



Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

John Jaschke | Executive Director
Andrea Fish | Assistant Director

Our Vision and Mission

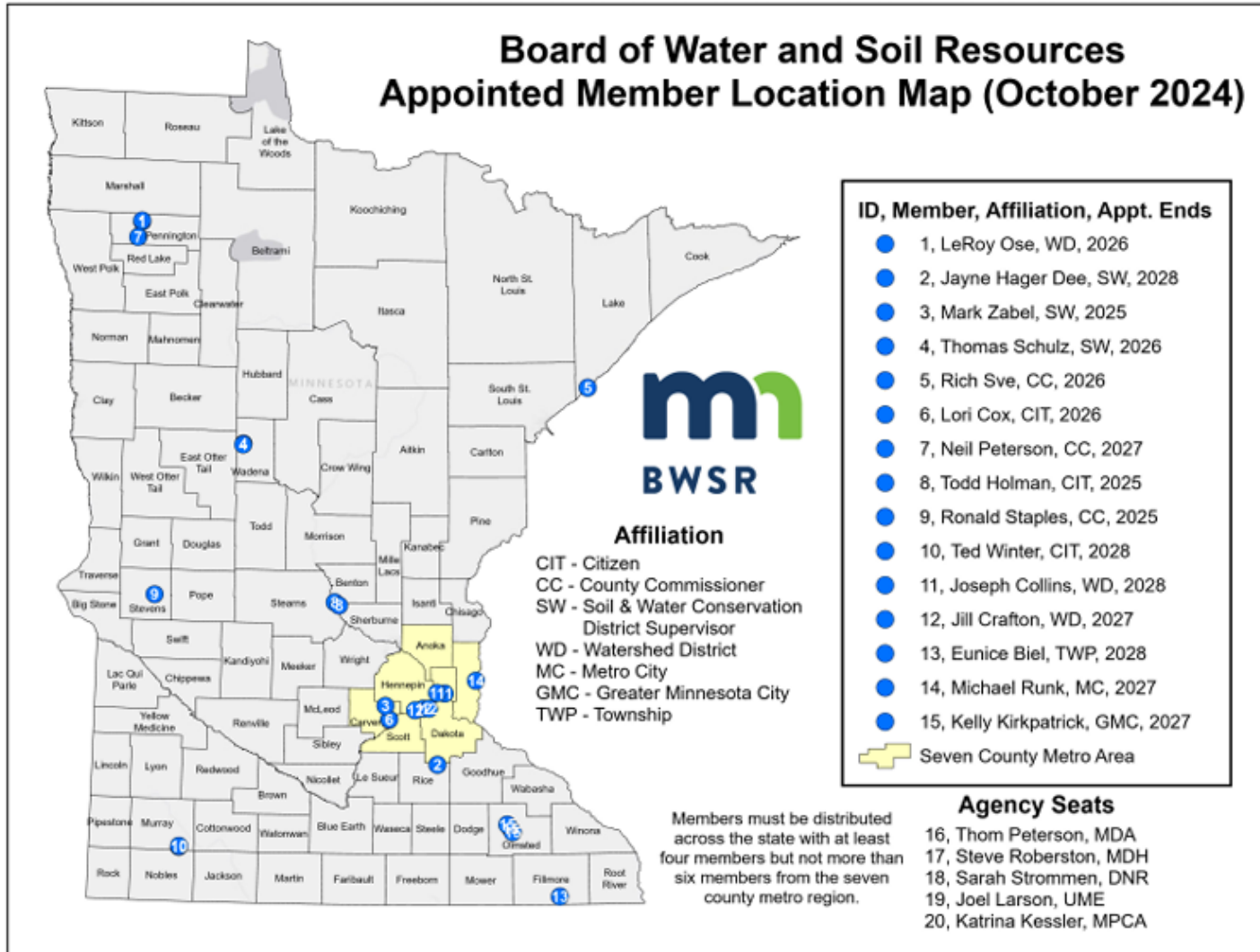
Vision:

All of Minnesota benefits from lands and waters that are ecologically and economically sustainable.

Mission:

Work with partners to improve and protect Minnesota's land and water resources.

BWSR Structure



- Governor-Appointed 20-member board: Local Govts, Citizens, Agencies
- 150 staff
- Offices in Bemidji, Brainerd, Duluth, Detroit Lakes, Mankato, Marshall, Rochester, St. Paul, and Waite Park

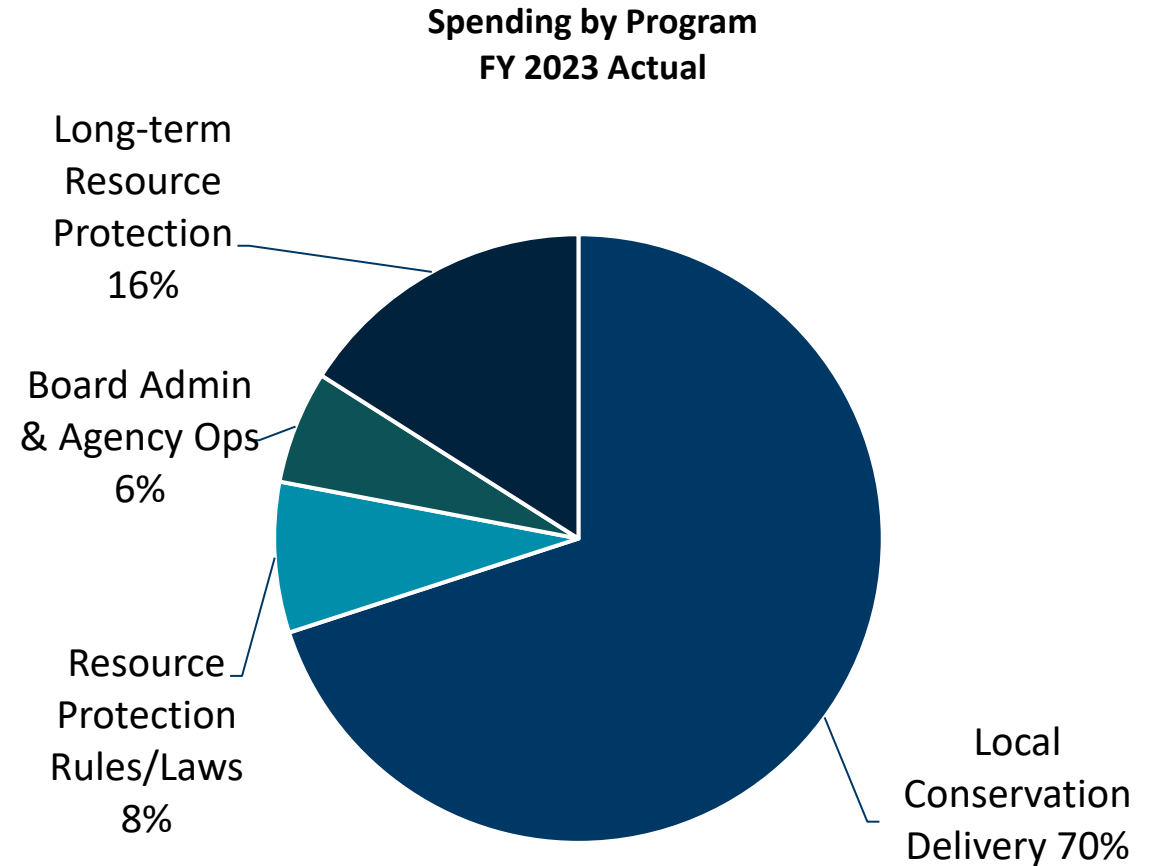
Who We Work With

- **88** Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- **45** Watershed Districts
- **87** Counties
- Joint Powers Organizations
- State and Federal agencies
- Agricultural and Environmental NGOs
- Tribal Governments

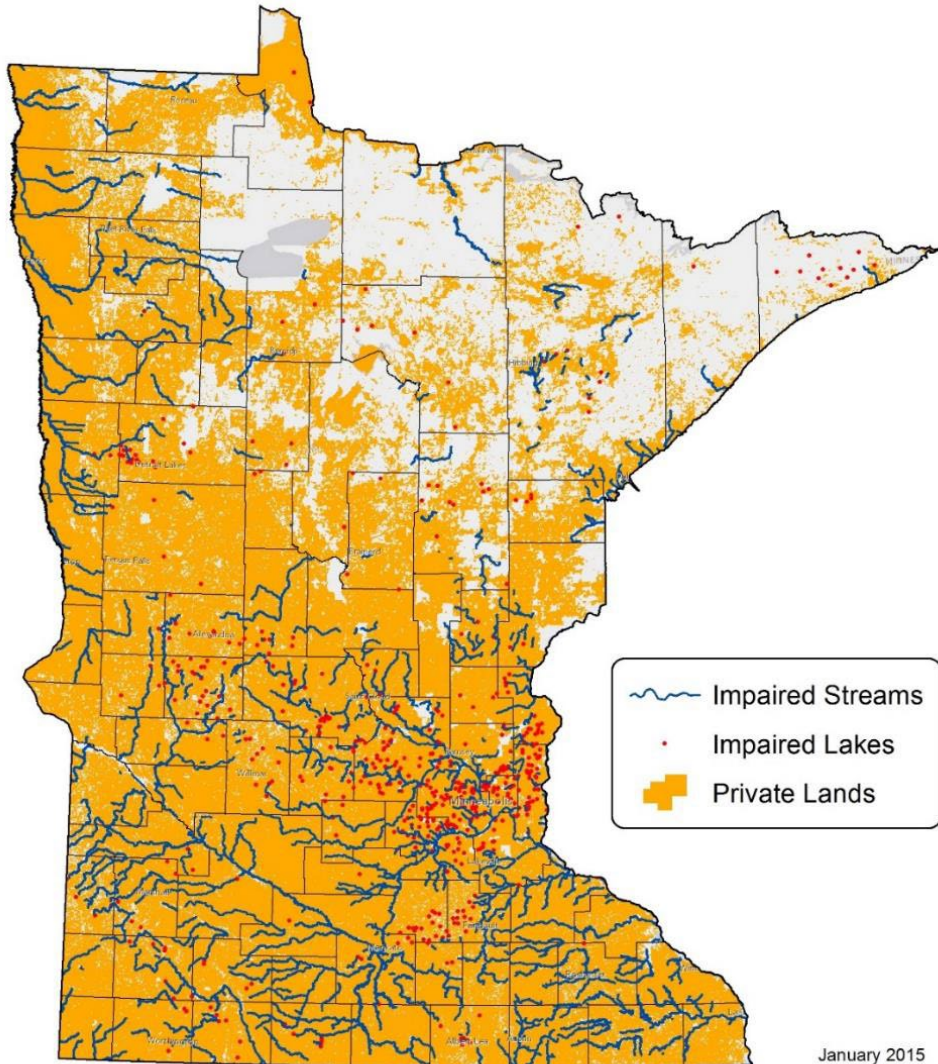
**Focus on Minnesota's private lands –
76% of the state**



- **Local delivery system**
(Counties, Cities, SWCDs, Watershed Districts/WMOs, NGOs, Tribal Govts)
- **On-the-ground conservation results**



Partnership with Private Landowners



January 2015

- 76% of Minnesota's lands are privately-held
- Many of our programs directly impact privately held land of all sizes on farms, utility corridors, and residential areas.

Statutory Authorities

- 12A – [Natural Disaster, State Assistance](#)
- 103A – [Water Policy and Information](#)
- 103B – [Water Planning and Project Implementation](#)
- 103C – [Soil and Water Conservation Districts](#)
- 103D – [Watershed Districts](#)
- 103E – [Drainage](#)
- 103F – [Protection of Water Resources](#)
- 103G – [Waters of the State](#)
- 103H – [Groundwater Protection](#)
- 114D – [Clean Water Legacy Act](#)

Local Government Roads Wetland Replacement Program

MN Statutes 103G.222



- Larger, higher-quality wetland mitigation
- More cost-efficient
- Expedited permitting



Soil Health Practices Program

M.S. 103F.06

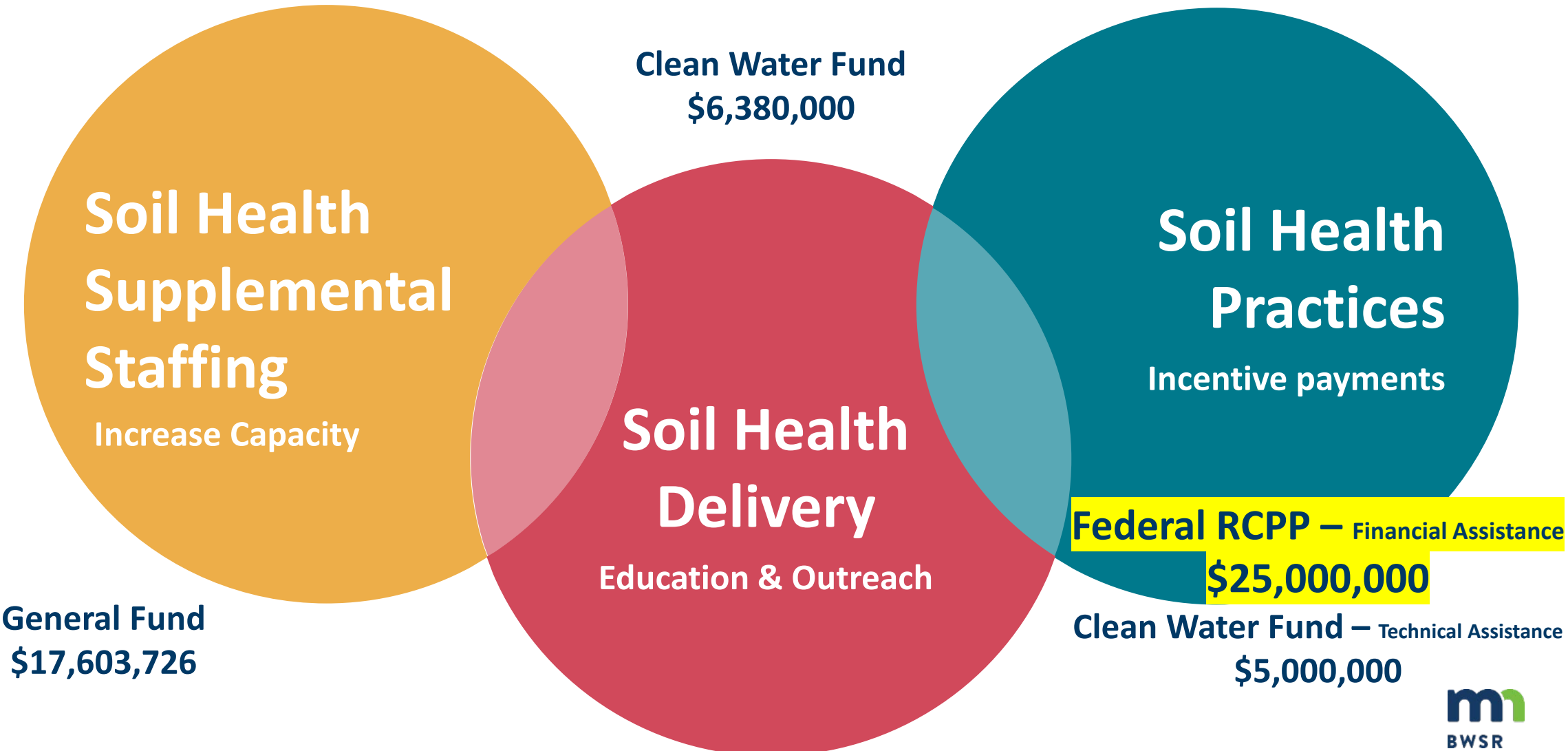


- Voluntary and locally-led
- Practices on sensitive lands to slow water and address surface and groundwater quality.
- Provides climate resiliency and carbon sequestration.

Examples - Soil Health Practices



Soil Health Funding Update



Increasing climate resiliency

Goals

- Increase water storage capacity
- Control water rates
- Protect infrastructure



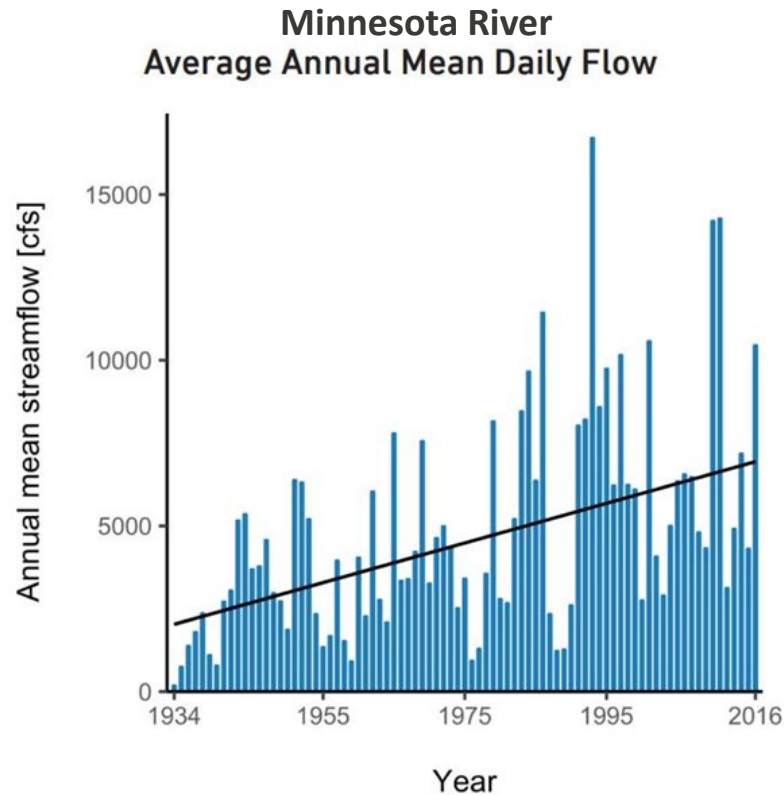
New Federal funding:
\$21 million in NRCS RCPP
funds awarded in
October 2024

16 grants awarded so far
totaling \$5.5 million



Accelerated Water Storage Program

- Adapt to changing climate
- Acquire, design, and construct projects to control water volume and rate
- Voluntary and locally-led



BWSR Living Landscapes Initiatives



- Encourage individual actions that increase carbon storage and establish landscapes to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Lawns to Legumes Habitat Friendly Utilities Program Habitat Enhancement Landscape Program

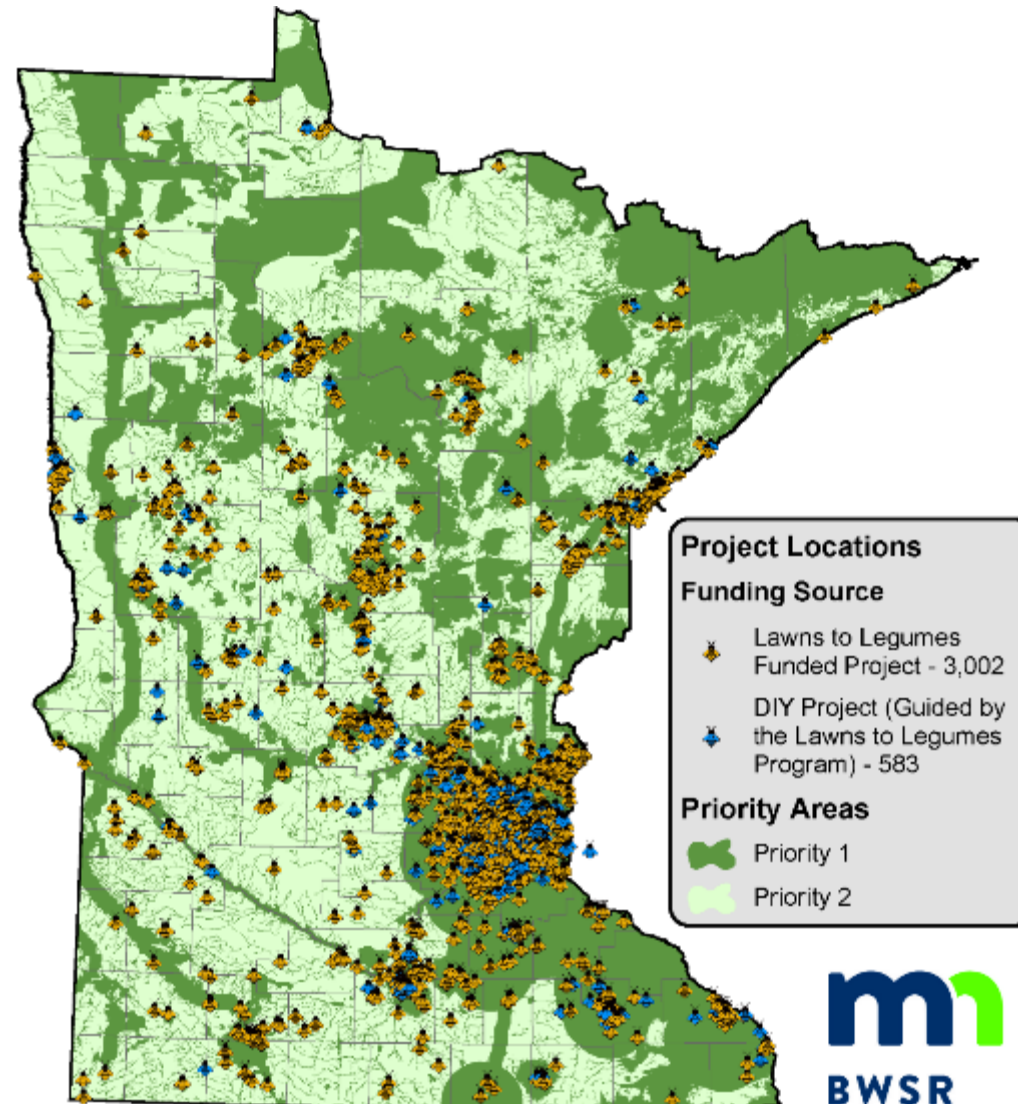
Lawns to Legumes

M.S. 103B.104

Reimburses residents \$400 for creating new pollinator habitat in their yards

More than 5,000 projects installed since 2019

Projects in all 87 Minnesota counties



Habitat Enhancement Landscape Program (HELP)

M.S. 103B.106

Provides financial and technical assistance to establish and enhance habitat on existing conservation lands, such as easements

\$3.4 million awarded to 12 organizations and governments last year



BWSR Pollinator Habitat Funding: Habitat Friendly Utilities

M.S. 103B.105

Provides financial and technical assistance to establish habitat within solar, wind, pipeline and electrical transmission corridors

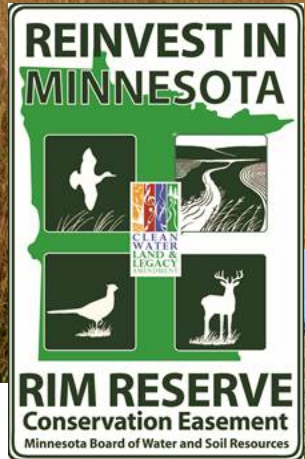


Private Lands Conservation Easements

M.S. 103F.515

Climate Action via the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program

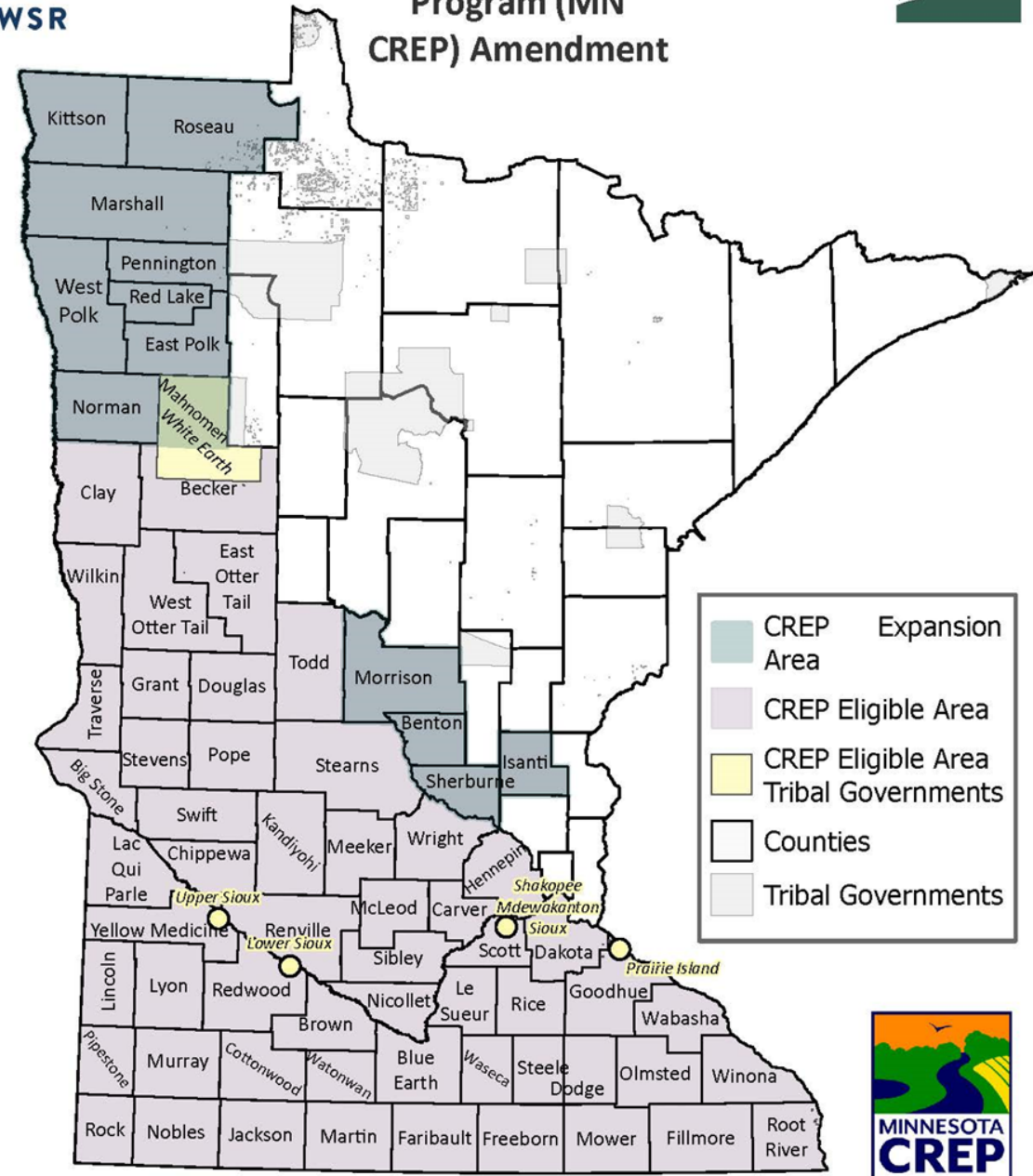
- Grassland/Working Land Restorations
- Peatland Restorations
- Mitigation and Resiliency for Existing State Easements



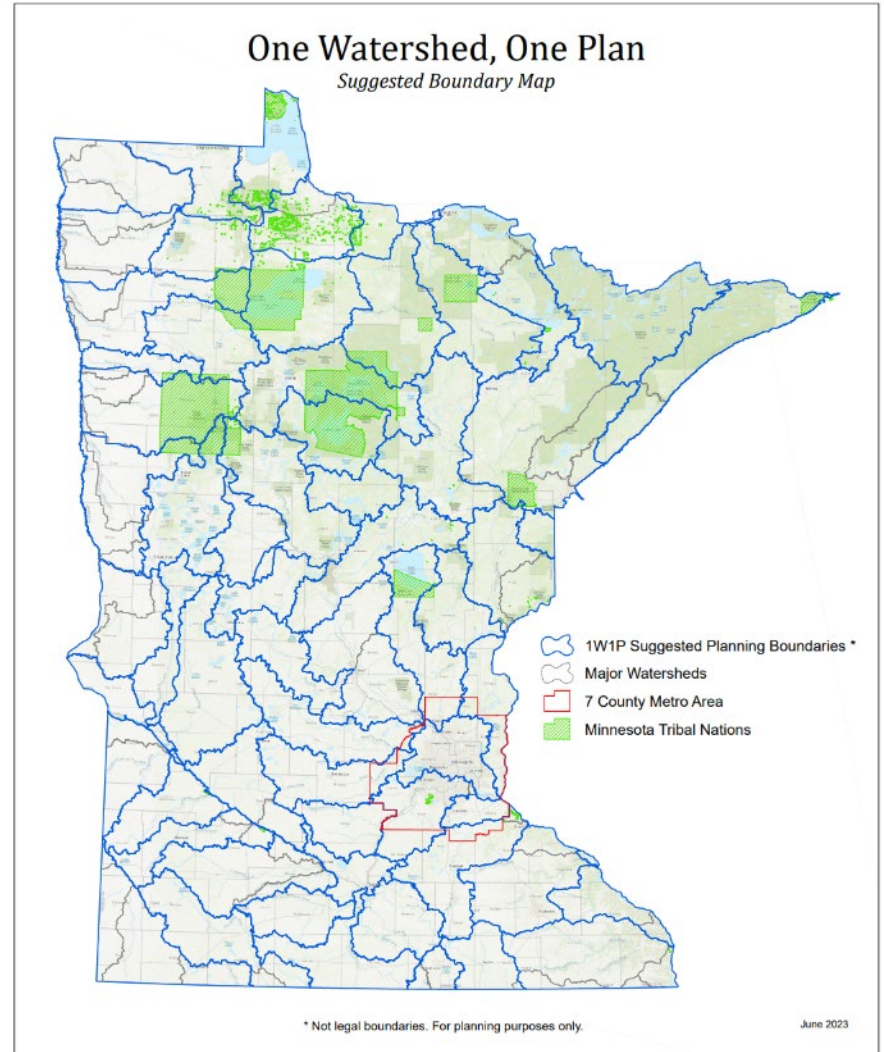
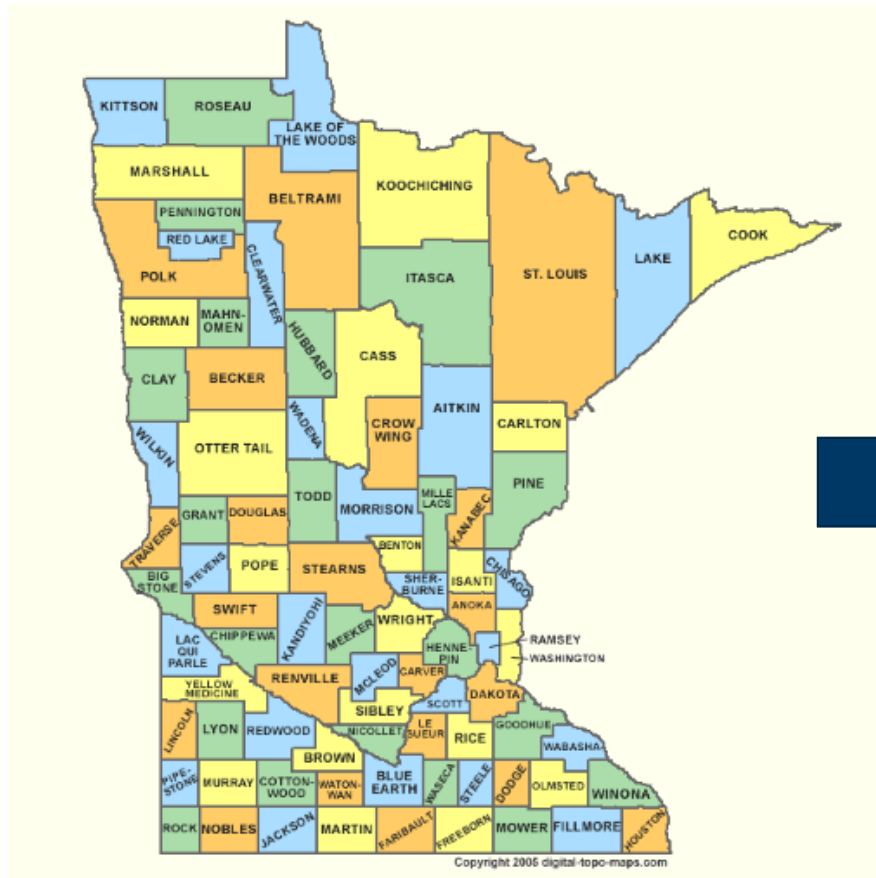
MN CREP

Agreement amended/extended
January 2025

- adds 12 new counties
- increases acreage cap from 60,000 to 75,000
- Adds private well protection practices
- Fed:State funding leverage 70:30



MN's Watershed Management Transformation

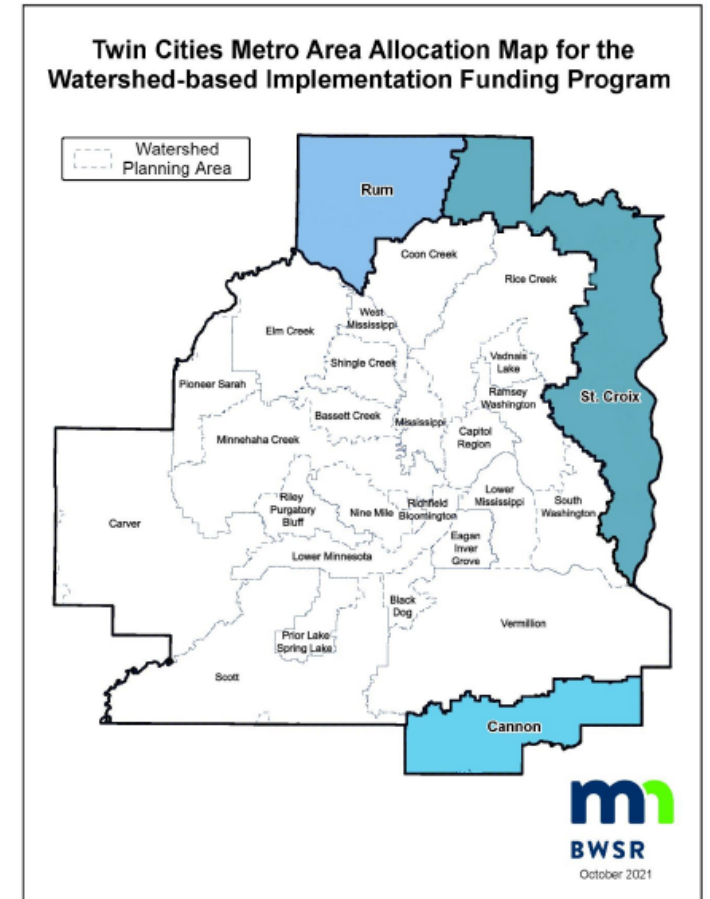
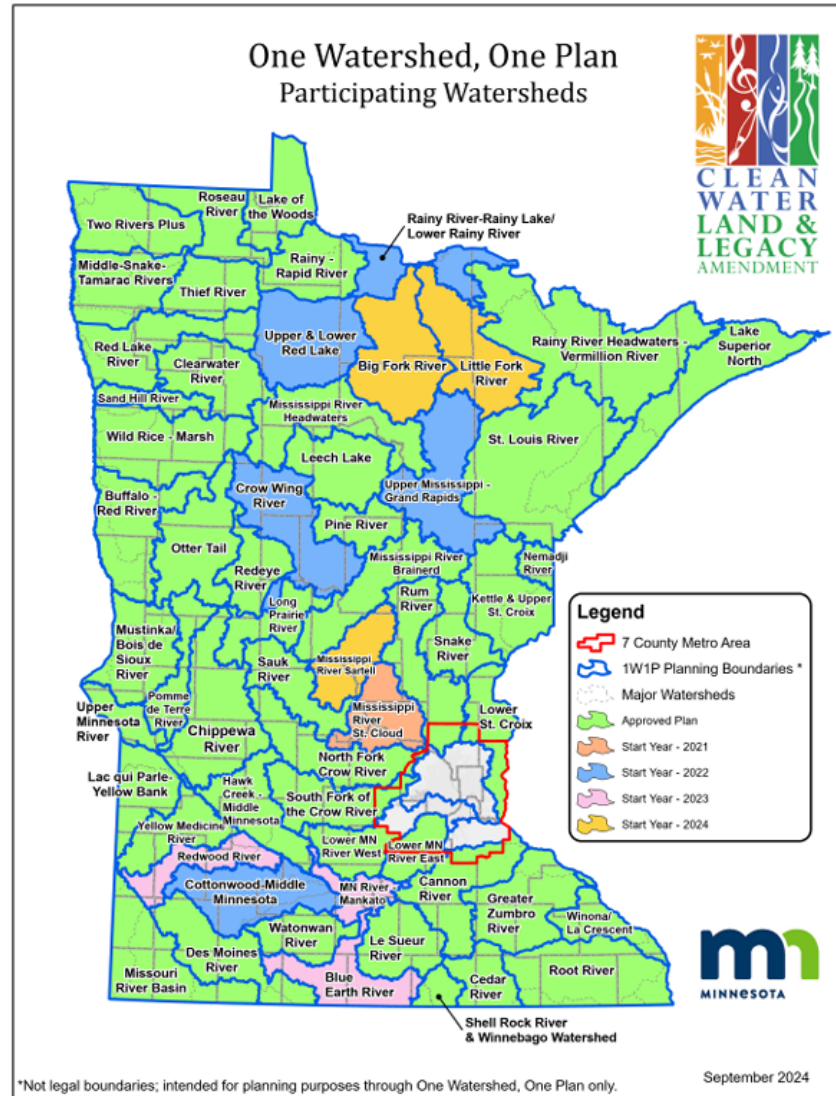


Watershed-Based Approach to Resource Management



All 60 planning areas now participating in One Watershed, One Plan

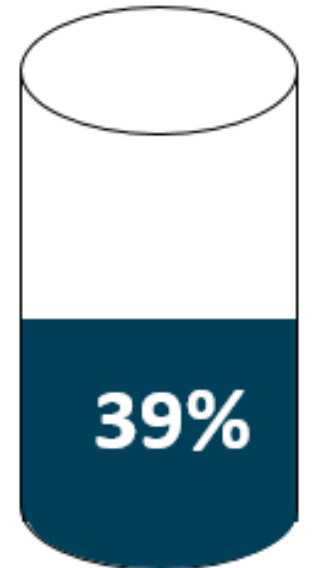
- 48 plans approved
- 6 plans in review
- 6 plans in development



Lake McCarron Protection: Upper Villa Park Volume Reduction and Stormwater Reuse



**Projected Pollution
Reduction:
Phosphorus (45 lbs/yr)**



Progress
towards goal



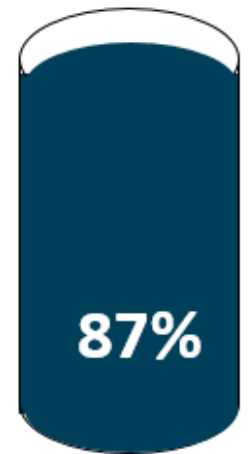
Grand Marais Outlet Project and Cut Channel Stabilization

“The amendment was the catalyst we needed to move forward. This is our legacy.”



637 tons of sediment annually kept from entering the Red River.

100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
10%
0%



Progress towards goal



Bois de Sioux WD Mustinka River rehabilitation



Outcome: Multipurpose project that will provide flood damage reduction, improved water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat

Remainder will add more than 6 river miles, 34 acres of wetland habitat and establish 226 acres of upland buffers



Clearing up Serpent Lake



Serpent Lake hasn't been this clear since 1991.

With two of three phosphorus-reducing projects complete and runoff-regulating ordinances adopted, the lake is poised for a rebound.

Policy - Drainage Work Group

The Drainage Work Group's purpose revolves around two overarching points:

- 1) Foster science-based mutual understanding about drainage topics and issues; and
- 2) Develop consensus recommendations for drainage system management and related water management, including recommendations for updating Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103E Drainage and related provisions.

2025 Consensus Recommendation:

- Repeal of duplicative reporting requirement - 103E.067

John Jaschke

Executive Director

john.jaschke@state.mn.us

612-202-3815

Andrea Fish

Assistant Director

andrea.fish@state.mn.us

612-616-5112

Michael Nelson

Legislative Coordinator

michael.nelson@state.mn.us

651-539-2598



Thank you

