



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

MEMO

To: BCWMC Commissioners, Alternate Commissioners, TAC Members
From: BCWMC Plan Steering Committee (PSC)
Date: November 14, 2024

RE: November 20th Watershed Management Plan Development Workshop Agenda and Materials

During the regular BCWMC meeting on November 20th, we'll hold the third and final Commission workshop to review PSC-recommended issue statements and goals for the 2025 Watershed Management Plan (plan). This workshop includes review and discussion of issues/goals in two categories: education and organizational effectiveness. Future workshops will focus on potential tools and strategies for addressing issues and progressing toward goals.

The issue statements and goals provide the basis for developing the rest of the plan - where the BCWMC will prioritize its work, the actions and policies it will set in place, and the level of time, effort, and funding that will go into implementation of projects and programs.

Please review the following information ahead of the workshop:

- Commission-approved prioritized list of issues across four categories (Attachment A).
- Commission-approved issue statements, desired future conditions, and 10-year goals for fourteen goals in the [Waterbody and Watershed Quality](#) category and [Climate Resiliency and Flooding](#) category.
- NEW: PSC-recommended issue statements, desired future conditions, and 10-year goals for the Education and Engagement category (Attachment B).
- NEW: PSC-recommended issue statements, desired future conditions, and 10-year goals for the Organizational Effectiveness category (Attachment C).

All 2025 Watershed Planning materials can be found at: <https://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/document/2025-plan-update>.

Workshop Outline (approximately 75 minutes)

1. Introduction and background information
2. Small group discussions: review and discuss draft issue statements, desired future conditions, and 10-year goals for issues in Education and Engagement category (Attachment B) and all issues in Organizational Effectiveness category (Attachment C)
 - A. Review and discuss sections in orange:
 - i. Issue Statement: Brief statement defining the problem and why it should be addressed. (Additional context about the issue will be included in the narrative of the plan.)
 - ii. Desired Future Condition: This is the overarching, long-range goal related to the issue but not a goal that can likely be reached within the 10-year life of the plan.
 - iii. 10-year Goal: This is a measurable outcome that should be attainable within the life of the plan for distinct waterbodies, resources, or watersheds.
 - B. Some things to keep in mind:
 - i. A more detailed education and engagement plan will be included as an appendix in the plan. The PSC will review the draft plan at their meeting in December. The DRAFT plan can be viewed [here](#) if desired.
 - C. Consider these questions about the 10-year goals as you review and discuss:
 - i. Which goals are you most excited to get working on?
 - ii. Are there any goals that make you nervous or give you pause?
 - iii. What are you still curious about? Where do you need more information?
 - iv. Are there any local issues or goals missing?
 - v. If the goals are achieved, will they result in noticeable improvements for ecosystems and communities?
 - vi. Are there any goals that you believe are likely unachievable?
 - D. Columns titled “strategy, action, or task” won’t be discussed at this workshop - they include a non-exhaustive list of potential implementation activities that will be considered when the implementation section of the plan is developed. The PSC keeps a list of these possible activities as a placeholder for future discussions.
3. Whole group discussion: report out highlights, questions, key critiques

Attachment A

Issue Category	Item ID	Issue Title and Description	Priority Level
Waterbody & Watershed Quality	1	Impaired waters – Some lakes and streams within the Bassett Creek watershed do not meet State water quality standards; some are listed as impaired for aquatic life function and recreational use due to pollutants such as nutrients, chloride, bacteria, and other stressors.	High
	2	Chloride loading – High chloride loading from use of winter deicers across the Bassett Creek watershed negatively impacts lakes streams, and groundwater water quality.	High
	3	Streambank and gully erosion – Excessive erosion along streambanks and gullies negatively impacts stream geomorphology, water quality, aquatic habitat, and floodplain function.	Medium
	4	Lakeshore erosion – Erosion along lake shorelines degrades water quality and negatively impacts lake ecology.	Medium
	5	Wetland health and restoration – The function, value and quantity of wetlands within the Bassett Creek watershed have been negatively impacted by development and the changing climate.	Medium
	6	Aquatic invasive species – Aquatic invasive species (AIS) present in the Bassett Creek watershed negatively impact water quality, lake and stream ecology, and are exacerbated by climate trends.	Medium
	7	Ground-/surface water interactions – The uncertainty of groundwater and surface water interactions complicates our ability to protect, restore, and responsibly manage natural resources.	Medium
	8	Degradation of riparian areas – Degraded riparian areas allow excess pollutant loading to water resources, contribute to impairments (water quality and biological), and result in decreased ecological function and habitat.	Low
	9	Degradation of upland areas – Natural areas in uplands may be threatened by development pressure, lack of proper management, and negative impacts from climate change.	Low
	10	Groundwater quality – Groundwater quality impacts public health as a source of drinking water and may be threatened by infiltration of stormwater and associated pollutants.	Low
Flooding and Climate Resiliency	11	Impact of climate change on hydrology, water levels, and flood risk – Extreme fluctuations in precipitation amounts and intensities increase flood risk and prolonged drought cycles that contribute to significant changes to water level and stream flow and may negatively impact the natural and built environment, (e.g. ecology, water quality, public health and safety, economy, and recreation)	High
	12	Bassett Creek Valley flood risk reduction and stormwater management opportunities – Current conditions in the Bassett Creek Valley present significant challenges to sustainable development and resilient, healthy ecosystems and people due to floodplain extents, environmental hazards, and limited space for stormwater management.	High
	13	Groundwater quantity – Groundwater levels may be negatively impacted by overuse, loss of recharge, or extreme changes in precipitation.	Low
Education and Outreach	Newly Proposed	Public Awareness and Action - Ability and interest of watershed residents and stakeholders to be good caretakers of the BCWMC waterbodies and ecosystems may be limited by the lack of knowledge and resources for action.	Medium
	14	Engagement of diverse communities – Efforts are needed to engage and build relationships with communities that have been under-represented in past BCWMC planning, programs, and projects.	Medium
	15	Recreation opportunities – Opportunities to protect or enhance recreational use of, and access to, natural areas in the watershed may be lost without proactive consideration by the BCWMC and its partners in their activities.	Low
Organizational Effectiveness	16	Organizational capacity and staffing – Current BCWMC staff capacity and organizational structure are likely not sufficient to achieve intended goals and effectively execute projects and programs.	High
	17	BCWMC funding mechanisms – Funding sources and funding mechanisms for BCWMC administration and implementation are not adequate to achieve the most efficient, equitable, and robust outcomes.	High
	18	Progress assessment – Evaluation of progress toward achieving 10-year goals is critical to process improvement.	High
	19	Projects and programs implemented through a DEI lens – Additional focus is needed to ensure equity in the delivery of BCWMC projects, programs, and decision making.	Medium
	20	Public ditch management – The Plan must address management of the public ditches within BCWMC jurisdiction (per MN Statutes 103B)	Low
	21	Carbon footprint of BCWMC projects – Carbon released in the construction and ongoing maintenance of BCWMC projects is not currently considered and contributes to climate change	Low

Education and Engagement Category

Public awareness and action – Medium Priority			
Issue Statement: Ability and interest of watershed residents and stakeholders to be good caretakers of the BCWMC waterbodies and ecosystems may be limited by the lack of knowledge and resources for action.			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
Watershed residents and stakeholders understand their relationship with and impact on waterbodies and ecosystems and are good caretakers of these ecosystems through their actions and behaviors.	Increase public participation of in programs of waterbody and ecosystem caretaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate as active member of West Metro Watershed Alliance - Collaborate and coordinate with member cities on creating and delivering education - Support implementation of small-scale BMP cost-share program (could be with some small amount of funding as incentive in conjunction with workshops?) [could be similar to channel maintenance fund where cities are implementing the cost share with residents or others] - Advertise existing grant programs maintained by partners - Utilize CIP projects to educate adjacent communities - Incorporate targeted outreach to watershed residents as part of CIP projects, where applicable - Events: creek clean ups, water ceremonies, trainings/workshops 	
	Increase the number of people who access watershed information and improve accessibility to information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support development and distribution of educational materials through West Metro Watershed Alliance - Maintain the BCWMC website - Provide BCWMC communications in multiple languages - Incorporate targeted outreach to watershed residents as part of CIP projects, where applicable - Update BCWMC website and key documents in compliance with ADA requirements - \$20,000 estimate - Consider ADA accessibility during planning and design of CIP projects. 	
	Support citizen science and volunteer efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue supporting CAMP program including recruiting and coordinating volunteers - Support volunteer activities such as native plantings, invasive species removals, clean ups, etc. 	

EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

PSC Recommendations for November 2024 Workshop

Engagement of diverse communities – Medium Priority

Issue Statement: Efforts are needed to engage and build relationships with communities that have been under-represented in past BCWMC planning, programs, and projects.

Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)
All communities, and especially those historically and currently under-represented, are positively engaged in relevant BCWMC planning, programs, and projects.	Establish and maintain relationships and communication avenues with under-represented communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify diverse, minority, and underrepresented communities and their representative contacts - Develop and implement plans for an engagement, communication, and relationship building
	Seek, consider, and respond to input from all relevant communities as part of the BCWMC’s plans, programs, and projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regularly submit communications to neighborhood newsletters or other publications - Annually attend meetings or events in diverse, minority, or underserved communities - Provide BCWMC communication materials in multiple languages - Cooperate with partners (e.g., Metro Blooms) on implementing projects and programs in environmental justice communities - Partner with cities already doing DEIA -related work.
	Incorporate Dakota place names, history, culture, and Native knowledge into BCWMC projects and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use both Dakota and English names for Bassett Creek on maps, documents, and signage. - Promote Hąhá Wakpádaŋ oral history project and pronunciation video. - Learn about Native land and water care practices - Participate in annual water ceremony

Recreation Opportunities – Low Priority

Issue Statement: Opportunities to protect or enhance recreational use of, and access to, natural areas in the watershed may be lost without proactive consideration by the BCWMC and its partners in their activities.

Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)
Recreational uses and access are maintained or enhanced, as appropriate, for priority waterbodies	Support recreational uses of, and access to, priority waterbodies, particularly in underserved communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inventory/list priority waterbody recreation access/functions (i.e., what will be maintained) - Provide technical and other support for city and partner projects impacting recreational access to/use of priority waterbodies. - Incorporate trails, parks, and natural areas into BCWMC watershed map or other BCWMC communications. (to be included with current map update) - Maintain interactive Bassett Creek paddling map in partnership with City of Golden Valley. (found here)
	Consider protecting and enhancing recreational functions of and access to waterbodies and natural areas during BCWMC planning and projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider opportunities for recreation enhancement when designing BCWMC projects

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Organizational capacity and staffing – High Priority			
Issue Statement: Current BCWMC staff capacity and organizational structure are likely not sufficient to achieve intended goals and effectively execute projects and programs.			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
BCWMC organization exists in its most efficient and effective structure	In first year of Plan implementation, perform assessment of options, benefits, and challenges of various organizational structures for effective and efficient management of the Bassett Creek watershed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete comprehensive assessment of BCWMC organization structure and staffing options, benefits, and challenges. - \$50K estimate - Restructure organization, as needed, pending results of comprehensive assessment and as approved by the BCWMC. 	
	Achieve optimal organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness.		

BCWMC funding mechanisms – High Priority			
Issue Statement: Funding sources and funding mechanisms for BCWMC administration and implementation are not adequate to achieve the most efficient, equitable, and robust outcomes.			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
BCWMC operations are adequately funded for ongoing administration and robust implementation	In first year of Plan implementation perform assessment of all potential funding mechanisms for BCWMC work related to various organizational structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In conjunction with assessment of organization structure options, complete comprehensive assessment of funding mechanisms available to BCWMC. - Establish maintenance levy through Hennepin County in accordance with MN Statute 103B.251. 	
	Expand potential funding streams through grants and partnerships with public and private entities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a framework or process to streamline private-public funding partnerships - Apply for competitive project and planning grants, as appropriate 	
	Implement funding mechanisms appropriate to the organizational structure and functions of the BCWMC		

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
PSC Recommendations for November 2024 Workshop

Progress assessment – High Priority			
Issue Statement: Evaluation of progress toward achieving 10-year goals is critical to process improvement.			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
BCWMC is effective in its implementation through evaluation and adaptive management.	Understand the effectiveness of implementation and progress towards reaching each of this plan’s 10-year goals	- Complete progress assessment biennially (every two years) (MN Rule 8410) and use assessment results to guide future policy decisions and implementation activities.	
	Adapt implementation activities to reflect changing conditions or pace of progress.	- Amend Watershed Plan, as needed, as new data become available or conditions, organizational structure, or priorities change	

Projects and programs implemented through a DEIA lens – Medium Priority			
Issue Statement: Additional focus is needed to ensure equity in the delivery of BCWMC projects, programs, and decision making.			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
BCWMC work is equitably implemented.	Prioritize and implement programs and projects with guidance from social vulnerability metrics.	- Develop and use social vulnerability indices for project and program prioritization. - Incorporate equity metric in CIP prioritization table	
	Diversify representation on BCWMC Board of Commissioners, contractors, consultants and vendors such that they reflect community diversity	- Implement outreach, communication, and engagement activities in diverse communities - Seek contractors, vendors, etc. that represent diverse communities - Encourage cities to seek Commissioner applicants from diverse communities	

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
PSC Recommendations for November 2024 Workshop

Public ditch management – Low Priority			
Issue Statement: The Plan must address management of the public ditches within BCWMC jurisdiction (per MN Statutes 103B)			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
Public ditches in the watershed are either transferred to municipal authority or abandoned, where appropriate.	Public ditches function in a manner that allows their current use as streams and altered waterways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage member cities to petition Hennepin County to transfer authority over public ditches in the BCWMC to the member cities (per MN Statute 383B.61). - Support the efforts of other entities to pursue legislation abandoning public ditches on land zoned non-agricultural, in consideration for the original function of public ditches to provide drainage of agricultural lands. 	
	If ditch authority is transferred to the member cities, the BCWMC and cities will manage the ditches similar to other BCWMC waterways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manage abandoned or transferred public ditches that are part of the BCWMC trunk system consistent with this Plan. Member cities will be responsible for management of abandoned or transferred public ditches that are not on the BCWMC trunk system, but are currently part of their municipal drainage system. 	

Carbon footprint of BCWMC projects – Low Priority			
Issue Statement: Carbon released in the construction and ongoing maintenance of BCWMC projects is not currently considered and contributes to climate change			
Desired Future Condition	Goal (10-year)	Strategy, Action, or Task (some potential examples; highlight = new activity)	
The BCWMC understands the carbon footprint or lifecycle impacts of its activities and considers mitigative measures during implementation.	Consider use of tools available to assess the impact and mitigate the effects of BCWMC activities on greenhouse gas emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When appropriate, use carbon footprint assessment tools when prioritizing projects or options. - Encourage use of renewable energy and carbon release reduction practices in projects and programs. - 	