

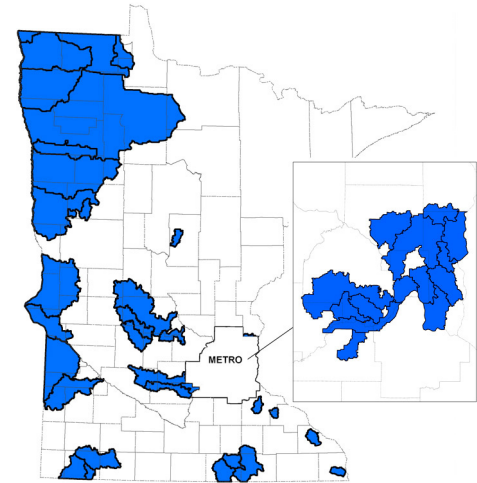
# Watershed District manager appointments

**Effective water management:  
seldom a solo effort**

Improving water quality or addressing flood prevention in one community almost always requires partnerships among many organizations in the surrounding area. Watershed District boundaries are based on the natural, hydrologic boundaries of a watershed, because water doesn't follow political boundaries.

Watershed Districts are independent, special purpose units of government that are created by petition. Some exist mainly to minimize property damage caused by flooding, while others have a broad range of programs and services that protect and improve water quality.

 Watershed District locations



**Appoint good managers:  
get good return on  
investment**

Recruiting and appointing qualified, professional Watershed District managers is a key to sound water management. Watershed Districts work with counties, state and federal government agencies, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and other organizations to accomplish conservation projects that provide tremendous value to state and local taxpayers.

**Watershed District  
manager responsibilities**

Watershed District manager duties include preparing for and attending board meetings, serving as a liaison to the local community, attending regional and statewide training, and responding professionally to inquiries from the public.

Watershed District managers:

1. Oversee and guide -- Utilizing appropriate staff, partnerships and consultants, Watershed District boards guide overall planning and implementation of education, monitoring, construction and regulatory programs.
2. Utilize unique authorities – Watershed Districts exercise local levy authority and a unique statutory blend of authorities to finance projects and programs, and some may establish standards regarding land use or development activities to protect water quality and prevent flooding.



*Heiberg dam - Wild Rice Watershed District.*



**State laws related to appointing watershed district managers are found in M.S. section 103D.311.**

# Watershed District manager appointments

## Factors to consider

- **Experience:** does the candidate have relevant experience in water resources, executive, administrative or board experience?
- **Representation/Geography:** does the candidate represent a sector, location or interest which is needed on the watershed district board (but will not act only on behalf of that interest)?
- **Beliefs:** does the candidate support the mission and primary goals of the watershed district?
- **Trust:** as the appointing authority, does the county board have familiarity with or knowledge of the candidate to insure that the watershed district's responsibilities will be fulfilled?
- **Commitment Level:** is the candidate willing to invest the necessary time and energy to prepare for and attend watershed board meetings, serve as a liaison to the local community, attend regional and statewide training, receive and respond professionally to inquiries from the public?
- **Expectations:** is the candidate willing to be a liaison to the county board on a regular basis?



*Vesledahl wetland restoration - Sand Hill River Watershed District.*

## Application and Interview

The appointment process should be clear, deliberate and transparent in order to recruit and appoint the best candidate. A model job description and expectations for Watershed District managers can be found at [www.mnwatershed.org](http://www.mnwatershed.org). Each Watershed District also has a comprehensive plan, annual budget and other documents that may be helpful in considering the qualifications of potential candidates.

## Processing the decision

Approaches for identifying, screening and nominating candidates:

- County Board standing committee.
- Committee of commissioners representing the watershed district area.
- County Appointments Committee or staff recommendation.
- For watersheds which have multiple counties, establish a committee with representation from each county to make recommendations to the respective county board.
- Recommendation from the Watershed District Advisory Committee.



*Lake Calhoun pond restoration - Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.*

\* Note: For districts wholly in the seven-county Twin Cities Metro Area, towns and municipalities jointly or severally within the district submit at least three nominees for each manager's position to be filled. The county board appoints the managers from this list. The county board may select managers from towns and municipalities if a list is not submitted.

## For more information

Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts  
540 Diffley Road  
St. Paul, MN 55123  
(651) 452-8506  
[www.mnwatershed.org](http://www.mnwatershed.org)

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
(651) 296-3767  
[www.bwsr.state.mn.us](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us)