

STEWARDSHIP OF WATER RESOURCES TO
PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR COMMUNITIES

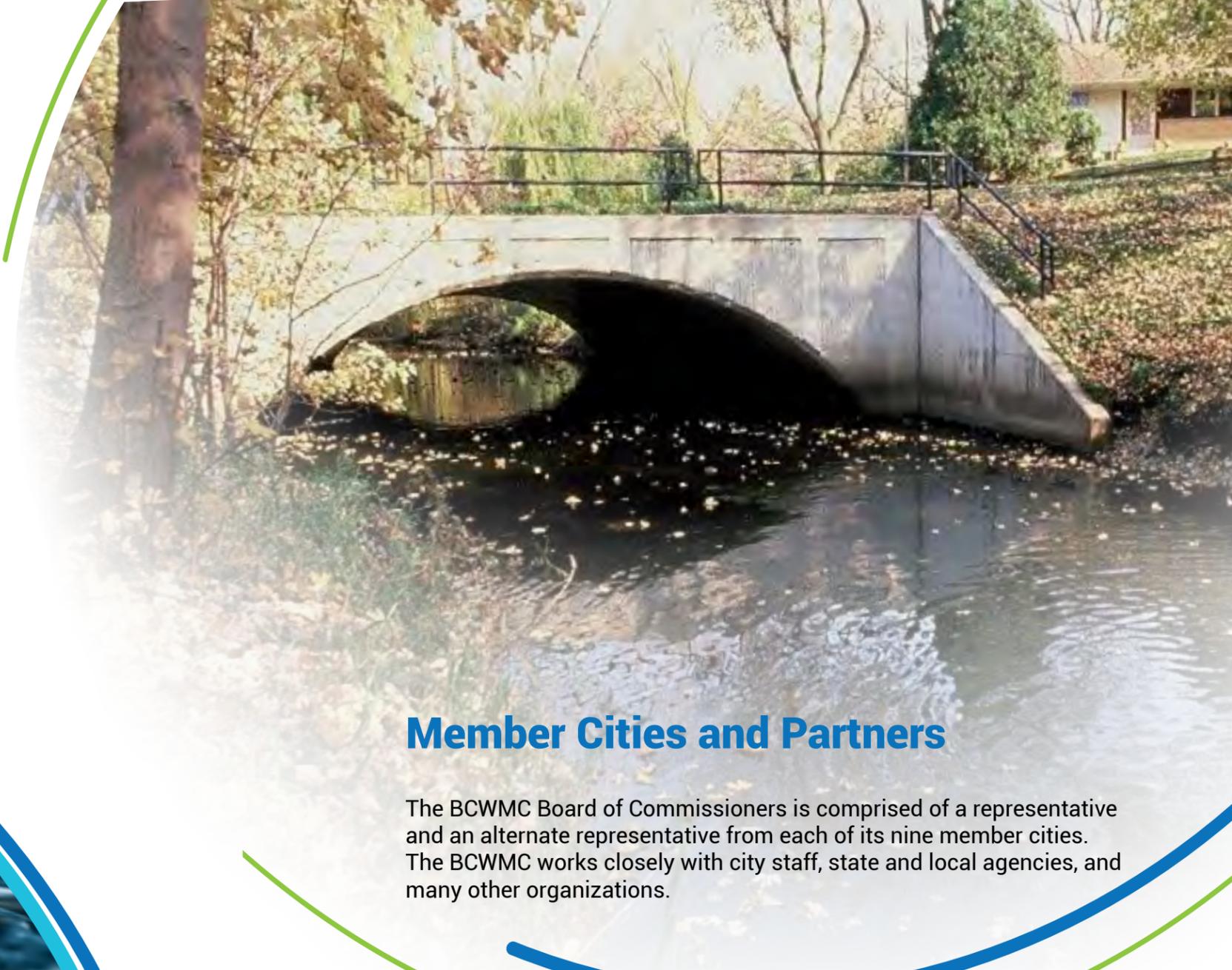


Overview of

Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

(BCWMC)

The BCWMC is a collaborative local unit of government, made up of nine member cities, that works to reduce flooding and protect and improve lakes, streams, wetlands, and ponds within its borders.



Member Cities and Partners

The BCWMC Board of Commissioners is comprised of a representative and an alternate representative from each of its nine member cities. The BCWMC works closely with city staff, state and local agencies, and many other organizations.

ensuring **DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**
ADHERE TO STANDARDS and
REQUIREMENTS

implementing **FLOOD**
ABATEMENT projects



Our Work



performing **WATER**
MONITORING
and
MODELING

providing
EDUCATION



implementing
WATER QUALITY
IMPROVEMENT projects



preparing
STUDIES and
PLANS

CITIES

- Crystal
- Golden Valley
- Medicine Lake
- Minneapolis
- Minnetonka
- New Hope
- Plymouth
- Robbinsdale
- St. Louis Park

AGENCIES & PARTNERS

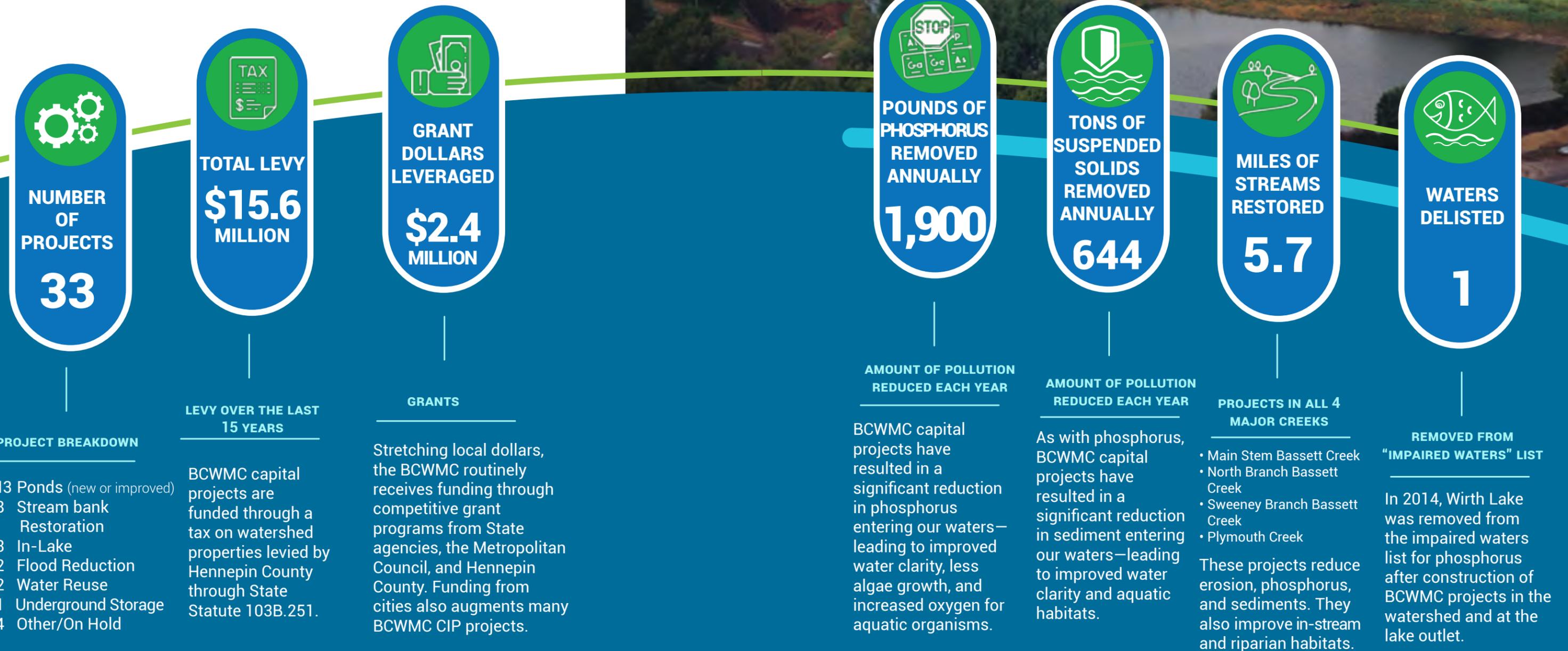
- Hennepin County
- Metropolitan Council
- MN Board of Water and Soil Resources
- MN Department of Natural Resources
- MN Pollution Control Agency
- Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
- Three Rivers Park District
- West Metro Water Alliance
- Westwood Hills Nature Center
- Metro Blooms
- Local Lake Groups and Organizations

50 Years of Service and Impact

The Bassett Creek Flood Control Project was the most significant accomplishment of the BCWMC and was also the reason for the organization's inception (read more about the project on pages 6-9). But, the BCWMC didn't stop there. Since 2004, the BCWMC has studied, designed, and constructed 33 water quality and flood control projects through a robust Capital Improvement Program (CIP) with funds levied by Hennepin County on behalf of the Commission. To learn more about our projects, please see the map on pages 8-9 of this booklet or visit bassettcreekwmo.org/projects.



Capital Improvement Program Impact from 2004 – 2019



Timeline

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Creek named after mill owner, Joel Bassett. Flooding already an issue.

1852

BASSETT CREEK COVERED WITH CONCRETE creating 1.5 mile tunnel that carried wastewater and stormwater to the Mississippi River

1913-1923

"BASSETT CREEK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION" FORMED

9 cities developed a joint powers agreement to cooperate in resolving their flooding problems. The first watershed management plan was approved in 1972.

1968-1969

1978

PHASE 1 OF BASSETT CREEK TUNNEL completed

1986

FEDERAL FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT FUNDING APPROPRIATED 10 years after project was approved

1992

NEW TUNNEL COMPLETED by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

1997

CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION AWARDED to Bassett Creek Water Management Partnership

2004

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM began to improve water quality and control flooding

2019

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SUCCESS and preparing for another 50!



Joel Bean Bassett (1817-1912)
picture courtesy of Bassett Family Association



COMMISSION HISTORY:

Bassett Creek Flood Control



EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT-1950s

Flooding problems coincided with European settlement and since there was no sanitary sewer, the lower end of the creek near Minneapolis was contaminated with waste. In an attempt to mitigate this health problem, between 1913 and 1923 the creek was covered with concrete creating 1.5-mile tunnel that brought the waste water and stormwater from Bassett Creek (from approximately Dupont Ave. N.) under Minneapolis to the Mississippi River.

In the 1950s, nine cities started meeting to discuss the problems relating to Bassett Creek. Minneapolis flooded often and knew that as the suburban communities to the west developed, their problems would get worse. The 1.5-mile tunnel was old and in desperate need of repairs.

FORMATION OF BCWMC

In the 1960s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed the Flood Control Plan for Bassett Creek including dikes, dams and levees. In hopes of developing a more aesthetically pleasing and robust project, in 1968, the nine cities entered a joint powers agreement to cooperate in a joint effort of planning to resolve their mutual flooding problems. This joint-powers organization was named the "Bassett Creek Flood Control Commission." Their first watershed management plan was approved in 1972 and recognized the need for major construction projects.

NEW TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION

In 1976, the U.S. Congress approved a Water Resources Development Act that included the Bassett Creek Flood Control Project. However, no money was appropriated until 1986 when 13 projects were authorized nationwide, including the Bassett Creek Flood Control Project.

Even without federal funding, construction of the first phase of a new tunnel was completed in 1978 by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. This "Second Street Tunnel" section is one mile long, with a 12-foot arch, and was constructed in a sandstone layer up to 80 feet below the street. It was designed to drain Interstates 394 and 94 and parts of the City of Minneapolis and the Bassett Creek watershed.

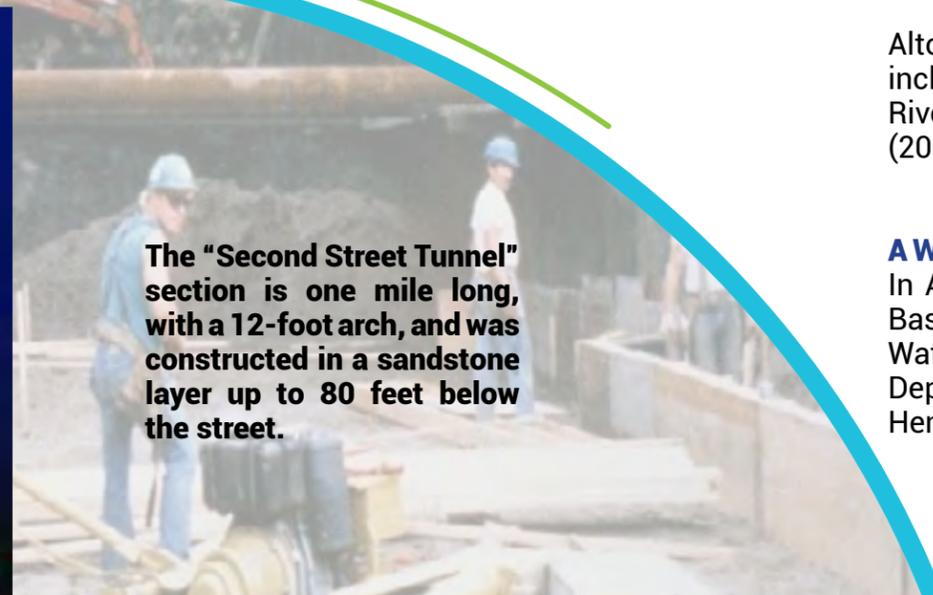
In 1987, another piece of the project was constructed near Theodore Wirth Park and Highway 55. Days later, the July 23, 1987 super storm hit the Twin Cities and dumped 10 inches of rain in 6 hours—the heaviest rainfall ever officially recorded in the Twin Cities. It is estimated that this new flood control structure paid for itself more than five times over with the first storm!

The final pieces of the new tunnel were completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1992. The "Third Avenue Tunnel" section is 0.3 miles long with a 13-foot arch and includes a 35-foot drop structure, creating an underground waterfall. The "Double Box Culvert" runs from the tunnel entrance (between Van White Memorial Blvd. and Colfax Ave.) underground 1.1 miles to the Third Avenue Tunnel and includes two culverts measuring 11 by 11 feet each.

Altogether, the new Bassett Creek tunnel runs 2.4 miles under the heart of Minneapolis, including under Target Field and the Warehouse District. It empties into the Mississippi River near the Stone Arch Bridge. The tunnel was the centerpiece of a larger \$80 million (2019 dollars) Flood Control Project that controls flooding and removes pollutants.

AWARD-WINNING PARTNERSHIP

In April of 1997, a Certificate of Commendation was awarded by the Governor to the Bassett Creek Water Management Partnership. Partners included the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Hennepin County, and the nine member cities in the watershed.



The "Second Street Tunnel" section is one mile long, with a 12-foot arch, and was constructed in a sandstone layer up to 80 feet below the street.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) & STREAM RESTORATION PROJECTS

For more information, please visit bassettcreekwmo.org



- BCWMC CIP Projects 2004 – 2019
- BCWMC Stream Restoration Projects 2004 – 2019

These dividing lines show subwatersheds within the watershed

THE GOOD NEWS AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

The BCWMC and its partners have made significant progress in the last 50 years to reduce flooding and improve water quality. In fact, creek monitoring shows pollutants have *decreased* significantly! Unfortunately, new challenges have emerged and we need active citizen participation to help solve them. Practice the tips below or become a volunteer to collect data on lakes, streams or wetlands; become an aquatic invasive species detector; or even take classes to be a Master WaterSteward. Find out more at bassettcreekwmo.org



SALT/CHLORIDES

Chlorides from winter deicers are on the rise in our lakes and creeks. There is no practical way to remove chloride once it's in the water—and it only takes one teaspoon of salt to pollute five gallons of water!



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS)

AIS continue to spread and degrade our lakes. Stopping the spread of organisms, like zebra mussels and starry stonewort, takes effort from every lake user.



STORMWATER RUNOFF

Since modern streets are connected to our waters by storm drains, snowmelt and stormwater runoff transport pollutants like salt, leaves, grass clippings, and fertilizers right into our waterbodies.

WHAT THE BCWMC IS DOING ...

- ✓ hosting trainings for winter maintenance crews
- ✓ supporting legislation to reduce salt use.
- ✓ implementing a AIS prevention plan
- ✓ working to educate residents and lake users
- ✓ requiring developments and redevelopments to manage runoff
- ✓ constructing capital projects to capture and treat runoff

WHAT WE ALL NEED TO DO...

- ✓ SPACE SALT GRANULES 3 INCHES APART
- ✓ SWEEP UP EXCESS SALT
- ✓ CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY EVERY BOAT, EVERY TIME
- ✓ USE ONLY CERTIFIED DOCK INSTALLERS
- ✓ KEEP UP WITH ISSUES AT DNR.STATE.MN.US
- ✓ KEEP STREETS & SIDEWALKS CLEAN
- ✓ VISIT ADOPT-A-DRAIN.ORG TO OFFICIALLY ADOPT "YOUR" STORMDRAIN