

Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District

Board of Managers

President:
Robert Hodapp, Kandiyohi County

Vice President:
Robert Zenner, Stearns County

Secretary:
Ruth Schaefer, Kandiyohi County

Treasurer:
Gordy Behm, Kandiyohi County

Vice Treasurer:
Joe Flanders, Meeker County

Inside This Report:

Diamond Lake TMDL Study	1
Best Management Practices	1
Monitoring	2
Education	2
Financial Report	3
Audit	3
Staffing Changes	3
What's coming up in 2008?	4

2007 Annual Report

Diamond Lake TMDL Study

Diamond Lake has been added to the impaired waters list for excessive nutrients. This means that the amount of nutrients in the lake can cause nuisance algae blooms along with other problems which detract from the lake's designated use of recreation. The Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District is going to conduct a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study, the goal of which is to identify and quantify the significant nutrient sources. In order to obtain this information, extensive monitoring will take place on and around Diamond Lake, beginning in the winter of 2008. Upon completion of the TMDL study, the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District will identify BMP programs that will help reduce the nutrient loading into the lake, and work with landowners to implement these practices. The TMDL study is expected to be completed in early 2010.



Best Management Practices (BMPs)

The goal of our best management program is to provide incentives for landowners, community groups, units of governments and others to improve land management activities in order to reduce pollution. The two types of incentives available are: 1) cost share funding and 2) State Revolving Fund low interest loans. These programs are often initiated by a landowner inquiry to the Middle Fork Crow office or any of our SWCD, NRCS, or County partners.

Cost share funds are available for eligible projects such as rain gardens, shoreland restoration, feedlot upgrades, erosion controls, and agricultural buffer strips,



among others. If a project meets funding criteria, a contract must be drawn up and approved by the District Board of Managers prior to project implementation. Cost share funds may be approved for 50-75% of the project cost. These funds are non-repayable grants and cannot be used for septic system upgrades. In 2007, the Watershed District completed BMP projects in manure management, agricultural sediment control, a grassed waterway, and stream channel stabilization.

The second type of funding for BMP is State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loans. These loans are available for eligible best management practice projects as well as for septic system upgrades. The loans are disbursed with a 3.5% interest rate and are placed as an assessment on the land owner property taxes. Therefore, they are repaid when taxes are paid, over a 7-10 year period. These loans are often used to cover the landowner contribution when receiving cost share funds. The Watershed District completed one septic system upgrade in 2007. Availability of funds is limited.

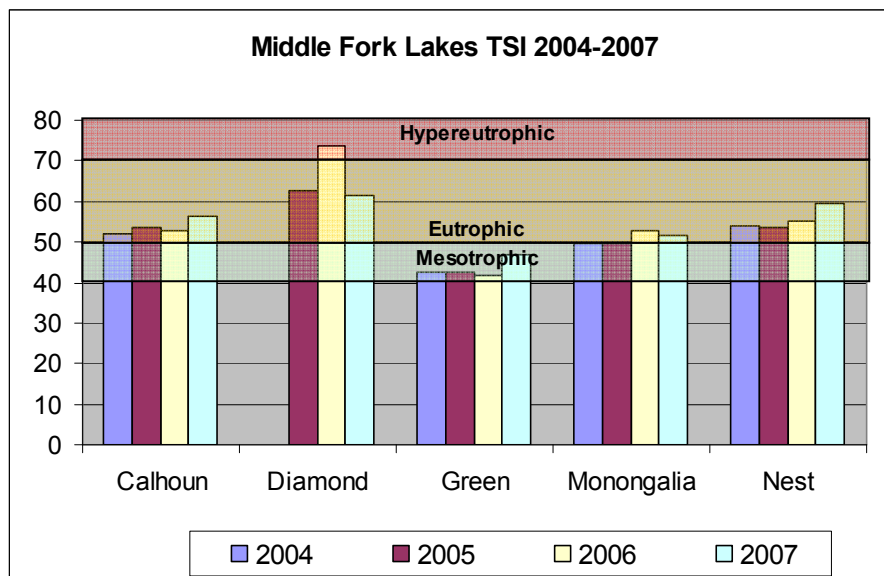
Monitoring Our Waters

Extensive volunteer monitoring efforts continued on Diamond, Green, Nest, Calhoun and Monongalia Lakes in 2007. The results of their efforts on area lakes are revealed in the chart below.

Thanks to our active volunteer monitoring program, in addition to gathering lake data, we were able to expand our monitoring efforts to incorporate streams. These efforts included monitoring stations at several points in the upper half of the watershed. By examining the water quality data from stream monitoring sites with the data collected in the lakes, we will be able to develop a better understanding of

water quality throughout the watershed. This program will help to determine not only where there are pollution issues to be investigated further, but to evaluate trends over time.

Due to the help of our volunteers the District will be able to use their data to show trends in water quality, identify existing or emerging water problems as well as more accurately prepare for future projects. We thank our 2007 volunteers: Bill Gossman, Bob Hodapp, Ron Johnson, Ann Latham, Dean Lovold, Harlan and Sherrie Meints, Jill Nelson, Dale Owens, Ruth Schaefer, Dave Schmidt, and Graden West.



Trophic Status Index (TSI) What does it mean?

Mesotrophic: Water moderately clear; increasing probability of no oxygen in the lowest levels during summer.

Eutrophic: Decreased transparency, lack of oxygen in the lower levels during the summer, weed problems evident, warm-water fisheries only.

Hypereutrophic: Dominance of blue-green algae, algal scums probable, extensive weed problems. Heavy algal blooms possible throughout the summer.

Education

The District's Watershed Management Plan calls for a comprehensive education/outreach program. While a formal program has not yet been developed, our education and outreach efforts have begun. In March of 2007, the Watershed District held a two-part workshop that covered the importance, design, construction and maintenance of rain gardens, which can be a very effective tool to address stormwater problems. Grants were offered to people interested in installing their own projects.

The Watershed District also provided training for our Volunteer Monitors to ensure the use of correct sampling methods; this training was made

possible through a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Because much of the water quality collected in the watershed comes from our network of volunteers, this educational program was important.

2008 holds more opportunities for public education. In February and March the Watershed District is planning to hold a three-part workshop on shoreland restoration and maintenance. The first two sessions will cover the theoretical sides of shoreland restoration, and the third session will provide a practical experience: actually executing a shoreland restoration project. The Watershed District will



offer another volunteer monitoring training early in the Spring of '08 for new volunteers and as a refresher course for return volunteers. Advanced training will also be available for people who want to try a more challenging monitoring experience.

Financial Report

The Watershed District finalized grant agreements that had been verbally awarded at the end of 2006. These included:

- Clean Water Legacy Act Implementation Grant: \$194,000 for implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) such as improvements in animal agriculture, cropland management and shoreline/riparian activities throughout the entire Middle Fork Crow Watershed. This grant is being implemented in conjunction with the Kandiyohi SWCD. It was signed in January, 2007 and expires in June 2009.

- Clean Water Partnership Grant: \$240,000 in grant funds and \$200,000 for low interest loan funds. This grant is for three years and allows us to conduct information and education programs, water quality monitoring and evaluation, and the ability to implement BMP's throughout the entire Middle Fork Crow Watershed. The grant was signed in February 2007.

- Clean Water Legacy Act (CWLA) Surface Water Assessment Grant: \$50,000 grant which was written with the CROW Organization and is for the entire Crow River Watershed (North, Middle and South Forks). This grant will help fund: training volunteers, monitoring on lakes, data, annual reporting and volunteer coordination. The grant was signed in March 2007.

- Minnesota Waters grant (\$3,450): This grant allowed us to conduct two Rain Garden workshops and to implement selected projects in the New London and Spicer area. This grant expired in late fall 2007.

2007 AUDIT

SUMMARY OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES NET ASSETS

Revenues

Grants	\$49,817
General fund	\$234,288
State aid	\$43,805
Interest Income	\$11,029
Miscellaneous	\$ 393
Total Revenues	\$339,332

Expenditures

Meetings	\$14,764
Contract labor	\$23,827
Administrative	\$5,721
BMP implementation expense	\$18,079
Professional expenses	\$11,662
Employee benefits	\$7,355
Dues	\$3,465
Insurance	\$4,689
Payroll expenses	\$72,114
Payroll tax expense	\$6,593
Utilities	\$783
Monitoring	\$19,239
Leased equipment	\$1,995
Office expense	\$20,494
Public education	\$2,013
Depreciation	\$216
Rent	\$5,830
Total Expenses	\$218,839

Change in Fund Balance	120,493
Fund Balance January 1	149,550
Fund Balance December 31	\$270,043

The complete audit report is available at the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District Office.

Watershed Staffing Changes

Julie Klocker continued to serve the Watershed District as administrator for 2007. During this time she was able to land the Watershed district over \$400,000 in grants. In October, Ms. Klocker started the Rules process, which will help shape how the Watershed District regulates different activities such as stormwater runoff, erosion control and drainage.

The Watershed District hired its second staff member in 2007. Vanessa Glieden Henjum was hired as the District Technician. Vanessa joins the District after graduating from the University of Minnesota, Duluth in 2005. Between 2005—2007, Vanessa

Minnesota, Duluth in 2005. During the two years between school and joining the District Vanessa worked as a lab technician first at Bushmills Ethanol and then Epitoix in Willmar. Vanessa will be working with volunteers on monitoring, helping to develop a more robust education program, and working on the TMDL study that will be started in January for Diamond Lake.

The Watershed District's first Administrator, Julie Klocker, announced her acceptance of a position with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) as Assistant Director of Programs and Policy. Even though the Watershed District was sad to see her leave, she will not be leaving the world of water conservation in Minnesota. We wish her well and we expect to see great things from her at BWSR! The search for a new Administrator will be complete by the end of January, 2008.



**Middle Fork Crow
River Watershed
District**

174 Lake Avenue North,
Suite 2
PO Box 8
Spicer, MN 56288

Phone: 320-796-0888
Fax: 320-796-0888
E-mail: info@mfcrow.org

We are on the web
www.mfcrow.org

What's coming up in 2008?

Monitoring

2008 holds a variety of new activities, in addition to continuing those that carry over from 2007. The aforementioned Diamond Lake TMDL study will require plenty of staff time and effort to ensure a successful project. Regular water quality monitoring for the purposes of modeling the watershed will be underway, beginning under ice conditions, and continuing throughout the season. In addition to the TMDL study, the Watershed District's Volunteer Monitoring Program will continue in a slightly expanded version, with the possibility of including sites closer to the headwaters of the watershed.

Rules

The District will continue to work on the development of its rules, which will focus primarily on stormwater management, erosion control, and drainage.

BMP Projects

The Watershed District will work with several stakeholders to explore stormwater management options associated with the County Road 10 reconstruction project. We will also continue working on the expansion of our BMP program; several projects, including shoreland restoration, raingardens, infiltration basins and stream stabilization are already in motion, and we hope to expand our BMP efforts with local farmers.

Education

A three-part shoreland restoration workshop is currently being planned, as are training workshops for ensuring that all volunteer monitors are employing correct sampling techniques. The development of a STORET-compatible website for the purpose of allowing volunteers to post their results on line is being planned. The Watershed District also plans on reaching out to some local schools to begin an environmental education program.