Meeting Agenda: Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Date and Time: November 18, 2026, 4:30 p.m., in-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center and virtually via Microsoft Teams

Note: Some CAC members may be participating in this meeting via interactive technology, in compliance with Minn. Stat. 13D.04 (Open Meeting Law).

1. Call to Order	
2. Roll Call	
3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda *(please limit audience comments to five minutes)*	
4. Approval of Agenda	Action
5. Approval of Minutes of the May 13 and August 12, 2026, meetings	Action
6. Business Items	
a. Recommend Adoption of the Final Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization 2027 Budget and Watershed Management Tax District Levy	Action
b. Approval of 2027 Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee Meeting Dates	Action
c. Presentation of Minnesota GreenCorps Member and Low Salt No Salt Initiative	Information
d. Update on Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee Terms and Status	Information
e. Virtual Drone Tour of North Creek Channel and Culvert Improvement Projects	Information
f. Introductory Presentation of FY26-27 Clean Water Fund's Watershed-Based Implementation Funding Projects Proposed in the Vermillion River Watershed	Information
7. Updates	
a. Chairperson's Report	
b. Staff Updates	
8. Adjourn	Action

Please note that the November 18, 2026, CAC meeting will take place in person in Conference Room A at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, 4100 220th Street West, Farmington, Minnesota, and virtually via Microsoft Teams. CAC members may participate in the meeting via interactive technology.

Microsoft Teams information

Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/2154372219487215?p=FLU6EmaioKJHSiKcSo
Meeting ID: 215 437 221 948 721 5
Passcode: VY7Dh9iZ
Click for assistance | System reference

Dial in by phone: +1 651-273-3070,,306954939# United States, Hastings
Find a local number
Phone conference ID: 306 954 939#

Other Information

Next meeting date: Wednesday, February 10, 2027, at 4:30 p.m.

Please confirm your attendance or absence to brita.moore-kutz@co.dakota.mn.us or (952) 891-7967 by noon on the day before, including whether you are attending in person or virtually. You will be notified via email by noon on the day of the meeting if it is canceled.

Meeting Minutes: Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Prepared by: Brita Moore-Kutz, Communications and Outreach Specialist for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO)

Location: In-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, Farmington, MN, and virtual via Microsoft Teams

All votes were conducted by roll call in compliance with Minn. Stat. 13D.04 (Open Meeting Law).

Attendees

CAC Members

- Brad Blackett
- Kevin Chamberlain
- Alex Franzen
- Steve Hamrick
- Andy Riesgraf (attended virtually due to family schedule)
- Tom Sauer
- Sandy Weber

VRWJPO Staff

- Travis Thiel, Administrator
- Kelly Perrine, Senior Watershed Specialist
- Jeff Dunn, Water Resources Engineer
- Brita Moore-Kutz, Communications and Outreach Specialist

Others

- Curt Coudron, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Project Management Supervisor

Agenda Items

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chair Kevin Chamberlain.

2. **Roll Call**

All members present except Jim Kotz and John Nicolai.

3. **Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda**

None.

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Sandy Weber to approve the agenda, seconded by Brad Blackett. Motion carried on a 7-0 vote.

5. Approval of Minutes from the February 11, 2026, Meeting

Motion by Tom Sauer to approve the minutes, seconded by Alex Franzen. Motion carried on a 7-0 vote.

6. Business Items

a. Presentation on 2025 Results from the Vermillion River Monitoring Network

Kelly Perrine gave an overview of the Vermillion River Monitoring Network (VRMN) and the 2025 sampling data available in each major VRWJPO subwatershed that contains a VRMN station. She highlighted improvements and areas of concern in each subwatershed.

Of note, site VR24 in New Market Township continues to exhibit high Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) levels above any other monitoring site. Kevin Chamberlain asked if staff knew what the cause was. Kelly replied that VRWJPO has been working with Scott County staff to narrow it down. Travis added that they had studied DNA samples from the area and found strong indicators of human DNA as the primary contributor, but there are likely other sources contributing to the issue.

The South Creek monitoring site has had a steady decrease in total suspended solids pollution since 2016 at baseflow conditions, which can be attributed to the projects installed in that subwatershed during the 2016-2025 Watershed Management Plan. Meanwhile, total phosphorus tends to spike across the watershed during runoff events. Nitrate levels continue to rise in the South Branch Vermillion River, affecting stations downstream from there as well. North and South Creeks have shown low levels of dissolved oxygen, an important factor in aquatic habitat. All of these data will factor into VRWJPO's improvement project planning.

Information only.

b. Site Visit Immediately Following the Meeting to North Creek in Empire Where an Upcoming Improvement Project will be Completed

Travis Thiel and Jeff Dunn provided background on the research and studies that led to the culvert improvement and replacement projects on North Creek in Empire and Farmington. Stressor identification studies by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and a 2011 geomorphic assessment of the North Creek subwatershed indicated areas where undersized and perched culverts were causing erosion and preventing fish passage upstream. The VRWJPO applied for and received Conservation Partners Legacy Grants from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in 2024 to replace the undersized and perched culverts with properly sized and placed ones, as well as to modify an existing culvert at a residential driveway to deepen continuous stream flow. This will be combined with natural stream narrowing and bank stabilization techniques.

Immediately following adjournment, committee members and staff traveled to the site along Minnesota Highway 3 in Empire. Jeff further elaborated on the project plans and pointed out the visible structural concerns that are causing the impairments.

Information only.

7. Updates

a. Chair's Report

None.

b. Staff Updates

None.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Alex Franzen to adjourn, seconded by Brad Blackett. Motion carried on a 7-0 vote.

Next Meeting

Date: August 12, 2026

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Location: In-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center and virtually via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Minutes: Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2026

Prepared by: Brita Moore-Kutz, Communications and Outreach Specialist for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO)

Location: In-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, Farmington, MN, and virtual via Microsoft Teams

Note: This meeting did not have a quorum of members in attendance, so no actions were taken. These minutes are a summary of discussion that took place.

Attendees

CAC Members

- Brad Blackett
- Alex Franzen
- Tom Sauer

VRWJPO Staff

- Travis Thiel, Administrator
- Kelly Perrine, Senior Watershed Specialist
- Jeff Dunn, Water Resources Engineer
- Brita Moore-Kutz, Communications and Outreach Specialist

Others

- Curt Coudron, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Project Management Supervisor

Agenda Items

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting began at 4:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

No quorum.

3. **Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda**

None.

4. Approval of Agenda

Not applicable.

5. Approval of Minutes from the May 13, 2026, Meeting

Not applicable.

6. Business Items

a. Recommend Adoption of the Preliminary Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization 2027 Budget and Watershed Management Tax District Levy

With no quorum present, the CAC did not vote on recommending adoption of the budget and levy. Travis Thiel reviewed it with the present members as information. He explained line items that are new for 2027 or significantly changing budgeted amounts from 2026, as well as the tax impact statements for the counties.

The VRWJPO set its recommended preliminary 2027 budget at $1,991,363, which would require a 5 percent increase in the watershed management tax district levy carried out by Dakota and Scott Counties. Staff also prepared scenarios in which the levy would be raised by 4.25 percent and 3.5 percent. In the event the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) chooses one of the two lower levies, funds would be reduced from VRWJPO's planned cost-share with Minnesota Trout Unlimited (MNTU) for a restoration project on South Creek (item 6c).

Alex Franzen asked about the consistency in prices for wetland bank credits. Travis said it's not likely the cost will go down, but that it's market-driven.

Information only.

b. Overview of Planned or Processed 2026 Project Grants from the Partner Project Maintenance and Repair Assistance and Stewardship Grants

Brita Moore-Kutz shared information about Stewardship Grants awarded to the City of Farmington and Friends of the Mississippi River. Jeff Dunn shared information about Partner Project Maintenance and Repair Assistance Grants awarded to the City of Lakeville for maintenance at the Avonlea Development Wetland (VRWJPO project from 2016), Middle Creek at Highview Avenue (VRWJPO project from 2021), and mowing at the South Creek Park Conservation Area in Farmington in advance of the MNTU stream restoration project (item 6c).

Both grant programs were initiated in 2026 and allocated funding each year as part of VRWJPO's budgeting process.

Information only.

c. Presentation of Planned Improvements Associated with Minnesota Trout Unlimited's South Creek Habitat Restoration Project

MNTU, with funding support from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund (one of the grant programs created by the Minnesota Clean Water, Land, and Legacy amendment), plans to restore a section of South Creek just south of the City of Farmington. The creek has been straightened and disconnected from its historic floodplain due to past agricultural production. The planned project will restore it to a

naturally meandering coldwater stream, with toewood implemented to stabilize the meander beds and riffles for streambed stabilization. Toewood consists of chopped-down trees lodged horizontally in the streambanks.

Jeff Dunn is the VRWJPO liaison for this project. VRWJPO plans to provide up to $65,000 in cost-share funding, based on what tax levy amount the VRWJPB approves for 2027.

Alex Franzen asked about maintenance at the restoration site. The land is owned by Dakota County, so the County will be responsible for overall maintenance. MNTU will lead maintenance efforts for the first three years after the project.

Alex asked about water quality improvement statistics for the project, such as phosphorus reduction. Those numbers were not quantified for the grant application, as the main focus is in-stream habitat restoration. Staff do anticipate improvements in water quality, even if no specific data is collected.

Information only.

7. Updates

a. Chair's Report

Not applicable.

b. Staff Updates

Jeff Dunn

CAC members requested an update on the North Creek culvert improvement project they visited in May 2026. Jeff said the contractor had gotten underway and hoped to complete the bulk of the work by mid-September.

8. Adjournment

Not applicable.

Next Meeting

Date: November 18, 2026

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Location: In-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center and virtually via Microsoft Teams

6a. Recommend Adoption of the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization 2027 Budget and Watershed Management Tax District Levy

Meeting Date: 11/18/2026
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Travis Thiel
Telephone: 952-891-7546

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) requires a budget and the subsequent levy to implement the programs and projects described in its Watershed Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) was approved a preliminary VRWJPO 2027 budget of $1,991,363 at their July 23, 2026, meeting; and

WHEREAS, at their August 2027, 2026, meeting, the VRWJPB adopted a preliminary 2027 budget of $1,991,363 and a maximum Watershed Management Tax District levy of $1,132,136, a five-percent increase in the levy compared to 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners were presented with the VRWJPO's preliminary 2027 budget and certified the Dakota County portion of the Watershed Management Tax District levy of $1,090,798 at their September 1, 2026, meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Scott County Board of Commissioners were presented with the VRWJPO's preliminary 2027 budget and certified the Scott County portion of the Watershed Management Tax District levy of $41,338 at their September 15, 2026, meeting; and

WHEREAS, staff have continued to refine the budget VRWJPO 2027 budget and have developed a final 2027 budget of $1,879,413 and a proposed levy of $1,121,354; and

WHEREAS, the Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee has reviewed and discussed the VRWJPO 2027 budget and Vermillion River Watershed Management Tax District levy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee hereby recommends approval of the VRWJPO 2027 Budget totaling $1,879,413 and recommends a Vermillion River Watershed Management Tax District levy of $1,121,354 ($1,080,148 in the Scott County portion of the watershed and $41,206 in the Dakota County portion of the watershed).

Background

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2027 budget (Attachment A) is $1,879,413, including Clean Water Fund Watershed-Based Implementation Funding grants, an MPCA Stormwater and Climate Resiliency grant, and the Watershed Management Tax District levy. The VRWJPO 2027 budget recommends a Watershed Management Tax District Levy of $1,121,354;

$41,206 in the Scott County portion of the watershed and $1,080,148 in the Dakota County portion of the watershed. This amount represents a 4% increase in the Watershed Management Tax District levy compared to 2026. The draft budget reflects recommendations from VRWJPO staff and partners and items from the implementation section of the 2026-2035 Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan.

Recommendation

Staff requests a recommendation from the Community Advisory Committee regarding their preferred budget and respective levy.

Financial and Staffing Impacts

The proposed VRWJPO 2027 Budget is $1,879,413 with a recommended Watershed Management Tax District Levy of $1,121,354, $41,206 in the Scott County portion of the watershed and $1,080,148 in the Dakota County portion of the watershed. The proposed 2027 levy represents a 4% increase over the amount levied in 2026.

Previous CAC Actions

None

Attachments

A. Final VRWJPO 2027 Budget

VRWJPO 2027 Final Budget

Expense Budget Category	Expense Budget Activity	Operations and Programs Expenses	CIP Expenses	Expenses Total	2026 Expense Amount	% Change
Administration and Operations	Dakota County VRW Staff	$ 185,000	$ -	$ 185,000	$ 227,000	-19%
Administration and Operations	Scott County VRW Staff	$ 15,000	$ -	$ 15,000	$ 15,000	0%
Administration and Operations	Legal Support	$ 26,000	$ -	$ 26,000	$ 25,000	4%
Administration and Operations	Miscellaneous Expenses (per diems, mileage, postage, insurance, etc.)	$ 13,000	$ -	$ 13,000	$ 11,000	18%
Administration and Operations	Training, Conferences, and Certifications	$ 6,000	$ -	$ 6,000	$ 6,000	0%
Planning	Dakota SWCD Incentive Program Policy Assistance	$ 1,500	$ -	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	0%
Planning	VRW Staff	$ 21,000	$ -	$ 21,000	$ 30,000	-30%
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	Monitoring	$ 65,000	$ -	$ 65,000	$ 100,000	-35%
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	USGS and DNR Flow Gaging	$ 34,000	$ -	$ 34,000	$ 20,000	70%
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	VRW Staff	$ 43,000	$ -	$ 43,000	$ 20,000	115%
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	General GIS support (Dakota SWCD)	$ 1,000	$ -	$ 1,000	$ 1,500	-33%
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	Equipment/Supplies	$ 2,000	$ -	$ 2,000	$ 1,000	100%
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	Riparian Vegetation Assessment	$ 30,000	$ -	$ 30,000	New	New
Inventory, Assessment, & Research	Stormwater and Climate Resilience Study	$ 172,000	$ -	$ 172,000	New	New
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	VRW Staff	$ 100,000	$ -	$ 100,000	$ 108,000	-7%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Dakota SWCD Outreach and Education	$ 40,000	$ -	$ 40,000	$ 40,000	0%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Scott County SWCD Outreach and Education	$ 2,400	$ -	$ 2,400	$ 2,300	4%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Communication and Outreach Materials and Supplies, Signage	$ 8,500	$ -	$ 8,500	$ 7,500	13%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Local Standards/Ordinance and Turf/Salt Workshops	$ 4,000	$ -	$ 4,000	$ 2,500	60%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Children's Water Festival Support	$ 750	$ -	$ 750	$ 600	25%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Watershed Partners	$ 5,000	$ -	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	0%
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Wetland Health Evaluation Program Sponsorship	$ 1,500	$ -	$ 1,500	New	New
Communications, Outreach, and Public Relations	Stewardship Grant Program	$ 25,000	$ -	$ 25,000	$ 25,000	0%
Regulation	VRW Staff Standards Assistance, Engineering/Environmental Review	$ 55,000	$ -	$ 55,000	$ 45,000	22%
Feasibility & Preliminary Engineering	Preliminary Design, Technical Assistance and Marketing for Capital Improvements (Dakota SWCD)	$ 35,000	$ -	$ 35,000	$ 20,000	75%
Feasibility & Preliminary Engineering	Preliminary Design, Technical Assistance and Marketing for Capital Improvements (VRW staff)	$ 28,000	$ -	$ 28,000	$ 40,000	-30%
Feasibility & Preliminary Engineering	Preliminary Design, Technical Assistance and Marketing for Capital Improvements (Partners/Consulting)	$ 155,000	$ -	$ 155,000	$ 20,000	675%
CIP and Maintenance (General)	Cost Share Programs in Dakota County (SWCD)	$ -	$ 95,000	$ 95,000	$ 60,000	58%
CIP and Maintenance (General)	Cost Share Programs in Scott County (SWCD)	$ -	$ 20,700	$ 20,700	$ 25,000	-17%
CIP and Maintenance (General)	VRW General Cost-share or Miscellaneous Grant Match	$ -	$ 135,000	$ 135,000	$ 40,000	238%
CIP and Maintenance (General)	Past projects maintenance/repair	$ -	$ 40,000	$ 40,000	$ 30,000	33%
CIP and Maintenance (General)	VRW staff construction oversight and grant development and admin	$ -	$ 100,000	$ 100,000	$ 60,000	67%
CIP and Maintenance (General)	Groundwater quantity tactics	$ -	$ 10,000	$ 10,000	New	New
East Lake Fish Management	VRWJPO cost share	$ -	$ 25,000	$ 25,000	$ 10,000	150%
FY24-25 WBIF Farmington 4th & Willow TSS	4th & Willow TSS Reduction grant pass-through	$ -	$ 71,013	$ 71,013	NA	NA
FY24-25 WBIF Farmington 4th & Willow TSS	VRWJPO cash match	$ -	$ 75,000	$ 75,000	NA	NA
FY24-25 WBIF Hastings 15th & Bailly TSS	VRWJPO cash match	$ -	$ 7,000	$ 7,000	$ 111,000	-94%
South Creek Restoration Project Assistance	VRWJPO cost share	$ -	$ 50,000	$ 50,000	NA	NA
FY26-27 WBIF Rosemount Anti-Icing Brine Tank	VRWJPO cash match	$ -	$ 2,800	$ 2,800	New	New
FY26-27 WBIF Lakeville Street Sweeper	VRWJPO cash match	$ -	$ 18,750	$ 18,750	New	New
FY26-27 WBIF Lakeville Middle Creek Channel Stabilization	VRWJPO cash match	$ -	$ 4,500	$ 4,500	New	New
Wetland Bank Credit Sales	Braun Wetland Bank Credit Sales	$ -	$ 150,000	$ 150,000	$ 100,000	50%
Total Expenditures		**$ 1,074,650**	**$ 804,763**	**$ 1,879,413**	**NA**	**NA**
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		

Revenue Budget Category	Revenue Budget Activity	NA	NA2	Revenue Total
Braun Wetland Bank Credit Revenue	NA	NA	NA	$ 150,000
Use of Fund Balance	NA	NA	NA	$ 415,878
Grant Revenue	NA	NA	NA	$ 142,181
Dakota County Levy	NA	NA	NA	$ 1,080,148
Scott County Levy	NA	NA	NA	$ 41,206
Investment Earnings	NA	NA	NA	$ 50,000
Total Revenues	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**	**$ 1,879,413**

6b. Approval of 2027 Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee Meeting Dates

Meeting Date: 11/18/2026
Item Type: Regular-Action
Contact: Travis Thiel
Telephone: 952-891-7546

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is required by its Bylaws to hold regular meetings; and

WHEREAS, regularly scheduled meetings of the CAC are required to complete its business in a timely and responsible manner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in calendar year 2027, the CAC will meet on the second Wednesday of the month (except in November) at 4:30 p.m., according to the following schedule:

- February 10
- May 12
- August 11
- November 17

Background

In 2026, the CAC meetings were held quarterly, in-person or virtually, on February 11, May 13, August 12, and November 18, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

It is proposed that the 2027 CAC meetings continue the same schedule as 2026. Based on changes in Minnesota Statute Ch. 13D. Open Meeting Law in 2025, participation and voting on recommendations can be provided virtually. However, there are requirements that must be met to conduct business virtually (see Attachment).

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, and because the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Power Board is projected to meet on December 2, 2027, the November meeting is scheduled for the third Wednesday of that month.

The 2027 CAC proposed meeting schedule is as follows:

- February 10
- May 12
- August 11
- November 17

Recommendation

Staff requests the Community Advisory Committee adopt a 2027 CAC meeting schedule.

Financial and Staffing Impacts

None

Previous CAC Actions

None

Attachments

Attachment: Guidance on Vermillion River Watershed Meetings Conducted via Interactive Technology

MEETINGS CONDUCTED VIA INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY
AS IT APPLIES TO THE VRWJPO

Minnesota Statutes § 13D.02 subd. 1 (revised)
VRWJPB meetings can be conducted by interactive technology so long as:

(1) At least one board/committee member is physically present at the regular meeting location; and
(2) All board/committee members wherever their physical location can hear and see all discussion and testimony presented at any location at least one board/committee member is present; and
(3) Members of the public present at the regular meeting location can hear and see all discussion and testimony and all votes of the board/committee members; and
(4) All votes are conducted by roll call.

Minnesota Statutes § 13D.02 subd. 3

To the extent practical, the board/committee shall allow a person to monitor the meeting electronically from a remote location.

Minnesota Statutes § 13D.02 subd. 4 (revised)

The VRWJPO shall include in its notice of the regular meeting location that the board/committee members may participate in the meeting by interactive technology. The timing and method of providing the notice of the regular meeting location must be as described in section 13D.04.

Minnesota Statutes § 13D.04 Notice of Meetings

The schedule of regular meetings of the board/committee kept on file at the VRWJPO's primary office will need to be updated to provide notification that board/committee members have the ability to attend through interactive technology. Website should also be updated to provide notice of this as well. Notice should also be posted on the door of the board's/committee's usual meeting room prior to the first interactive meeting conducted by the board/committee. Notices of special meetings should include language notifying the recipients of said notice that board/committee members have the ability to attend via interactive technology.

Minnesota Statutes § 13D.02 subd. 6

The meeting minutes must reflect the names of any board/committee members appearing by interactive technology and state the reason or reasons for the appearance by interactive technology.

6c. Presentation on Dakota County's Low Salt No Salt Initiative

Meeting Date: 11/18/2026
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: Valerie Neppl
Telephone: 952-891-7019

Resolution

Information only. No action requested.

Background

Dakota County applied for a 2026–2027 Minnesota GreenCorps (MGC) member to support chloride reduction efforts throughout the County. Thanks in part to support from the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization, Dakota County was awarded a MGC member.

Marit Isaacson, Dakota County's MGC member, started in October 2026 and is focusing on developing and implementing a Low Salt, No Salt Minnesota Campaign (LSNS) in Dakota County. This work includes outreach to organizations such as faith-based organizations, homeowner associations (HOAs), and schools; as well as outreach and education to the public. Another task Marit will be working on is identifying opportunities to improve chloride reduction practices within County operations. Dakota County also has resources on its webpage regarding chloride reduction.

These efforts will be coordinated and supported by efforts of the VRWJPO and its staff. Marit and Valerie Neppl, Groundwater Protection Unit Supervisor with Dakota County, will provide a presentation on the LSNS effort. The presentation will include information about LSNS and what's being done in Dakota County. Some questions to think about prior to the meeting include:

- What actions can you take as an individual to reduce salt usage?
- Are there opportunities to share about LSNS within your community? If so, what resources would be helpful for you to spread the word?
- Are there recommendations for organizations (e.g., faith-based organizations, HOAs, schools) Dakota County should prioritize for LSNS outreach?
- Do you have any ideas for other outreach opportunities (e.g., events, groups to connect with)?

Recommendation

None

Financial and Staffing Impacts

VRWJPO staff will be used to coordinate this effort with Dakota County for the benefit of both organizations. The VRWJPO staff time is integrated into the 2027 VRWJPO budget.

Attachments

None

6d. Update on Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee Member Terms and Status

Meeting Date: 11/18/2026
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: Brita Moore-Kutz
Telephone: 952-891-7967

Resolution

Information only. No action requested.

Background

Members of the Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) are appointed to serve three-year terms by the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB). Appointed members of the CAC are eligible to serve two consecutive terms. Members are sometimes appointed to an open incumbent seat on the CAC completing the previous incumbent's existing term. In such cases fulfilling the previous incumbent term is not counted as a term of the newly appointed member thus retaining their eligibility to serve up to two full three-year terms in addition to completing the previous incumbent term.

There are nine members seats for the CAC. Currently, requirements to be eligible to serve on the CAC stipulate members must be residents of either Dakota County or Scott County with appointment preference given to applicants that live within the watershed area for which they are to be appointed. Seats for those whose eligibility is completed become vacant and open for a new appointee. The VRWJPB may appoint an expiring term member of the Community Advisory Committee to continue to serve as an interim appointment upon the expiration of that member's term where the VRWJPB has not received applications for that expiring term member's position. The interim member's appointment shall expire upon the VRWJPB's appointment of a new member of the Community Advisory Committee filling the position held by the interim member.

Based on staff's tracking of CAC terms, Andy Riesgraf, Jim Kotz, and Steve Hamrick have second terms that will expire at the end of calendar year 2026. Staff are also aware that Alex Franzen will be resigning from the CAC at the end of the year due to moving. An effort to recruit new CAC applicants was started in early October. There have been three applications received so far, and staff will continue to recruit new applicants. We recommend all CAC members use their social networks to assist staff in recruiting new members.

An update will be provided at the meeting regarding where members are at in their respective terms.

Recommendation

Not applicable.

Financial and Staffing Impacts

None.

Attachments

CAC Term Spreadsheet

CAC MEMBER TERMS

Member	Previous Incumbent Term End	Appointment Date	Interim Term Expiration Date**	1st Full Term Expiration Date	2nd Full Term Expiration Date*	Eligibility Ends**
John Nicolai	12/31/2024	1/23/2025		12/31/2027	12/31/2030	12/31/2030
Brad Blackett	12/31/2022	3/23/2023	12/31/2025	12/31/2028	12/31/2031	12/31/2031
Andrew Riesgraf	12/31/2020	1/28/2021		12/31/2023	12/31/2026	12/31/2026
James Kotz	12/31/2020	1/28/2021		12/31/2023	12/31/2026	12/31/2026
Sandra Weber	12/31/2021	12/1/2022	12/31/2024	12/31/2027	12/31/2030	12/31/2030
Tom Sauer	12/31/2024	1/22/2026	12/31/2027	12/31/2030	12/31/2033	12/31/2033
Alex Franzen	12/31/2025	1/22/2026		12/31/2028	12/31/2031	12/31/2031
Kevin Chamberlain	12/31/2022	6/22/2023	12/31/2025	12/31/2028	12/31/2031	12/31/2031
Steve Hamrick	12/31/2017	6/25/2020	12/31/2020	12/31/2023	12/31/2026	12/31/2026

*If a member chooses to continue serving on the VRWCAC for a second full term, this would be their formal term end date.

** When appointed to finish out the term of an existing position on the CAC, the appointee is eligible to finish that term and serve two full three year terms in addition.

Eligibility reflects the full period that could be served by a current incumbent or an appointee to a currently vacant position.

6e. Virtual Drone Tour of North Creek Channel and Culvert Improvement Projects

Meeting Date: 11/18/2026
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: Brita Moore-Kutz/Jeff Dunn
Telephone: 952-891-7967/952-891-7140

Resolution

Information only. No action requested.

Background

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) constructed culvert and channel improvements on North Creek in Farmington and Empire in summer 2026. These improvements resulted in better stream channel connectivity and aquatic organism movement, better floodplain connection, and improved water quality and habitat. Staff led the CAC on a site visit at North Creek in Empire in May 2026 to see pre-project conditions. Daylight is too limited to do another site visit at this time. However, now that construction is complete, staff will provide a virtual drone tour of the improvements showing pre- and post-project conditions to get an idea of the changes that occurred.

Recommendation

Not applicable.

Financial and Staffing Impacts

No fiscal impact for the virtual drone tour. A construction contract for the proposed improvement project was awarded with a bid of $514,355. Final invoices are still being collected and processed. The project will be paid for by a Conservation Partners Legacy Grant, made possible through the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment, and VRWJPO Capital Improvement Program funds.

Attachments

None.

6f. Introductory Presentation of FY26-27 Clean Water Fund Watershed-Based Implementation Funding Projects Proposed in the Vermillion River Watershed

Meeting Date: 11/18/2026
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: Kelly Perrine/Jeff Dunn
Telephone: 952-891-7002/952-891-7140

Resolution

Information only. No action requested.

Background

Every two years, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) requires major watersheds in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area which are awarded funds from the Clean Water Fund Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) program hold a Convene process including watershed districts and management organizations, soil and water conservation districts, counties with approved groundwater plans, and cities and townships within the watershed. The purpose of Convene is for these stakeholders to present, discuss, prioritize, and coordinate projects and activities that could utilize WBIF grants.

The Convene process for the Vermillion River Watershed planning area FY26-27 WBIF began in early 2026 and concluded in August. It resulted in several proposed projects and activities that will utilize WBIF in conjunction with local funds. Funded projects and activities must result in water quality improvements in the Vermillion River Watershed.

Funding awarded to the Vermillion River Watershed for FY26-27 is $717,186, which will be divided among the approved projects and activities.

Recommendation

Not applicable.

Financial and Staffing Impacts

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) has allocated approximately $30,000 within its 2027 budget to assist partners in covering five percent of the required ten percent match for proposed projects and activities. This amount does not include an allocation of match in the 2027 budget for projects proposed by the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as that grant match is being provided through the existing agreement between the VRWJPO and SWCD.

Attachments

Attachment: WBIF Convene Process Guidance
Attachment: FY26-27 WBIF Approved Project and Activity List

BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Metro Area Convene Process Guidance for the FY26-27 Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) Program

Introduction

The purpose of WBIF is to supplement existing funding to accelerate clean water activities toward advancing Minnesota's water resources goals through prioritized and targeted cost-effective actions with measurable water quality results.

All eligible activities must have a primary benefit towards water quality. Activities that result in multiple benefits are strongly encouraged. Eligible activities must be identified in the implementation section of a state approved, locally adopted comprehensive watershed management plan developed under Minnesota statutes §103B.801, watershed management plan required under §103B.231, county groundwater plan authorized under §103B.255, or a soil and water conservation district comprehensive plan approved by the BWSR board, as authorized under §103C.331.

Metro grantees must request state funds that equal or exceed $30,000. Applications submitted that do not meet this minimum dollar amount will not be accepted.

Metro WBIF Watershed Allocation Areas



For purposes of this document, the group of participants in each watershed allocation area (see map) will be called a partnership (e.g., Rice Creek partnership or Rum River partnership). WBIF is available to all eligible partners within each watershed allocation area.

Federally Recognized Minnesota Tribal Nations are eligible if they are implementing projects or programs for the purpose of this funding that are identified in eligible plans. BWSR encourages inviting Tribal representatives into the convene process.

Refer to the WBIF Frequently Asked Questions website for more information.

Convene Meetings

The convene process allows the partnership to jointly coordinate on the development of a funding request to BWSR that is prioritized, targeted and measurable. The partnership needs to select a local government entity (or entities) to coordinate and facilitate the convene meeting(s) or request assistance from BWSR by contacting the board conservationist (BC). Each partnership will include one decision-making representative (participant) from each watershed district and/or watershed management organization, soil and water conservation district, county with a current groundwater plan, and up to two decision-making representatives from municipalities within the allocation area.

Municipalities in each allocation area must coordinate to self-select up to two decision-making representatives. Municipal representatives are expected to communicate with other municipalities on the solicitation and selection of projects and activities during the process.

The BC and Clean Water Specialist (CWS) must be invited to convene meetings. The facilitating entity must: 1) take meeting notes that document the general discussion, decisions, and attendees, and 2) share the notes with the partnership soon after each meeting and be made available upon request.

Each partnership must meet at least one time prior to submitting a funding request. Ideally, partnerships will develop a shared understanding of proposed activities during the convene process. To improve the efficiency of the convene process, BWSR recommends the following meeting objectives:

1. Determine an overall decision-making process (e.g., majority rules, consensus, informed consent).
2. Pick one of the following methods for selecting activities:
   - Developing a list of potential activities from eligible plans,
   - Dividing funding among eligible entities in an equitable manner,
   - Selecting a few priority waterbodies (lake, streams) and/or groundwater areas to prioritize activities,
   - Using agreed upon criteria to select activities, or
   - Using a process approved by the BWSR Central Region Manager.
3. Select the highest priority, targeted, measurable, and eligible activities to be submitted to BWSR as a funding request (see submittal process below).
4. Confirm which entity will serve as grantee and/or fiscal agent for each selected activity and decide on the source(s) of the 10% required match.

Activity Eligibility

To ensure proposed activities are eligible, refer to the WBIF Grant Program Requirements. If you have questions regarding eligibility, consult with the BC as early as possible.

Preparing the Funding Request

Refer to the WBIF Funding Request and Work Plan Guidance when preparing your funding request.
NEW in FY26-27: Changes to the Proposed Measurable Outcomes and Activity Descriptions.

- Use the following generic language for the **"Proposed Measurable Outcomes" field in the funding request:**

  "Make measurable progress toward water quality goals using eligible

projects, practices, and programs as described in the {Plan Name(s)}"

- Grant-specific proposed outputs/outcomes will be recorded in the **activity descriptions** of the work plan.

The partnership **must send a list of partnership-approved activities* to the BC prior to submittal of an eLINK funding request.** This list must include:

- the entity requesting funding (grantee)
- fiscal agent (if different from grantee)
- activity title
- activity explanation
- water resource(s)
- activity outcome(s)
- match
- plan reference(s)
- grant funds requested

*An activity may be a project, a practice, or a program. A template activity spreadsheet is available on the BWSR WBIF webpage under the "FY26-27 Information" tab.

Submitting the Funding Request

Once the activities have been agreed upon by the partnership and approved by the BC, each grantee must submit an eLINK funding request. Once the BC approves the eLINK funding request, each grantee is responsible for completing an eLINK work plan. See WBIF funding request and work plan guidance for:

- an overview of process steps
- more information about what must be included in work plan activity descriptions.

The BC must approve the work plan and execute the grant agreement prior to the funds being distributed.

Timeline

- BWSR will hold an informational meeting in early 2026. The recorded meeting will be available on the BWSR WBIF website
- Organizations identify a meeting coordinator/facilitator and select decision-making representatives for convene meetings
- Partnerships hold at least one convene meeting
- Partnerships send the list of partnership-approved activities to the BC (prior to the submittal of the eLINK funding request)
- Funding available on July 1, 2026
- Partnerships submit eLINK funding request between June 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027
- BWSR will process funding requests on a monthly basis
- All grant agreements must be executed by June 1, 2027
- Grant expiration date is Dec. 31, 2029

FY26-27 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Watershed Based Implementation Funding Projects

Grantee	Project Title	Project Description	Project Cost	Grant Award
City of Apple Valley	Long and Farquar Alum Feasibility Study	Complete an Alum Feasibility and Alternative analysis to assess internal loading in Long and Farquar Lakes. A 2017 TMDL Implementation Plan identified alum treatment as a recommended project for Farquar Lake. As Long Lake is the main contributor to nutrients loading into Farquar Lake, we propose to include Long Lake in the analysis as well for the purpose of analyzing lake sediments and alternative methods to reduce pollutant loading.	$65,000	$50,000
City of Lakeville	Enhanced Street Sweeping	This project involves the purchase of one high-efficiency vacuum street sweeper to implement an Enhanced Street Sweeping Program within the City of Lakeville. The additional unit will allow for targeted sweeping and increased frequency.	$421,940	$375,000
City of Lakeville	Middle Creek Channel Stabilization Project	The Middle Creek channel stabilization project is located just east of Hamburg Ave. The project is located between 2 previously restored channels. This area has experienced significant slope erosion and is contributing to sediment and nutrients downstream.	$118,985	$86,886
City of Rosemount	Rosemount Anti-Icing Brine Tank	10,000 gallon brine tank storage for anti and deicing operations for the City of Rosemount.	$62,000	$55,800
Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District	Etter Creek/Mississippi Direct Subwatershed Analysis	A subwatershed analysis will take place on the subwatershed of the Vermillion River that includes Etter Creek and adjacent Mississippi River Direct drainage areas. The subwatershed analysis will identify and rank projects based on cost-effectiveness.	$38,500	$35,000
Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District	Nitrate Reduction and Irrigation Management	Target nitrate reduction practices in areas of very high, high, high medium and medium water table aquifer vulnerability areas through practice incentives. Practices include cover crops, harvestable covers, and nutrient management. Increase use of irrigation scheduling tools and precision irrigation technologies through outreach, technical assistance to irrigation operators, and introduction to precision moisture sensors.	$125,950	$114,500