

<b>Project Name</b>	Brown's Creek Watershed District (BCWD) Watershed Management Plan Update	<b>Date</b>	10-14-2024
<b>Meeting Location</b>	Stillwater Public Library		
<b>Regarding</b>	Watershed Management Plan Update; Land Conservation and Ecological Health		
<b>Attendee(s) + Info.</b>	CAC – Anne Maule-Miller, George Vania, Yihong Gao, Sandy Noreen-Ruben, Board Liaison - Celia Wirth District Staff – Karen Kill, Cameron Blake, Camilla Correll (EOR), Alexander Furneaux (EOR)		
<b>Recorded By</b>	Alexander Furneaux, EOR		

## Meeting Overview

EOR staff attended the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting to lead a discussion on two issues being revised as part of the BCWD Watershed Management Plan (WMP) update. Alexander provided a summary of Plan progress input received from the TAC on the Issues of Stormwater Management and Stream Management. Alexander noted that the BCWD Board provided initial comments on the Issues discussed with the CAC and TAC in August. EOR also shared the approach to considering climate change impacts and DEI in the planning process. The remainder of the meeting was used to discuss two Issue categories “Land Conservation” and “Ecological Health”.

CAC members were asked to identify concerns/threats, management strategies, monitoring opportunities, and engagement opportunities associated with these Issues. Of importance was understanding how these Issues are evolving and what updates are required to ensure the relevance of the Issue for the coming 10 years.

## Discussion

The following summary of the meeting discussion includes input received from the CAC during the meeting, input on these Issues received following the meeting (if any), and input on the Issue received through prior engagement as part of the Watershed Management Plan Update.

This input is summarized in **Table 1** and **Table 2** and separated by content discussed that is Within the Plan Currently<sup>1</sup>, New to the Update, or Out of Scope of the District’s authority (if applicable).

Information from these tables will be used to update the following subsections of the Issue Statements in the Plan in the following ways:

- **Concerns/Threats** – Informs potential updates to the General Issue Statement (3.X.1), Relevance to the District (3.X.2), and Sub-Issue Areas (3.X.3).
- **Management Strategies** – Informs potential Goals (new or updated).
- **Monitoring Opportunities** - Informs potential Implementation Items (new or updated).

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to content within the Plan currently that was discussed by CAC members. More content on the Issue is available but was not referenced by participants.

- **Engagement Opportunities** – Informs potential Implementation Items (new or updated).

Prior to the small group discussion, EOR shared revisions to the Ecological Health Issue Statement and Relevance to the District. The group agreed that characterizing the issue as a watershed health issue and speaking to the ecosystem services of upland areas was an important revision to this section of the Plan. The CAC was supportive of the changes presented at the meeting.

**Table 1. Land Conservation**

	Concerns/Threats	Management Strategies	Monitoring Opportunities	Engagement Opportunities
Within the Plan Currently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat loss/fragmentation.</li> <li>Loss of groundwater recharge zones.</li> <li>Climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards for development near/within land protection corridors.</li> <li>Prairie, wetland, and woodland restoration.</li> <li>Buckthorn and invasive species management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 2017 BCWD Conservation Easement Baseline Report.</li> <li>Bird and plant species sampling/surveying.</li> <li>Unique Species Inventory.</li> <li>Continue to measure stream flows to understand if the water is cold enough at the Conservation Easement to support trout and other cold-water dependent species.</li> <li>Trail camera capturing mammal species mostly.</li> <li>Macroinvertebrate sampling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration with partners to protect land.</li> <li>CAC and community stewardship.</li> </ul>
New to the Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEI in this Issue should read “Equitable access <i>and protection</i> to land and natural resources”</li> <li>More new development and subdivision potential as agriculture in the area decreases.</li> <li>People who want to put their properties into conservation easement when they pass away but don’t formalize it. Inheritors selling the land against their family’s wishes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing tree preservation goals with municipalities.</li> <li>Consider developing an incentive program for native plantings along shorelines.</li> <li>Engagement with homeowners who live next to the Conservation Easement.</li> <li>Encouraging native planting as an adaptation strategy to more extreme wet/dry conditions.</li> <li>Where possible conserve land without having to purchase the property, help people understand what they can do themselves on their property.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationship building between BCWD and community, and BCWD as a facilitator of connecting the community with other resources. E.g:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BCWD working with people to get them to participate in entering an easement (newsletter, neighbor outreach).</li> <li>BCWD connecting people to representatives at the County and Minnesota Land Trust.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Engagement at the Conservation Easement. Discussion of extent to which BCWD opens the Conservation Easement to broader public</li> </ul>

				<p>access. Also discussed during the August meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Add "Who to contact" portion to the property sign if people want a tour.</li><li>○ Consider a geocaching event on the property, locations show comparison between now and past.</li><li>○ Tie-in to <i>Recreation</i> with opportunities for tours with organization (e.g. scouts) to learn about conservation activities.</li><li>○ Consider <i>Recreation</i> potential of squirrel hunting, recognized as a practice in the area.</li><li>○ Engage Conservation Easement neighbors to collaborate on the management of the area (Nature Conservancy model), protect land without having to buy it all</li></ul>
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Table 2. Ecological Health

	Concerns/Threats	Management Strategies	Monitoring Opportunities	Engagement Opportunities
Within the Plan Currently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degraded fisheries.</li> <li>Aquatic and terrestrial invasive species (AIS &amp; TIS).</li> <li>Lack of understanding of ecosystem services.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAC noted it would be helpful to have a graphic in the plan conveying interrelated elements contributing to a healthy watershed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Climate change.</li> <li>Habitat fragmentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native plant preservation and restoration.</li> <li>Cost-sharing invasive species management where there is water quality benefit.</li> <li>Upland management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bird and plant species sampling/surveying</li> <li>TSS monitoring</li> <li>Pollutant loading monitoring</li> <li>Unique Species Inventory</li> <li>Routine monitoring of fish in lakes and streams, increased frequency would be a value-add.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invasive species management <i>Education and Outreach</i></li> <li>Collaboration on vegetation maintenance practices</li> <li>Citizen amphibian and reptile survey</li> </ul>
New to the Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEI in this Issue should read “Equitable access <i>and protection</i> to clean water”</li> <li>People releasing pets (e.g. bullfrogs and goldfish) into water resources, e.g Long Lake.</li> <li>“Unique features” currently captures trails and scenic areas, compared to biological unique areas (Section 1.2.6.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to wean people off seeing BCWD as the “doer” so that people take action on their own/assume the actions BCWD undertakes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish surveys on lakes and ponds conducted when Lake Management Plan developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we define “Ecological Health”; what ways the district help convey the components of a healthy watershed.</li> <li><i>Education and Outreach</i>, invasive species information on the website</li> <li>Sharing stories of what is being monitored, what needs improvement, and how landowners can contribute to these improvements on their properties. Could include attending township board meetings to share these stories.</li> <li><i>Education and Outreach</i>, work with the Gateway Trail Association along the trail.</li> <li>Ongoing discussion of increasing name recognition, how the BCWD should engage renters, businesses, etc...</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Education and Outreach</i>, connecting with more diverse audiences.</li></ul>
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