

Vermillion River Watershed

Changing Climate and Stormwater Resiliency Study

Request for Proposals

Answers to Submitted Questions

1. Are you willing to meet with proposers?

It would be useful for staff to receive a presentation from prospective consultants; however, the study will use partial funding from the MPCA's Planning Grants for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience planning grant (pending award). As proposals for the study are due November 27 and the MPCA grant application is due December 11, there will not be adequate time to interview prospective consultants.

2. Do you have evaluation criteria/percentages for proposal review? Can they be shared?

Yes, the VRWJPO can share the DRAFT template used for assessing the proposal. Please reference the template on the [Requests for Applications, Bids, Quotes, Proposals landing page](#).

3. Do you have an anticipated budget for this study? Can it be shared?

The VRWJPO is not willing to share a budget amount. The consultant should propose a budget based on the scope.

4. What areas does the VRWJPO model cover?

The 2009 Vermillion River Watershed Hydrologic Study of Existing Conditions encompasses modeling across the entire VRWJPO political boundary. The 2015 model included the cities of Rosemount, Farmington, and Lakeville. The 2020 model covered eastern portions of the VRWJPO, and some acreage within the Cannon River Watershed (focus was in more rural than urban locations). The reports relating to the previously completed models can be accessed by clicking the links below.

Linked: [2009 Vermillion River Watershed Hydrologic Study of Existing Conditions](#)

Linked: [2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Rosemount](#)

[2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Lakeville](#)

[2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Farmington](#)

Linked: [2020 Dakota County Rural SWMM Study](#)

In addition, the selected consultant will be provided city H&H models that include more recent updates undertaken by the respective city (not partnering with the VRWJPO). The below cities have provided dates for which additional H&H model updates took place:

- *City of Rosemount – 2018*
- *City of Apple Valley – 2018*
- *City of Hastings – 2018*
- *Elko New Market – 2013*
- *City of Lakeville – 2018*
- *City of Farmington – 2018*
- *City of Empire – 2017*

5. Is the 2020 PC-SWMM model currently a 1D or 2D model?

The VRWJPO models are 1D. The VRWJPO is unsure if city models are 1D or 2D.

6. Are the XP-SWMM models for intercommunity flow rate and standards 1D or 2D models?

The VRWJPO models are 1D. The VRWJPO is unsure if city models are 1D or 2D.

7. What frequency storm events have been run in the current model and what frequency events are requested for the proposed modeling?

The 2009 and 2015 models included 1-Year, 2-Year, 10-Year, 50-Year and 100-Year frequencies. The 2020 model included 2-Year, 10-Year and 100-Year frequencies.

The VRWJPO requests that the selected consultant perform analyses for five (5) distinct precipitation frequency events representing a range of return periods using the Atlas 15 Volume 1 and Volume 2 precipitation data. The consultant shall identify and justify the selected storm frequencies and corresponding durations based on professional expertise in stormwater modeling, hydrology, and hydraulics, and in accordance with VRWJPO Standards. Selected storm frequencies and durations should best model evolving climate conditions that support the development/identification of potential BMP's that are resilient to both current and future climate conditions.

8. Do the XP-SWMM models used for intercommunity flow rate and standards or city models need to be updated for this effort as well as the 2020 PC-SWMM model?

The purpose of the RFP is to bring models into conformance with updated datasets and precipitation frequencies and durations. The selected consultant will be provided all aforementioned models (both VRWJPO and city H&H models) and use their professional expertise to select which previous model datasets should be incorporated.

9. If future questions come up after November 3 (today), are you open to answering additional questions?

In accordance with the RFP, all comments were due by 4:30 pm on November 3. This is to allow staff adequate time to compile all questions, formulate responses, and post to the VRWJPO website for all potential consultants to review as they develop their respective proposals.

10. Is a cover excluded from the 20-page limit?

A cover is excluded from the 20-page limit.

11. Please clarify what information should be included in sections B1 (personnel) versus B7 (resources) versus B8 (project team):

- a. What information should proposers include in section B1 (personnel) versus section B8 (project team)? How do these sections differ? Should any information be repeated in both sections?

B1 can be combined with B7 to create a concise table including: names and titles of personnel that will work on the proposal tasks (and subtasks as applicable); personnel hourly billing rates; hours billed (according to personnel) dedicated to each task; total costs associated with each task; and total estimated hours broken up according to personnel. Conversely, B1 and B7 could be formatted differently at your discretion.

B8 should include personnel names, titles, and roles for completion of the overall project. In addition, B8 should include concise resumes for each personnel.

- b. Section B1 (personnel) asks for personnel's hourly rates and total cost, while Section B7 (resources) asks for an itemized budget as well as hours and costs by each personnel member. Please clarify what proposers should include in each section. Should any information be repeated in both sections?

Please reference the response above. It is up to the proposer how they choose to format and present the information.

- c. Relatedly, should proposers include short bios in the 20-page limit in addition to concise resumes in an attachment, or just resumes? If bios should be included, please clarify where.

Resumes can include short bios. Otherwise, the proposer can choose to format bios into the rest of the proposal document.

12. The evaluation criteria section mentions "project team organization." Would you like proposers to include an organization chart of key personnel? If yes, under which section?

Yes, an organization chart of key personnel is desired. It is up to the proposer where they think it is best fit within the proposal.

13. In Task 1, we will be compiling the H&H modeling from all the MS4 communities as well as all the watershed models, including the most recent 2020 VRWJPO PCSWMM model. And in Task 2, we will be compiling/updating the models to reflect storm sewer and development projects that have been implemented since the models were previously developed. Are all model updates and evaluations intended to be made in the VRWJPO PCSWMM model?

While considering modeling softwares for the project, staff's research and institutional knowledge of the existing models suggest that both XPSWMM and PCSWMM can manage the RFP's hydrologic and hydraulic modeling tasks. However, research also indicates that Autodesk/Innovyze may gradually reduce updates to XPSWMM, focusing future development on InfoWorks ICM.

The VRWJPO is focused on long-term climate resilience, adaptability, and keeping data accessible over time. In particular, the VRWJPO is looking for a model that:

- Will be supported and accessible for the long term,*
- Can work with common, widely used data formats (so data can be shared or moved between tools easily), and*
- Can adapt to future climate change scenarios and integrate with other models.*

The software used to accomplish these goals can be selected at the proposer's discretion. Please include in your proposal which platform is recommended and an explanation of how it supports the long-term resilience and adaptability goals.

14. Can the existing VRWJPO models be provided as part of the RFP process (XP and PC-SWMM)?

The VRWJPO models will be provided to the chosen consultant following contract award; however, reports relating to the initiatives are publicly available on the VRWJPO's website.

Linked: [2009 Vermillion River Watershed Hydrologic Study of Existing Conditions](#)

Linked: [2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Rosemount](#)

[2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Lakeville](#)

[2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Farmington](#)

Linked: [2020 Dakota County Rural SWMM Study](#)

In addition, the selected consultant will be provided city H&H models that include more recent updates undertaken by the respective city (not partnering with the VRWJPO). The below cities have provided dates for which additional H&H model updates took place:

- *City of Rosemount – 2018*
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15. The available model watershed resolution for each MS4 community varies and even varies within an individual community. What level of resolution does the VRWJPO anticipate being incorporated into the H&H model updates for use in this flooding and climate resiliency assessment (e.g. subwatersheds to intersection low points? Subwatersheds for recent development/redevelopments projects above a certain size/area?)?

Following the resolution of previous models, subwatersheds within municipal plans should be merged together to create subwatersheds approximately 1 square mile in area, within the range of 0.25 to 2 square miles.

16. The RFP calls out the identification of impacts to infrastructure and water resources resultant of varying precipitation frequencies. Typically we would model precipitation events with frequencies aligning with regulatory requirements, but what specific frequency events would the VRWJPO like evaluated?

The VRWJPO requests that the selected consultant perform analyses for five (5) distinct precipitation frequency events representing a range of return periods using the Atlas 15 Volume 1 and Volume 2 precipitation data. The consultant shall identify and justify the selected storm frequencies and corresponding durations based on professional expertise in stormwater modeling, hydrology, and hydraulics, and in accordance with VRWJPO Standards. Selected storm frequencies and durations should best model evolving climate conditions that support the development/identification of potential BMP's that are resilient to both current and future climate conditions.

17. When identifying the flood areas, is the climate resiliency project focus area within the seven MS4 cities listed only (i.e. no BMPs outside city limits)?

The study should include BMPs sited within city limits.

18. The RFP identifies quantifying pollutant load reductions for the identified BMPs. Does the VRWJPO have a preferred modeling approach to quantifying the TP and TSS load reduction?

The VRWJPO envisioned that the consultant would use MIDS to quantify pollutant reduction, but is open to other modeling techniques if recommended by the consultant.

19. Task 1 does not identify water quality models as part of the data compilation task. Will any water quality models be provided for any of the seven communities? If so, what models?

The VRWJPO lacks an integrated water quality modeling framework. Water quality outputs for multiple subwatersheds and geomorphic assessments were synthesized using a range of specialized software applications. When developing the RFP, the VRWJPO envisioned that water quality modeling would take place using MIDS. If a consultant has other software in mind, they are free to propose utilizing it.

20. In Task 5 of the RFP, the text indicates that priority projects will be determined through assessment of projected date of flooding impacts, extent of flooding impact, overall cost, flood volume reduction, TSS and TP reductions and land ownership. In reference to the “projected date of flooding impacts,” how is the VRWJPO intending to use the Atlas 15 Volume 2 information as it relates to climate/emission scenario and projected future year? How many different future climate simulations is the VRWJPO anticipating as part of Task 5?

The VRWJPO requests that the selected consultant use future climate simulations for the years 2035 and 2050 in the study. Areas prone to high-water events identified in Task 2 are intended to guide prioritization of BMPs addressing higher priority current risks, based on present precipitation frequency estimates and historical trends (Atlas 15, Volume 1). BMPs are primarily ranked for mitigating high-water impacts, with those also providing water quality benefits considered higher in priority ranking.

In Task 3, modeling for 2035 will identify areas with anticipated high-water impacts during implementation of the VRWJPO’s 2026–2035 Watershed Management Plan, using Atlas 15, Volume 2 future climate projections. In Task 3, modeling for 2050 will identify areas with anticipated high-water impacts with future climate conditions under Atlas 15, Volume 2 projections.

21. Does VRWJPO have a hydrologic/hydraulic modeling software preference?

While considering modeling softwares for the project, staff’s research and institutional knowledge of the existing models suggest that both XPSWMM and PCSWMM can manage the RFP’s hydrologic and hydraulic modeling tasks. However, research also indicates that Autodesk/Innovyze may gradually reduce updates to XPSWMM, focusing future development on InfoWorks ICM.

The VRWJPO is focused on long-term climate resilience, adaptability, and keeping data accessible over time. In particular, the VRWJPO is looking for a model that:

- Will be supported and accessible for the long term,*
- Can work with common, widely used data formats (so data can be shared or moved between tools easily), and*
- Can adapt to future climate change scenarios and integrate with other models.*

The software used to accomplish these goals can be selected at the proposer's discretion. Please include in your proposal which platform is recommended and an explanation of how it supports the long-term resilience and adaptability goals.

22. How about water quality modeling software? Is there any existing modeling out there and, if so, what software is it in?

The VRWJPO lacks an integrated water quality modeling framework. Water quality outputs for multiple subwatersheds and geomorphic assessments were synthesized using a range of specialized software applications. When developing the RFP, the VRWJPO envisioned that water quality modeling would take place using MIDS. If a consultant has other software in mind, they are free to propose utilizing it.

23. Do you anticipate any need for survey data collection to supplement potential gaps in the municipal data?

No additional field surveys will be required to address areas where LiDAR data coverage is incomplete. The selected consultant is expected to interpolate or otherwise generate a continuous representation of the terrain to fill any data gaps. In addition, the updated model is not intended to include every culvert or storm sewer segment, as it is understood that it takes time for municipal storm infrastructure datasets to 100% reflect in-ground infrastructure.

24. Is this project tied to a funding source? Is it your intent to pursue funding with the project? If you have received a grant, can you share the program and amount? Depending on the funding source, schedule flexibility may be limited, so just confirming if those schedule restrictions are firm.

Yes, the VRWJPO will utilize partial funding from the MPCA's Planning Grants for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience (pending award). We anticipate the grant application to be highly competitive due to greater than required budgeted grant match, inclusion of two types of environmental justice areas, and other factors. The proposed schedule aligns with requirements of the MPCA grant.

25. Do you have an approved budget in mind?

The VRWJPO is not willing to share a budget amount. As previously mentioned, the VRWJPO has budgeted what staff believe to be substantially more than the 10% match required for the MPCA grant.

26. What is the source of funding for this RFP?

There are two sources of funding for this RFP. The VRWJPO will utilize partial funding from the MPCA's Planning Grants for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience (pending award). We anticipate the grant application to be highly competitive due to greater than required budgeted grant match, inclusion of two types of environmental justice areas, and other factors.

27. What modeling platform is preferred for this proposed work?

While considering modeling softwares for the project, staff's research and institutional knowledge of the existing models suggest that both XPSWMM and PCSWMM can manage the RFP's hydrologic and hydraulic modeling tasks. However, research also indicates that Autodesk/Innovyze may gradually reduce updates to XPSWMM, focusing future development on InfoWorks ICM.

The VRWJPO is focused on long-term climate resilience, adaptability, and keeping data accessible over time. In particular, the VRWJPO is looking for a model that:

- Will be supported and accessible for the long term,*
- Can work with common, widely used data formats (so data can be shared or moved between tools easily), and*
- Can adapt to future climate change scenarios and integrate with other models.*

The software used to accomplish these goals can be selected at the proposer's discretion. Please include in your proposal which platform is recommended and an explanation of how it supports the long-term resilience and adaptability goals.

28. Are designed front and back cover as well as the Table of Contents page (3 pages total) excluded from the 20-page limit?

Front and back covers as well as the Table of Contents page are excluded from the 20-page limit.

29. Are all referenced datasets (e.g., LGU stormwater infrastructure, GIS, LiDAR, floodplain, XP-SWMM, PC-SWMM models) readily available, or are there known gaps?

All referenced datasets are readily available. Within Task 1, the selected consultant will also meet with MS4 community staff to acquire H&H models updated according to the years shown below:

- *City of Rosemount – 2018*
- *City of Apple Valley – 2018*
- *City of Hastings – 2018*
- *Elko New Market – 2013*
- *City of Lakeville – 2018*
- *City of Farmington – 2018*
- *City of Empire – 2017*

30. What methodology or metrics does VRWJPO prefer for cost-benefit analysis (e.g., lifecycle costs, pollutant reduction per dollar, flood volume reduction, triple bottom line, etc.)?

When developing the proposal, VRWJPO staff envisioned defining this with assistance from the consultant. Several options come to mind, including, but not limited to:

- *High public cost-benefit relating to relieving flooding impacts on highly frequented roads*
- *High public-cost benefit relating to relieving flooding impacts on other public infrastructure/facilities*
- *High public cost-benefit relating to families displaced due to flooding*
- *High cost-benefit with projects that address items above while also having pollutant removals*

The proposer should use their discretion in defining what the most useful cost-benefit analysis may look like, which can be refined through the study development.

31. What is the expected level of engagement with VRWJPO, LGUs, and other stakeholders throughout the project? Will VRWJPO coordinate stakeholder meetings, or is the consultant responsible for scheduling and facilitation?

The selected consultant will be responsible for agenda creation, note taking and facilitation. The VRWJPO can assist with scheduling.

32. Is there a budget range or cap for the project, or should the consultant propose a budget based on the scope?

The consultant should propose a budget based on the scope.

33. Is there an opportunity for an interview or presentation as part of the selection process?

It would be useful for staff to receive a presentation from prospective consultants; however, with proposals due November 27 and the MPCA grant application due December 11, there will not be adequate time to interview prospective consultants.

34. The RFP requests that the model updates use Atlas 15 precipitation data which is scheduled to be released in 2026. If Atlas 15 data is not available by the project start date in May 2026 will the project start date be delayed?

Budget used to fund the study must be expended by June 2027. Atlas 15 Volume 1 is scheduled to be released in late 2025, and the selected consultant is scheduled to complete Tasks 1 and 2 (Data Compilation and Evaluation of Existing Watershed Conditions) by September 16, 2026. Atlas 15 Volume 2 data is scheduled to be released in 2026, and Task 3 is scheduled to take place late in 2026, allowing time for the Volume 2 release. If for some reason the Volume 2 release is delayed, Tasks 3-6 will be modified to exclude future projections, and invoicing for future projection tasks will not take place.

35. Under Task 2 the RFP states, “Current hydrologic and hydraulic model outcomes relating to drainage and flooding impacts to VRWJPO stormwater infrastructure and water resources will be identified, incorporating newer stormwater assets since models were previously run.” Will incorporation of newer stormwater assets be limited to those which are included in spatial datasets collected in Task 1, or will the consultant be responsible for updates based on as-built data from individual cities?

The Task 2 model data sets will be developed from the data collected during Task 1. The consultant will not be responsible for updates based on as-built data.

36. What are the spatial extents of the 2009 and 2015 XP-SWMM models and the 2020 PC SWMM model which are being provided by the VRWJPO? Do they cover the entire watershed or are there areas that are not covered by these two models?

The 2009 model encompasses the entire VRWJPO political boundary, with the exception of the City of Rosemount. The 2015 model updated the cities of Rosemount, Farmington, and Lakeville. The 2020 model covered eastern portions of the VRWJPO, and some acreage within the Cannon River Watershed (focus was in more rural than urban locations, but included the City of Hastings).

In addition, to the above datasets, the selected consultant will be provided city H&H models, that include more recent updates undertaken by the respective city (not partnering with the VRWJPO). The below cities have provided dates for which additional H&H model updates took place:

- *City of Rosemount – 2018*
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- *City of Lakeville – 2018*
- *City of Farmington – 2018*
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37. The RFP makes multiple references to providing results for “varying precipitation frequencies.” Can the VRWJPO provide a specific list of storms that it wishes to analyze?

The VRWJPO requests that the selected consultant perform analyses for five (5) distinct precipitation frequency events representing a range of return periods using the Atlas 15 Volume 1 and Volume 2 precipitation data. The consultant shall identify and justify the selected storm frequencies and corresponding durations based on professional expertise in stormwater modeling, hydrology, and hydraulics, and in accordance with VRWJPO Standards. Selected storm frequencies and durations should best model evolving climate conditions that support the development/identification of potential BMP’s that are resilient to both current and future climate conditions.

38. In Task 3, should modeling be done considering future land use with or without future BMPs?

No. Future BMP’s will be identified in Task 4 using the data from Tasks 2 and 3. Future land use will not be considered.

39. Can the VRWJPO provide a list of all available **hydrologic and hydraulic models**, including the date of the most recent update, the number of nodes in each model, and the consulting firm currently maintaining or working with each tool? Additionally, can the VRWJPO also provide a coverage map or the GIS subwatershed boundary files associated with each model?

The 2009 model encompasses the entire VRWJPO political boundary, with the exception of the City of Rosemount. The 2015 model updated the cities of Rosemount, Farmington, and Lakeville. The 2020 model covered eastern portions of the VRWJPO, and some acreage within the Cannon River Watershed (focus was in more rural than urban locations, but included the City of Hastings). The reports relating to the previously completed models can be accessed by clicking the links below.

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[2015 VRWJPO XP-SWMM Model Update: City of Farmington](#)

Linked: [2020 Dakota County Rural SWMM Study](#)

The VRWJPO currently does not allocate funds to consulting firms to maintain the models. Cities are tasked with updating models, which generally takes place aligning with Comp Plan updates. The below cities have provided dates for which additional H&H model updates took place:

- *City of Rosemount – 2018*
- *City of Apple Valley – 2018*

- City of Hastings – 2018
- Elko New Market – 2013
- City of Lakeville – 2018
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- City of Empire - 2017

40. It is our understanding that the Climate Resiliency Plan includes **model updates** to account for recent development. Can you tell us a sense of how many development plans/projects need to be incorporated into the existing models?

To gain a sense of the development that has taken place between the 2009, 2015, 2020 and additional city updated models, please navigate to [Dakota County GIS](#), navigate to “Imagery/Basemap Gallery,” and assess according to each city to be included in the project. Note: all MS4 communities maintain GIS stormwater infrastructure mapping; however, that data is not publicly available. Said data will be shared with selected consultant for the purposes of the project. City updated H&H models will also be shared as mentioned above.

41. Can the VRWJPO provide a list of all available **water quality** models, the model type, and the date of the most recent update and the consulting firm currently maintaining or working with each tool?

The VRWJPO lacks an integrated water quality modeling framework. Water quality outputs for multiple subwatersheds and geomorphic assessments were synthesized using a range of specialized software applications. When developing the RFP, the VRWJPO envisioned that water quality modeling would take place using MIDS. If a consultant has other software in mind, they are free to propose utilizing it.

42. Can you clarify the **primary driver for the siting of 30 BMPs**. Is the goal to site 30 BMPs that cost-effectively reduce pollutant loads and then quantify the flood reduction benefits, or should they be sited to maximize flood reduction and then articulate the water quality benefits?

The primary purpose of the project is to provide MS4 regulated city flood resiliency; however, it is understood that projects may have additional benefits. Several options to rank priority can be explored, including, but not limited to:

- *High public cost-benefit relating to relieving flooding impacts on highly frequented roads*
- *High public-cost benefit relating to relieving flooding impacts on other public infrastructure/facilities*
- *High public cost-benefit relating to families displaced due to flooding*
- *High cost-benefit with projects that address items above while also having pollutant removals*

The proposer should use their discretion in defining what the most useful cost-benefit analysis may look like, which can be tweaked through the life of the project.

43. Can the VRWJPO elaborate on its goals for exploring the feasibility of **stormwater pond smart technology**? The Watershed Management Plan identifies this strategy (automated pumping in anticipation of runoff events) as a low priority among climate resilience topics. How in-depth an analysis is expected for this management strategy, and are there specific locations or member communities where its application is being considered?

Although stormwater pond smart technology is identified as a lower priority in the Watershed Management Plan (WMP), it remains a high priority for the City of Rosemount due to the lack of natural outlets from its stormwater basins. The City is currently evaluating the design and implementation of a pumping and gravity-fed conveyance system to manage 100-year overflow events from its landlocked basins.

This study will explore opportunities to integrate smart pond technologies that can enhance the proposed system's hydraulic performance, operational reliability, and adaptive management capabilities under varying hydrologic conditions. Key considerations may include adaptive outlet controls, remote monitoring systems, automated valves or gates, real-time water level and rainfall sensors, integration with watershed-scale forecasting and modeling tools, and other components such as pumps with variable frequency drives (VFDs) and pond float sensors. Collectively, these systems could enable active and adaptive management of pond water levels with minimal manual intervention.

In assessing potential "smart pond" applications, the City envisions leveraging these technologies such that they can easily be integrated with its existing SCADA system—the same platform currently used to operate the City's wells, towers, and lift stations. Many of these technologies could be designed to interface with SCADA, enabling automated, data-driven adjustments based on near real-time conditions and forecasts of rainfall or snowmelt, similar to river flood prediction models.

44. Can the VRWJPO provide more context for the long lead time before project initiation? Is this related to the anticipated release of Atlas 15 data, grant funding timelines, or other factors?

The study will utilize funding from the MPCA's Climate Resiliency Planning Grant (pending award), as well as VRWJPO budget (substantially higher than 10% MPCA grant match requirement). In accordance with the grant requirements, billing towards the grant cannot take place prior to grant execution, which is anticipated to be complete in May, 2026. This time also aligns with Atlas 15 release dates.

45. Can the VRWJPO confirm the total **budget** for this initiative? The Watershed Management Plan identifies an amount for the Climate Resiliency Plan—are member communities contributing additional funds, particularly for model updates? Is the Climate Resiliency Plan and the Changing Climate and Stormwater Resiliency Study one and the same?

The VRWJPO is not willing to share a budget amount. As previously mentioned, the VRWJPO has budgeted what staff believe to be substantially more than the 10% match required for the MPCA grant. The Climate Resiliency Plan and the Changing Climate and Stormwater Resiliency Study is one and the same.

46. Does the VRWJPO consider it a **conflict of interest** if a consultant is currently working on design projects for any of its member communities?

The VRWJPO does not consider it a conflict of interest.