



# LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

## Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

### Agenda Item

#### Item 4. D. – 2025 Workplan progress report

#### Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

#### Summary

At the April 16, 2025, meeting of the LMRWD Board of Managers, President Barisonzi asked for a report on workplan items that are beyond the scope of Young Environmental. These items are listed in the workplan as sponsorships and include the following:

Task	Deliverable description	Budget
5.1	Scott County Water Education Partnership	\$7,500
5.2	Sponsorship of Minnesota River Congress	\$400
5.3	Sponsorship of Annual Salt Symposium	\$500
5.4	Sponsorship of Metro Children's Water Festival	\$1,650
5.5	Friends of the Minnesota Valley River Watch Program	\$20,000
5.6	Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River	\$5,000
Total		\$35,050

#### Scott County Water Education Partnership

The Scott County Water Education Partnership (SCWEP) is part of the annual agreement between the LMRWD and the Scott County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), which provides monitoring, technical assistance, education, and other conservation services. SCWEP is administered through Scott SWCD as part of this agreement.

For the Board's information, the 2024 SCWEP Annual Report and the 2025 SCWEP Work Plan are attached.

#### Sponsorship of Minnesota River Congress

The LMRWD has supported the Minnesota River Congress since 2014. Manager Yvonne Shirk served on the Congress's Action Team for several years until her resignation from the Board of Managers. The LMRWD has also provided financial support for the Congress by funding its meetings, which were

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typically held three to four times per year. Since the onset of the COVID-19 public health emergency, meetings have shifted to an annual schedule.

The next Minnesota River Congress is scheduled for 6:00 PM, June 12, 2025, at the Kato Ballroom in Mankato, MN. At this time, the LMRWD has not been asked to sponsor the upcoming meeting.

### **Sponsorship of Annual Salt Symposium**

At February 19, 2025, Board of Managers meeting, the Board approved supporting the 2025 Salt Symposium as a Bronze Sponsor.

### **Sponsorship of Metro Children's Water Festival**

The LMRWD has been a long-time supporter of the Metro Children's Water Festival (MCWF), an educational event that brings fourth-grade students together at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds to explore various aspects of water science and conservation. Since the COVID-19 public health emergency, a virtual participation option has also been made available.

The LMRWD has historically provided funding to support transportation for students attending the festival. For 2025, \$1,650 has been allocated in the LMRWD budget for this purpose. The 2025 MCWF is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, September 24, 2025. As of now, the LMRWD has not received a formal funding request for this year's event.

### **Friends of the Minnesota Valley River Watch Program**

Funding for the River Watch Program, previously supported by the LMRWD through the Friends of the Minnesota Valley (FMV), was included in the 2025 LMRWD budget. However, the LMRWD has not yet received a funding request from FMV. It is understood that FMV has secured funding from the State of Minnesota, which may eliminate the need for LMRWD support this year.

The LMRWD has reached out to FMV to confirm whether its financial contribution will be necessary in 2025.

### **Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River**

This project was originally authorized by the Board of Managers in 2023. It stems from a 2018 request by Mr. Scott Sparlin, who approached the LMRWD on behalf of the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River to support efforts in securing funding for water storage initiatives. The Board agreed to provide financial support contingent upon the Coalition securing matching funds. The initial commitment was \$10,000 over two years.

Similar funding arrangements were approved again in 2021 and 2023. The \$5,000 included in the 2025 LMRWD budget represents the second year of the most recent funding cycle.

In 2024, the Board expressed concerns about continuing this financial support. As of now, the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River has not submitted a funding request for 2025.

### **Attachments**

- 2024 SCWEP Annual Report
- 2025 SCWEP Work Plan

### **Recommended Action**

No action recommended – for information only

# Scott Clean Water Education Program 2024 Annual Report



Prepared By:

Shelby Roberts, SCWEP Coordinator  
Scott Soil and Water Conservation District



## Background

The Scott Clean Water Education Program (SCWEP) started in 2010 to educate Scott County residents consistently and effectively on the topic of clean water. The program's goal is to make clean water choices second nature for all who live and work in Scott County. SCWEP has incorporated the goal into marketing materials using the theme of "Clean Water Starts with Me!"

## 2024 Highlights

### Workshops

In 2024, SCWEP hosted five educational workshops on the topics of soil health implementation, shoreline restoration, raingarden installation, and shallow lake health. All workshops were free and hosted in-person at central locations throughout the county.

The workshops were promoted through social media, online blogs, and submissions to local papers and community calendars. Registration for the workshops was made simple by utilizing the Google Forms online registration tool.

2024 Workshop attendance:

- 12 participants at the "Sodas and Soil Health" workshop
- 61 participants at the "Prescribed Burns: Prep, Permits, and Payoff Part 1" workshop
- 15 participants at the "How to Build a Raingarden" workshop
- 7 participants at the "Prescribed Burns: Prep, Permits, and Payoff Part 2" workshop
- 12 participants at the "Stabilize your shoreline" workshop



### Conservation Leaders Program

Every year conservation leaders are recognized in Scott County to illustrate local ways of positive conservation-based behavior changes. In 2024, Maxine Hughes was featured for her community stewardship and dedication to our local lakes and water quality.

Maxine and her husband Keiran improved their entire 165' of O'Dowd Lake shoreline through a native buffer project. At the same time, they converted over a half an acre upland of the lake into native prairie, preventing even more runoff from getting into the lake.

Maxine was recognized at the MASWCD convention as the Minnesota Metro Area 4 finalist for her outstanding achievements and representation.





## Conservation in the Classroom



SCWEP holds youth education at a high priority and hosts the Conservation in the Classroom (CIC) program to enable conservation lesson delivery to any third-through-eighth grade school in Scott County at any time of the year.

In 2024, the Conservation in the Classroom program hosted three events, reaching 340 students across 8 classrooms and two boy scout groups. Lessons brought students in close contact with stormwater runoff pollution, the benefits of native flowers, and the different ways that trees for an urban forest. This program has been well-received by teachers and educators, and its future outlook remains bright.

## Rhythm on the Rails

In an effort to connect with urban and previously underserved populations in Scott County, SCWEP hosted a booth at the prominent Rhythm on the Rails concert series in Shakopee.

The event brought residents together for community outreach and small business/organization promotion. Over the course of 6 weeks, the SCWEP education booth connected with hundreds of people and collected over 60 direct requests for technical assistance and site visits to implement conservation projects.

The event was an influential opportunity to connect with urban residents educating them on positive and impactful clean water habits.



## Outdoor Education Days



2024 hosted the 38<sup>th</sup> annual Outdoor Education Days. 1,100 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> graders from 14 schools—including Belle Plaine, New Prague, Shakopee, Savage, and Jordan—were part of the fall outing this year. The weather cooperated well with the event, and no rain days were needed.

2024 was the second year of implementation for five new lesson plans at the event. The lessons maintained focus on the program's previous topics of forestry, the water cycle, pond macro-invertebrates, conservation, and soils, but were given updated activities and made to be compliant with Minnesota State education standards for grades 5-6.

In 2024, SCWEP was delighted to welcome new and returning volunteers to the event; the stations were taught by staff from the Scott SWCD, the Scott Watershed Management Organization, the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District, University of Minnesota Master Gardeners, the National Resources Conservation Services, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and community volunteers. At the end of each day, CLIMB Theatre put on a production about recycling and composting.

The program received \$1,000 from MVEC Operation Roundup Grant for presenter lunches and a bussing grant for Oak Crest Elementary. Outdoor Education Day remains the main activity that SCWEP utilizes to directly reach Scott County youth.

## **News Releases**

SCWEP continues to promote information, activities, and relevant news through various print publications available to Scott County citizens. This year SCWEP published 18 water-related articles to the county-wide Scott County SCENE newspaper and the Scott SWCD online blog. In addition, events, informational articles, and workshops continued to be promoted on partner's social media platforms, websites, and other local papers including those a part of SWNewsmedia.

## **Target audience expansion**

As stated in the 2023 SCWEP work plan, special consideration was given to expanding targeted audiences to better reach Scott County's underserved and ESL communities. The process continued this year with expansion to underserved populations at several events, and by distributing stormwater-related handouts in Spanish to targeted areas around Scott County. Program coordinators met with staff from the cities of Shakopee, Prior Lake, and Savage, and Scott County to brainstorm additional strategies and determine optimal community leaders to initiate conservation with. This is an initiative that will continue in development for the next several years as we build foundational relationships with these populations. Once trusted relationships are built, clean water messaging and behavior changes will increase.

## Partners

Members of the SCWEP partnership believe more can be accomplished by working together toward our common goal. By collaborating, we eliminate overlapping programs, prevent inconsistent and duplicative messaging, and achieve similar outcomes at lower costs. In 2024, SCWEP partners included:

- Scott Soil and Water Conservation District
- Scott Watershed Management Organization
- Scott County Government
- Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District
- Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
- Lower Minnesota River Watershed District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- City of Shakopee
- City of Savage
- City of Prior Lake
- Spring Lake Township
- Jackson Township
- Louisville Township
- City of Credit River

SCWEP also collaborates with other agencies, organizations and clubs implementing outreach programs with similar goals and objectives in Scott County. This collaboration achieves an even greater level of consistency, reach and cost effectiveness. In 2024, these agencies included:

- Scott County Library System
- Prior Lake Association
- Cedar Lake Improvement District
- O'Dowd Lake Association
- Spring Lake Association
- Scott County School System
- Three Rivers Park District
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

## Accomplishments

Every year, SCWEP's work plan lists initiatives and activities that the partnership aims to complete within the calendar year. The annual report is a chance to reflect on what was accomplished based off the initial planned trajectory. Individual items may shift along the way, but the message of "clean water starts with me" always remains at the heart of everything SCWEP accomplished.

The 2024 SCWEP Work Plan targeted its "Clean Water Starts with Me!" campaign to three general audiences:

1. Agriculture/Rural Landowners
2. Urban and Shoreline Residents
3. Community Groups like Schools and Government.

Appendix 1 details the assembly of ongoing activities by targeted audiences SCWEP completed in 2024.

Appendix 2 details the assembly of events by targeted audiences SCWEP participated in during 2024.

## MS4 Activity

The 2024 Work Plan was designed to ensure member compliance with the educational requirements of their respective Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans. There are six minimum control measures (MCMs) defined in the MS4 Permit, including:

1. Public Education and Outreach
2. Public Participation and Involvement
3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
4. Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control
5. Post Construction Storm Water Management in New and Redevelopment
6. Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations

Many SCWEP activities helped partners comply with the MCM1 requirements. Data used for MS4 reporting can be found in appendix 1 and 2.



## 2024 Projected SCWEP Budget

Funding Agency	Program Staff & Supplies
SWMO	\$60,000
SWCD	\$9,020
PLSLWD	\$6,500
LMRWD	\$7,500
VRWJPO	\$2,080
SL TWP	\$2,000
City of Prior Lake	\$1,600
City of Shakopee	\$2,700
City of Savage	\$1,500
City of Credit River	\$500
Louisville Township	\$500
Jackson Township	\$250
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$94,150</b>

## Other Contributing Funds

Funding agency	Funding source	Total available in 2024
USDA-NRCS	Cooperative Partnership for Education	\$18,000
MVEC	Operation Roundup (OED)	\$1,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$19,000</b>

## 2024 Reported SCWEP Expenses

Funding Agency	Program Staff & Supplies
SWMO	\$60,000
SWCD	\$9,020
PLSLWD	\$6,235
LMRWD	\$7,500
VRWJPO	\$2,080
SL TWP	\$2,000
City of Prior Lake	\$1,600
City of Shakopee	\$2,700
City of Savage	\$1,500
City of Credit River	\$500
Louisville Township	\$500
Jackson Township	\$250
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$93,885</b>

## Other Contributing Funds

Funding agency	Funding source	2024 expenditures
USDA-NRCS	Cooperative Partnership for Education	\$18,000
MVEC	Operation Roundup (OED)	\$1,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$19,000</b>

## Outcomes, Evaluation and Reporting

The SCWEP goal – to make clean water choices second nature for all who live and work in Scott County – was reviewed throughout the year. Outcomes were evaluated primarily by number of participants and following-up with program participants. We also tracked follow-up requests for additional information and technical assistance in SWIMS database.

A large part of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP) requires identification and documentation of best management practices that will be undertaken to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the MS4 to the maximum extent practicable. A few of the metrics used to measure the impact of marketing strategies include:

- Number of participants at specific SCWEP hosted events or workshops
- Number of direct mailings, brochures and flyers distributed
- Number of submitted press releases articles
- Number of requests for technical assistance
- Number of best management practices completed through partner organizations

Staff recorded and quantified the above metrics to assess the success or benefit of each marketing strategy. Additionally, staff provided evaluations after educational workshops and outreach events (when applicable) to gauge how well topics were understood, how much project excitement was felt, and if adjustments to curriculum were recommended. Once results were received, staff used survey feedback to modify content and presentations as needed.

Evaluation was and continues to be an important component in understanding the effectiveness of reaching “Clean Water Starts with Me!” campaign goals.

## 2024 SCWEP events

R	B	CF	I	LO	SCWEP audience	Activity category	Event type	Event	Audience reach	Materials distributed	Amount distributed	Date	Notes
			X	X	Community Groups	Water Quality	Community event	SCWEP Annual Partnership Meeting	24	SCWEP draft work plan	24	2/14/2024	
X				X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil Health	Workshop	Soda's and Soil Health	12	Rack cards	26	2/29/2024	Materials distributed include brochure pamphlets on the topics of cover crops, manure management, and erosion control practices.
					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Natural Landscaping	Workshop	Prescribed Burns: Prep, permits, and payoff part 1	61	Rack cards & program flyers	65	4/2/2024	Materials distributed include brochure pamphlets on the topics of safely implementing prescribed burns, natural landscaping, and Scott SWCD cost share opportunities.
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural Landscaping	Workshop	How to Build a raingarden	15	Raingarden starter packet	15	4/16/2024	Packet contained a list of native prairie consultants, seed & plant distributors, and burn consultants and information on the management of prairie meadows
X	X	X	X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Groundwater protection	Tabling event	Nitrate testing clinic	230	DOH phamplets	230	4/26/2024	Materials distributed include DOH guidance on homeowner's nitrate level test results from water sample
X				X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Wildlife habitat	Tabling event	Spring Tree sale	440	Native trees	29000	4/26/2024	
X				X	Community Groups	Illicit discharge	Youth lesson	Conservation in the Classroom	312	"Raingarden and Runoff" lesson plan	312	5/13/2024	Hosted Raingarden lesson plan for 3rd-5th graders at Raven Stream Elementary at their School's garden Day.
					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Natural Landscaping	Workshop	Prescribed Burns: Prep, permits, and payoff part 2	7	Program flyers	7	5/15/2024	Materials distributed include brochure pamphlets on the topics of safely implementing prescribed burns.
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Illicit discharge	Tabling event	Summer plant sale	14	Rain barrels	14	6/7/2024	
X				X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Conservation cover	Tabling event	Summer plant sale	34	Compost Bins	34	6/7/2024	
X				X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Conservation cover	Tabling event	Summer plant sale	208	Native plants	7500	6/7/2024	Amount distributed refers to the number of native plants sold.
X			X	X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water Quality	Community event	Summer Conservation Tour	28	Conservation Tour packet	28	6/27/2024	Conservation tour within the PLSLWD district hosted for the district board and citizen advisory committee
X	X			X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water Quality	Community event	Reel Cool Fishing School	50	AIS outreach flyers	50	6/28/2025	Hosted by PLSLWD with marketing assistance provided by Scott SWCD
X	X			X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural Landscaping	Community event	Rhythm on the Rails	63	Program flyers	63	7/10/2024	Attended 5 series of tabling events at the Rhythm on the Rails concerts.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Community event	Watershed Week	85	Watershed phamplets	85	7/9/2024-7/13/2024	Events hosted by PLSLWD with makreting assistance provided by Scott SWCD. Events included: Natural Inks Workshop and Paint & Sip, Wellness Walk in the Watershed: Step, Stretch, and Learn, and Bike the Watershed
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural Landscaping	Workshop	Stabilize your Shoreline	12	Rack cards & program flyers	12	7/18/2024	Materials distributed include brochure pamphlets on the topics of "Don't leave leaves", natural landscaping, and Scott SWCD cost share opportunities.
X	X	X	X	X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural Landscaping	Tabling event	Scott County Fair	15,000	Rack cards & program flyers	200	7/24/2024	Materials distributed include brochure pamphlets on the topics of soil health, agriculture incentives, native prairie restoration, and Scott SWCD cost share opportunities.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural Landscaping	Community event	Night to Unite	50	Rack cards & program flyers	10	8/6/2024	Provided informational tours and program information to attendees at neighborhood Night to Unite event
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water Quality	Community event	Starry Trek	4	AIS outreach flyers	4	8/10/2024	Hosted by PLSLWD with marketing assistance provided by Scott SWCD
			X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil Health	Community event	Farmers for Monarch's tour	16	Program flyers	16	8/16/2024	Provided informational tours and native prairie program information to industry professionals.
X			X	X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Community event	Fall Fest	150	Chloride kits	30	9/9/2024	Chloride kits contain information on the dangers of chloride pollution a reusable bag, and a plastic cup to measure the proper amount of sidewalk salt in the winter.
X			X	X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Community event	Fall Fest	150	Pet waste holders	50	9/9/2024	
			X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil Health	Community event	Cover Crop Open House	14	Program flyers	14	9/17/2024	
X			X		Community Groups	Water quality	Youth lesson	Outdoor Education Days	1,100	Field guides	1,100	9/23/2024	Hosted 38th annual event. Hosted students from 14 schools (Belle Plaine, New Prague, Shakopee, Jordan, Prior Lake and Savage) on 9/23/2024 - 9/26/2024.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Community event	Clean Water Clean up	12	Program flyers	12	10/5/2024	Removed invasive buckthorn from a wildlife management area near Spring Lake.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Community event	Buckthorn wreath-making	20	Buckthorn wreaths	20	10/26/2024	Event hosted by PLSLWD. Marketing assistance by SWCD
X				X	Community Groups	Wildlife habitat	Youth lesson	Conservation in the Classroom	20	Urban Forestry	20	10/12/2024	Provided Conservation in the Classroom lesson to 20 5th grade boyscouts in Savage on the topic of urban forestry.
X				X	Community Groups	Illicit discharge	Youth lesson	Conservation in the Classroom	8	Storm Drain Stenciling	64	10/13/2024	Assisted Eagle Scout with capstone project stenciling 64 drains in city limits with illicit discharge messaging.
X			X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Groundwater protection	Tabling event	Nitrate testing clinic	24	DOH phamplets	24	9/11/2024 & 9/18/24	Materials distributed include DOH guidance on homeowner's nitrate level test results from water sample

## MS4 Audiences

R	Resident
B	Business
CF	Commercial Facility
I	Institutions
LO	Local Organizations

**2024 SCWEP activities**

R	B	CF	I	LO	SCWEP audience	Activity category	SCWEP program category	Activity	Audience reach	Materials distributed	Quantity distributed/completed	Notes
X		X			Urban & Shoreline Residents	Conservation cover	Targeted O/R	<b>Mailer</b>	364	New Landowner postcard	364	Mailed to anyone who purchased more than 0.2 acres of property in the last year.
X	X				Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil health BMP's	Targeted O/R	<b>Mailer</b>	183	EQJP mailer	183	Local incentives mailed to ag producers
X	X	X	X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Conservation cover	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	8	
X				X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Groundwater	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	8	
X	X	X		X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Ice management	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	4	
X	X	X	X	X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	4	
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural landscaping	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	22	
X	X	X		X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Shoreline BMP's	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	8	
X				X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil health BMP's	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	24	
X	X	X		X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality BMP's	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	10	
			X	X	Community groups	Conservation assistance	Targeted O/R	<b>Monthly activity update</b>	6	Activity report	12	Provided regular updates and reports to the WPC Board on a monthly basis.
			X	X	Community groups	Conservation assistance	Targeted O/R	<b>Monthly activity update</b>	5	Activity report	12	Provided regular updates and reports to the Scott SWCD Board on a monthly basis.
X	X	X	X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Wildlife habitat	Digital media	<b>Social media outreach</b>	866	Social media post	16	
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Ice management	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	5,000	Brochure	300	Salt alternative brochures displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Ice management	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	5,000	Brochure (Spanish)	90	Salt alternative brochures displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	5,000	Brochure	300	Pet waste brochures displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	5,000	Brochure (Spanish)	90	Pet waste brochures displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	5,000	Brochure	300	Yard care brochures displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	5,000	Brochure (Spanish)	90	Yard care brochures displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Ice management	Targeted O/R	<b>Facility display</b>	8,000	Chloride kits		Distributed to city halls for display and distribution.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Ice management	Targeted O/R	<b>Facility display</b>	3,000	Chloride kits		Distributed to township halls for display and distribution.
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Nutrient management	Targeted O/R	<b>Facility display</b>	8,000	Dog waste bags	150	Distributed to partner city and township halls for display throughout the year.
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Nutrient management	Targeted O/R	<b>Facility display</b>	500	Dog waste bags	80	Distributed to partners for display at local parks during events.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Ice management	Print media	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	30	"Salt Pollutes. Shovel first" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Don't Throw it Out, take it to the County" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"The unfiltered truth" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Have gutters and downspouts? Catch rain in a barrel" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"For a much healthier lawn, leave your leaves" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural landscaping	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Landscape naturally" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural landscaping	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Beautiful lawn. Healthy environment. You can have both" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Nutrient management	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Manage manure. Store and dispose of it safely" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Shoreline BMP's	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Have waterfront property? Don't let it wash away. Restore it naturally" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil health BMP's	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Gullies destroy landscapes. Repair these monsters" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil health BMP's	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"If you are growing crops, you are losing soil" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil health BMP's	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Cover crops make dollars and sense" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil health BMP's	Signage/brochures	<b>Facility display</b>	1,000	Rack card	10	"Are your animals jealous? Don't overstock your pasture" rack cards displayed at partner offices.
X	X	X			Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Conservation cover	N/A	<b>Certified project installation</b>		N/A		The "amount distributed" refers to acres of new plantings installed.
X	X	X			Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural landscaping	N/A	<b>Certified project installation</b>		N/A		The "amount distributed" refers to square footage of new rain gardens installed.
X	X	X			Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural landscaping	N/A	<b>Certified project installation</b>		N/A		The "amount distributed" refers to square footage of pollinator plantings installed.
X	X	X			Urban & Shoreline Residents	Shoreline BMP's	N/A	<b>Certified project installation</b>		N/A		The "amount distributed" refers to linear feet of shoreline restoration/streambank protection.
X	X	X			Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Cover Crops	N/A	<b>Certified project installation</b>		N/A		The "amount distributed" refers to acres of cover crops planted.
X		X			Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Groundwater nitrate	N/A	<b>Certified project installation</b>		N/A		The "amount distributed" refers to the amount of well that were decommissioned.

**MS4 Audiences**

R	Resident
B	Business
CF	Commercial Facility
I	Institutions
LO	Local Organizations



2024 SCWEP news articles											
R	B	CF	I	LO	SCWEP audience	MS4 activity category	Article title	Distribution method		Audience reach	Publishing partner
								Digital media (blog)	Print media (SCENE)		
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Wildlife habitat	Cedar Trees offer cost-affordable and eco-friendly stream stabilization.	X	X	63,127	SWCD
X	X	X	X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Groundwater protection	Free nitrate testing for well water on April 26	X	X	63,245	SWCD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Wildlife habitat	Rental program helps farmers and landowners make conservation happen	X	X	63,149	SWMO
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Funding is Available for Conservation in Scott County Watersheds	X	X	63,088	SWCD
X	X		X		Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Water quality	Landowners add 29,000 Trees to Scott County's Landscape		X	63,000	SWCD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Natural Landscaping	Spring Maintenance for Raingardens	X		70	SWCD
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil Health	Urban farming brings big benefit to the community	X	X	63,030	SWCD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Restore your Shoreline Workshop on July 18	X	X	63,058	SWCD
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Wildlife habitat	Shed full of tools available to tackle harmful plants		X	63,000	SWCD
X					Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Water quality	Wetland restoration brings beauty and structure to New Prague		X	63,000	SWCD
X	X			X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Soil Health	Aerial cover crop seeding happening early September	X	X	63,000	SWCD
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	The do's and dont's of storm drains	X	X	63,122	SWCD
X				X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Why it's Important to scoop the poop	X	X	63,073	SWCD
X	X	X	X	X	Urban & Shoreline Residents	Illicit discharge	Have an old license plate? You can recycle that!		X	63,000	SWCD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Maxine Hughes named 2024 Conservation Leader	X	X	63,192	SWCD
X				X	Community Groups	Illicit discharge	Students Learn Environmental Lessons at Outdoor Education Days		X	63,000	SWCD
X	X	X	X	X	Agriculture & Rural Landowners	Wildlife habitat	Scott SWCD Native Tree Sale Opens Jan 1	X	X	63,155	SWCD
X	X				Urban & Shoreline Residents	Winter maintenance	Winter salt: it doesn't take much!	X	X	63,042	SWCD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Where is the Water?		X	63,000	PLSLWD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Wildlife habitat	Get Creative with Buckthorn this Fall		X	63,000	PLSLWD
X					Urban & Shoreline Residents	Water quality	Stream Restoration in Progress		X	63,000	PLSLWD

MS4 Audiences	
R	Resident
B	Business
CF	Commercial Facility
I	Institutions
LO	Local Organizations

# Scott Clean Water Education Program

## 2025 Work Plan



Prepared by:  
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Scott Soil and Water Conservation District



# Introduction

The Scott Clean Water Education Program (SCWEP) began in 2010. This program's work plan builds off the progress and momentum that has developed since then and focuses on improving and expanding activities that the current partnership believes will provide the greatest, most cost-effective impact towards improving water quality in Scott County.

The goal of SCWEP is to make clean water choices second nature for all who live and work in Scott County. SCWEP will utilize the "Clean Water Starts with Me!" message to help create a new "normal" in terms of how citizens of Scott County think of stormwater runoff and their roles in making a difference. The objective throughout implementation of this work plan is to make this message personal. "Clean Water Starts with Me!" can be paired with outreach targeted at agricultural, rural, shoreline, and urban residents, which allows the clean water message to be tailored to reach a wide audience. SCWEP will work towards their goal with consistent and long-term, broad-based messaging, hands-on workshops, and engagement events tailored to target-specific audiences.



Scott County has a bountiful share of natural water resources, including more than 90 lakes totaling over 11,600 acres, thousands of wetland basins totaling more than 33,500 acres, and approximately 280 miles of public rivers, streams, and creeks. This includes Eagle Creek and headwaters of the Vermillion River, both classified trout streams. SCWEP's partners envision a future where clean water flows throughout Scott County.

## Partners

Members of the SCWEP partnership believe more can be accomplished by working together. By collaborating, we eliminate overlapping programs, prevent inconsistent and duplicative messaging, and achieve similar outcomes at lower costs. The 2025 SCWEP partners are:

- Scott Soil and Water Conservation District
- Scott Watershed Management Organization
- Scott County Government
- Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District
- Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board
- Lower Minnesota River Watershed District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- City of Credit River
- City of Shakopee
- City of Prior Lake
- City of Savage
- Spring Lake Township
- Jackson Township
- Louisville Township

When and where possible, SCWEP will also collaborate with other agencies and organizations to implement outreach programs with similar goals and objectives in Scott County.

# Priorities

As in past years, the SCWEP Work Plan will target and prioritize its “Clean Water Starts with Me!” campaign to three general audiences. These audiences and their respective goals and objectives include the following:

<b>AUDIENCE: Agriculture/Rural Landowners</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Land management decisions are made with conservation and minimizing detrimental impacts to water resources in mind.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Educate producers and landowners on local water quality impairments and show them how implementing BMPs can have a positive impact.</li> <li>2) Promote technical assistance and cost-share opportunities for the adoption of priority practices including but not limited to gully erosion control, cover crops, filter strips and riparian buffers, livestock manure management and appropriate fertilizer use.</li> </ol>
<b>2025 High priority items</b>	Promotion of soil health and regenerative agriculture, groundwater protection, runoff reduction, and wetlands.
<b>AUDIENCE: Community Groups, Schools, and Government</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Enhance the quality of and opportunities for conservation leadership, education, and outreach.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Provide speaking engagements and educational opportunities that introduce soil and water conservation topics.</li> <li>2) Encourage volunteerism and foster relationships that will result in improved water quality and personal accountability.</li> </ol>
<b>2025 High priority items</b>	Development of watershed organization guidance tools for local leaders. Relationship building and distribution of accessible outreach to traditionally underserved and ESL communities. Regulatory and permitting education for residents and local officials.
<b>AUDIENCE: Urban and Shoreline Residents and Businesses</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Landscape design and maintenance choices are made to protect water quality and reduce runoff.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Educate residents on how water is managed in urban environments and about ways they can positively impact water quality in their everyday lives.</li> <li>2) Offer information, workshops, and technical assistance on the adoption of suitable BMPs, such as water-wise lawn care, native shorelines, increased natural landscaping, raingardens, and chloride reduction.</li> </ol>
<b>2025 High priority items</b>	Promotion of local water quality and aquatic plant species expectations. Chloride and pet waste reduction in developed landscapes. Residential education on stormwater runoff pollution and prevention.

# Programming Highlights

## Workshops

Free educational workshops catered to County residents are offered throughout the year. Workshops on natural landscaping and soil health will be offered in 2025. Previous webinar recordings will be available via the Scott SWCD YouTube page. Workshops help start the conversation about technical assistance and cost share, which may ultimately lead to conservation practices being installed. Content for workshops continue to change and improve every year through post-workshop surveys and continuous information updates.

## Conservation in the Classroom

Through this youth education classroom visitation program, Conservation in the Classroom enables delivery of conservation-themed educational lessons to any fifth-eighth grade Scott County school at any time. This expansion is especially important for under-served and non-traditional education populations.

## Outdoor Education Day

Every fall, middle school students from across Scott County attend Outdoor Education Day to learn about conservation. Students rotate through six stations focused on forestry, wildlife, conservation, agriculture, the water cycle, and pond macro-invertebrates. Outdoor Education Days allow for opportunities to teach the value of clean water from a young age.

## News articles and Success Stories

News articles, including personal accounts from residents who have installed conservation projects, will be used to promote SCWEP activities and events. Success stories highlight those who are doing their part for clean water and begin to create a new normal by showing that residents are changing their behaviors.

A timeline of proposed articles for 2025 is provided in the appendix.

## Conservation Leaders Program

Each year, a local resident or organization is chosen as a Conservation Leader and recognized for their contributions to conservation practices that benefit clean water. Many times, the Conservation Leader is also nominated for the MASWCD Outstanding Conservationist Award. Recognizing conservation leaders each year helps show Scott County residents that their neighbors are changing their behaviors.

## Project Signage

Signs will be offered to landowners who installed pollinator plantings, raingardens, shoreline restorations, native prairies, and cover crops identifying their projects. These signs give landowners a sense of pride in their project and show others in the community that conservation practices are happening all around them.

## Participation in Community Events

SCWEP participates in community expos and other relevant events. These community events involve putting up the “Clean Water Starts with Me!” display, staffing a table with rack cards and information, and interacting with the community. Attendance at community events gives residents that may not otherwise get exposed to SCWEP messaging a chance to talk with staff and start a conversation.



# Strategies

SCWEP's marketing strategy includes selecting behaviors to change, identifying the barriers and benefits of the change, developing strategies, testing the strategies, and implementing the strategies on a large scale. SCWEP will continue to apply both passive and active marketing and outreach techniques to connect with the identified audiences in Scott County.

Active techniques consist of activities that are hands-on, engage with specific audiences, and happen in accordance with seasonal relevance. They take significant time and resources to plan and implement but are more likely to have a greater impact of desired outcomes. Examples include workshops, field demonstrations, targeted mailings, tours, and one-on-one landowner meetings.

Passive activities are intended to reach large audiences and deliver consistent, base messaging. They have a lower impact relative to active techniques but are comparatively easy and inexpensive to implement. Examples include news articles, social media posts, blog posts, and event displays.

Hands-on approaches paired with the broader spreading of information will help SCWEP reach a wide audience and get residents to make changes. The SCWEP Partnership is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all Scott County residents by valuing the equity and inclusion of diverse perspectives. SCWEP extends their programming to under-represented communities through this work plan.

Changes and adaptations to implementation will be acknowledged in the 2025 Annual Report.

## Digital Engagement Strategies

SCWEP recognizes the effectiveness and long-term benefits of remote communication and outreach and will continue to offer digital outreach as an option to maintain and enhance program objectives. Strategies include online webinars, educational video demonstrations, and social media presence.

## Audience expansion

To best serve and provide clean water messaging to all residents of Scott County, SCWEP is dedicated to building new and maintain existing relationships with underserved and ELS communities. Such an initiative requires time and resources that will extend benefits to land and people as such relationships are built. Expansion will be targeted to each of SCWEP's three identified audience groups. Strategies for such audience expansions will include but are not limited to maintaining dialogue with community leaders, providing targeted outreach materials to community gathering places, and structuring messaging to ensure relevance for a community's land use.

## Partnership Meetings

The SCWEP Partnership meets annually to discuss accomplishments of the previous year, and goals for the upcoming one. In 2025, the partnership will conduct a mid-year meeting to discuss the program's 2026 budget and the future programming priorities of SCWEP.

# Planned Activities for 2025

Applicable audience groups for individual Events and Activities will be notated under their numerical description and subgroups will be listed as applicable.

New SCWEP activities for 2025 are highlighted.

Events and Activities	Dates	Audience and Subgroup	Objective	MS4 Activity
Host "Conservation Open House"	February 12	Ag & rural residents	1	X
Host "Soil Health Workshop"	February 26	Ag & rural residents	1	X
Mail postcard to residents who recently purchased 2+ acres about SWCD services	March	Ag & rural residents	1	X
		Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Host nitrate water testing clinic	April 25	Ag & Rural residents	1	X
		Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Host tree/native seed mix sale pickup	April 25	Ag & rural residents	1	
Attend Raven Stream Classroom Day	May 9	Community groups & Schools	1	X
Host Natural Landscaping workshop series	March 13, 18, 20	Urban & shore residents	2	X
Host teaching garden workshop	July	Urban & shore residents	2	X
Permitting requirements material development and distribution*	Spring	Ag & rural residents	1	X
		Community groups, Gov	1	X
		Urban & shore residents	1	X
Elected official training*	Spring/Summer	Community groups, Gov	1	
Host clean-water clean-up, rake the lake event	Spring and Fall	Community Groups	3	X
		Urban & shore residents & businesses	2	X
Host native plant sale pickup	June	Urban & shore residents	1	X
Attend Scott County Fair	July	Ag & rural residents	1	X
		Community groups, Gov	1	X
Distribute nutrient management and related program information to applicable landowners	Summer	Ag & Rural residents	1	X
Distribute program information to natural landscaping cooperators with seasonal updates.	Summer	Ag & rural residents	2	X
		Community groups, Gov	2	X
		Urban & shore residents	2	X
Participate in Conservation Leaders/Awards	Fall/Winter	Ag & rural residents	1	
		Community groups, Gov	2	
		Urban & shore residents	2	
Host Fall Conservation Tour	September	Government	1	
Host Outdoor Education Days	September	Community groups & Schools	2	X

Attend Prior Lake Autumn Fest	October	Urban & Shore residents	2	X
Develop and distribute materials to targeted landowners on topical areas	As requested	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
		Ag & Rural residents	1	X
Promote projects and conservation topics via local library kiosks	Rotated seasonally	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
		Community Groups & Schools	2	X
Publish conservation success stories	Quarterly	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
		Ag & Rural residents	1	X
		School, Gov, etc.	1	X
Rent out storm drain stencil kit and provide illicit discharge lessons	As requested	Community Groups, Gov	1	X
		Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Conduct education presentations to community leaders (WPC, Citizen Advisory Committees, etc.)	As requested	Community Groups, Gov	1	X
Provide educational lessons for 3-8 grade through the Conservation in the Classroom program	As requested	Community Groups & Schools	1	X
Educate residents on AIS prevention	Ongoing	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Educate residents on pet waste pollution	Ongoing	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Work with county, cities, and community groups to identify effective venues/methods for reaching nontraditional audiences	Ongoing	Community groups, Gov	1	X
Display promotional materials for conservation practices in areas of influence	Ongoing	Ag & Rural residents	1	X
		Groups, Gov, & schools	1	X
		Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Build relationships with Lake Associations and other local improvement districts	Ongoing	Community groups, Gov	3	X
Display project signage: raingarden, native prairie, native shoreline, cover crops	Ongoing	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Provide technical assistance and cost share for agricultural and erosion control BMPs	Ongoing	Ag & Rural residents	2	X
Provide technical assistance and cost share for shoreline BMPs	Ongoing	Urban & Shore residents	2	X
Provide technical assistance and cost share for Natural Landscaping BMPs	Ongoing	Urban & Shore residents	2	X

**\*SCALE Water Committee initiative**

In addition to the above programming, SCWEP will provide ongoing outreach in the following areas via print and digital media throughout the year.

Promote “unintentional” pollution and illicit discharge prevention	Ag & Rural residents	1	X
	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Promote proper disposal of hazardous waste via HHW facility	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
	Ag & Rural residents	1	X
Promote yard waste and maintenance BMP’s	Urban & Shore residents	1	X
Promote environmentally healthy snow and ice management	3: Urban & Shore residents	1	X

## 2025 Budget

Partner	Program Staff & Supplies
SWMO	\$60,000
SWCD	\$8,500
PLSLWD	\$7,325
LMRWD	\$7,575
Spring Lake Twp	\$1,500
VRWJPO	\$1,800
City of Prior Lake	\$2,400
City of Savage	\$2,375
City of Shakopee	\$3,575
City of Credit River	\$750
Jackson Twp	\$250
Louisville Twp	\$750
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$96,800</b>

## Other Contributing Funds

Partner	Funding source	Amount
USDA-NRCS	Cooperative Partnership for Education	\$15,000
MVEC	Operation Roundup (OED)	\$1,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$16,000</b>

# Outcomes, Evaluation and Reporting

SCWEP's goal – to make clean water choices second nature for all who live and work in Scott County – will be reviewed throughout the year. It can be difficult to track progress towards this goal because behavior changes are not easily measured. There are, however, some metrics that act as indicators of change, and that is what the SCWEP evaluation is based on. These measurements include:

- Number of participants at SCWEP hosted events and workshops
- Number of direct mailings, brochures and flyers distributed
- Number of published press releases and articles
- Number of requests for technical assistance
- Number of best management practices completed through partner organizations

These numbers can be found in SWCEP's annual reports. They are an important part of SCWEP, as these numbers are used in many partners' MS4 reporting. Evaluation continues to be an important component in understanding the effectiveness of the "Clean Water Starts with Me!" campaign.

## MS4 Activity Detail

There are six minimum control measures (MCMs) defined in the MS4 Permit, including:

1. Public Education and Outreach
2. Public Participation and Involvement
3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
4. Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control
5. Post-Construction Stormwater Management
6. Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations

This work plan is designed in part to meet the requirements of MCM 1 for partner MS4 permitted communities. In addition to the public education and outreach, staff at the SWCD and WMO are available to assist MS4 communities in preparing their annual SWPPP and public meetings and MS4 audits when requested.

## Goals Beyond 2025

The activities outlined in this report are geared toward achieving positive behavior change for the long term. Many of these activities will be repeated in future years as a constant reminder to the public that "Clean Water Starts with Me!" As new ideas and opportunities emerge, new activities will be added to keep SCWEP relevant and reaching as many people as possible. SCWEP goals beyond 2025 include:

- Providing support and programming to partner agencies and others
- Showing the public that their everyday decisions do matter by including personal success stories in press releases and outreach
- Increasing workshop participation numbers to create greater impact and personal behavior change
- Building and enhancing partnerships between SCWEP and local citizen groups (i.e., lake associations, lake residents, sportsmen's clubs, existing social networks, community service clubs, etc.)



## APPENDIX: PROPOSED 2025 NEWS RELEASES

Quarter	News Article
Mar/Apr/May	Free nitrate testing for well water on April 25
	PLSLWD Buck Stream highlight
	Ag Equipment for Rent
	Spring workshops with Scott SWCD
	Funding available for conservation in local watersheds
	Lending Library open for residents
Jun/July/Aug	Natural Landscaping workshop and open house
	Tree Sale wrap-up
	Wetland Conservation Act Information
	NRCS requested article
	Landowner success story
Sept/Oct/Nov	Outdoor Education Days recap
	Illicit discharge prevention
	Permit resources in Scott County
	Landowner success story
Dec/Jan/Feb	2026 Scott SWCD tree sale open
	Conservation tour features water-saving projects
	A little salt goes a long way
	Landowner success story – Conservation Leader