



Red Lake River Watershed: Planning for a new era in water management

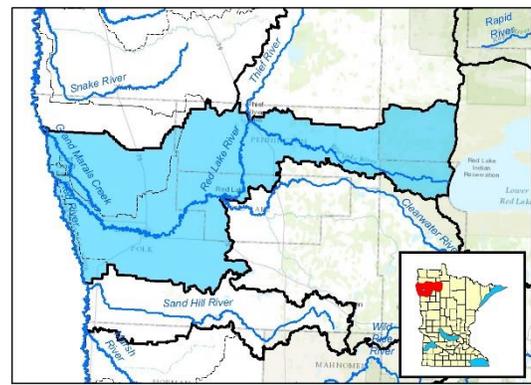
October 2015 Snapshots



Since submitting a nomination to be a part of *One Watershed, One Plan* in April 2014, the local government entities in Pennington, Polk, and Red Lake counties have been deeply engaged in making progress on the Red River Watershed Plan.

“We’ve gotten to a good point where we are making progress on the actual plan,” said Corey Hanson, Red Lake Watershed District Water Quality Coordinator. “We’re getting the priority concerns figured out and are starting to get different parts of the plan finalized.”

One Watershed, One Plan has foundations in the Local Government Water Roundtable, in which the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASCWD), and the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) committed to collaboration. The *One Watershed, One Plan* program, developed in 2013 and funded by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment, offers grants and assistance to local governments charged with water management responsibility to help them make the transition to water planning on a watershed scale.



“I like the fact that you will end up with one plan instead of eight for the designated area,” said Tanya Hanson, Red Lake River SWCD District Manager. “I believe the plan will help prioritize and target future projects.”

Since June 2014 when the BWSR Board approved the Red Lake River Watershed *One Watershed, One Plan* nomination, the Red Lake River Watershed pilot project team has been meeting regularly to outline the plan and communicate with the consultant. In the last thirteen months, the group has built upon the Red Lake River Watershed area’s history of strong intergovernmental collaboration, working together to compile watershed information and data and to write the draft plan.

“Over the years the Red Lake Watershed District has partnered in many projects with various local units of government, including SWCDs and counties,” said Myron Jesme, Red Lake River Watershed District Administrator. “These types of working relationships have gone a long way in assuring the Red Lake Watershed that *One Watershed, One Plan* will stay on track.”

The Red Lake River Watershed pilot project team continues to engage in planning meetings and communication with the consultant to finalize the draft plan.

“With more LGUs involved, you have to get all of the LGUs on the same page before you can communicate information to the consultant,” said Peter Nelson, Pennington SWCD Water Plan Coordinator. “You can’t have just one LGU working with the consultant. We find it works best to have the LGUs meet often and relay that information to the consultant.”

More and more Minnesotans are starting to recognize the need to talk about water quality, quantity, and management. The Red Lake River *One Watershed, One Plan* pilot project is pioneering Minnesota’s water future, setting the groundwork to permanently improve water quality across Minnesota.