river a rare natural resource in a growing metropolitan area.



Figure 2. An aerial view of the North Creek Vermillion River Greenway, courtesy of the Dakota County Transportation Department.

The river and watershed are managed according to a Joint Powers Agreement signed by Dakota and Scott counties in 2002. This agreement formed the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO), to manage the watershed as required by Minnesota law (Minn. Stat. Chapter 103B.201-253). Dakota and Scott counties established special tax districts within their portions of the watershed to provide the primary funding for watershed planning and activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unique challenges; VRWJPO adapted to keep staff and partners safe while successfully delivering programs and practices as it has in past years. This report summarizes the VRWJPO's 2021 activities and its 2022 plans to protect and improve the Vermillion River Watershed.

Personnel

Joint Powers Board

The VRWJPO is governed by the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB), which consists of two Dakota County Commissioners and one Scott County Commissioner. The VRWJPB directs watershed administration, policy, budget, and implementation of the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan (Plan). The VRWJPB met nine times in 2021. Members included:

Commissioner Mike Slavik, Dakota County District 1 (Chair), Hastings
Commissioner Tom Wolf, Scott County District 2 (Vice Chair), Prior Lake
Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland, Dakota County District 7 (Secretary-Treasurer), Apple Valley

Watershed Planning Commission

A nine-member Watershed Planning Commission (WPC) consists of citizens of the watershed. These members are appointed by the VRWJPB under authority of the Joint Powers Agreement to advise the Board on policy, programs, or other matters that may come before the Board. The WPC is responsible for guiding implementation of the Watershed Plan, annual work plan, and budget. In 2021, the WPC met ten times. The WPC members in 2021 included:

Mark Henry, Castle Rock Township, Chair
Ken Betzold, Castle Rock Township, Vice Chair
Carolyn Miller, Elko New Market
Josh Borton, Apple Valley
Chuck Clanton, Hampton Township
Tony Wotzka, Lakeville
Steve Hamrick, Lakeville
Andrew Riesgraf, Apple Valley
James Kotz, Rosemount

Technical Advisory Group

The VRWJPO consults with a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that consists of local, regional, state, and federal government partners and non-profits with expertise and interest in watershed issues. The group meets to discuss emerging scientific, technical, and policy impacts on the Vermillion River Watershed. The TAG meets occasionally to discuss projects and policies from a scientific and technical perspective, though no meetings were held in 2021 due to the pandemic. Representatives include but are not limited to:

Cities and townships within the Vermillion River Watershed
Dakota and Scott Counties

Dakota and Scott County Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Metropolitan Council
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
Prairie Island Indian Community
University of Minnesota Extension
Environmental consulting firms
Environmental organizations

VRWJPO Administrators and Staff

The VRWJPO is housed under Dakota County's Environmental Resources Department at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center. The VRWJPO is staffed with an administrator from Dakota County and a co-administrator from Scott County; other Dakota and Scott County employees provide support for specific projects. Staff in 2021 included:

Mark Zabel, VRWJPO Administrator, Dakota County
Melissa Bokman-Ermer, VRWJPO Co-administrator, Scott County
Travis Thiel, Senior Watershed Specialist, Dakota County
Mark Ryan, Water Resources Engineer, Dakota County
Brita Moore-Kutz, Public Outreach and Communications Specialist, Dakota County
Paula Liepold, Water Resources Specialist – Education and Outreach, Dakota County

The counties' respective Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) provide monitoring and technical assistance services for the VRWJPO. District Managers for the SWCDs in 2021 were:

Brian Watson, Manager, Dakota County SWCD
Troy Kuphal, Manager, Scott SWCD

Legal Counsel

The Joint Powers Agreement for the VRWJPO provides for consultation from the Dakota County Attorney's Office on legal and contractual matters. In 2021, the attorney assigned to the VRWJPO was Helen Brosnahan, Assistant Dakota County Attorney.

Consultants

The VRWJPO enters contracts with consultants to provide engineering and environmental professional services for water resources management projects. The approved consultant list for 2021-22 follows:

Company	Address	City	State
Alliant Engineering, Inc.	233 Park Avenue S, Ste 300	Minneapolis	MN
Applied Ecological Services, Inc.	21938 Mushtown Rd	Prior Lake	MN
Barr Engineering Company	4300 MarketPointe Drive, Suite 200	Minneapolis	MN
Cardno	7157 Commerce Circle South	Fridley	MN
Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc.	7030 6th St. North	Oakdale	MN
Houston Engineering	7550 Meridian Circle North, Suite 120	Maple Grove	MN
Inter-Fluve	2121 Randolph Ave, Second Floor	St. Paul	MN
KLJ	370 Wabasha St., Suite 300	St. Paul	MN
Landbridge Ecological	670 Vandalia Street	St. Paul	MN
Limno-Tech, Inc.	7300 Hudson Blvd., Suite 295	Oakdale	MN
Minnesota Native Landscapes, Inc.	8740 77th Street Northeast	Otsego	MN
Native Resource Preservation	260 Wentworth Ave. E.	West St. Paul	MN
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.	One Carlson Parkway North, Suite 150	Minneapolis	MN

Company	Address	City	State
TKDA	444 Cedar Street, Suite 1500	St. Paul	MN
Wenck Associates, Inc. (now a part of Stantec Associates)	1800 Pioneer Creek Center, PO Box 249	Maple Plain	MN
WSB	701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 300	Minneapolis	MN

Awarded contracts

The VRWJPO also entered several contracts because the projects required solicitation in 2021 as noted below:

Sole Source—Irrigation Audit Services | Conserva Irrigation

Sole Source – Fish Monitoring Services | Stantec Associates (Wenck)

Sole Source – Nitrate Treatment Wetland OCS Repair Design | Stantec Associates (Wenck)

2021 Work Plan Activities

The VRWJPO had another successful year of implementation. In 2020, the VRWJPO assessed progress in completing tasks outlined in the Watershed Management Plan (Plan). The 10-year Plan was adopted in June 2016. The Plan includes 239 implementation initiatives in several categories: Administration and Operations; Regulation; Research and Planning; Monitoring and Assessment; Land and Water Treatment; Coordination and Collaboration; and Public Communications and Outreach. These categories are comparable to those used by the VRWJPO to budget, develop work plans, and classify current activities. Of the 239 initiatives, 199 (83%) were completed or ongoing.

Administration and Operations

Administrative responsibilities include staff training and supervision; coordinating and documenting VRWJPB meetings, decisions, and directions; coordinating and documenting WPC and TAG meetings, decisions, and recommendations; managing the budget; setting priorities and developing work plans; managing contracts; reporting; and seeking funding. See Appendix A for VRWJPB actions taken throughout the year.

Regulation

The VRWJPO works with the cities and townships in the Watershed to ensure adoption of the Plan and local implementation. Annual work to verify adoption of the Plan includes the Standards Evaluation program through which the VRWJPO documents community permitting activities and reviews some example projects. This program's current form was started in 2017 and continues to be adapted to fit community and VRWJPO needs.

All local water management plans from the 2018-19 cycle had been reviewed and commented on as of the end of 2020. The Board approved the last of these plans (City of Elko New Market) in July 2021 through a Board Action after delays and extensions for completion of that plan. Communities implementing the Standards through local ordinance are required to update their ordinances in response to the Standards amendment (and the Comprehensive Plan updates). These updates started to occur in 2021 after being delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the delayed issuance of the State of Minnesota Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit. MS4 communities had until November 2021 (one year from issuance of the updated MS4 General Permit) to revise ordinances, and the VRWJPO set goals for working with local communities to verify ordinances in 2022.

The Watershed includes all or part of 20 separate jurisdictions, 19 of which have land-use planning and zoning authority. These local government units implement the VRWJPO Standards through local ordinance and apply their own permit programs. In 2021, the VRWJPO continued permitting and enforcement in Eureka Township where the township retains land use planning and zoning authority but does not implement the VRWJPO Standards. The VRWJPO issued two permits for land disturbance activities in Eureka Township in 2021 under the updated 2019 VRWJPO Standards, and no variances were issued.

In addition to the VRWJPO permits noted above, the VRWJPO reviewed and provided comment on the following development projects permitted under local ordinances and environmental studies:

- Brookshire EAW in Lakeville – Planned Residential Development
- Ryan-Scannell Properties EAW in Lakeville – Industrial Development
- Rich Valley Golf Club Development AUAR in Rosemount – Business Park/Industrial AUAR
- SKB Waste Facility Expansion EAW in Rosemount – Landfill Expansion Project
- Eagle Point Residential Golf Course Redevelopment in Apple Valley – Wetland Conservation Act process comments on residential development proposals
- Water's Edge/River's Edge in Farmington – Informal comments on Residential Development
- Vita Attiva in Farmington – Informal comments on Residential Development
- Field Stone Industrial Park in New Market Township – Scott County Co-Administrator shared Scott County Review of industrial park development with Board
- Berres Ridge 8th Addition in Lakeville – Informal comments to city on buffer standards for continuation of residential development

Research and Planning

The VRWJPO develops strategic approaches for managing water resources through monitoring emerging issues, evaluating data, and engaging the public, stakeholders, and partners in planning and policy issues. In 2021, the VRWJPO researched or planned the following:

Dakota County Plans

VRWJPO staff assisted the Dakota County Groundwater Protection Unit with developing its Agricultural Chemical Reduction Effort (ACRE) and the Dakota County Groundwater-Source Water Collaborative. By participating in this effort, water quality, water quantity, and natural resources of the Vermillion River Watershed were represented and included in planning efforts.

VRWJPO Plan Amendment – Bemis Wetland

The VRWJPO Plan was amended to incorporate a potential wetland restoration project in New Market Township into the implementation plan. The project was identified by the Scott SWCD as a previously created constructed wetland restoration project that had reached the end of its useful life. Portions of the berm and pipe that were previously constructed to establish the wetland were beginning to fail, and without intervention, the wetland would be lost. If it's not addressed, the ability to store more water on the landscape would be lost, creating the potential for additional degradation to the Vermillion River. The VRWJPO held a public hearing on the Bemis Wetland amendment at its January 28, 2021 meeting and approved the amendment at its February 25, 2021 meeting.

Monitoring and Assessment

Water quality and quantity monitoring data are essential for effective management of the Vermillion River Watershed. Surface water and groundwater monitoring allow the VRWJPO to determine the current condition of the resource, any trends occurring over time, the highest priorities for protection and restoration, and effectiveness of water-quality improvement projects. The following activities reflect the VRWJPO's commitment to evidence-based watershed management.

Vermillion River Monitoring Network

The Vermillion River Monitoring Network (VRMN) was created to assess water quality and quantity in the Vermillion River Watershed. Monitoring staff with Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District and Scott Soil and Water Conservation District visit eight locations on a biweekly basis from the time of snowmelt (mid-March) through Nov. 1 (Figure 2). The summer's historic drought meant that most samples were collected during baseflow or low water level conditions as rainfall events were few and far between (a few in the spring and fall).

Monitoring activities include sample collection, continuous temperature and water level monitoring, biological monitoring, and equipment maintenance. The data collected through this effort include a combination of chemical, physical, and biological parameters and assessments, enable local agencies

including the VRWJPO to better understand the health of the stream and implement appropriate management strategies throughout the watershed.

Analysis shows that many of the water monitoring parameters are meeting state water quality standards and indicate a generally healthy condition in the Vermillion River and its tributaries.

Chemistry

Nitrate (NO₃; a form of nitrogen) levels were quite low, except at the one station on the South Branch Vermillion River. The South Branch station (SB802) has a significant nitrate load compared to others in the network. High levels of nitrate in drinking water pose a human health risk and are likely related to the soils, artificial drainage, and agricultural land use that is predominant in the South Branch Vermillion River subwatershed. Monitoring locations downstream of the confluence with South Branch have elevated nitrate levels in comparison to sites higher in the watershed.

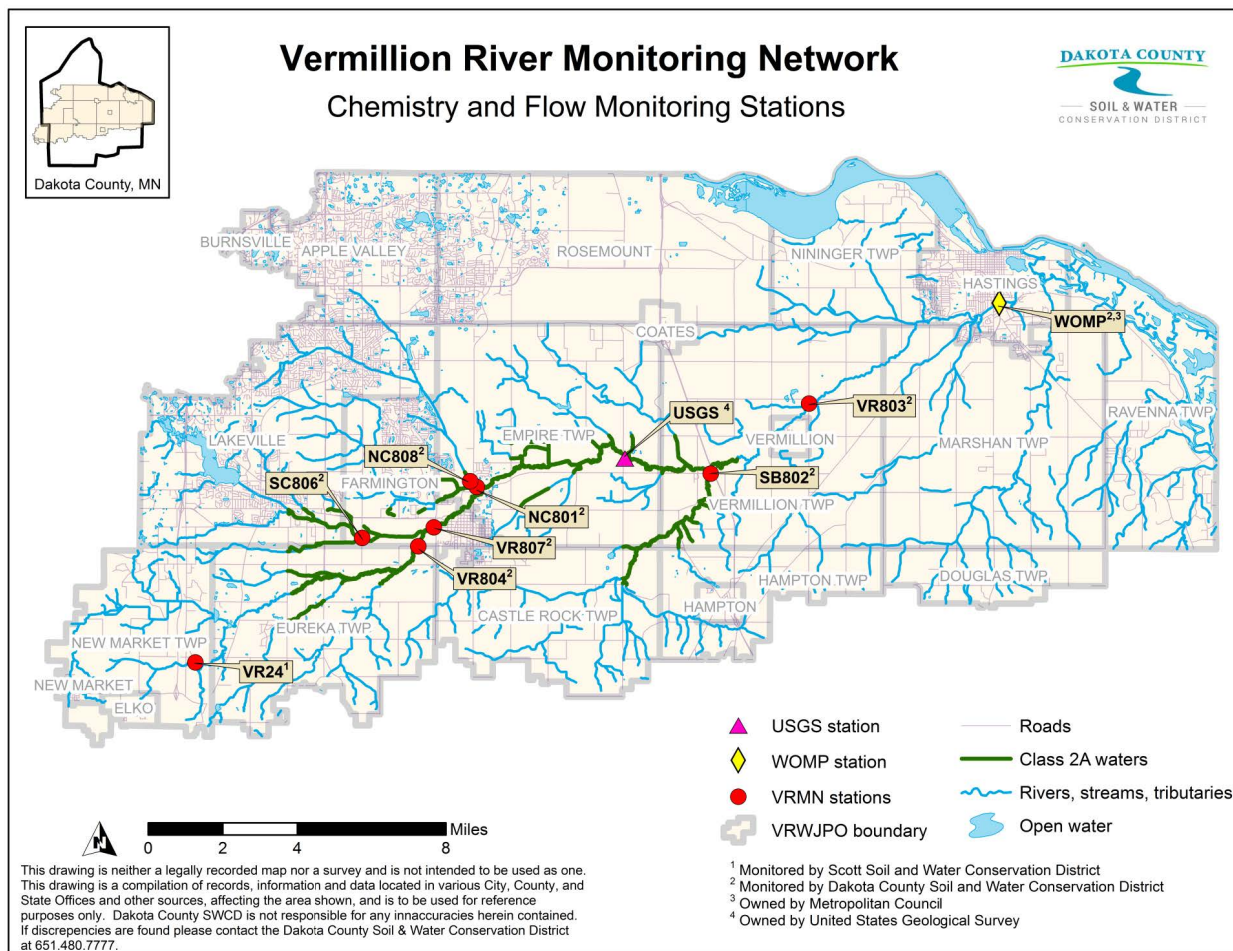


Figure 3. Vermillion River Monitoring Network (VRMN) chemistry and flow monitoring stations.

The other primary nutrient monitored in the watershed is phosphorus, an essential life element for plants. Excess phosphorus can lead to eutrophication and increased algae growth in the river. The median level for all sites is below the state standard during baseflow conditions. Elevated

concentrations were recorded during runoff and snowmelt events at all monitoring events throughout the season. Highest variability is seen at VR24 (most upstream site), and VR803 (most downstream site monitored by the VRWJPO), and VR0020 (most downstream site in watershed, monitored for the Met Council).

Low dissolved oxygen concentrations for single event runoff events were common at several sites, but median stayed above the standard (Figure 4). All median dissolved oxygen levels met the standard for both 2A and 2B stream sites during baseflow conditions, except SC806. NC801 and NC808 have historically had the lowest recorded levels during baseflow, but both SC806 and VR804 had lower levels in 2021. Dissolved oxygen levels during snowmelt conditions were high and SC806 had the highest variability of all monitoring sites.

High levels of total suspended solids (contributing to turbid, cloudy, water) following runoff events were also common at several sites (Figure 5). In conversation with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) staff, it was determined that the 2B warmwater sites in the Vermillion River watershed should be assessed using the Central River Nutrient Region total suspended solids standard (30 mg/L) instead of the South River Nutrient Region standard (65 mg/L) as was previously done. Sample medians were at or below (meeting) the state standard at all stations during baseflow conditions. Standard exceedances occurred during runoff conditions at all monitoring water sites, particularly at SC806, VR803, and VR0020. Both individual event and sample median exceedances were seen during snowmelt conditions.



Temperature

The Vermillion River watershed includes stream reaches with both cold-water and warm-water use designations meaning that temperature standards are applied to the middle watershed (cold-water) but are not applicable to reaches in the upper and lower parts of the watershed (warm-water). The cold-water reaches of the Vermillion River and its tributaries are home to a self-sustaining brown trout population, so there is great interest in reducing or maintaining water temperatures suitable for a healthy brown trout fishery.

Continuous temperature data, measured in 15-minute intervals, has been collected annually starting in 2005 for many of the sentinel monitoring stations in the Vermillion River monitoring network. The

temperature data for 2021 for NC801 and NC808 (Farmington) shows temperature maximums were measured in the complete mortality range (red; > 25°C) during all summer months with the highest median water temperatures observed in July.

Biological and Habitat Assessments

The MPCA developed biological indices to evaluate the health of the macroinvertebrate community in the Vermillion River. In 2021, six sites were monitored in various parts of the watershed. The macroinvertebrate index of biological integrity (MIBI) scoring data is not available as of March 2022.

Habitat assessments were completed using the MPCA's Minnesota Stream Habitat Assessment protocol to further evaluate and understand the biological integrity of stream reaches. Of the sites monitored in 2021, three sites had a 'fair' score and three sites scored 'good.'

Bacteria Sampling

Some parameters have been measured at undesirable levels. Escherichia coli (E. coli) bacteria levels are high in many streams of southeast Minnesota, and the Vermillion River and its tributaries are no exception. Monitoring results in 2021 show numerous low-level exceedances during the season at all the sites in the network. The geometric mean at each site continues to show less variability than in 2019 and is even closer than in 2020 (Figure 8).

E. coli levels at VR24 continue to be higher than samples collected at other monitoring sites within the watershed. In 2021, the geometric mean for E. coli samples at VR24 was 27 times more than the standard, whereas other sites were two times higher than the standard (2020 geometric means were two to nine times higher than the standard). Efforts in 2021 and previous years have been conducted to identify the source(s) of the high E. Coli counts at VR24 but have been unsuccessful to date. Continued efforts are planned in 2022.

Agency Monitoring

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) continues its monitoring effort in response to potential impacts to the quantity of water within the Vermillion River from groundwater withdrawals through appropriations. The DNR maintains responsibility for 12 stream gaging stations within the watershed as part of this effort. The VRWJPO contracts annually with DNR hydrologists for assistance with maintenance, rating-curve development, and data analysis and compilation at these stations.

The VRWJPO provides cost-share for the operation of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Blaine Avenue gaging station, which has the longest continuous record of flow in the watershed. Real-time stage and flow data are available from the USGS station. This information can be accessed from the USGS National Weather Information System (https://waterdata.usgs.gov/mn/nwis/uv?site_no=05345000).

Continuous temperature monitoring was conducted at the eight stream gaging stations the Dakota County SWCD, Scott SWCD, and DNR operate, as well as at the Metropolitan Council's Watershed Outlet Monitoring Program (WOMP) station in Hastings.

The Vermillion River Monitoring Network is valuable in that the watershed can be assessed on its physical, chemical, and biological characteristics, and that information is then used to make informed management decisions. Restoring in-stream and riparian habitat, reducing nutrients and suspended materials in the stream, and minimizing temperature peaks, among other possible conservation strategies, will have a cascading positive effect on the overall health of the river. It is important to consider physical parameters such as temperature, which plays an essential role particularly in cold water streams. Water quantity and flow patterns have a significant impact on aquatic communities, with too much or too little causing stress. An effective management strategy would be one which integrates both the quality and quantity aspects of the Vermillion River.

Land and Water Treatment

The VRWJPO continues to ensure that Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects with direct and observable benefits to water quality and quantity and aquatic habitat are identified and developed. The VRWJPO provides financial assistance and incentives through cost-share programs for Local Government Units and other partners seeking effective solutions to local water quality or quantity problems. To find out more about cost-share programs, review the VRWJPO's project funding policy. Projects constructed in 2021 included:

Middle Creek Channel Restoration at Highview Avenue (Lakeville)

Middle Creek, in the heart of the developing fringe of Lakeville, had seen better days. Previous land use practices, channel straightening, and excess stormwater runoff have resulted in a stream with eroding banks and channel bottom that has eroded and deepened. With development occurring adjacent to Middle Creek and its tributary and a corridor along the creek and tributary now owned by the City of Lakeville, the changing land use provided an opportunity to improve the stream channel conditions.

The first step in the process was to identify trees along Middle Creek and the tributary for removal. The channel corridor was overgrown with poor tree species leaving very little ground cover to stabilize the banks of the channel. Trees were selectively removed, leaving only those that provided ecological and bank stabilization benefits, resulting in additional sunlight reaching the understory.



Figure 4. Middle Creek at Highview prior to project.

Figure 5. Post-restoration creek.

Bank sloping and stabilization measures were installed in Middle Creek and its tributary to reduce the amount erosion occurring on the banks. Some bends were added back into the previously straightened channel to promote natural stream channel processes. Rock structures were also installed in the bottom and sides of the channel that will prevent further erosion and deepening of the channel bottom.

The results are an improved Middle Creek and tributary that erode less, the transfer of less sediment downstream, and an ecologically healthier stream network. With greater access to the stream through the project area and nearby city park land, an added benefit is a more enjoyable recreational corridor.

Location: North of 185th St. and east of Highview Ave., Lakeville

Costs and contributions:

- VRWJPO: \$45,413 in cash match, design assistance, and construction oversight
- City of Lakeville: \$116,222 in cash match, project design, and construction oversight
- Clean Water Fund: \$374,587 in grant funding

Erickson Park Stormwater Improvements (Apple Valley)

Erickson Park provides open space and flood retention for the surrounding residential areas in Apple Valley. When the stormwater pond and piping was installed in the area 45 years ago, the focus was on holding water after heavy rains to prevent flooding, not on addressing water quality. As a result, the runoff from small storms passed through the pond with very little pollutant removal.

Stormwater flows through the Erickson Park open space and ultimately reaches Farquar Lake, which is impaired for nutrients. Improving the Erickson Park stormwater pond will provide better management and treatment of low flows and help reduce phosphorus delivery to Farquar Lake. Lastly, the improvements will provide better access for maintenance and sediment removal in the long-term.

The project was completed in fall 2021. Phosphorus reduction at Farquar Lake resulting from the project is estimated at seven pounds per year. Partners avoided construction in the existing pollinator area in the northern portion of Erickson Park due to the excellent quality of the vegetation present.



Figure 6. The pond at Erickson Park shortly after project completion.

Location: Erickson Park, 140th St W and 142nd Path W, Apple Valley

Costs and contributions:

- VRWJPO: \$50,000 in cash match, design, and pollutant reduction modeling assistance
- City of Apple Valley: \$135,990 in cash match, design assistance, and construction oversight plus \$77,752 of sediment removal
- Clean Water Fund: \$114,250 in grant funding

Bachmans Wholesale Property Stream Channel Clearing with CCMI (Eureka Township)

A reach of the Vermillion River east of Cedar Avenue contained several tree trunks and branch snags that were significantly inhibiting flow, increasing stream temperatures, reducing oxygen levels, and causing erosion. VRWJPO and Dakota County SWCD staff assisted crews from the Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa (CCMI) to clear the snags using chainsaws and by hand to restore river flow and improve oxygen levels.

Project partners: VRWJPO, Dakota County SWCD, Bachmans Inc., CCMI

Dakota County SWCD Cost-Share Programs

In addition to the Landscaping for Clean Water courses described in the Public Communication & Outreach section of this report, VRWJPO provided funding to the Dakota County SWCD for their Conservation Initiative Funding and Incentive Payment Practice Programs. The projects from 2021 are listed below.

*May include other funding besides from VRWJPO. Technical Assistance costs are not included.

Project	Practice Installed	Location	Cost-Share Amount*	Landowner Contribution	Pollutant Reduction/Year
Steve Meyers	Water and Sediment Control Basin Repair	Douglas Township	\$930	\$310	19 lbs phosphorus (P) 57 tons sediment
Ron Beissel	Grade Stabilization Repair	Hampton Township	\$3,616.82	\$4,127.02	152 lbs P 264 tons sediment

Project	Practice Installed	Location	Cost-Share Amount*	Landowner Contribution	Pollutant Reduction/Year
The Food Group	Cover Crops	Eureka Township	\$2,125	\$0	40 lbs P 816 lbs nitrogen (N) 290 tons sediment
Jay Frandrup	Cover Crops	Vermillion Township	\$3,500	\$0	9 lbs P 1,152 lbs N 66 tons sediment
Charles Schaffer	Water and Sediment Control Basins	Hampton Township	\$28,325.99	\$9,442	38 lbs P 272 tons sediment
Molitor Brothers LTD Partnership	Water and Sediment Control Basin	Douglas Township	\$3,617.16	\$1,205.72	3.6 lbs P 43 tons sediment
Ambrey Gartner	Native Prairie Restoration	Marshan Township	\$2,074.08	\$691.36	8 lbs P 11.72 lb N 16 tons sediment
Century South HOA	Native Prairie Restoration	Hastings	\$1,800	\$5,622	0.04 lb P 1 ton sediment
Eric Johnson	Native Prairie Restoration	Ravenna Township	\$4,090.09	\$1,363.36	0.1 lb P 47 lbs N 0.2 tons sediment
Mike Serres	Grassed Waterway	Douglas Township	\$2,282.51	\$760.84	7 lbs P 60 tons sediment

Project	Practice Installed	Location	Cost-Share Amount*	Landowner Contribution	Pollutant Reduction/Year
Peter Schweich	Grassed Waterway	Douglas Township	\$1,293.75	\$431.25	4.5 lbs P 39 tons sediment
Jack Siebenaler	Native Prairie Restoration	Hampton Township	\$881.44	\$293.81	1.2 lbs P 14.7 lbs N 2.4 tons sediment
Brandy Wentzler	Native Prairie Restoration	Hampton Township	\$390.38	\$130.12	0.6 lbs P 7.3 lbs N 1.2 tons sediment
Noah Blaha	Native Prairie Restoration	Vermillion Township	\$785.47	\$261.82	0.3 lbs P 0.5 tons sediment
Audrey Anderson	Native Prairie Restoration	Ravenna Township	\$1,575	\$1,157.73	0.2 lbs P 0.4 tons sediment
Bryce Kimmes	Cover Crops	Marshan Township	\$2,500	\$0	10.4 lbs P 1,017 lbs N 38.33 tons sediment
Kent Otte	Grassed Waterway	Hampton Township	\$3,530.09	\$1,176.69	55 lbs P 165 tons sediment
Steve Devney	Cover Crops	Lakeville	\$750	\$0	5.6 lbs P 66 lbs N 22 tons sediment

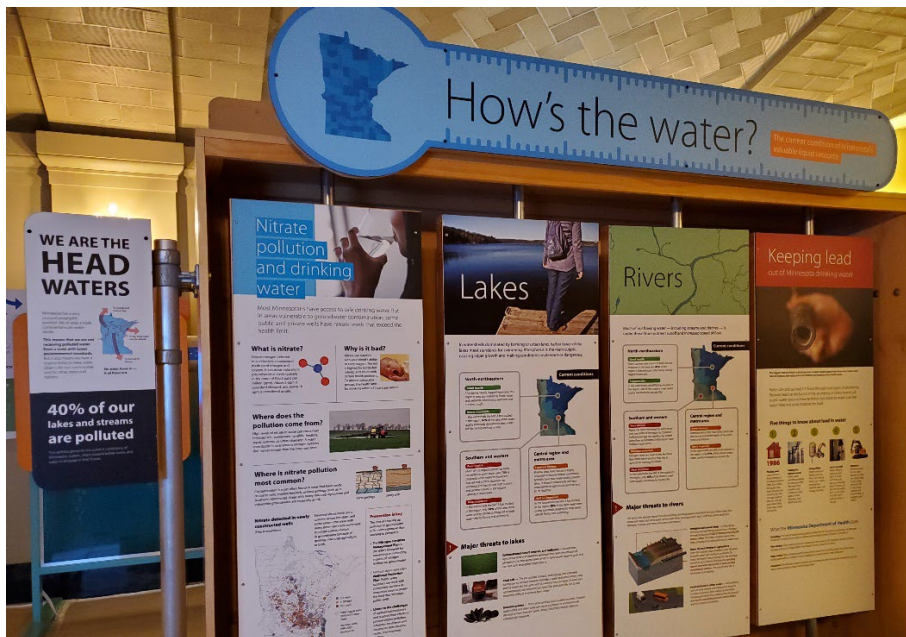
Project	Practice Installed	Location	Cost-Share Amount*	Landowner Contribution	Pollutant Reduction/Year
Metropolitan Mosquito Control	Native Prairie Restoration	Rosemount	\$3,750.02	\$1,250	3.5 lbs P 51 lbs N 7 tons sediment

Coordination and Collaboration

In cooperation with groups, the VRWJPO works to amplify mutual efforts, leverage resources, instill consistency, share knowledge and expertise, and make each public dollar go further in achieving water quality, quantity, and safety goals.

We Are Water MN

Dakota County was pleased to be selected to host the We Are Water Minnesota exhibit in 2022 at the Hastings Pleasant Hill Library and Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan. VRWJPO staff Brita Moore-Kutz and Paula Liepold, along with Dakota County Environmental Resources, Soil and Water Conservation District, Parks, Libraries, and Communications staff, spent many hours in the second half of 2021 planning for the exhibit with support from the Minnesota Humanities Center and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.



The exhibit consists of several components discussing the meaning of water in our state and the difficulties it's facing, from impaired waterbodies to drinking water safety. It also highlights personal

stories about water from people in the area currently hosting. As Hastings is a key location in the Vermillion River Watershed, the County intends to make the river a significant part of its exhibits. In addition to setting up the physical exhibits, we are planning for educational and stewardship events such as Smart Salting for Local Leaders and a Hastings drinking water treatment plant tour.

Part of the We Are Water journey is shining a light on absent narratives in our area – meaning, voices we have not listened to enough and have important stories to share. In Dakota County, our workgroup is collaborating with the Hmong American Farmers Association and local Indigenous artists as a start to delve into our own absent narratives.

For more about We Are Water, visit <https://mnhum.org/we-are-water-mn/>. Plan to visit the exhibit in Hastings and Eagan between Oct. 13 and Dec. 5, 2022.



Adopt-a-Drain

In 2021, VRWJPO continued its membership in the Metro Watershed Partners, a coalition of Twin Cities-area watershed organizations, cities, and interest groups providing water stewardship messages to the public. It is based out of Hamline University. Its well-known Adopt-a-Drain program encourages people to “adopt” storm drains in their area by keeping them clear of leaves, grass, trash, and other things that don’t belong in our waterways. 9,200 participants have adopted more than 17,000 storm drains in the metro area. This has resulted in nearly \$460,000 pounds of debris collected and reported on the Adopt-a-Drain website. In the Vermillion River Watershed in 2021, 100 new drains were adopted by 52 new participants, who kept a reported 638.7 pounds of debris out of our local waterbodies. A total of 186 participants have adopted 364 drains.

Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP)

The VRWJPO continued financial support of the Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP), engaging citizen volunteers to monitor wetlands in their community. The program turns volunteers into citizen scientists and is an excellent opportunity for environmental education and natural resource information gathering. Many changes implemented in 2020 for COVID-19 safety were carried over into 2021. However, both cross checks and macroinvertebrate identification by teams were reinstated. Six teams with 81 WHEP volunteers donated more than 1,248.75 hours to monitor 17 different wetlands in the Vermillion River Watershed.

Specific VRW wetlands and volunteer details in 2021:

Apple Valley

- Hidden Valley (AV-1)
- Alimagnet Lift Station Chain (AV-17)
- Sunset Park Pond (AV-18) (pictured)
- Alimagnet Lift Station Chain (AV-19)



Burnsville

- Alimagnet Dog Park (B-6)

Empire Township

- Empire Lake (DC-1)

Farmington

- Kral Pond (F-3)
- Autumn Glen (F-7)
- Cambodia Ave (F-9)

Hastings

- Stonegate Treated (H-4)
- Lake Rebecca (H-6)
- 180th Street Marsh
- Cari Park Pond (H-57)

Lakeville

- DNR #393 (L-8)

Rosemount

- Kelly Marsh (R-1)
- White Lake (R-2)
- Schwarz Pond (R-4)
- Birger Mitigation Area (R-15)

Number of volunteers on each team: Apple Valley (16), Burnsville (13), Farmington (8), Hastings (13), Lakeville (10), and Rosemount (21). Annual reports are posted on the WHEP website, www.mnwhep.org.

Minnesota Water Stewards

The Minnesota Water Stewards (MWS) program invites residents to become leaders protecting local waterways from pollution and educating their neighbors on clean water issues. The MWS program provides training and opportunities for stewards to build projects in their neighborhoods to prevent polluted stormwater from entering lakes or streams.

In 2021, we began with two Steward candidates, but unfortunately both had conflicts and had to drop. As of the end of 2021, we had one candidate set to begin the next round of the program, learning about hydrology and stormwater basics, water and environmental policy, community engagement, and best management practice planning, evaluation, and maintenance. Stewards will volunteer 50 hours in 2022 to maintain their certification. MWS is coordinated by Freshwater Society.

Metro Children's Water Festival



Metro Children's Water Festival

Dakota County staff took a leadership role in the Metro Children's Water Festival planning and implementation and provided financial support for schools to participate in the popular event. The event was virtual again this year and was a great success. The plan is to hold both in-person and virtual events in 2022.

Community Event Participation

With most Minnesotans being vaccinated for COVID-19, VRWJPO was able to return to some community events that we had been involved with before. We hosted tables at the Hastings Party in the Park in July,

the Dakota County Fair in August, and the Day Without Water event at the Lakeville Water Treatment Facility in October and will do more in 2022 as safety allows.

Public Communications and Outreach

Communicating the value of water is an essential part of the VRWJPO's mission, and in recent years, civic engagement has taken on greater importance in watershed processes. Among the outreach and communication programs wholly or partially funded by the VRWJPO in 2021 were:

Landscaping for Clean Water Workshops

Once again, VRWJPO helped fund and promote the Landscaping for Clean Water workshops hosted by the Dakota County SWCD. They continued being held virtually in 2021 due to spread of COVID-19.

- 7 classes were hosted live via Zoom – 4 Introduction classes and 3 Maintenance classes
- 371 Individuals participated in Introduction Classes (virtual or pre-recorded video)
- 96 Individuals participated in new three-part Maintenance Workshops (virtual or pre-recorded video)
- 142 Projects designed as part of virtual Design Workshops
- 3 grant rounds; 41 Raingardens & Native Gardens & Shorelines Installed
- 52 participants took part in the Office Hours program

Vermillion River Watch Program

In 2021, the VRWJPO continued support of Dakota County SWCD's work with educators and students at Rosemount and Hastings High Schools to collect macroinvertebrates and habitat data, identify macroinvertebrates, and compare species type and abundance to biological metrics. This is a successful way to interest students in scientific disciplines and engage them in protecting and improving water resources. VRWJPO staff also participated in a Hastings High School Paddle Day on the lower Vermillion River in May 2021, which was another opportunity for students to get up close with the river and talk with water and natural resources professionals.

Scott Clean Water Education Program

In 2021, the Scott Clean Water Education Program (SCWEP) focused activities and outreach on the overall theme of "Clean Water Starts with Me!" Multiple initiatives helped Scott County residents make clean water choices.

Four webinars were held on the topics of raingarden instillation, restoring shoreline, planting native prairie, and instilling proper winter maintenance techniques, all of which are available for free viewing on the Scott SWCD YouTube channel. The annual Outdoor Education Days event brought together 3-5th grade students, including those from Eagle View Elementary School in Elko New Market and Cedar Lake Farm Park in New Prague for interactive activities and learning stations on environmental issues. SCWEP also had a display table and informational rack cards at various public events throughout the year such

as the Scott County Fair. These cards provided information on urban and rural BMPs that landowners can do to improve water quality. SCWEP also writes and distributes news releases in various outlets including the Scott County SCENE, local papers, on partner websites, and social media. In 2021, 23 articles and 95 social media posts relating to the topic of clean water were published.

Maintenance Workshops

The VRWJPO provided cash and in-kind services for the Turf Maintenance workshop held virtually on March 17, 2021 with 34 attendees.

Staff member Paula Liepold organized three additional workshops:







- 4/20/2021 – Level 2 Smart Salting (virtual) – 28 attendees
- 10/5/2021 – Level 12 Smart Salting for Roads (in person for Transportation Dept only) – 24 attendees
- 11/2/2021 – Smart Salting for Property Managers (virtual) – 18 attendees

All attendees completed the trainings and passed their exams to become certified in smart salting.

Social Media

The VRWJPO continues to maintain its presence on social media. The watershed has been generating original content and sharing news from partners on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Each platform has grown in its follower count over the past year. More specific numbers below:

Top Facebook and Instagram posts from 2021:

 <p>Aug 9, 2021 Stop in at the Dakota County... Post Reach 441</p>	 <p>Jul 14, 2021 The Burnsville, Minnesota g... Post Reach 152</p>	 <p>Jul 22, 2021 Each of these lawns is maint... Post Reach 140</p>
 <p>Aug 11, 2021 If you live alongside one of t... Post Reach 110</p>	 <p>Oct 6, 2021 Our Fall 2021 email newslett... Post Reach 109</p>	 <p>Jun 14, 2021 Though we could use some ... Post Reach 109</p>

Top tweets from 2021:


 **Vermillion River Watershed** @VRWJPO · Jul 23, 2021


.@UMNExt and @MetCouncilNews: Lawns will survive the drought even if we don't water them. #mndrought #mnwx twitter.com/kare11/status/...




 **2**  **2**  **0**

Impressions ⓘ Engagements ⓘ Detail expands ⓘ

936 **8** **4**

 **Vermillion River Watershed** @VRWJPO · Aug 9, 2021

 Visit us this week in the @DakotaCoFairMN Natural Resources Building!

 **8**  **2**  **0**

Impressions ⓘ Engagements ⓘ Detail expands ⓘ

777 **28** **4**

Vermillion River Watershed @VRWJPO · Dec 22, 2021

We are excited to have two Vermillion River Watershed projects receive Clean Water Funds - a dry pond in Foxborough Park (@CityOfLakeville) and ravine stabilization in Ravenna Township. @MNBWSR

bit.ly/3yBw1nW

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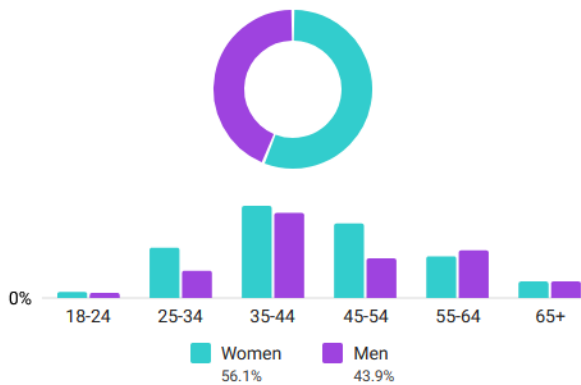
Impressions ⓘ **612** Engagements ⓘ **17** Detail expands ⓘ **2**

Social media account audiences:

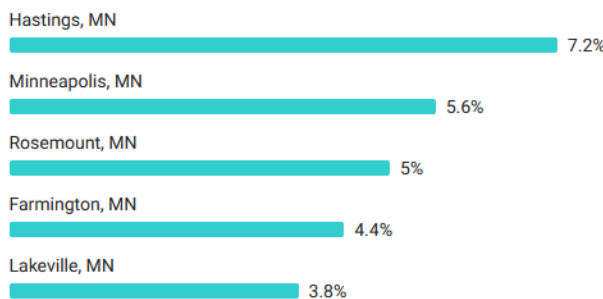
Facebook Page followers ⓘ

320

Age & Gender ⓘ



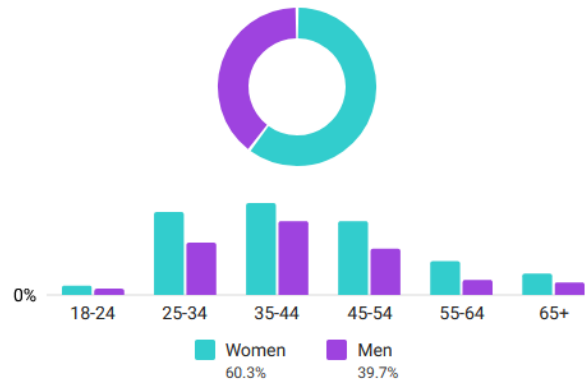
Top Cities



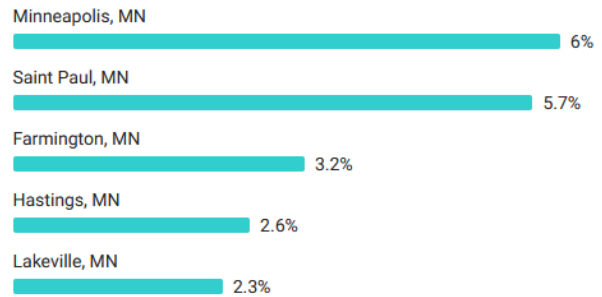
Instagram Followers ⓘ

349

Age & Gender ⓘ



Top Cities



Twitter does not have the analytical breakdown of follower demographics that Facebook and Instagram do. The account currently has 224 followers. From the data we do have, we can see that VRWJPO gained 84 new followers in 2021.

Publications

The VRWJPO provides an electronic newsletter to interested residents in the watershed twice a year (Spring and Fall 2021 issues can be found at <https://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/news-events/newsletter/>) as required by Minn. Rules Part 8410.0100, Subpart 4.

Additionally, VRWJPO publishes fact sheets on its capital improvement projects (<https://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/watershed-management/capital-improvement-projects/>) as required by the Clean Water Fund.

2021 Financial Statement

Governmental Fund Statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance and governmental activities – Statement of Activities

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization for the year ended December 31, 2021

Revenues	
Taxes	\$972,251
License and Permits	\$4,902
Intergovernmental	\$635,991
Investment earnings	\$13,473
Miscellaneous	\$18,619
Total Revenues	\$1,645,236

Expenditures/Expenses Current	
Conservation of Natural Resources	\$1,530,220

Fund Balances	
Net Change in Fund Balance/Net Position	\$115,016
Fund Balance/Net Position – Jan. 1, 2021	\$1,144,560
Fund Balance/Net Position – Dec. 31, 2021	\$1,259,576

2022 Work Plan and Activities

Watershed Plan Category	Budget Items	Budget Amount
Administration and Operations	Dakota County VRW staff	\$180,500
	Scott County VRW staff	\$15,000
	Other Dakota County staff time	\$12,000
	Legal support	\$25,000
	Miscellaneous Expenses (per diems, mileage, postage, etc.)	\$6,000
	Training, conferences, and certifications	\$2,000
	Subtotal Administration	\$240,500
Research and Planning	Dakota County SWCD Incentive Program Policy Assistance	\$1,600
	Scott County Staff	\$2,000
	VRW staff	\$12,000
	Subtotal Research and Planning	\$15,600
Monitoring and Assessment	Vermillion River Monitoring Network in Dakota County	
	A. Downloading	\$39,000
	B. Reporting	\$17,000
	C. Water Quality Sample Analysis and QA/QC samples	\$19,000

Watershed Plan Category	Budget Items	Budget Amount
	D. Equipment and Supplies	\$8,000
	Vermillion River Monitoring Network in Scott County	\$9,800
	USGS cost-share for Blaine Ave. Station	\$8,900
	DNR flow-gaging assistance	\$9,700
	Biological and Habitat Assessments	\$7,000
	Electrofishing	\$16,000
	Monitoring programs review and evaluation	\$15,000
	General GIS support (Dakota SWCD)	\$5,000
	Nitrate treatment practices sampling	\$1,000
	Iron enhanced sand filter performance sampling	\$2,000
	Subtotal Monitoring and Assessment	\$157,400
Public Communications and Outreach	Communication and Outreach staff	\$100,000
	Vermillion River Watch program	\$6,000
	Scott County outreach efforts	\$2,250
	Vermillion River Watershed projects signage and map updates	\$5,000
	Newsletter, mailings, website, general communication materials	\$10,000

Watershed Plan Category	Budget Items	Budget Amount
	Landscaping for Clean Water Workshop (Dakota SWCD)	\$30,400
	K-12 classroom presentations (Dakota SWCD)	\$4,000
	Local standards/ordinance and turf/salt workshops	\$3,500
	Subtotal Public Communications and Outreach	\$161,150
Regulation	Scott SWCD assistance with plan review	\$900
	Engineering assistance and review	\$35,000
	VRW staff local program assistance	\$20,000
	Subtotal Regulation	\$55,900
Coordination and Collaboration	Coordination VRW staff	\$32,000
	Metro Children's Water Festival support	\$600
	Metro Watershed Partners membership (incl. Adopt-a-Drain)	\$5,000
	Minnesota Water Stewards	\$5,000
	Subtotal Coordination and Collaboration	\$42,600
Land & Water Treatment: Capital Improvement Projects	Cost-share programs in Dakota County (SWCD)	\$80,000
	Cost-share programs in Scott County (SWCD)	\$31,300

Watershed Plan Category	Budget Items	Budget Amount
	Cost-share	\$215,550
	Subtotal Capital Improvement Projects	\$326,850
Land & Water Treatment: Maintenance	Past projects maintenance/repair	\$40,000
	CIP construction oversight, maintenance/repair staff costs	\$25,000
	Subtotal Maintenance	\$65,000
Land & Water Treatment: Feasibility/Preliminary Studies	Preliminary design, technical assistance, and marketing for capital improvements (Dakota SWCD)	\$40,000
	Improvements	\$150,000
	Subtotal Feasibility/Preliminary Studies	\$190,000
Land & Water Treatment: Irrigation Audit and Cost Share Program	Irrigation audits	\$5,000
	Irrigation cost-share	\$5,000
	Subtotal Irrigation Audit and Cost-Share	\$10,000
Land & Water Treatment: 2020-2023 Watershed-Based Implementation Fund (WBIF) Grant (BWSR) North Creek	North Creek stabilization	\$288,700
	VRWJPO cash match	\$50,000
	Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant North Creek Stabilization	\$338,700
Land & Water Treatment: 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Farmington	Farmington Direct Drainage Assessment	\$13,400
	VRWJPO cash match	\$3,330

Watershed Plan Category	Budget Items	Budget Amount
	Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Farmington	\$16,730
Land & Water Treatment: 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Hastings Direct	Hastings Direct Drainage Assessment	\$26,700
	VRWJPO cash match	\$3,330
	Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Hastings Direct	\$30,030
Land & Water Treatment: 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Ravenna Basins	Ravenna basins restoration	\$59,000
Land & Water Treatment: 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Ravenna Basins	VRWJPO cash match	\$26,000
	Subtotal 2020-2023 WBIF Grant Ravenna Basins Restoration	\$85,000
Land & Water Treatment: Clean Water Fund Grant (BWSR)	WBIF grant administration	\$17,700
	Subtotal WBIF grant administration	\$17,700
	Subtotal of Expenditures	\$1,753,160
	Cash Reserve	\$189,440
	TOTAL Annual Expenses	\$1,942,600

Appendix A: 2021 Resolutions of the Joint Powers Board

January

Res. No. VRW 21-00: Election of Officers

Res. No. VRW 21-01: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the Dec. 3, 2020 meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Execute a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for services in 2021
- e. Execute a JPA with Scott SWCD for services in 2021
- f. Authorization to amend a JPA with the City of Hastings for the 21st St. Stormwater Treatment Projects

Res. No. VRW 21-02: Approval of Expenses totaling \$163,866.59 between Nov. 21, 2020 and Dec. 16, 2020 and \$144,602.44 between Dec. 17, 2020 and Jan. 19, 2021

Res. No. VRW 21-03: Appointment of Andrew Riesgraf and James Kotz to the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission

February

Res. No. VRW 21-04: Approval of Consent Agenda

Approval of Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes from the Jan. 28, 2021 meeting
- b. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- c. Schedule a public hearing for modifications to the VRWJPO permit program fee and security schedule

Res. No. VRW 21-05: Approval of expenses totaling \$171,241.26 between Jan. 20, 2021 and Feb. 16, 2021.

Res. No. VRW 21-06: Adoption of an amendment to the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan Implementation section

March

Res. No. VRW 21-07: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the February 25, 2021, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Authorization to Amend a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Apple Valley for the Erickson Park Stormwater Improvement Project
- e. Authorization to Execute a Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for Fiscal Year 2021 Watershed-Based Initiative Funding
- f. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Lakeville for the North Creek at Highview Avenue Channel Improvement Project
- g. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Rosemount for Anti-Icing Equipment Purchase
- h. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Farmington for Vermillion River Direct Drainage Stormwater Treatment Assessment
- i. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Hastings for Vermillion River Direct Drainage Stormwater Treatment Assessment

Res. No. VRW 21-08: Approval of Expenses totaling \$55,454.36 between Feb. 17, 2021 and March 12, 2021.

Res. No. VRW 21-09: Public Hearing to receive comments on and adoption of modifications to VRWJPO permit program fee and security schedule

Res. No. VRW 21-10: Adoption of modified VRWJPO permit program fee and security schedule

Res. No. VRW 21-11: Adoption of candidate selection and appointment process for Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission members

April

Res. No. VRW 21-12: Approval of consent agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the March 25, 2021 meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Authorization to Submit 2020 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

Res. No. VRW 21-13: Approval of Expenses totaling \$48,414.61 between March 13, 2021 and April 14, 2021

Res. No. VRW 21-14: Approval of proposed amendments to the VRWJPO 2021 budget

July

Res. No. VRW 21-15: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the April 22, 2021, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Approval of the City of Elko New Market Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan
- e. Schedule a Public Hearing to Receive Comments on the Draft VRWJPO Budget and Watershed Management Tax District Levy
- f. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Rosemount for an Irrigation Audit Program in 2021

Res. No. VRW 21-16: Approval of Expenses totaling \$120,244.30 between April 15, 2021 and May 11, 2021, \$54,885.44 between May 12, 2021 and June 11, 2021, and \$53,290.23 between June 12, 2021 and July 12, 2021

August

Res. No. VRW 21-17: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the July 22, 2021, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report

Res. No. VRW 21-18: Approval of Expenses totaling \$48,561.03 between July 13, 2021 and Aug. 12, 2021

Res. No. VRW 21-19: Public hearing on the draft 2022 VRWJPO budget and Vermillion River Watershed Management Tax District Levy

Res. No. VRW 21-20: Adoption of draft 2022 VRWJPO budget and Vermillion River Watershed Management Tax District Levy

September

Res. No. VRW 21-21: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the August 26, 2021, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Approval of Expenses
- e. Board member site visits of two completed Capital Improvement Projects immediately following the meeting

October

Res. No. VRW 21-22: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the September 23, 2021, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report

Res. No. VRW 21-23: Approval of Expenses totaling \$480,845.31 between Sept. 13, 2021 and Oct. 12, 2021

Res. No. VRW 21-24: Amendment to agenda removing item 6a

December

Res. No. VRW 21-25: Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the October 28, 2021, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Approval of dates for 2022 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) meetings

Res. No. VRW 21-26: Approval of Expenses totaling \$236,159.21 between Oct. 13, 2021 and Nov. 12, 2021

Res. No. VRW 21-27: Authorized executive of a JPA with Dakota County for the Wetland Health Evaluation Program

6c. Delegation of a Limited Authority for Contracts and Purchase Agreements to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Administrator and Co-administrator

Meeting Date: 4/28/2022
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Mark Zabel
Telephone: 952-891-7011
Prepared by: Mark Zabel



PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

- Delegation of a Limited Authority for Contracts and Purchase Agreements to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Administrator and Co-administrator

SUMMARY

The VRWJPO’s existing delegated limited authority policy that identifies the VRWJPO Administrator may approve and sign contracts when the funds for the contract are included in the current budget and have a value less than \$50,000 must be renewed when there is a change of Commissioners on the VRWJPB. As of January 2022, there is a change in Commissioners which mandates review and renewal of this delegated authority.

On review of the existing policy, a discrepancy was noted regarding the Management Rights and Administration Policy of the VRWJPO, which identifies that the VRWJPO employs an Administrator from Dakota County and a Co-administrator from Scott County. The Administrator is primarily responsible for Watershed Management Plan implementation in Dakota County, while the Co-administrator is primarily responsible for the Scott County portion. The proposed delegation of authority corrects this discrepancy by including the Co-administrator in the delegated limited authority.

The proposed delegation of authority also addresses the addition of an authority for the approval of purchase agreements for the sale of wetland bank credits out of bank accounts with credits allocated to the VRWJPO. The permitting process associated with implementation of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act includes identifying wetland impacts and required mitigation of those impacts. When impacts are proposed to be mitigated by purchase of wetland bank credits, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources strongly recommends a signed purchase agreement be included in the documentation for local government regulatory approval in a timely manner.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

RESOLUTION

6c. Delegation of a Limited Authority for Contracts and Purchase Agreements to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Administrator and Co-administrator

WHEREAS, The VRWJPO’s existing delegated limited authority policy that identifies the VRWJPO Administrator may approve and sign contracts when the funds for the contract are included in the current budget and have a value less than \$50,000 must be renewed when there is a change of Commissioners on the VRWJPB; and

WHEREAS, As of January 2022, there is a change in Commissioners which mandates review and renewal of this delegated authority; and

WHEREAS, The Administrator is primarily responsible for Watershed Management Plan implementation in Dakota County while the Co-administrator is primarily responsible for the Scott County portion; and

WHEREAS, When impacts are proposed to be mitigated through purchase of credits from a wetland bank the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources strongly recommends a signed purchase agreement is obtained and included in the documentation for local government regulatory approval; and

WHEREAS, Completing purchase agreements in a timely manner may be important for permit applicants completing regulatory requirements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) chair delegates the authority to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Administrator and Co-administrator to approve and sign contracts when the funds for the contract are included in the VRWJPO’s current year approved budget, and the contract has a value of less than \$50,000 for work or labor, professional services, specialized equipment or software, or other items to support the goals of the VRWJPO, following the VRWJPO Policy for Management Rights and Administration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the VRWJPB chair delegates the authority to the VRWJPO Administrator and Co-administrator to approve and sign purchase agreements for the sale of wetland bank credits out of balances of wetland credits allocated for the VRWJPO, following the Policy for Management Rights and Administration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegation of these limited authorities to the VRWJPO Administrator and Co-administrator must be renewed following a change of Commissioners serving on the VRWJPB or a change of VRWJPO Administrator or Co-administrator.

Management Rights and Administration

The VRWJPB members are appointed by their respective counties to provide direction for the management and protection of water resources within the identified boundaries of the Vermillion River Watershed. The VRWJPB approves the 10-year Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan, as well as the annual budget, work plan, and special watershed tax district levy. The VRWJPB has the sole authority to approve, modify, or reject these policies by resolution at any time.

The VRWJPO employs an Administrator from Dakota County and a Co-administrator from Scott County, to implement the Watershed Plan under the direction of the VRWJPB. The Administrator and Co-administrator develop policies as necessary and gain approval from the VRWJPB by resolution. Approved policies will be added to the current policies and will be kept on file at the VRWJPO.

The Administrator and Co-administrator are responsible for the Administration and Operations role in the VRWJPO. The Dakota County Administrator is primarily responsible for Watershed Management Plan implementation in Dakota County while the Scott County Co-administrator is primarily responsible for the Scott County portion. This role is defined in the 2016-2025 Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan as follows:

- ▣ Operate the organization effectively, developing appropriate procedures, organizational capacity, and clear work direction to implement watershed objectives.
- ▣ Report to the VRWJPB and receive its direction on policy, budget, plans, and projects. Consult with citizen and technical advisory bodies.
- ▣ Develop watershed programs and projects. Use metrics to evaluate program and project effectiveness. Improve programs and operations to address public needs and new opportunities. Report on program and project outcomes to the VRWJPB, stakeholders, and the public.
- ▣ Manage fiscal resources with annual budgeting and capital improvement program processes. Develop cost-effective solutions and leverage local, state, and federal resources for priority projects.



Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission Meeting

April 13, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.

In-person and Zoom Videoconference

WPC Members in Attendance

Mark Henry James Kotz
Josh Borton Andy Riesgraf
Steve Hamrick
Chuck Clanton via teleconference

Staff in Attendance

Mark Ryan, VRWJPO
Brita Moore-Kutz, VRWJPO
Mark Zabel, VRWJPO

Others in Attendance

Curt Coudron, Dakota County SWCD

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Election of officers

Mark Zabel opened nominations for Chair. Josh Borton nominated Mark Henry as Chair. Mark Henry nominated Chuck Clanton as Chair. There was some discussion about whether either of them was accepting their nomination. Both indicated a willingness to serve. After further discussion Commissioner Clanton withdrew leaving Commissioner Henry as the lone nominee. Mark Henry was elected Chair by acclamation. Chair Henry then nominated Chuck Clanton as Vice-chair. There were no other nominations and Chuck Clanton was elected Vice-chair by acclamation.

3. Roll Call

All members present.

4. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

5. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Chair Henry asked for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Clanton asked if there were no minutes listed for approval on the agenda. The January meeting did not have a quorum of

members present and so there was no meeting. Commissioner Clanton pointed out that the minutes of the previous meeting presented in the January meeting packet would still require approval. The minutes from the November 17, 2022 meeting of the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission were added for approval.

Chair Henry requested any adjustments to the minutes as presented. Upon hearing none, Chair Henry called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2021 meeting of the WPC.

Motion by Commissioner Clanton, second by Commissioner Borton, to approve the agenda, and minutes of the November 17, 2021 meeting, as distributed. The agenda and minutes were approved by a 6-0 vote.

6. Business Items

a. Recommend Approval of Proposed Amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Draft Revised 2022 Budget

Mark Zabel introduced the draft budget document showing proposed amendments to the Final VRWJPO 2022 Budget. These amendments are based on carryover funds from underspending in the previous year and new grants awarded since adoption of the Final VRWJPO 2022 Budget on December 2, 2021. Mark went through the document highlighting each line where a change had occurred and explained the reason for the change. The overall result of proposed amendments to the budget is an increase in revenues from \$1,942,600 to \$2,693,350, a total increase of \$750,750, an increase in expenses from \$1,753,060 to \$2,464,010, a total increase of \$710,410, with a cash reserve of \$229,340.

Motion by Commissioner Kotz, second by Commissioner Riesgraf, recommending approval of the amendment to bring the budgeted total expenses in 2022 to \$2,464,010 and total revenue to \$2,693,350 with a cash reserve of \$229,340 was unanimously approved by a 6-0 vote.

b. Recommendation to Approve Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Consultant List for 2022-2023

Mark Ryan presented the list of consultants whose application met the requirements of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Mark Ryan commented that the VRWJPO does the RFQ process every two years to meet the requirements set out by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. Commissioner Riesgraf asked whether this list represents all consultants that we might use and how new consultants are accessed. Mark Zabel described the purpose of BWSR's requirement and how the VRWJPO then uses the consultant list, but that the list does not limit our access to consultants as the VRWJPO can use the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for larger projects or for projects with specific service needs. Commissioner Clanton suggested that the services (five areas) listed in the RFQ be shown with the list of consultants so that it is evident to those accessing the document as to what services are available through these consultants (i.e. a checklist). Mark Ryan commented

that we will consider that, though it is not something that the VRWJPO had done in the past or would be required by Statute. Commissioner Clanton commented that since this is a public document the information could be used as a resource for outside parties looking to access certain services. Commissioner Borton pointed out that consultants on the list would have the opportunity to subcontract for services that they don't directly support. Mark Ryan acknowledged that consultants do use that approach when responding to an RFP. Commissioner Kotz asked if any of these firms are located within the watershed. Mark Ryan responded that he was not aware if any of these firms were officed locally within the watershed, but that could be a future consideration in trying to access local firms.

Motion by Commissioner Borton, second by Commissioner Hamrick, recommending approval of the list of qualified professional consultant services for 2022-2023, was unanimously approved by a 6-0 vote.

c. Recommend Authorization to Submit 2021 VRWJPO Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

Brita Moore-Kutz presented a summary of the VRWJPO Annual Activity and Financial Report. Brita noted that a change to the report for this year was a formatting to an ADA compliant accessible format to make it readily available to screen readers. Commissioner Borton noted that his address should be corrected. Brita agreed to make that correction before presenting to the VRWJPB. The WPC members commented that the report was well done, thorough and complete. Mark Zabel noted that the report is a BWSR requirement that calls for its submittal within 120 days of the end of the VRWJPO fiscal year, which is the calendar year. The report will need to be submitted to BWSR by the end of April 2022.

Motion by Commissioner Clanton, second by Commissioner Kotz, recommending VRWJPB approval and submittal to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources of the VRWJPO Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement, was unanimously approved by a 6-0 vote.

7. Updates

a. Chairperson's Report

Chair Henry mentioned Joe Duggan has been advocating a bill at the Minnesota State Capitol supporting the promotion of enhanced CRP/CREP for riparian areas. There was some discussion about CRP (Conservation Reserve Program – implemented through the United States Department of Agriculture) and the challenges around getting conservation practices implemented on the land.

b. Staff Updates

Curt Coudron provided an update on several projects and programs of the Dakota SWCD. Curt highlighted the Landscaping for Clean Water Program as the workshops for the introductory course have been completed and the program will be moving into the design course soon.

Brita Moore-Kutz reported that efforts for outreach in direct public contact like tabling events were lacking in 2021 mainly due to COVID. This year and this month (being Earth Month and Earth Day being April 22nd) the VRWJPO will be participating in several events, one in Farmington and one in Lakeville. Another event involves students from the School of Environmental Studies with a live staking on North Creek in Farmington. Brita has been coordinating with the “We Are Water” development with Dakota County. Displays will be at two locations, the Pleasant Hill Library in the City of Hastings and at the Visitor Center at Lebanon Hills Regional Park. Events and activities are being planned for both locations. The eNewsletter was sent out recently and included several articles and a few yard management tips for Spring.

Curt Coudron followed up with a note that the Dakota SWCD is holding their Tree Sale at the Dakota County Fairgrounds County Building on April 20, 21, and 22.

Mark Ryan reported that Apple Valley is a new partner in the Irrigation Audit Program and so we will be seeing some water conservation implementation in three participating cities this year (Lakeville and Rosemount again are the other two). Mark Ryan also reported having attended the Spring Township Officer’s meeting on March 19th where he talked about the need for updating ordinances for Water Resource Management (to implement the VRWJPO Standards). Mark also mentioned that the Manager for the Empire Wastewater Treatment Plant presented information about biosolids management at that meeting and has a copy of an information sheet to share with Commissioner Clanton with his prior interest in the subject. Mark mentioned that staff have been coordinating with the Dakota SWCD on a subwatershed assessment on the Lower Mainstem Vermillion River South – which encompasses the tributaries flowing to the Vermillion River from the south for an area generally between highways 52 and 61. Something new in the subwatershed assessment will be assessing projects for nitrate reduction to help with this local concern.

Mark Zabel provided an update on the wetland bank and the sale of wetland bank credits. Dakota County was allocated credits for the Braun Wetland bank (Wetland Bank #1740) a portion, 5.1066 acres of credit, for public sale on behalf of the VRWJPO. The VRWJPO is offering those credits for mitigation of wetland impacts at a cost of \$37,000 per acre credits for replacement of impacts that occur within the watershed, and \$45,000 per acre credits for replacement of impacts that occur outside the watershed. Mark Zabel recently sent letters to all the local units of government that implement the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) within the watershed, informing them of the development of Wetland Bank #1740 and the availability of wetland credits. Since then there have been three inquiries for a total of 3.212 acres of credit. Two are from inside the watershed and one, for 0.24 acres, from outside the watershed. If all three of these requests go through to completion it would generate \$120,764 of revenue. Mark gave a brief explanation of how WCA manages for wetland impacts through mitigation and the options available for permit applicants to mitigate their impacts – which may include obtaining credits from a wetland bank. Mark described the recent restoration of the Braun Wetland through a partnership between BWSR, Dakota County, and

the VRWJPO (financially) toward developing a wetland bank. If these requests go through the VRWJPO would have approximately 1.9 acres left and then we will have to wait until next year for the next performance evaluation, certification, and release of credits. Mark Henry commented that the area of this wetland was once called Lake Eleven as it was in Section 11 of Castle Rock Township. Mark Henry also shared that Blaine Avenue which runs along the western edge of this wetland was originally constructed as a dirt road by hauling load after load of sand and gravel out onto the ice in Winter to build up a roadbed through the wetland. Chair Henry noted that the restoration of this wetland may also provide some treatment for nitrates going to the South Creek tributary to the Vermillion River.

Commissioner Clanton commented that he had heard that the Field Biology Class at Hastings High School is not continuing. Staff noted that Joe Beattie had resigned his position at Hastings High School as the Biology Teacher and is now teaching at Inver Hills Community College. Commissioner Clanton suggested the VRWJPO consider appointing people who own land (but who do not live) in the watershed as WPC members in order to broaden the opportunity for people who have an interest to serve. Mark Zabel said that he believed that the residency requirement is set out in the Joint Powers Agreement that established the VRWJPO and will verify that requirement and discuss with the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Hamrick, second by Commissioner Borton, to adjourn the meeting at 5:22 p.m. The motion passed on an 6-0 vote.