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º Philosophy of Partnership - We will join with others in pursuing our watershed management goals
º Geographic Focus - We will intensify and maintain our focus on high-priority projects
º Responsiveness and Flexibility – We will be flexible and creative in adapting our practices to those of our partners

IN PURSUIT OF A BALANCED URBAN ECOLOGY

Developing the District’s 2007 Plan involved extensive analysis of the watershed and a robust stakeholder engagement process to set long-term goals. The 2017 Plan update will build on this strong foundation and focus primarily on developing policies and processes to improve service delivery and project implementation. Consistent with past practices, the District welcomes input from our engaged communities and citizens alike.

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COMPREHENSIVE WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) is updating its Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan (Plan) as part of its ongoing commitment to water quality issues throughout the watershed. Required by law to set the District’s goals and guide its activities, the current Plan was adopted in 2007, with the next generation Plan due in June 2017.

BE HEARD: Opportunities for Public Input

The District values input from all of its stakeholders – local technical staff, policy makers, and the general public. There are a variety of ways to get involved:

º Join an advisory committee (throughout 2015)
º Technical Advisory Committee
º Policy Advisory Committee
º Citizen Advisory Committee
º Six Mile Steering Committee
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º Keep up to date on our website, www.minnehahacreek.org/2017
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CONTACT

Direct questions to MCWD Planner:
Becky Christopher
bchristopher@minnehahacreek.org
(952) 641-4512

www.minnehahacreek.org/2017

TIMELINE

February 2015 – Kickoff Meeting
Early 2015 – Public opinion survey
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July-December 2015 – Local subwatershed meetings
January - June 2016 – Plan drafting and committee review
July - December 2016 – Formal review process (60-day and 90-day comment periods)
June 27, 2017 – Deadline for Plan adoption
TWO-TRACK APPROACH
For the 2017 Plan update MCWD is proposing using a “Two-Track” approach that will allocate District resources to their highest and best use in protecting the water quality and addressing flooding throughout the watershed.

TRACK 1 - FOCUS
This track will prioritize projects, staff and financial resources to “high need” areas within the District in order to make significant, lasting improvements to the most sensitive water challenges in the watershed.

FOCUS SPOTLIGHT: Restoring Minnehaha Creek through its most degraded section
Beginning in 2009, the District has concentrated resources on the most urbanized section of Minnehaha Creek, through St. Louis Park and Hopkins. The District has worked closely to understand the goals of its partners, and as a result has achieved enduring, measurable improvement in the creek while leveraging resources and benefiting surrounding communities. Partners include the City of Hopkins, City of St. Louis Park, Hennepin County, multiple public agencies and private businesses.

Recent, the City of Orono and TRPD identified an opportunity to restore steep, eroding bluffs on a TRPD nature preserve on Lake Minnetonka’s Big Island. A partnership with TRPD and MCWD resulted in 1,200 feet of shoreline restoration.

For the 2017 Plan update MCWD is proposing using a “Two-Track” approach that will allocate District resources to their highest and best use in protecting the water quality and addressing flooding throughout the watershed.

TRACK 2 - FLEXIBILITY
The District will continue to remain responsive to needs and opportunities District-wide through project partnerships, grant funding, education programming, permitting assistance, aquatic invasive species prevention, and other District resources.

FLEXIBILITY SPOTLIGHT: Seizing opportunities for partnership
The District strives to remain open to opportunities for cost-effective partnership, often combining funds with developers, private businesses, nonprofits, and other agencies to achieve water quality benefits on projects. Recently the Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) reached out to the MCWD about partnering to restore about 1,200 feet of shoreline at Lake Minnetonka’s Big Island on Park District land. The shoreline was severely eroded due to heavy wave action, which caused unstable banks to fall into Lake Minnetonka.

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When the series of projects is complete, the District and its partners will have achieved significant results: 550 acres of stormwater management; 1.5 miles of restored stream channel; 50 acres of newly-accessible green space; two miles of new trails and boardwalks; 150 jobs created; the connection of 600 housing units to within a 10-minute walk of transit hubs; financial contributions from at least six other organizations, and free private property easements.

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The project was modeled after the District’s major restoration of another section of Big Island a few years earlier in cooperation with the City of Orono. Both projects preserve habitat and prevent soil from eroding into one of the most sensitive and productive areas of the lake.
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