

Middle Fork Crow Watershed District

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What's coming up in 2007?

Now that the Comprehensive Plan is completed and approval is expected, the real work of the watershed district can begin. This milestone, along with the tremendous funding boost we will receive from all the grants we have been awarded put many of our efforts and programs on a fast track. Below is a summary of some of our goals for 2007.

Education Program: We have already planned a two part workshop series on raingarden design and implementation. We will also be holding training workshops for the volunteer monitoring program in cooperation with the Crow River Organization of Water (CROW). Additionally, we hope to launch a website and have regular updates with important conservation information and press releases regarding events and workshops.

Monitoring Program: We will continue and enhance the current surface water quality monitoring program through an expansion

of the volunteer monitoring program. We will also partner with the MPCA to develop a long-term stream monitoring program that will track trends over time.

Best Management Practice Program: This program will be starting from the ground up and will result in a program that provides incentives for landowners, community groups and units of government to implement on the ground projects that improve water quality. Projects may include raingardens, buffer strips, streambank or shoreline restorations and many more.

Administrative Program: Upon approval of our comprehensive plan, we can begin to develop the district rules. Rules are a requirement of watershed districts and are a tool to insure water resources are given adequate protection.

So, with all of these goals and program targets you can see that we are planning to have a great 2008!

Middle Fork Crow Watershed District

Board of Managers

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Robert Hodapp, Kandiyohi County

Vice President:
Robert Zenner, Stearns County

Secretary:
Ruth Schaefer, Kandiyohi County

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Gordy Behm, Kandiyohi County

Vice Treasurer:
Joe Flanders, Meeker County

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Comprehensive Plan Completed

The Watershed completed its state mandated 10 Year Comprehensive Plan this year which will help to guide the District over the next ten years. Within the Plan is an inventory of resources, an assessment of resources, identification of priority issues, plans for implementation and an overview of the administration. The Priority Issues were determined based on input from the informational meeting, the Watershed Management Plan Taskforce and the Advisory Committee. The Issues are divided into 10 subwatersheds and are quite detailed. Priorities include:

Stormwater Management – seek to work with the cities, towns and townships within its borders to mitigate the impact of unregulated stormwater.

Wetland Preservation/Restoration – seek to restore and protect the wetlands within the district, seek to work with partnering agencies.

Erosion and Sediment Control – reduce erosion and sedimentation associated with cultivated agriculture and development through the implementation of BMP's and regulations.

Invasive Aquatic Species – work to control or eradicate invasives such as Curly Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Watermilfoil.

Groundwater Contamination – seek to both educate landowners and agricultural producers about ways to reduce pollution through proper nutrient/pesticide management and waste disposal.

The Watershed District would like to thank Mike Sharp of the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission and all the volunteers and committee members for helping make our comprehensive plan one which is state of the art and provides an excellent roadmap for our future.



Over 60 people attended the November open house to review the draft objectives and 'vote' for those deemed urgent and important.

Keeping Green Grass Out of Green Lake

The MFCRWD spent part of the year promoting an education project intended to reduce storm water pollution due to grass clippings. The "Grass Clipping Campaign" was a collaboration involving the Watershed District, Green Lake Property Owners Association, Kandiyohi Public Works, and the cities of Spicer, New London, Belgrade and Atwater. Nearly 1500 postcards

were sent out informing people about how phosphorus from clippings generates algae growth in lakes and rivers. Signs were placed all around Green Lake. Front page articles in newspapers, radio spots and signs on city storm drains which state "No Dumping—Drains to Lake" were all efforts aimed at informing the public of problems associated with runoff from grass clippings.



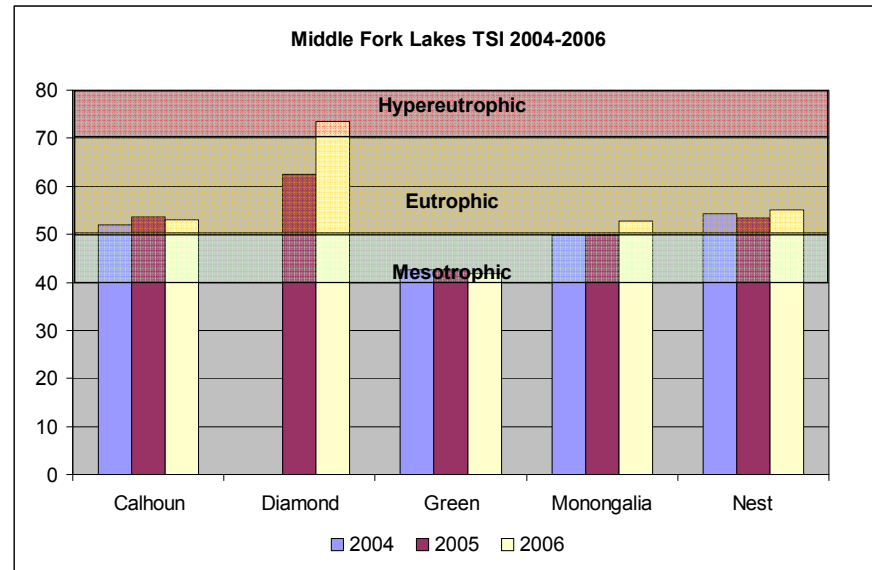
Monitoring Our Waters

This year many volunteers from last year continued to collect data for the MFCRWD in a variety of locations in 2006. Volunteers monitored Diamond, Green, Nest, Calhoun and Monongalia Lakes. The results of their efforts on area lakes is revealed in the chart below.

In addition to gathering lake data, we are laying the foundation for an extensive monitoring program utilizing the USGS flow monitoring station at County Road 2 and steam level monitoring stations at Alvig Slough, Town Hall Road, Old Mill and County Ditch 26. Combining the flow data from these stations with the chemistry sampling data collected from the

volunteer program, we will be able to create an in depth picture of the water quality through loading data. Monitoring programs help to determine not only where there are pollution issues to be investigated further, but allow us to evaluate trends over time.

Thanks 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. This year's volunteers were: Loren Beck, Ron Johnson, Dean Lovold, Jill Nelson, Harlan and Sherrie Meints, Val and Jerry Seckler, Ruth Schaefer, 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.

County Road 10 Project

The County State Aid Highway 10 (CSAH 10), also known as Lake Avenue South, was identified as a possible site for storm water treatment practices which could be implemented as part of the reconstruction of CSAH 10. The goal is to reduce the level of pollutants into Green Lake during both the construction process and in the long term. The Watershed District worked with Jay Michels of Emmons Olivier Resources to supply the City of Spicer with a set of recommendations designed to enhance stormwater treatment. The City of Spicer will move forward with the feasibility study and we hope this study and the development of engineering plans will include the stormwater recommendations.

Surveying Eurasian Watermilfoil on Green Lake

Some studies have suggested that due to factors such as size and substrate materials, Green Lake is not at risk of becoming infested with Eurasian Watermilfoil. However, the



Green Lake Association and the watershed district think this resource is too precious to go unmanaged. In an effort to determine if there has been an increase in abundance of this invasive, non-native species members of the lake association, the watershed district and the DNR conducted a brief survey on October 6. Numerous stands of dense growth were found. A meeting was held to talk about management options that the DNR would support. The lake association will continue to pursue alternatives which allow for more intensive management. The goal is to reduce the potential for this plant to grow into a nuisance situation.

Watershed Hires an Administrator

The Board began the process to hire a Administrator in July 2006. After conducting a thorough employment process, Julie Klocker was hired by the Board in September.

Ms. Klocker brings extensive experience in watershed district operations and project accomplishment from a previous tenure as the Sauk River Watershed District Administrator. While at the Sauk River Watershed, Ms. Klocker managed comprehensive monitoring, educational and land management programs, efforts that earned the organization five major awards for watershed accomplishments.

According to Robert Hodapp, President of the Board, "The District is fortunate to have an Administrator with Klocker's

scope of experience – she has proven capabilities to obtain grant funding and to forge partnerships that make watershed wide projects happen."

As the first Administrator Klocker states, "It is exciting to know that I will

be here to help form the foundation, including development of the Comprehensive Plan. It's a rare opportunity and I am ready for the challenges of starting from the ground up."



From left to right: Robert Hodapp, Ruth Schaefer, Joseph Flanders, Gordon Behm, Julie Klocker and Robert Zenner

Financial Report

After struggling through the first year and a half of existence, the watershed was thrilled that at the end of 2006 we were notified that we have been awarded four grants.

- 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. We partnered with the Kandiyohi SWCD to submit this grant which expires June 2009.

- Clean Water Partnership Grant: \$240,000 grant funds and \$200,000 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.

- 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.

- Conservation Partners Grant: This is a small grant (\$5000) from MN Waters. This grant allowed us to conduct two Rain Garden workshops and to implement selected projects in the New London and Spicer area. This grant expires in late fall 2007.

SUMMARY OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES NET ASSETS

| SUMMARY OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND CHANGES NET ASSETS | |
|---|------------------|
| Revenues | |
| General Fund | \$275,139 |
| Donations | \$247 |
| Interest Income | \$1,343 |
| Miscellaneous | \$2,250 |
| Total Revenues | \$279,249 |
| Expenditures | |
| Meetings | \$12,755 |
| Contract Labor | \$8,781 |
| Administrative | \$4,558 |
| Professional Expenses | \$12,679 |
| Dues | \$2,406 |
| Insurance | \$3,646 |
| Payroll Expenses | \$18,701 |
| Utilities | \$480 |
| Watershed Plan | \$23,059 |
| Monitoring | \$19,245 |
| Public Education | \$481 |
| Rent | \$2,600 |
| Total Expenses | \$109,391 |
| Change in Fund Balance | 169,858 |
| Fund Balance January 1 | (20,308) |
| Fund Balance December 31 | \$149,550 |

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