

DNR Priorities for the Nemadji River Watershed

Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans are required to consider several important high-level issues. The 7 priorities below (on the left) relate most closely to 3 of these high-level issues (as listed on the right).

Priority Resource Concerns & Opportunities	High-Level Priority Issues
<p>The Nemadji River Watershed has good water quality overall. Protecting water quality is more cost effective than trying to restore impaired waters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage, maintain, and enhance forest cover. Important aspects of forest management for protecting water quality include maintaining existing working forest lands, promoting water quality best management practices (BMPs) and providing guidance on their implementation, and applying site-level forest management guidelines. The Minnesota Forest Resources Council has voluntary site-level forest management guidelines available on their website (https://mn.gov/frc/forest-management-guidelines.html). • Private forest lands are vulnerable to conversion to non-forest land uses. The DNR can help identify priority tracts of privately owned forestland at risk of development, where collaborating to promote sustainable timber management could help protect water quality and high-priority fisheries. • Prepare for potential impacts to the watershed from invasive species, such as the Emerald Ash Borer, which could wipe out black ash swamps within the area and result in a change in habitat and water retention (black ash act like water pumps and take up water from wetlands). 	<p style="text-align: center;">Water Quality and Land Cover</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the watershed’s capacity to withstand changes in precipitation patterns, adapt to increasing temperatures, and recover from severe weather events. • Improperly sized culverts throughout the watershed are contributing to flooding and related repair costs. DNR can provide guidance on properly sizing new culverts. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Flood Damage Reduction</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The culvert issue noted above also impacts fish habitat and fish passage. The DNR has data that can be used to help identify sites where there is potential to restore healthy fish populations and create new fishing opportunities. • Whenever possible, remove connectivity barriers, such as the Red Clay Dams, which create barriers to fish and sediment passage. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Habitat and Outdoor Recreation</p>