



## Bassett Creek Watershed Management

# MEMO

Date: February 10, 2021  
From: Laura Jester, Administrator  
To: BCWMC Commissioners  
RE: **Administrator's Report**

Aside from this month's agenda items, the Commission Engineers, city staff, committee members, and I continue to work on the following Commission projects and issues.

**CIP Projects** (more resources at <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects.>)

**2019 Medicine Lake Road and Winnetka Avenue Area Long Term Flood Mitigation Plan Implementation Phase I: DeCola Ponds B & C Improvement Project (BC-2, BC-3 & BC-8) Golden Valley:** A feasibility study for this project was completed in May 2018 after months of study, development of concepts and input from residents at two public open houses. At the May 2018 meeting, the Commission approved Concept 3 and set a maximum 2019 levy. Also in May 2018, the Minnesota Legislature passed the bonding bill and the MDNR has since committed \$2.3M for the project. The Hennepin County Board approved a maximum 2019 levy request at their meeting in July 2018. A BCWMC public hearing on this project was held on August 16, 2018 with no comments being received. Also at that meeting the Commission officially ordered the project and entered an agreement with the City of Golden Valley to design and construct the project. In September 2018, the City of Golden Valley approved the agreement with the BCWMC. The [Sun Post](#) ran an article on this project October 2018. Another public open house and presentation of 50% designs was held February 6, 2019. An EAW report was completed and available for public review and comment December 17 – January 16, 2019. At their meeting in February 2019, the Commission approved the 50% design plans. Another public open house was held April 10<sup>th</sup> and a public hearing on the water level drawdown was held April 16<sup>th</sup>. 90% Design Plans were approved at the April Commission meeting. It was determined a Phase 1 investigation of the site is not required. The City awarded a contract to Dahn Construction for the first phase of the project, which involves earthwork, utilities, and trail paving and extends through June 2020. Dewatering began late summer 2019. Tree removal was completed in early winter; excavation was ongoing through the winter. As of early June 2020, earth work and infrastructure work by Dahn Construction is nearly complete and trail paving is complete. Vegetative restoration by AES is underway including soil prep and seeding. Plants, shrubs, and trees will begin soon along with placement to goose protection fencing to help ensure successful restoration. The construction phase of this project was completed in June with minor punch list items completed in September. The restoration and planting phase is complete except for minor punch list items and monitoring and establishment of vegetation over three growing seasons. A final grant report for BWSR's Watershed Based Implementation Funding was submitted at the end of January. Project website: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=433> .

**2020 Bryn Mawr Meadows Water Quality Improvement Project (BC-5), Minneapolis:** A feasibility study by the Commission Engineer began last fall and included wetland delineations, soil borings, public open houses held in conjunction with MPRB's Bryn Mawr Meadows Park improvement project, and input from MPRB's staff and design consultants. At their meeting in April, the Commission approved a TAC and staff recommendation to move this project from implementation in 2019 to design in 2020 and construction in 2021 to better coincide with the MPRB's planning and implementation of significant improvements and redevelopment Bryn Mawr Meadows Park where the project will be located. The final feasibility study was approved at the January 2019 Commission meeting. Staff discussed the maintenance of Penn Pond with MnDOT and received written confirmation that pond maintenance will occur prior to the park's reconstruction project with coordination among the BCWMC, MPRB, and MnDOT. A public

hearing for this project was held September 19, 2019. The project was officially ordered at that meeting. An agreement with the MPRB and the city of Minneapolis will be considered at a future meeting. In January 2020 this project was awarded a \$400,000 Clean Water Fund grant from BWSR; a grant work plan was completed and the grant with BWSR was fully executed in early May. The project and the grant award was the subject of an article in the Southwest Journal in February: <https://www.southwestjournal.com/voices/green-digest/2020/02/state-awards-grant-to-bryn-mawr-runoff-project/>. In early September, Minneapolis and MPRB staff met to review the implementation agreement and maintenance roles. BCWMC developed options for contracting and implementation which were presented at the November meeting. At that meeting staff was directed to develop a memorandum of understanding or agreement among BCWMC, MPRB, and city of Minneapolis to more formally recognize and assign roles and responsibilities for implementation. The draft agreement was sent to MPLS and MPRB staff earlier this week in advance of a meeting with them about the project scheduled for January 14<sup>th</sup>. The agreement is being reviewed by MPLS and MPRB. The Commission Engineer plans to bring a proposal for project design to the March Commission meeting. Project website: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/bryn-mawr-meadows-water-quality-improvement-project>

**2020 Jevne Park Stormwater Improvement Project (ML-21) Medicine Lake (No change since Oct 2019):** At their meeting in July 2018, the Commission approved a proposal from the Commission Engineer to prepare a feasibility study for this project. The study got underway last fall and the city's project team met on multiple occasions with the Administrator and Commission Engineer. The Administrator and Engineer also presented the draft feasibility study to the Medicine Lake City Council on February 4, 2019 and a public open house was held on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The feasibility study was approved at the April Commission meeting with intent to move forward with option 1. The city's project team is continuing to assess the project and understand its implications on city finances, infrastructure, and future management. The city received proposals from 3 engineering firms for project design and construction. At their meeting on August 5<sup>th</sup>, the Medicine Lake City Council voted to continue moving forward with the project and negotiating the terms of the agreement with BCWMC. Staff was directed to continue negotiations on the agreement and plan to order the project pending a public hearing at this meeting. Staff continues to correspond with the city's project team and city consultants regarding language in the agreement. The BCWMC held a public hearing on this project on September 19, 2019 and received comments from residents both in favor and opposed to the project. The project was officially ordered on September 19, 2019. On October 4, 2019, the Medicine Lake City Council took action not to move forward with the project. At their meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup>, the Commission moved to table discussion on the project. The project remains on the 2020 CIP list. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=467>.

**2019 Westwood Lake Water Quality Improvement Project (WST-2) St. Louis Park (No change since October 2020):** At their meeting in September 2017, the Commission approved a proposal from the Commission Engineer to complete a feasibility study for this project. The project will be completed in conjunction with the Westwood Hills Nature Center reconstruction project. After months of study, several meetings with city consultants and nature center staff, and a public open house, the Commission approved Concept 3 (linear water feature) and set a maximum 2019 levy at their May meeting. 50% designs were approved at the July meeting and 90% design plans were approved at the August meeting. The Hennepin County Board approved a maximum 2019 levy request at their meeting in July. A BCWMC public hearing on this project was held on August 16<sup>th</sup> with no comments being received. At that meeting the Commission officially ordered the project and entered an agreement with the City of St. Louis Park to design and construct the project and directed the Education Committee to assist with development of a BCWMC educational sign for inside the nature center. The draft sign was presented at the October 2017 meeting and was finalized over the winter. The Sun Sailor printed [an article](#) on the project in October 2018. The project is largely complete and a ribbon cutting by the city was held September 13<sup>th</sup>. The building and site are open to the public and being used to educate students. There are still punch list items which must be addressed by the contractor to finalize the work. The system is capturing stormwater runoff from roof and paving, and the runoff is being stored underground and pumped via solar or hand pumps into the engineered creek. None of the captured water is flowing over land into Westwood Lake. The educational sign indoors is installed. (See photo.)

Project website: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/westwood-lake-water-quality-improvement-project> .

**2017 Main Stem Bassett Creek Streambank Erosion Repair Project (2017CR-M):** The feasibility study for this project was approved at the April Commission meeting and the final document is available on the project page at: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cid=281>. A Response Action Plan to address contaminated soils in the project area was completed by Barr Engineering with funding from Hennepin County and was reviewed and approved by the MPCA. The Commission was awarded an Environmental Response Fund grant from Hennepin County for \$150,300 and a grant agreement is in the process of being signed by the county. A subgrant agreement with the City will be developed. The City hired Barr Engineering to design and construct the project. Fifty-percent and 90% designs were approved at the August and October Commission meetings, respectively. In September 2017, design plans were presented by Commission and city staff to the Harrison Neighborhood Association's Glenwood Revitalization Team committee and through a public open house on the project. Construction was to begin summer of 2018 but was delayed until due to the unanticipated need for a field based cultural and historical survey of the project area required by the Army Corps of Engineers and ongoing negotiations with Pioneer Paper.

Construction began in November 2020 with clearing and grubbing to have access to the creek and to remove trees from the work area. In the Fruen Mill Reach work was completed per design plans on the south side of the creek, including stabilizing the existing MPRB trail, installing riprap toe protection and grading the bank. In the Cedar Lake Road to Irving Avenue Reach, the City was unable to come to an agreement with Pioneer Paper to get the amount of access needed to install the VRSS on the north side of the creek. The property owner allowed access to the streambank but instead of installing VRSS through this reach the City installed riprap toe protection, removed debris, completed bank grading and live staking and seeding, and installed the in-stream rock vanes to divert flows away from the steep banks. In Irving Avenue to the tunnel reach, the work was completed according to design plans with the installation of live staking, rock vanes within the stream channel, removal of brush and invasive species, and the installation of live stakes and fascines to encourage native plant growth and minimize bank erosion. Construction was completed in December 2020. An ERF grant report and RAP report are currently being developed. Vegetation will be established this spring. Project Website: [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/bassett-creek-main-stem-erosion-repair-project-cedar-lake-ro](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/bassett-creek-main-stem-erosion-repair-project-cedar-lake-ro)

**2014 Schaper Pond Diversion Project, Golden Valley (SL-3) (No change since Oct 2019):** Repairs to the baffle structure were made in 2017 after anchor weights pulled away from the bottom of the pond and some vandalism occurred in 2016. The city continues to monitor the baffle and check the anchors, as needed. Vegetation around the pond was planted in 2016 and a final inspection of the vegetation was completed last fall. Once final vegetation has been completed, erosion control will be pulled and the contract will be closed. The Commission Engineer began the Schaper Pond Effectiveness Monitoring Project last summer and presented results and recommendations at the May 2018 meeting. Additional effectiveness monitoring is being performed this summer. At the July meeting the Commission Engineer reported that over 200 carp were discovered in the pond during a recent carp survey. At the September meeting the Commission approved the Engineer's recommendation to perform a more in-depth survey of carp including transmitters to learn where and when carp are moving through the system. A Federal 319 grant for management of carp in relation to Schaper Pond and Sweeney Lake was recently approved by the MPCA and the grant agreement may be available by the December Commission meeting. At the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Commission received a report on the carp surveys and recommendations for carp removal and management. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cid=277>.

**Sweeney Lake Water Quality Improvement Project, Golden Valley (SL-8) (See Item 6A):** This project was added to the 2020 CIP list after receiving a federal 319 grant from the MPCA. It is partially a result of the carp surveys completed through the Schaper Pond Diversion Project and a study of the year-round aeration on Sweeney Lake. This project will

treat curly-leaf pondweed in spring 2020, will remove carp in summer 2020, and will perform an alum treatment on Sweeney Lake in late summer 2020. The project was officially ordered by the Commission after a public hearing in September 2019. A public open house on this project was held via Webex on April 8<sup>th</sup> with approximately 20 people joining. The open house presentation and a question and answer document are available online. The curly-leaf pondweed herbicide treatment was completed in May. Carp Solutions performed carp tracking and setting nets in early June. The first round of netting resulted in 334 carp removed from Sweeney Lake (mean length 620 mm, mean weight 3.1 kg), representing an estimated 29% of the total population. From Schaper Pond 82 carp removed which likely represents about 17% of the initial population. After another round of carp removals in late July, 118 additional carp were netted from Sweeney. Based on preliminary estimates, approximately 40% of the carp population was removed from Sweeney this summer. The carp biomass was reduced from approximately 129 kg/ha to 79 kg/ha, which is below the threshold where adverse impacts on water quality are expected. The first round of alum treatment was completed in late October. A grant report and payment request were submitted at the end of January. A report on the results of the carp removals and recommendations for future management will be presented at this meeting. The project website: [Sweeney Lake Water Quality Improvement Project, SL-8](#)).

**2014 Twin Lake In-lake Alum Treatment, Golden Valley (TW-2): (No change since June 2018)** At their March 2015 meeting, the Commission approved the project specifications and directed the city to finalize specifications and solicit bids for the project. The contract was awarded to HAB Aquatic Solutions. The alum treatment spanned two days: May 18- 19, 2015 with 15,070 gallons being applied. Water temperatures and water pH stayed within the desired ranges for the treatment. Early transparency data from before and after the treatment indicates a change in Secchi depth from 1.2 meters before the treatment to 4.8 meters on May 20<sup>th</sup>. There were no complaints or comments from residents during or since the treatment. Water monitoring continues to determine if and when a second alum treatment is necessary. Lake monitoring results from 2017 were presented at the June 2018 meeting. Commissioners agreed with staff recommendations to keep the CIP funding remaining for this project as a 2<sup>nd</sup> treatment may be needed in the future. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=278>.

**2013 Four Seasons Area Water Quality Project/Agora Development (NL-2) (No change since Oct 2020):** At their meeting in December 2016, the Commission took action to contribute up to \$830,000 of Four Seasons CIP funds for stormwater management at the Agora development on the old Four Seasons Mall location. At their February 2017 meeting the Commission approved an agreement with Rock Hill Management (RHM) and an agreement with the City of Plymouth allowing the developer access to a city-owned parcel to construct a wetland restoration project and to ensure ongoing maintenance of the CIP project components. At the August 2017 meeting, the Commission approved the 90% design plans for the CIP portion of the project. At the April 2018 meeting, Commissioner Prom notified the Commission that RHM recently disbanded its efforts to purchase the property for redevelopment. In 2019, a new potential buyer/developer (Dominium) began preparing plans for redevelopment at the site. City staff, the Commission Engineer and I have met on numerous occasions with the developer and their consulting engineers to discuss stormwater management and opportunities with “above and beyond” pollutant reductions. Concurrently, the Commission attorney has been working to draft an agreement to transfer BCWMC CIP funds for the above and beyond treatment. At their meeting in December, Dominium shared preliminary project plans and the Commission discussed the redevelopment and potential “above and beyond” stormwater management techniques. At the April 2020 meeting, the Commission conditionally approved the 90% project plans. The agreements with Dominium and the city of Plymouth to construct the project were approved May 2020 and project designers coordinated with Commission Engineers to finalize plans per conditions. The redevelopment project is scheduled to be before the Plymouth City Council again on November 24<sup>th</sup> for approval of various items including final plat, the stormwater grant agreement, and site improvement performance agreement. If approved, Dominium is scheduled to close on the property in the first half of 2021 and potentially begin construction later next year. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=282>.

**2021 Parkers Lake Drainage Improvement Project (PL-7) (No change since January):** The feasibility study for this project was approved in May 2020 with Alternative 3 being approved for the drainage improvement work. After a public hearing was held with no public in attendance, the Commission ordered the project on September 17, 2020 and entered an agreement with the city of Plymouth to design and construct the project. The city hired WSB for project design which is currently underway. [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/parkers-lake-drainage-improvement-project](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/parkers-lake-drainage-improvement-project)

**2021 Parkers Lake Chloride Reduction Project (PL-7):** The feasibility study for this project was approved in May 2020 with Alternative 3 being approved for the drainage improvement work. After a public hearing was held with no public in attendance, the Commission ordered the project on September 17, 2020 and entered an agreement with the city of Plymouth to implement the project in coordination with commission staff. City staff and I have had an initial conversation about this project. The city plans to collect additional chloride data this winter in order to better pinpoint the source of high chlorides loads within the subwatershed. Partners involved in the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative (HCCI) are interested in collaborating on this project. City staff are developing a proposal for the HCCI at their next meeting in early March. Additional information on project implementation will be available in the coming weeks.  
[www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/parkers-lake-drainage-improvement-project](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/parkers-lake-drainage-improvement-project)

**2021 Mt. Olivet Stream Restoration Project (ML-20) (No change since January):** The feasibility study for this project was approved in May 2020 with Alternative 3 being approved for the drainage improvement work. After a public hearing was held with no public in attendance, the Commission ordered the project on September 17, 2020 and entered an agreement with the city of Plymouth to design and construct the project. The city hired WSB for project design which is currently underway. [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/mt-olivet-stream-restoration-project](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/mt-olivet-stream-restoration-project)

**2021 Main Stem Lagoon Dredging Project (BC-7):** The feasibility study for this project was approved in May 2020 with Alternative 2-all (dredge all three lagoons to 6-foot depth) being approved. After a public hearing was held with no public in attendance, the Commission ordered the project on September 17, 2020. Rather than entering an agreement with a separate entity to design and construct this project, the Commission will implement the project in close coordination with the MPRB. At their meeting in November, the Commission approved a timeline for implementation and the Commission Engineer was directed to prepare a scope of work for project design and engineering. That scope is presented in 5C at this meeting. Design and permitting should get underway in summer 2021. Dredging of all three lagoons is planned for winter 2022/2023. A grant agreement for the \$250,000 Watershed Based Implementation Funding grant was approved at the January meeting. The agreement and work plan have been submitted to BWSR. Unfortunately, we were not successful at receiving a Hennepin County ERF this round. However, we'll receive almost \$75,000 from the Hennepin County Opportunity grant (pending County Board approval in March). Project website: [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/bassett-creek-main-stem-lagoon-dredging-project](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/bassett-creek-main-stem-lagoon-dredging-project)

**2021 Cost-share Purchase of High Efficiency Sweeper (ML-23) (No change since Dec):** Because the Commission had not entertained a project like this in the past (to cost share equipment purchase), this proposed project was discussed by the Commission in February and April, 2020 after being recommended for approval by the TAC. The Commission approved a [policy](#) regarding the use of CIP funds for equipment purchases at their April 2020 meeting. The project was added to the CIP through a Watershed Plan Amendment adopted in August 2020 and was officially ordered by the Commission on September 17, 2020 after a public hearing. The Commission entered an agreement with the city of Plymouth which includes reporting requirements for street sweeper use and effectiveness. The first report is expected spring 2021.

**2022 Medley Park Stormwater Treatment Facility (ML-12):** The feasibility study for this project is underway after the Commission Engineer's scope of work was approved last August. City staff, Commission Engineers and I collaborated on developing materials for public engagement over the fall/early winter. A project kick-off meeting was held in September, an internal public engagement planning meeting was held in October, and a Technical Stakeholder meeting with state agencies was held in November. A [story map of the project](#) was created and a survey to gather input from residents closed in December. Commission Engineers reviewed concepts with city staff and me in January. A draft feasibility report is expected in early spring 2021. Another public engagement session will be held later this winter to showcase and receive feedback on concept designs. [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/medley-park-stormwater-treatment-facility](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/medley-park-stormwater-treatment-facility)

**2022 SEA School-Wildwood Park Flood Reduction Project (BC-2, 3, 8, 10):** The feasibility study for this project is underway after the Commission Engineer's scope of work was approved last August. A project kick-off meeting with city staff was held in late November. Meetings with city staff, Robbinsdale Area School representatives, and technical stakeholders were held in December, along with a public input planning meeting. A storyboard is being developed for the public, likely

available in early March and a virtual open house will be held in March or April. A draft feasibility study report is expected in early spring 2021. [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/sea-school-wildwood-park-flood-reduction-project](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/sea-school-wildwood-park-flood-reduction-project).

## **Other Work**

### **CIP Project Work and Technical Assistance**

- Participated in meetings and correspondence on FEMA modeling and mapping project with DNR and Commission Engineers
- Discussed Parkers Lake Chloride Reduction Project with city staff and participated in Hennepin County Chloride Initiative meeting
- Participated in meeting with Golden Valley staff re: sustainability and stormwater management with future city campus
- Drafted and submitted grant reports and invoices/payment requests for FEMA Modeling Project (DNR), Sweeney Lake Improvement Project (MPCA), DeCola Ponds B & C Improvement Project (final report to BWSR)
- Developed work plan for Main Stem Lagoon Dredging Project for Watershed Based Implementation Funding grant
- Reviewed CIP project ideas from TAC members including fact sheets, matrix scores, etc.
- Reviewed/commented on Sweeney Lake Carp Removal Report
- Gathered information for Plymouth on Starry Stonewort in Medicine Lake

### **Administration and Education**

- Updated Channel Maintenance Fund memo with current figures and funds available
- Met with Dawn Pape to discuss 2021 education activities and budgets
- Assisted with ideas for walking tour of Bassett Creek project sites with Minnesota Stormwater Committee
- Participated in Blue Thumb's Environmental Justice Hub meeting and sub-committee meeting
- Participated in meetings with Metro watershed administrators and MAWD/BWSR re: Watershed Based Implementation Funding Program review
- Reviewed/commented on updated revisions to BCWMC Requirements Document
- Reviewed/commented on agreement for accounting services; corresponded with consultant
- Met with U of M graduate student re: pollinator programs and their intersection with watershed work and work in environmental justice communities
- Participated in MAWD's Handbook Committee meeting and drafted/sent email to MAWD Handbook Committee members and MAWD Executive Director
- Drafted resolutions for February Commission meeting, reviewed invoices and financial report
- Participated in WMWA meeting
- Arranged, prepared agenda and materials; prepped for and hosted BCWMC TAC meeting