

Project Name	Brown's Creek Watershed District Watershed Management Plan Update	Date	02-12-2025
To / Contact info	BCWD Board of Managers		
Cc / Contact info	Karen Kill, BCWD; Camilla Correll, EOR		
From / Contact info	Alexander Furneaux, EOR		
Regarding	Issue Update – Ecological Health, Erosion and Sediment Control		

Background

To complete the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) Update, staff are reviewing Issues with watershed partners (Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee), and reviewing plans and work completed over the past 10 years to identify updates to the Issues, Goals, and Implementation Actions that will guide the next 10 years of work.

Submittal Materials / Instructions

As a reminder, we will be reviewing the following issue categories at the February Board meeting:

- Ecological Health
- Erosion and Sediment Control

Attached to this memorandum, you will find the following materials which we are asking you to review in advance of next week's Board meeting:

1. **Ecological Health** (Track Changes version) – Review the *General Issue Statement, Relevance to the District, Sub-Issue Areas, and Policies and Goals*. You may review the *Implementation Items as well, however these will not be the focus of the conversation*.
2. **Erosion and Sediment Control** (Track Changes version)– Same comments as above.
3. **Ecological Health** (Clean version)
4. **Erosion and Sediment Control** (Clean version)

For next week's discussion, we are asking the Board if they are comfortable with the content developed to date. This content is still subject to change and may be modified based on what we learn over the coming months. We are looking for you to tell us if the changes made to the document are in line with what you think the BCWD should be doing for the next 10 years. With this in mind, please think about the following questions as you review each of these documents:

- **What do you like about this content?**
- **What concerns do you have with the content?**
- **What doesn't make sense? Where would you like more education on a topic or aspect of this issue?**

Be prepared – We will ask you to answer these questions during our meeting.

Areas of Board of Manager Decision

As stated above, the revised sections of the Plan are provided for initial review and reaction to understand whether new directions for these Issues align with the Board's comfort level. As the WMP Update progresses to review other Issues, interrelationships between Issues may result in changes

to the Issues presented. The Board will have further opportunity to refine and sign-off on the characterization of these Issues.

We ask that the Board review the three Issue sections of **Ecological Health** and **Erosion and Sediment Control** to provide input and direction on:

- General Issue Statement
- Relevance to the District
- Sub-Issue Areas
- Policies
- Goals

Major Changes

Ecological Health

1. Encompassing a broader view of the interrelationships between surface water resources and surrounding landscapes. Recent field studies continue to suggest that the District contains unique and rare species indicative of the watershed system's health.
2. Sub-issues are proposed to change to reflect:
 - a. Greater clarity that maintaining ecological health involves the protection and enhancement of upland areas and their associated ecosystem service functions (water quality [filtration], water rate control, groundwater recharge, habitat)
 - b. Increasing concerns related to competition from invasive species that negatively impact water resources (e.g. Buckthorn impacts the understory which has implications on soil erosion increasing nutrient and sediment loads).

Erosion and Sediment Control

1. Expanding the issue to consider how soil health impacts processes of erosion and sedimentation. Emphasis is placed on the impact of land disturbing activities including natural vegetation clearing, agriculture, and urban development which have degraded soil structure.
2. Climate change impacts consider how swings between drought and periods of heavy precipitation accelerate erosion and sedimentation. Disturbed soils dry out faster and retain less moisture, making them less resilient precipitation events leading to greater erosion and sediment transport.
3. Sub-issues are proposed to change to reflect:
 - a. A proactive approach to identifying areas of higher risk of erosion due to changing climate conditions.
 - b. Less emphasis on agricultural practices due to findings from the 4th Generation Plan that yielded little impactful projects to address the issue. Pivoting to a broader sub-issue of Soil Health Practices that encompasses efforts that can occur on developed land to improve soil quality through remedial actions (e.g. turf conversion, reintroduction of organic materials).