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Innovative approach to water management takes next step

Seven new planning areas announced as part of One Watershed, One Plan

St. Paul, Minn. - Continuing statewide work to shift local water planning to a more holistic, coordinated approach, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) approved seven new planning grants for the One Watershed, One Plan program. The August 26 board action allocates up to \$1,700,000 in Clean Water Fund grants to fund seven planning projects to address water quality on a watershed basis. The program aligns planning on major watershed boundaries with prioritized, targeted, and measurable watershed plans that will be developed and implemented locally.

These new planning grants follow on the heels of a successful pilot phase that involved five watersheds from around the state. Local governments will build on existing efforts, using current local water plans, state and local knowledge, and a systematic, science-based approach to watershed management in plan development. The resulting plans will address the largest threats to provide the greatest environmental benefits to each watershed and will involve a broad range of stakeholders, including local governments, state agencies, and community members as true partners in the planning process.

"We learned a great deal from the pilot phase," BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke said. "Using lessons learned from those five areas, we developed program guidelines and principles that will help the rest of the state transition over the next decade to this approach. These more efficient plans will include prioritized, targeted, and measurable implementation practices - good news for Minnesota's waters and its citizens."

The seven planning areas are:

- Cannon River watershed, which includes parts of Dakota, Goodhue, Le Sueur, Rice, Steele, and Waseca counties.
- Cedar River watershed, which includes parts of Dodge, Freeborn, Mower, and Steele counties.
- Lake of the Woods watershed, which includes parts of Lake of the Woods and Roseau counties.
- Leech Lake River watershed, which includes parts of Beltrami, Cass, and Hubbard counties.
- Missouri River Basin watershed, which includes parts of Jackson, Lincoln, Murray, Nobles, and Pipestone counties and all of Rock County.
- Pomme de Terre River watershed, which includes parts of Big Stone, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Stevens, and Swift counties.
- Thief River watershed, which includes parts of Beltrami, Marshall, Pennington, and Roseau counties.

More information about the One Watershed One Plan program, including its guiding principles and plan outcomes as well as a map of the participating watersheds, can be found at BWSR's website: www.bwsr.state.mn.us.

Governor Mark Dayton has declared a Year of Water Action in the state of Minnesota. Governor Dayton has

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called on Minnesotans to examine their individual responsibility in keeping Minnesota's water drinkable, swimmable, and fishable for generations to come. Find out more at online at mn.gov/governor or on social media using #WaterActionMN.