

Mississippi Headwaters One Watershed, One Plan

January 2020



FORESTRY & WATER QUALITY DISCUSSION

- Lindberg Ekola and Dan Steward from BWSR presented on the connection between forest and water quality.

- Groundwater recharge is excellent in this part of the state, but is threatened by urbanization and agricultural development.

- It is essential to protect forests to ensure continued water protection; however, protection doesn't mean we can't manage the land. We want to conserve and manage working forest landscapes.

- BWSR completed a Watershed Landscape Stewardship Plan. Lindberg and Dan encouraged the committee to consider including this plan in the 1W1P as an appendix.

Mississippi Headwaters communities answering the call to protect and improve: Our waters, forests, economy, future.

PRIORITIES DISCUSSION

- Forestry: forestry areas will be prioritized by looking at locations where there has been the greatest decrease in forest cover combined with the highest GRZ (growth potential determined by the growth roads zoning model). This is being weighted by nearby lakes with highest sensitivity to phosphorous.
- Lakeshed: lakeshed areas are being prioritized by evaluating recent development areas then buffering it with the location of lakes. A Lake Cost Benefit will be used to get a priority lakeshed score, which will help further prioritize.
- Agricultural Lands: agricultural lands will be prioritized by evaluating areas over 25% disturbed; the goal is to bring it below 25%, as well as SSS (soils slope stream proximity)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Protection of forests is vital to protecting water quality.
- Knowledge distribution is key: we want to inform the public about the science and how it shows what will get most impact for public dollars – the committee discussed potentially adding this as a goal to the 1W1P.
- The committee continued to discuss land stewardship as a part of the plan. The group agreed that it is important to celebrate what we have done well (known managed lands) while still seeking to improve unmanaged lands.
- The committee agreed that the current prioritization methods are sufficient.
- **Next Advisory Committee Meeting: February 19th, 2020 from 9:30am – 1:00pm in Bemidji**