

# Water Quality

## Issue Category Information

Water quality has been a primary driver of work in the Vermillion River Watershed since the VRWJPO’s inception. For this generation Watershed Management Plan (Plan), water quality encompasses both surficial and groundwater sources. Issue Statements can be found below.

- Surface water quality is threatened or impaired.
- Groundwater quality is threatened or impaired.

<i>Water Quality Objectives</i>	<i>TAG-WPC Input</i>	<i>Staff Recommendations (Based Off Expertise &amp; Statistical Analysis)</i>	<i>Board Recommendations</i>
Protect surface waters from impairments	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Support and implement projects, programs and practices to protect or improve groundwater quality	High Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Use surface water quality monitoring data to inform restoration and protection decisions	Medium Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Remove surface waters from the impaired waters list	Medium Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Coordinate with others to assess impacts to groundwater from the Vermillion River and its tributaries	Low Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Assist and coordinate groundwater quality work with lead groundwater organizations	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority

# Stormwater Management

## Issue Category Information

The Plan is structured to address management of stormwater runoff through implementation actions that: promote conservation of features that naturally attenuate stormwater, expand on built practices that have the ability to improve stormwater quality and quantity, and capture and reuse stormwater where feasible. Issue Statements can be found below.

- Land alterations and lack of adequate stormwater management in the Watershed have increased the rate and volume of stormwater runoff, impacted water quality, degraded habitat and increased flood risk.
- Watershed Rules and Standards are challenging for some local government units to enforce.

<i>Stormwater Management Objectives</i>	<i>TAG-WPC Input</i>	<i>Staff Recommendations (Based Off Expertise &amp; Statistical Analysis)</i>	<i>Board Recommendations</i>
Promote and implement stormwater practices that manage the peak rate and volume of runoff from the landscape	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Promote and implement infiltration practices	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Assist in the development and implementation of policies and programs that promote green infrastructure and low impact development practices	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Promote protection of natural floodplain capacities	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Collaborate with technical experts and local governments when updating, revising, or changing watershed rules and standards	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Ensure watershed rules and standards can be administered by local governments	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority
Assist local governments with navigating and understanding regulatory frameworks	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority



## Groundwater Supply

### Issue Category Information

While the VRWJPO is not a governing body for groundwater supply, impacts have implications for local water resources and Watershed communities. For this reason, the Plan incorporates groundwater supply implementation actions that: assist with groundwater conservation initiatives and lean on the expertise of groundwater supply leading agencies. Issue Statements can be found below:

- Groundwater aquifer supply is threatened due to increased and competing uses.
- Groundwater recharge rates are decreasing due to landscape alterations and climatic fluctuations.

<i>Groundwater Supply Objectives</i>	<i>TAG-WPC Input</i>	<i>Staff Recommendations (Based Off Expertise &amp; Statistical Analysis)</i>	<i>Board Recommendations</i>
Assist with and coordinate groundwater supply planning, protection, and improvement efforts with lead groundwater organizations	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Assist with and implement projects, programs and practices that reduce landscape and agricultural water use	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Assist with and implement projects programs and practices that promote infiltration	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority



## Climate Resilience

### Issue Category Information

While the Watershed does not have a role in minimizing greenhouse gas reductions, water planning entities and local communities are tasked with fostering resilience on the built and natural landscapes. The Plan achieves this through implementation actions that: support engineering best practices for the built environment, improve historic infrastructure to account for climate deviations and promote resilience in the natural environment. Issue Statements can be found below.

- Climatic patterns are negatively impacting the Watershed’s natural and built environment.
- Historic stormwater infrastructure is not adequate to manage climate patterns.

<i>Climate Resilience Objectives</i>	<i>TAG-WPC Input</i>	<i>Staff Recommendations (Based Off Expertise &amp; Statistical Analysis)</i>	<i>Board Recommendations</i>
Foster partnerships to implement projects, programs and practices that improve stormwater infrastructure’s resilience to climate impacts	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Support LGUs in stormwater infrastructure adaption	High Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority
Foster partnerships to implement projects, programs, and practices to increase the amount of green infrastructure	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Support re-evaluation of watershed floodplains using updated data	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Promote reconnection to historic floodplains	Low Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority

## Natural Environments

### Issue Category Information

The Watershed Management Plan supports Watershed growth in an environmentally responsible manner through implementation actions that: support native biodiversity, protect and improve local habitats and minimize impacts to local ecosystems. The Issue Statement relating to this category can be found below.

- Human-caused ecosystem disruptions decrease biological diversity, promote the proliferation of invasive species and have wide-reaching impacts to the Watershed’s natural environment.

<i>Natural Environments Objectives</i>	<i>TAG-WPC Input</i>	<i>Staff Recommendations (Based Off Expertise &amp; OPA Information)</i>	<i>Board Recommendations</i>
Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that protect the watershed’s aquatic and riparian habitats	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Identify and improve high-priority water resource environments found to be significantly impacted by humans	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs, and practices that improve soil health	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Coordinate with others to implement projects, programs and practices that improve disturbed landscapes	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority



## Community Relationships

### Issue Category Information

Establishing and nurturing relationships with individuals that live, work and play within the Watershed is essential for our success. The Plan will foster the longevity of meaningful community relationships through implementation actions that: articulate the impact local communities have on local water resources and natural environments; promote the engagement of individuals and groups in implementation of environmental stewardship projects, programs and practices; and increase the understanding of the Watershed’s role in various environmental realms. Issue Statements can be found below.

- Public awareness and understanding of the Watershed is limited.
- Community members in the Watershed lack awareness of opportunities to engage in the VRWJPO’s work.

<i>Community Relationships Objectives</i>	<i>TAG-WPC Input</i>	<i>Staff Recommendations (Based Off Expertise &amp; Statistical Analysis)</i>	<i>Board Recommendations</i>
Create and support opportunities for stakeholder connection and engagement with the watershed’s natural resources	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Consistently communicate and promote the work of the VRWJPO with partners and stakeholders	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Communicate with stakeholders regarding the environmental issues that directly impact the watershed	High Priority	High Priority	High Priority
Engage citizens to promote sustainable stewardship of lakes and streams	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Grow the amount of watershed stakeholders	Medium Priority	Medium Priority	Medium Priority
Maintain or increase ways for stakeholders to provide relevant input to the VRWJPO	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority