



WATERSHED UPDATE

Formed in 1981, the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District oversees a variety of projects and programs to assess and improve the health of our 81-square mile watershed – which includes 31 lakes, three designated trout streams, hundreds of acres of wetlands and over 17 miles of St. Croix River shoreline. The Watershed District is managed by the following volunteer board of residents appointed by Washington County:

- President**..... Steve Kronmiller, 651.433.4042
- Secretary/Treasurer** Victoria Dupre, 651.439.8266
- Manager** Richard Caldecott, 651.439.7385
- Manager** John Bower, 651.430.2793
- Manager** Jason Husveth, 651.433.4410
- Manager** John Lennes Jr., 651.433.3063
- Manager** Thomas Polasik, 651.430.0263

CARNELIAN-MARINE-ST. CROIX WATERSHED DISTRICT MEETINGS are open to the public and take place the first Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room of the Scandia Community Center, 14727 209th St. N. in Scandia.

If you have questions or would like information on any of the District's programs, contact Administrator Jim Shaver at 651.433.2150 or jimshaver@cmscw.org.

You can also check out our website: www.cmscw.org.

ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

The District's 2008 Annual Report includes details on District projects and programs, including water quality monitoring, permitting and Best Management Practices (BMP) projects. The report is available on the District website — or you can request a CD by contacting Jim Shaver.



DOWNLOAD DISTRICT PLANS

The draft Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District 2010 Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, which outlines long-term strategic priorities for work in the watershed, is available on the District website. Comments can be made on the draft plan through December. Watershed District Rules, which include actual permitting requirements in the watershed, will be available on the website soon. For more information on these documents, contact Jim Shaver.

Arcola “Stream Team” Provides Vital Monitoring



The Stream Team in action.

The Arcola Stream Assessment and Protection (ASAP) Monitoring project is an effort to assess the current condition of the watershed flowing through Arcola Mills by monitoring water quality and sharing the information with appropriate agencies. A dedicated team of volunteers — including Larry Whitaker, Jenna Fletcher, Patricia Morrison and Mary Smith — is powering the effort.

The group began volunteering at Arcola Mills in 2008. With training and equipment from the Watershed District, the group collects water samples from the creek every month. They monitor the water level, water temperature, velocity, flow, turbidity, ph, dissolved oxygen and phosphate and nitrate levels. They also conduct a rudimentary test for e-coli. According to Larry, despite an indication of e-coli, “all the other monitoring levels are good — they show a good, consistent stream.”

A recently-completed Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fish survey found native brook trout in the stream. The survey also found barriers blocking and limiting the trout habitat. The monitoring group is working to address these barriers and formulating plans

to improve the habitat. The group is also working with Washington Conservation District to leverage grant funds for expanding the monitoring program to add collection of macroinvertebrates (water bugs, which indicate water quality) and improved e-coli testing.

For more information on this project, or to get involved in volunteer water monitoring at Arcola Creek, call Larry Whitaker at 651.433.3896.

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY IN FALLS CREEK AND THE ST. CROIX RIVER

Falls Creek is a vibrant spring-fed tributary to the St. Croix River. Preventing stormwater runoff that could damage the creek has been a long-term priority for the District and Marine Watershed Management Organization (which is now merged with the District).

Highway 95 is a significant land use near the creek, and this summer the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) constructed an infiltration area that captures runoff from the road and allows it to seep naturally into the ground. “Road runoff used to flow into Falls Creek from the culverts along Highway 95,” said District Administrator Jim Shaver. “Now the culverts will drain into an infiltration area with soil and vegetation that allow the water to recharge groundwater — it’s essentially a big rain garden.”



This specially landscaped and planted area will capture stormwater runoff from Highway 95, protecting Falls Creek and the St. Croix River.

The project is located on the west side of Highway 95 in Scandia, across from Wind in the Pines Nature Park. “It’s a great project that will reduce erosion and protect water quality in Falls Creek — and keep sediment out of the St. Croix,” said Shaver. “We talked to MnDOT about this several years ago and it’s great to see it come to fruition.”



Education Powered by the Sun

Warner Nature Center's solar powered pontoon boat is a unique resource for teaching students about water quality and ecology. District Manager Tom Polasik is shown here talking with Warner's Kathy Feste.

INSIDE

Updates on the District's 2010 budget, volunteer opportunities and new projects to improve water quality.

May Township Family Installs Best Management Practices for Water Quality



Jim and Patty Schoeller's May Township home includes Willowbrook Stream, which flows to the St. Croix River, and a pond that flows to the stream. In the two years that they've owned the property, the Schoellers have taken numerous steps to protect this chain of water resources.

In 2007, they removed invasive plants, including reed canary grass, stinging nettles and buckthorn. In 2008, they planted seeds to begin creating a buffer of vegetation around 150 feet of the pond shoreline and 250 feet of the stream shoreline. In 2009, they expanded the buffer and added more plants with support from the District's Best Management Practices (BMP) program.

According to Jim, it's all a work in progress. "You don't just plant it," he said. "It takes a couple of years for plants to get established." The first year they saw a lot of blackeyed Susans and the second year brought more, different flowers including butterfly weed, boneset and blazing star. Jim enjoys the sedges that have stabilized the shoreline while allowing him to see down to the creek. But what pleases him the most is that he no longer needs to mow the steep slope to the pond.

For Patty, the increase in birds, butterflies and bumblebees has been notable. And she's glad that the natural buffer of native plants keeps her grandkids away from the water's edge.

District BMP funds are available for water quality projects in 2010. **To discuss a potential project or seek technical advice, contact District Administrator Jim Shaver at 651.433.2150.**



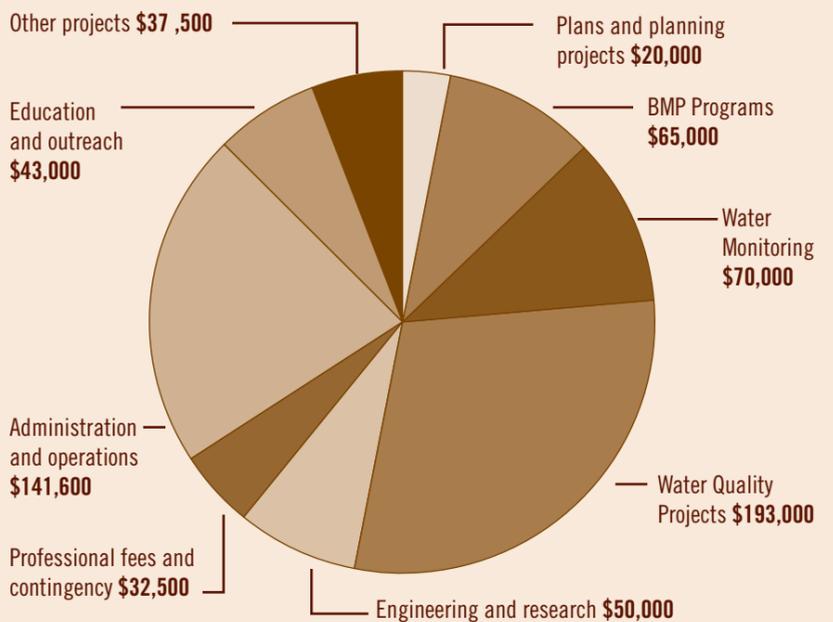
Before restoration, the Schoeller's turf grass lawn stretched all the way to the edge of the water.



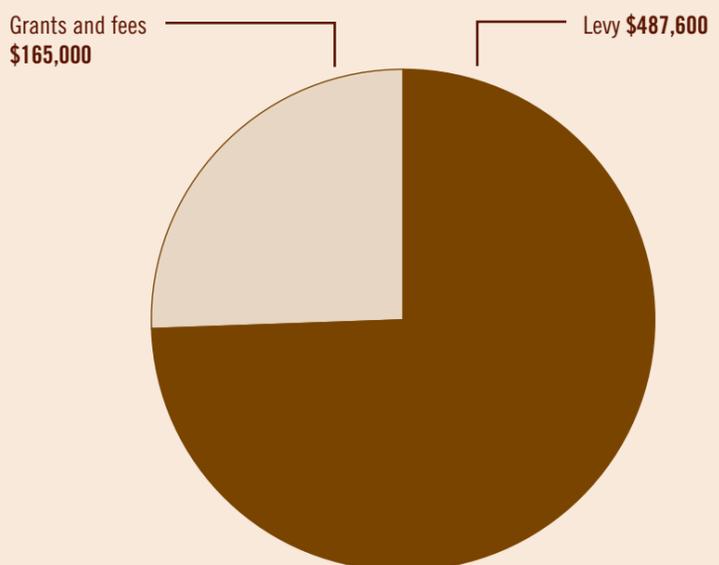
Now, this beautiful buffer of plants prevents stormwater runoff from flowing into Willowbrook Stream.

CARNELIAN-MARINE-ST. CROIX WATERSHED DISTRICT ADOPTS 2010 BUDGET

The District Board of Managers adopted its 2010 budget at the annual meeting on September 14, 2009. The levy (the portion of the District's budget paid by residents) is .2% lower than in 2009 and 6.2% lower than in 2008. Funds will be used to improve water quality through a range of important programs including water quality monitoring, public education and our Best Management Practices (BMP) program, which provides technical assistance and cost share benefits for landowners and local units of government implementing water quality improvement projects. Details are included in the charts below.



DISTRICT PROJECTS AND EXPENSES



SOURCES OF REVENUE