



Water Resources Center

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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Clean Water Listening Sessions

The University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center (WRC) and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) are actively seeking input on a plan to protect and preserve Minnesota's lakes, streams, rivers and groundwater for the 21st century and beyond.

WRC and BWSR staff will conduct a series of listening sessions around the state to gather ideas and insights to inform the Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework, a 25-year plan on how and when to make investments that will ensure the purity and abundance of Minnesota's water for generations to come. Citizens, local officials and water resources professionals are invited to attend the listening session in their area to provide input on this plan.

In 2008, Minnesota voters approved a Constitutional Amendment to protect drinking water sources; to protect, enhance, and restore wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat; to preserve arts and cultural heritage; to support parks and trails; and to protect, enhance, and restore lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater. The amendment created a three-eighths of a percent sales tax to fund, among other things, the protection and preservation of Minnesota's freshwater. The amendment has the potential to raise more than \$275 million a year, of which roughly one third will go toward protecting and preserving Minnesota's surface and ground water. The WRC has been charged by the Legislature to develop this framework to serve as a roadmap — with clear signposts on how and when to spend the money and on what initiatives — based on scientific research, expert opinion, and input from citizens.

In early 2009 BWSR conducted listening sessions focused on informing attendees on how priorities would be established in the short-term for spending clean water and habitat dollars generated by the Constitutional Amendment, and this year's listening sessions will focus on evaluating efforts to date and on developing the long term priorities and strategies for clean, sustainable water.

"We see value in reprising the sessions we hosted a year ago and again expect to gather valuable insights and ideas on the expectations for Clean Water funding" said John Jaschke, BWSR Executive Director.

"The Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework is intended to serve as a roadmap for decision makers—with clear recommendations on how and when to invest and on what initiatives," says Dr. Deborah Swackhamer, Water Resources Center co-director and project leader. "This partnership between BWSR and the WRC will be a great way to bring in the perspectives from a broad set of stakeholders who are representative of the diversity of Minnesota's communities and landscapes."

Visit the Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework project website at wrc.umn.edu to learn more about the project. You are also encouraged to visit the website to be one of 10,000 people to complete the “Minnesotans and Their Water” [online survey](#).

Two separate but similar sessions are planned for each location. The agenda and locations for the listening sessions are noted below.

12:30-3:30 p.m. Regional water resource professionals

- Overview of Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment
- One year status report and check-in on Clean Water Fund implementation
- Overview of Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework Project
- Quantitative Input Session
- Qualitative Input Session

4-6 p.m. Citizens and local officials

- Overview of Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment
- Overview of Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework Project
- Quantitative Input Session
- Qualitative Input Session

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>
St. Cloud - Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites, Hwy. 23 & 15	Jan 19
Chanhassen – Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Snyder Auditorium	Jan 21
Crookston - UMC, Youngquist Auditorium	Feb 3
Brainerd - Northland Arboretum	Feb 4
Duluth - MPCA Building, 525 Lake Avenue South, 4th Floor	Feb 10
Rochester - Holiday Inn, South 1630 S. Broadway	Feb 11
Marshall - Best Western, 1500 E. College Drive	Feb 16
West St. Paul - Thompson Park, Dakota Lodge	Feb 18
St. Paul – Capitol Region Watershed District (7 to 9 p.m. for citizens and local officials)	Feb. 25