

# RCRCA 2018 YEAR-IN-REVIEW



# REDWOOD-COTTONWOOD RIVERS CONTROL AREA (RCRCA)

8 County and 8 SWCD Joint Powers Organization  
pursuant to MN Statutes Section 471.59

*Partner Counties:*

*Brown, Cottonwood, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray,  
Pipestone, Redwood and Yellow Medicine*

**16 Member Board of Directors consisting of an appointed  
Commissioner and SWCD Supervisor from each county**

*Funding consists of \$75,000  
from county appropriations*

# RCRCA'S MISSION STATEMENT

RCRCA, in cooperation with partner groups and individual landowners, works to improve water quality, reduce erosion, and provide enhanced recreational opportunities by providing education, outreach, monitoring and technical assistance within the watershed boundaries.

# RCRCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(COMMISSIONER / SWCD SUPERVISOR)



- *Executive Board Members*  
*3 SWCD / 3 Commissioners*

- ▶ **Brown County**
  - ▶ Dennis Potter; Jeff Nielsen
- ▶ **Cottonwood County**
  - ▶ Norman Holmen; Clark Lingbeek
- ▶ **Lincoln County**
  - ▶ Corey Sik; Glen Sorensen
- ▶ **Lyon County**
  - ▶ Rick Anderson; Mark Meulebroeck
- ▶ **Murray County**
  - ▶ Lori Gunnink; Paul Posthuma
- ▶ **Pipestone County**
  - ▶ Luke Johnson; Arvin Pater
- ▶ **Redwood County**
  - ▶ Lon Walling; Ed Carter
- ▶ **Yellow Medicine County**
  - ▶ Glen Kack; Tom Remmele

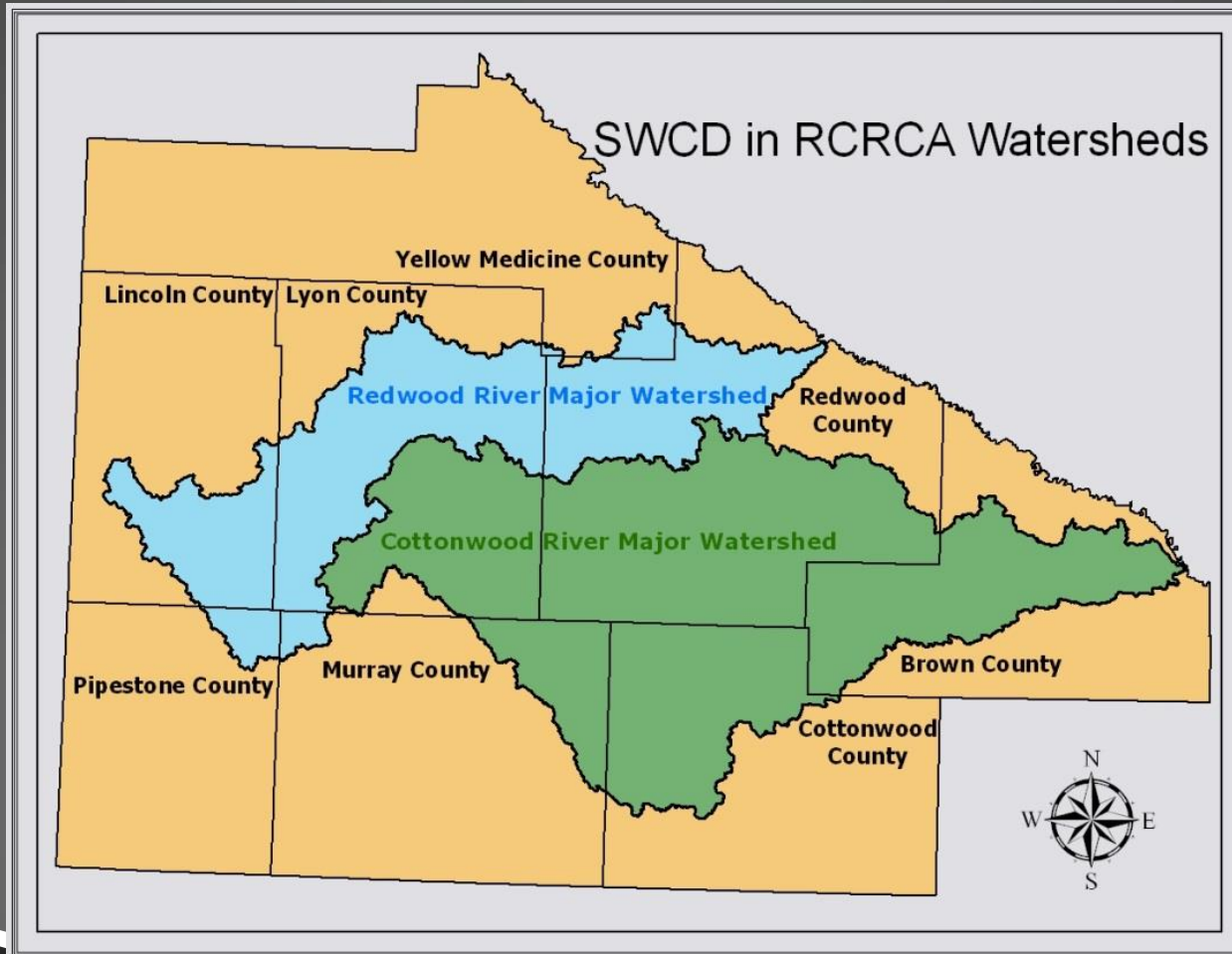


# RCRCA STAFF

- ▶ Kerry Netzke, Executive Director  
*(5 years of service)*
- ▶ Joy Bruns, Office Manager  
*(8 years of service)*
- ▶ Bill Moldestad, PE, Watershed Engineer  
*(16 years of service)*
- ▶ Shawn Wohnoutka, Watershed Technician  
*(15 years of service)*



- ▶ Cottonwood River Watershed 838,200 acres
- ▶ Redwood River Watershed 452,480 acres
- ▶ TOTAL 1,290,680 acres / 2,017 sq. miles



# ACTIVITIES

Determine watershed “Priority Areas” based on GIS, research, and water quality assessments.

Accelerate conservation adoption through securing additional funding for BMP cost share, long-term monitoring, GIS/Outreach and technical assistance.

Track and report BMP successes, re-evaluate priority areas, and re-focus efforts.

## ENDED GRANTS:

\$301,024 **Redwood River Turbidity Reduction Project** Clean Water Partnership Grant (*Ended 6/30/2018*)

## ENDING GRANTS:

\$75,605.17 **Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG)** for Redwood and Cottonwood River Watersheds (*12/31/2018*)

## CONTINUING GRANTS:

\$210,741.65 **Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN) Grant** for both watersheds (*2-year Amendment until 6/30/2020*)

**Discovery Farms Minnesota** (*through 12/31/2023*); reimbursed time & mileage

\$5,500 **MN Department of Agriculture Pesticide Monitoring** (annual purchase order)

\$77,000 **Watershed Restoration & Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Planning Grant**

## NEW GRANTS:

\$200,000 **Watershed Restoration And Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Grant** for the Cottonwood Watershed

\$200,000 **Watershed Restoration And Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Grant** for the Redwood Watershed

# GRANTS



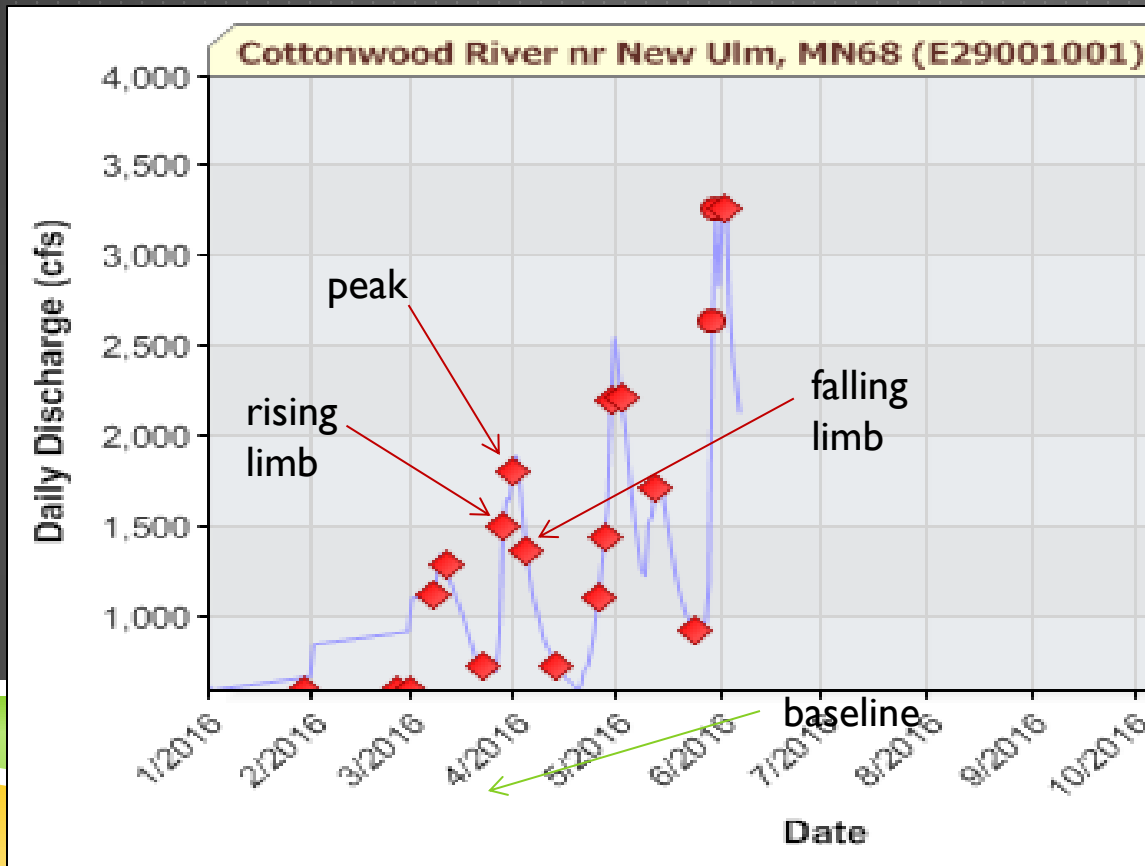
# WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Shawn Wohnoutka conducted sampling for 5 separate grants consisting of 654 samples taken in 2018.

- ▶ 210 samples for MPCA's Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN)
- ▶ 50 samples for MN Department of Ag for pesticide residue testing, + 3 lake samples
- ▶ 153 samples for MPCA's Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG), +25 lake samples
- ▶ 91 samples for MPCA's Watershed Restoration & Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Grant
- ▶ 122 samples for Discovery Farms  
*(10/1/2017 – 10/1/2018 water year)*



# MPCA's Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN) continues for the Redwood and Cottonwood watersheds.



Year-round storm-based stream sampling

- 3 sites in the Cottonwood River watershed
- 3 sites in the Redwood River watershed
- 1 site on the Minnesota River (Morton, MN)



▶ MPCA's Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) began March 2017 for the Redwood and Cottonwood watersheds.

▶ 2-Year Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG)

- ▶ June thru September – 2-3 x month stream sampling
  - ▶ 16 sites in the Cottonwood River watershed
  - ▶ 8 sites in the Redwood River watershed
- ▶ May thru September – 1 x month lake sampling
  - ▶ 4 lakes in the Cottonwood River watershed
  - ▶ 1 lake in the Redwood River watershed

# Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Gap Sampling

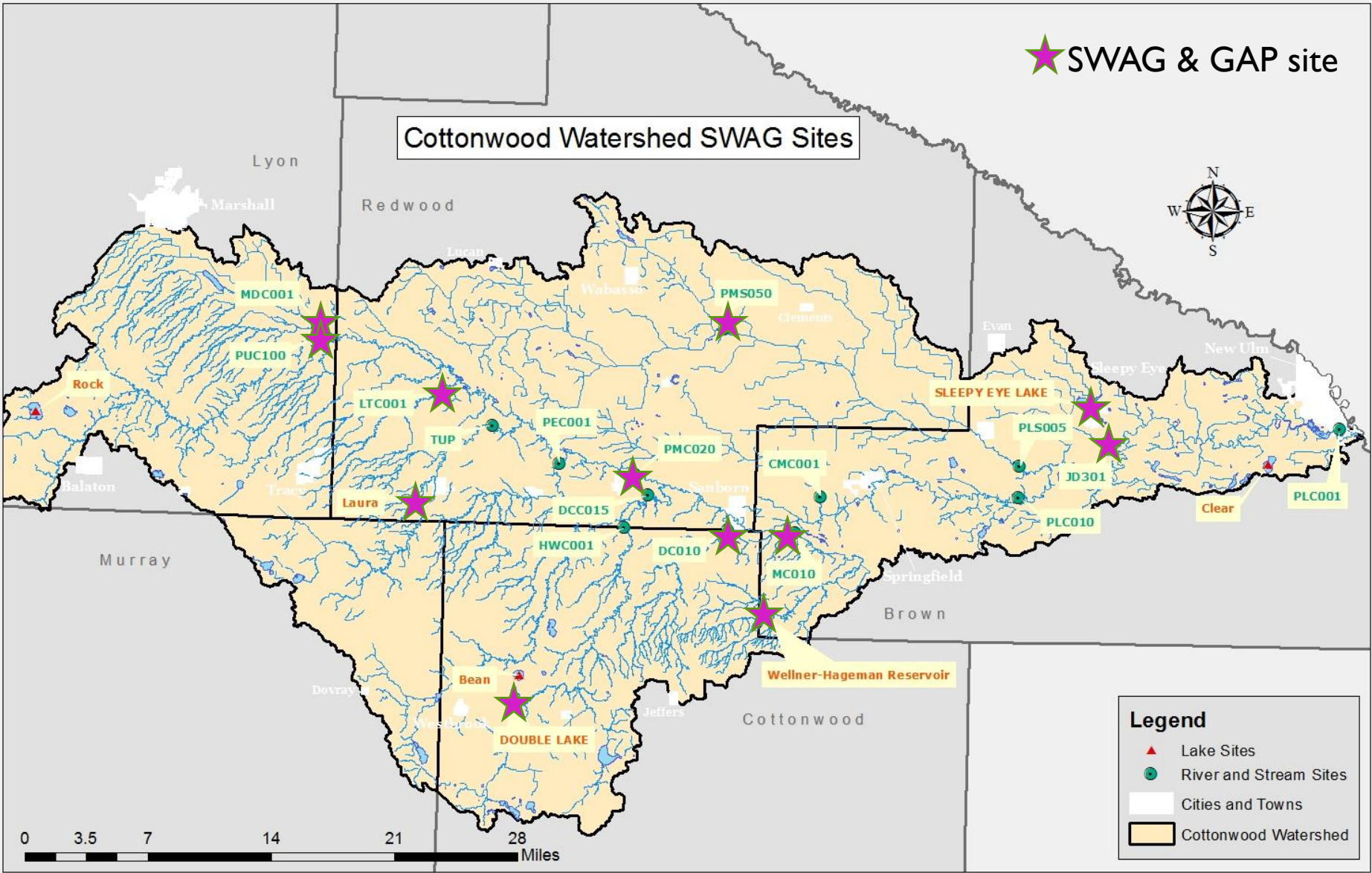
Gap samples are intended to obtain a sufficient number of samples for analysis to eliminate “insufficient findings” when the WRAPS report is written.

June thru September – 2 x month stream sampling  
9 sites in the Cottonwood River watershed  
4 sites in the Redwood River watershed



★ SWAG & GAP site

### Cottonwood Watershed SWAG Sites

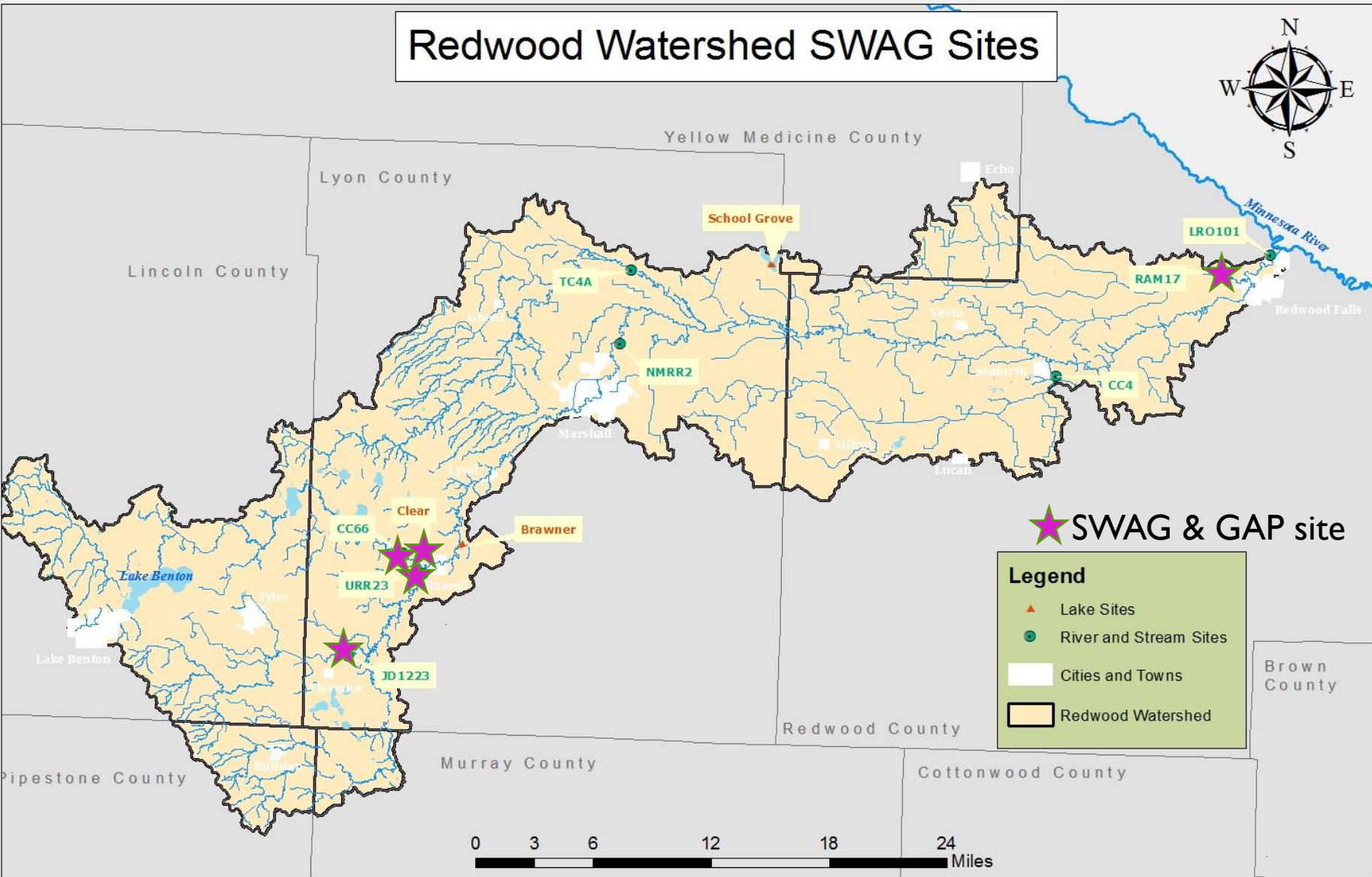


**Legend**

- ▲ Lake Sites
- River and Stream Sites
- Cities and Towns
- Cottonwood Watershed

0 3.5 7 14 21 28 Miles

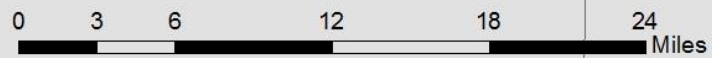
# Redwood Watershed SWAG Sites



**★ SWAG & GAP site**

**Legend**

- ▲ Lake Sites
- River and Stream Sites
- Cities and Towns
- ▭ Redwood Watershed



# Minnesota Department of Ag's Pesticide Monitoring

*May thru August – storm-based stream sampling*

## Redwood River Watershed:

Three Mile Creek (Green Valley)

Redwood River (Redwood Falls)

## Cottonwood River Watershed:

Sleepy Eye Creek (Leavenworth)

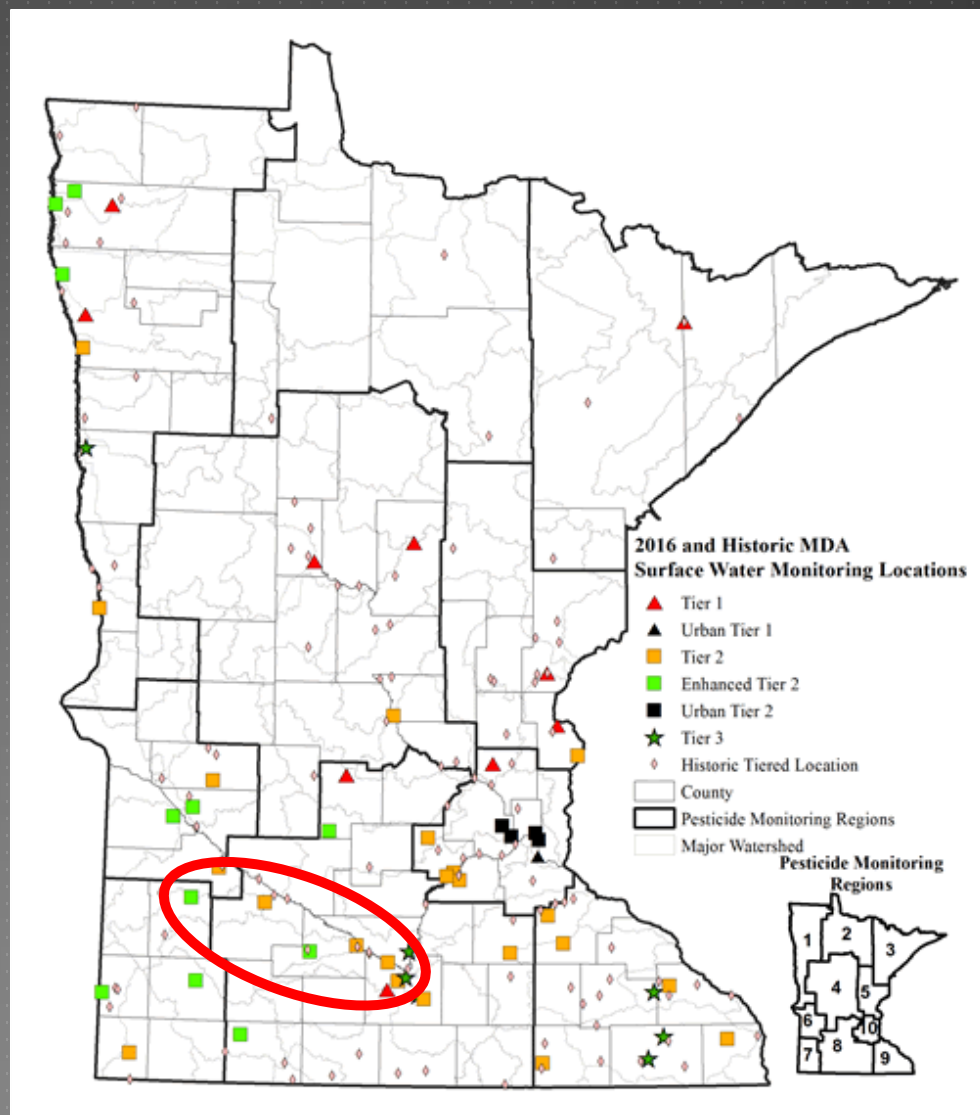
Cottonwood River (New Ulm)



With over **30 years** of monitoring data, the MDA operates one of the few programs with sufficient long term data to evaluate changes in water quality over time.

Minnesota's pesticide water monitoring program is one of the most comprehensive programs in the country and is regarded as a national leader.

The MDA increased the number of detectable pesticides from 44 in 2009 to **138** in 2015.





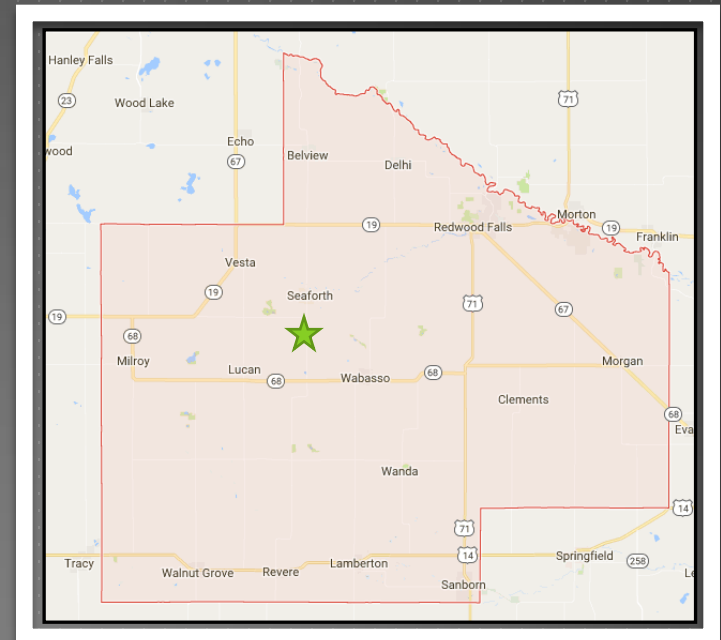
Discovery Farms Minnesota is a farmer-led effort to gather field scale water quality information from different types of farming systems, in landscapes all across Minnesota.

The goal is to provide practical, credible, site-specific water quality information to enable better farm management.

The program collects accurate measurements of sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus movement over the soil surface and through subsurface drainage tiles. This work leads to a better understanding of the relationship between agricultural management and water quality.



## Discovery Farms MN



- North 12.5 ac
- South 10.2 ac
- Surface runoff and tile
- Soils: Ves loam
- Slope: 2-3%





For more information:  
<https://discoveryfarmsmn.org>





Deane River 14

**RCRCA**  
Redwood Cottonwood Rivers Control Area  
1-507-637-2142

**RCRCA**  
Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area  
1-507-637-2142

**RCRCA**  
Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area  
1-507-637-2142

# 2018 Outreach Activities



# CANOE TRIPS







- ▶ The Environmental Fair gathers 5th and 6th grade students from an 11-county area.
- ▶ The 1-day event provides a fun-filled learning about the world around us through demonstrations and student participation.
- ▶ Topics include: trees, native prairie, ground and surface water, soils, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife and much more!

# SW MN ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR

In 2018, 212 students from 9 schools visited RCRCA's stream table exhibit.

Shawn speaks about different kinds of pollution and what can be done to protect our land and water.

The stream table shows in 5 minutes the erosion that can happen over a period of 30 years or more.

ALL students left with a RCRCA backpack, compliments of the Redwood River Turbidity Reduction Grant through MPCA.







In 2018, the St. Matthew Lutheran Youth Group of Wabasso assisted with the twice-per-year clean up effort of the 2-mile stretch of Hwy 19 near Vesta, MN.

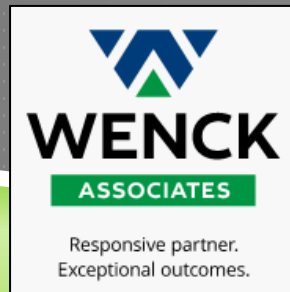
RCRCA and Area II proudly presented the group with a \$400 donation towards their mission trip to Mississippi.

**ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY**



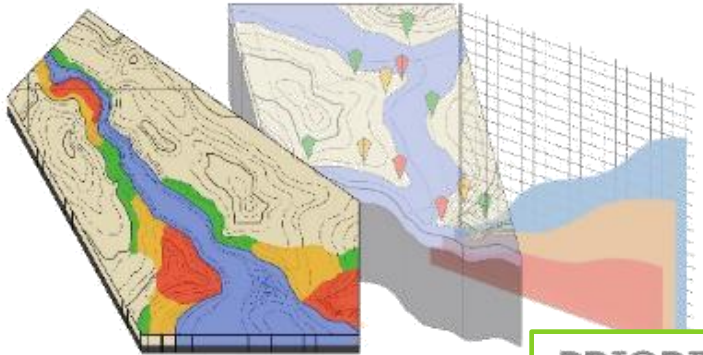
# LOCAL WORK GROUP

- ▶ Brown, Cottonwood, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood & Yellow Medicine **Environmental Offices**
- ▶ Brown, Cottonwood, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood & Yellow Medicine **SWCDs**
- ▶ Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA)
- ▶ MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
- ▶ Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- ▶ Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR)
- ▶ MN Department of Agriculture (MDA)
- ▶ MN Department of Health (MDH)
- ▶ Wenck Associates, Inc.



# WRAPS

PRIORITIZE • TARGET • MEASURE



# ELECTED OFFICIALS MEETING

MARCH 19, 2018

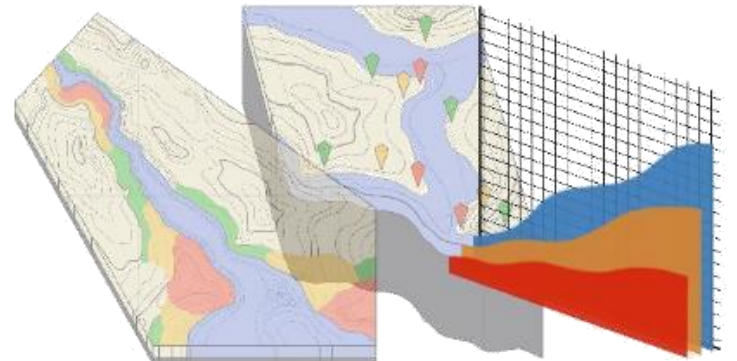
## GOALS:

- To explain the 4-year WRAPS process
- Emphasize the science-based report
- Stress the importance of Civic Engagement

PRIORITIZE • TARGET • MEASURE



PRIORITIZE • TARGET • MEASURE

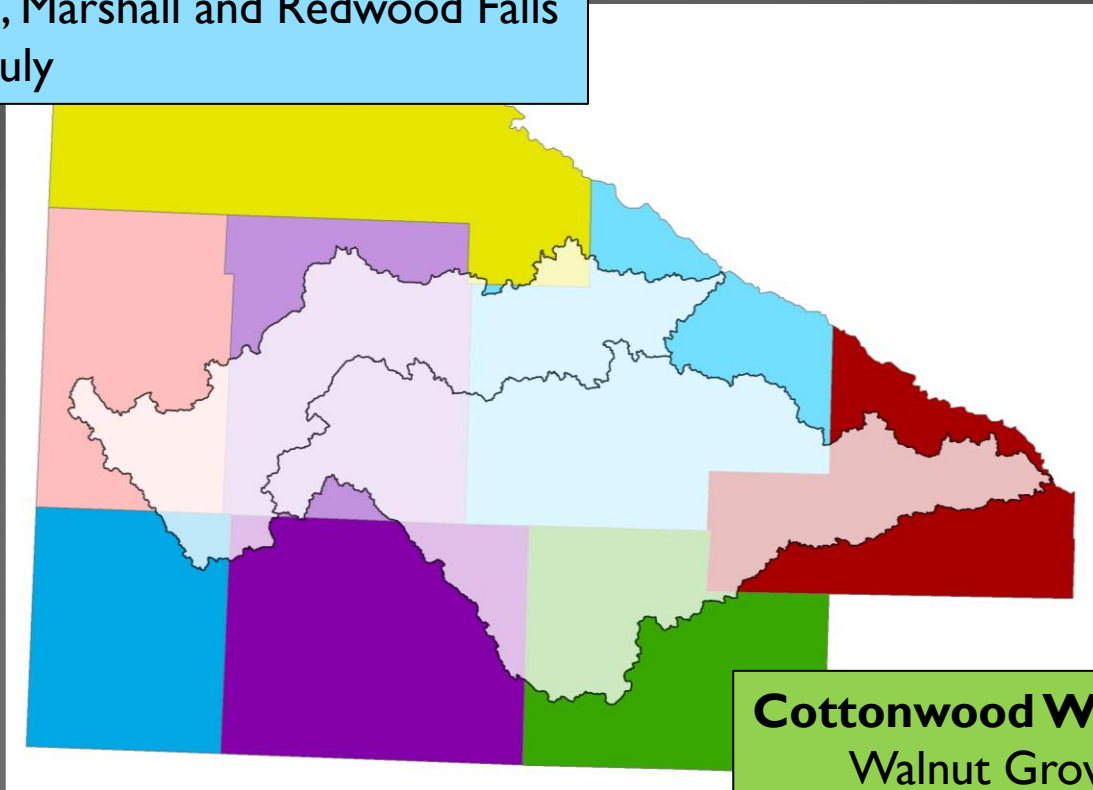


# WRAPS

# PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

## Redwood Watershed

Lake Benton, Marshall and Redwood Falls  
4<sup>th</sup> week in July



## Cottonwood Watershed

Walnut Grove and Sleepy Eye  
3<sup>rd</sup> week in July

# WRAPS



# COLLECT INFORMATIONAL







### School Grove Lake – Lyon County

- Mirror Carp
- 25 lb. carp, 78 cm/30.7 inches long



### North Double Lake – Cottonwood County

- Carp with only one eye

# NEWEST ENDEAVOR

## LAKE REDWOOD RECLAMATION AND ENHANCEMENT PROJECT M.L. 2018, ART. 6, CHAP. 214, SEC. 4, SUBD. 6(2)





# LAKE REDWOOD



1960's



Today

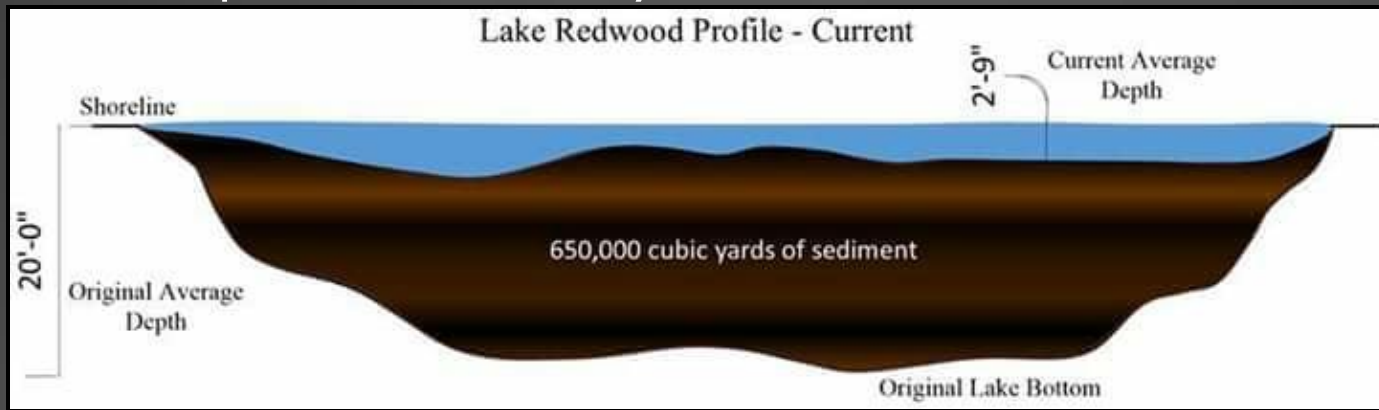
## Utilize \$7.3 million of LCCMR funds to:

- ∞ Capture and treat pollutants to remove **TMDL impairments** on the Redwood and MN Rivers
- ∞ Reclaim and enhance regional **recreational opportunities**
- ∞ Enhance and increase the **green energy production** of hydroelectric power
- ∞ Improve **economic development** through workforce attraction and retention

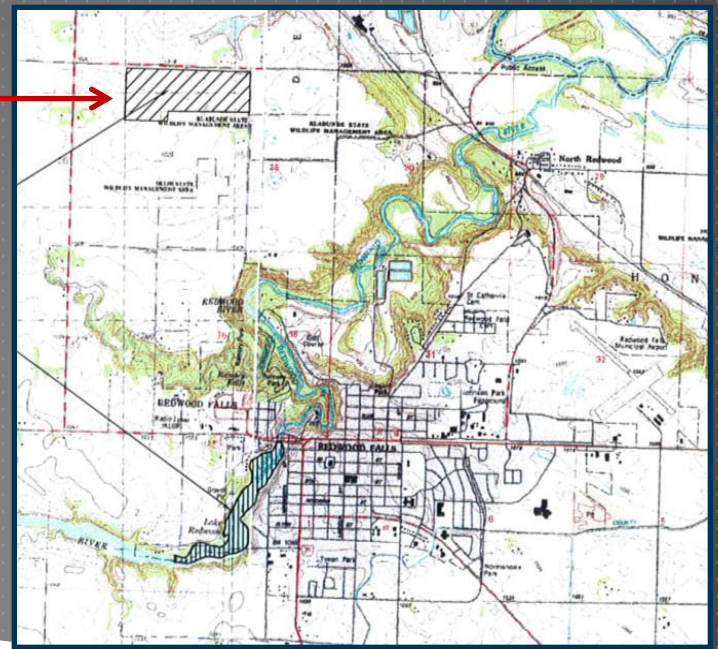




- ▶ Dredge to 20' depth
- ▶ Remove up to 650,000 cubic yards of sediment



- ▶ 120-acre dewatering pond site
  - ▶ Permanently protected green space
  - ▶ Pollinator habitat and food source
  - ▶ Future dewatering use, if needed
- ▶ 3 years to complete
- ▶ Future park enhancements
- ▶ Continued improvements in the watershed

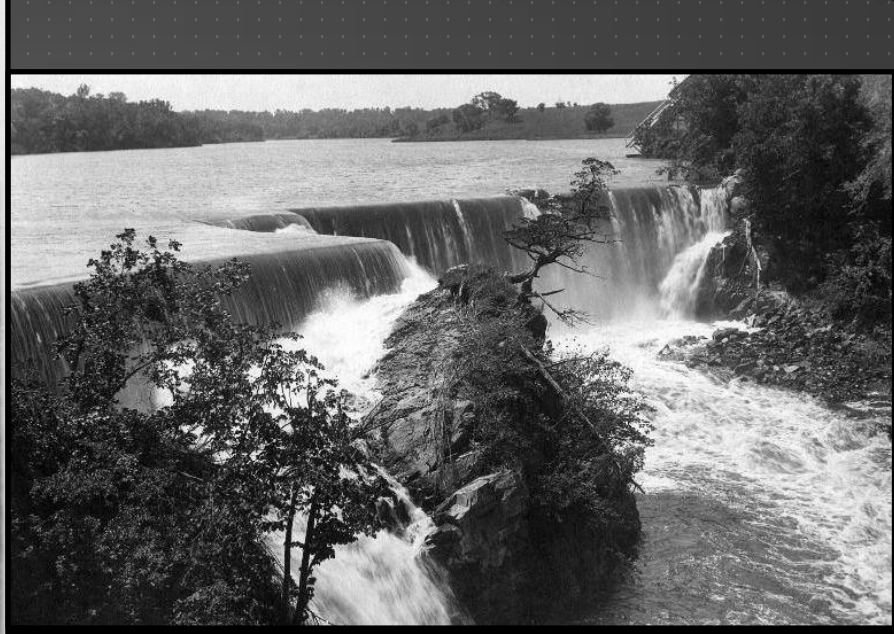


# PROJECT GOALS & OPPORTUNITIES

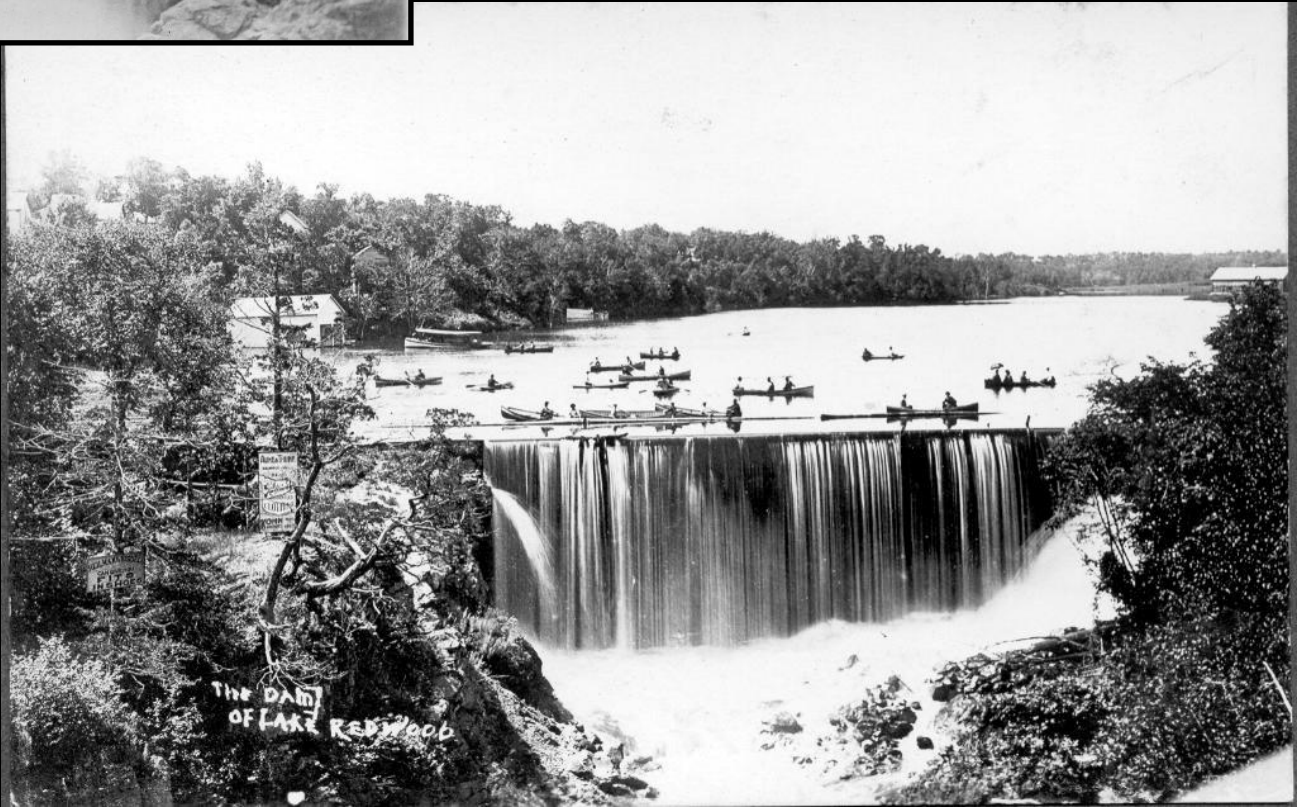




1902

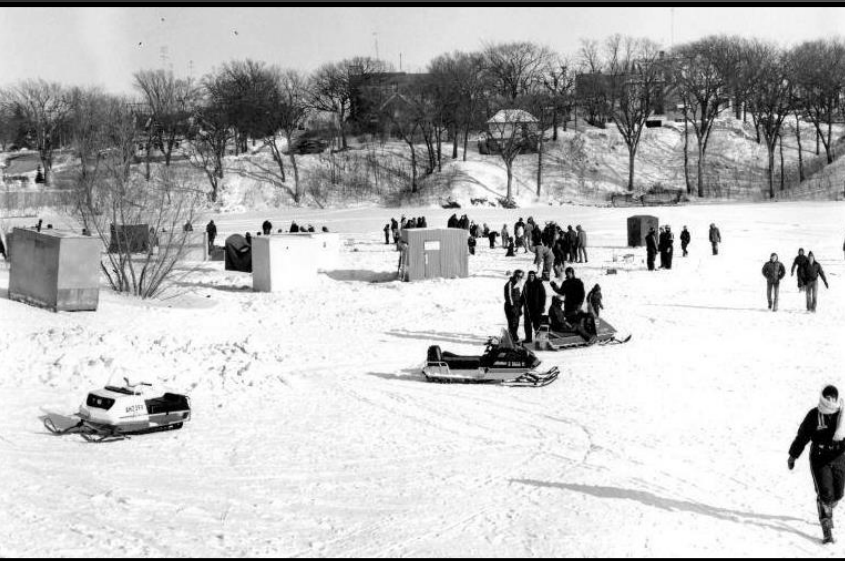


Catch at Lake Redwood  
1908



THE DAM  
OF LAKE REDWOOD









1950's - 1970's





## Present Conditions...

- Very limited recreation
- Loss of habitat
- Not classified as a “lake”
- Limited capacity for hydroelectric power

Since 1994,  
TSS loading has  
decreased by **75%**!



July  
2018



# Proposed Lake Redwood Improvements

Fitness  
Trail

Pedestrian  
Bridge

Riverfront  
Park

Fitness  
Trail

Lookout

Fountains





# CURRENT STATUS

- ▶ The LCCMR Committee approved the work plan on Sept. 13, 2018.
- ▶ Once a contract is executed with RCRCRA, as the fiscal agent, work can commence on the project.
- ▶ Houston Engineering, Inc. has been retained for engineering and project management services.

- ▶ On October 2, 2018
- ▶ RCRCRA was notified by LCCMR that bond sales have been placed on hold pending the outcome of litigation.
- ▶ Environmental groups are contesting the use of LCCMR / Environmental Trust Funds in this fashion which will cost more than general obligation bonds due to 0.5%-1.0% higher interest rate.





- ▶ For more information about RCRCRA, check our website at [www.rcrca.com](http://www.rcrca.com)



- ▶ **THANK YOU** for your continued support of both organizations!