

MEETING DATE: December 10, 2015

TITLE: Authorization to Renew the Contract with Freshwater Society for the Watershed Association Initiative

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 15-XXX

PREPARED BY: Darren Lochner

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REVIEWED BY: Administrator Counsel Program Mgr. (Name):__Telly Mamayek____
 Board Committee Engineer Other

WORKSHOP ACTION:

| | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board mtg. Consent Agenda. | <input type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board meeting for discussion prior to action. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to a future workshop (date):_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to taskforce or committee (date):_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Return to staff for additional work. | <input type="checkbox"/> No further action requested. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____ | |

PURPOSE or ACTION REQUESTED: Authorization to renew the contract with Freshwater Society for the Watershed Association Initiative (WAI).

PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Minnehaha Creek Watershed

PROJECT TIMELINE: January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

PROJECT/PROGRAM COST:

Fund name and number: 2302 - Education
Current budget: \$36,500
Expenditures to date: \$0
Requested amount of funding: \$30,000
Is a budget amendment requested? No
Is additional staff requested? No

PAST BOARD ACTIONS: None

SUMMARY: The Initiative started in September of 2006 and has continued through December 2015. The contract under consideration covers January 2016 through December 2016. See Exhibit A: Watershed Association Initiative: Scope of Services with detailed Work Plan and Budget.

This contract with Freshwater Society will authorize the tenth year of the Watershed Association Initiative (WAI) for 2016. The WAI program was evaluated in 2014 through a Community Capacity Assessment, completed in consultation with MCWD staff. The assessment focused on evaluating the WAI program and

**DRAFT for discussion purposes only and subject to Board approval and the availability of funds.
Resolutions are not final until approved by the Board and signed by the Board Secretary.**

exploring opportunities to build capacity and examine ways to further build a base of active and engaged citizens. Based on the results of the assessment it was recommended that the WAI focus efforts on supporting and empowering existing associations rather than seeking to form new associations in the watershed. This refined focus will capitalize on existing associations and assisting them with improving their effectiveness and capacity to further engage in water quality programming.

The entire WAI program budget of \$25,000 includes the contract amount of \$25,000 for Freshwater Society as well as \$5,000 for the MCWD Mini Grant Program, which provides matching funds to existing lake associations within the District. The mini grant program is administered by the Freshwater Society on behalf of the District.

Please see attached Year 9 Year End Report for 2015 with details on recent WAI activities.

In year ten, MCWD will once again hire Freshwater Society to provide a 0.5 FTE Watershed Organizer to engage and empower citizens in the District, and assist MCWD staff in evaluating the WAI program, focusing on a civic organizing framework. These citizen groups will gain an increased understanding of the District's water quality goals and will improve their capacity to interface with local governments and the District. These activities will ultimately aid the District in meeting its established water quality goals. See Exhibit A, attached, for more detail on specific program areas.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval to authorize the renewal of the Freshwater Society contract for the tenth year of the Watershed Association Initiative. Please note: The overall program budget is \$30,000. The contract with Freshwater Society is for \$25,000, with \$5,000 that is set aside for the association Mini Grant Program.

PAST BOARD ACTIONS:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| April 6, 2006 | The MCWD Board of Managers approved resolution 019-06, Authorization to Hire Minnesota Waters to Execute a Lake Association Initiative. |
| July 12, 2007 | The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2008 Communications and Education Work Plan, which contained the following item for 2008: <i>Lake Association Initiative: This is an extension of the initiative started in summer 2006. Lake associations provide increased community involvement on a subwatershed level, and interest in high profile lakes in the District, resulting in better stewardship of those lakes and subsequent improvement in water quality. The District has provided a grant to Minnesota Waters, who is hiring a person that will carry out the initiative with District support and oversight.</i> |
| July, 2008 | The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2009 Communications and Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative. |
| July, 2009 | The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2010 Communications and Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative. |
| August, 2010 | The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2011 Communications and Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative. |
| August, 2011 | The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2012 Education Work Plan, which included |

funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.

- August, 2012 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2013 Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- June, 2012 MN Waters Organization dissolved and the 2012 MN Waters contract was transferred per approval of the MCWD Administrator to Freshwater Society, to continue the WAI contracted work.
- June 2013 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2014 Education Workplan and Budget, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative as well as funds to cover community capacity assessments throughout the District.
- November 2014 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2015 Education Workplan and Budget, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 15-XXX

TITLE: **Authorization to Renew the Contract with Freshwater Society for the Watershed Association Initiative**

WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2016 Education Work Plan and Budget, which includes \$30,000 for the Watershed Association Initiative; and

WHEREAS, the District's strategic education and communications plan identifies a need to work on a localized, subwatershed basis to develop strong partnerships with lake associations, thereby enhancing community capacity to reach the District water quality goals; and

WHEREAS, the MCWD recognizes the importance of an informed and involved citizenry in managing aquatic resources; and

WHEREAS, active lake associations provide the District with a mechanism to work directly with informed and involved citizens in lake management projects; and

WHEREAS, Freshwater Society has expertise in building community capacity and assisting citizens with the formation and growth of effective lake associations; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to enter into a contract not to exceed \$25,000 with Freshwater Society to continue the Watershed Association Initiative;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to reimburse funds, not to exceed a total of \$5,000 to citizen groups according to the parameters set in the Watershed Association Initiative Mini Grant Program;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized to sign necessary documents to carry out the Watershed Association Initiative, pending approval of form and execution by the District counsel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers

Resolution Number 15- was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____.
Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: _____.

Secretary Date: _____

EXHIBIT A

Watershed Association Initiative

Scope of Services

January 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

 **FRESHWATER SOCIETY**

Watershed Association Initiative

Year 10 (2016) Workplan

WAI Mission:

To engage and empower citizens in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed to assist the MCWD in meeting its established water quality and lake/stream management goals.

Program Goals:

Leadership:

- Empower citizens to help meet local water quality goals by strengthening stewardship practices.
- Support existing and provide support to newly forming lake and stream groups within the District.
- Assess groups for ability and willingness to participate in advanced leadership programs (like the Master Water Stewards) and recruit individuals.

Education:

- Educate property owners on ways to form healthy, effective, and sustainable citizen-led, water focused organizations.
- Provide workshops to newly forming and established water protection groups to help them create Action Plans to meet organizational goals.
- Expand property owner's knowledge base and skill sets for engaging in stewardship practices aligned with MCWD's water quality and lake/stream management goals.

Collaboration:

- Strengthen groups' capacity to collaborate with local businesses, government, non-profit, and citizen-led lake, stream or wetland associations
- Promote a network of peer-to-peer learning and opportunities for citizen groups
- Inspire groups to participate in local planning and policy processes

These goals support an informed and engaged citizenry who are better able to work with their local municipality and the watershed district to accomplish mutual water quality and lake/stream protection goals.

Working Relationships:

The Organizer is an employee of the Freshwater Society. The Organizer will provide regular reports as requested to the MCWD Education Manager on overall initiative progress. Written materials and major initiative decisions must be reviewed and approved by the MCWD Education Manager. The MCWD Education Manager will evaluate contract progress and will approve invoices according to the payment schedule as outlined in the contract.

Objectives

Outreach, Education, and Support for Existing Groups

The WAI now works with many existing associations as well as a coalition of associations from throughout the MCWD. The Organizer will work to accomplish the following objectives to promote healthy and sustainable organizations.

Provide Organizational Development Assistance

- The Organizer will solicit opportunities to meet with all known groups at least once a year to maintain contact, offer resources and assess their organizational needs.
- Through meeting facilitation the Organizer will help groups determine priorities and develop action plans.
- The Organizer will work with groups to assess opportunities to advance recommendations from the 'Civic Organizing Framework' report finalized last summer. The focus will initially be looking at groups' abilities to participate in the Master Water Stewards program.
- Additional support will be provided to groups as needed through workshops or one-on-one consulting in the areas of fundraising, annual planning and communications as requested by groups.

Connect Citizens and Associations to Resources

- Provide timely and relevant information on funding opportunities from both the District as well as other organizations.
- Act as liaison between groups and the District as well as other local and state government representatives and resource experts.

Connect Citizens and Associations to Each Other

- Connect those groups and individuals with similar interests throughout the District.
- Promote the work of all groups including the CMCW to other relevant peer groups.
- Provide on-going support to the CMCW as a tool that keeps groups connected.
- Promote association mentoring, sharing resources and materials, and encouraging citizens to attend each other group's meetings or events.

Provide Education, Training and Networking Events

- Assess needs and offer groups support in organizing programs as needed such as workshops or other networking style events.
- The Metro Summit, an annual information and dinner networking event, will be promoted throughout the District as well as the 7 county metro area to build on the larger network of involved citizens and experts in the area.
- The topics for these events will be chosen through utilizing citizen leader feedback and input, and conducted both formally and informally.
- The events will be strategically marketed throughout the MCWD to optimize WAI community outreach, visibility and ultimately to maximize citizen engagement.

While every group is unique, the road to success and the roadblocks encountered along the way are similar. Addressing these opportunities and challenges can be a worthwhile effort at any point in a group's lifespan or development. From the earliest stages of formation to fine tuning membership services or community outreach after years of existence, most groups have the opportunity to become even more effective over time.

Outcomes:

The Organizer will work with established associations to build or strengthen their organizational capacity and efficacy in working towards lake and stream protection throughout the MCWD and to increase participation in the CMCW. Pages 2-5 detail the specific outcomes sought by theme.

Outreach, Education, and Support for New Groups

Building upon previous assessments and ongoing contacts, and depending on the contacts District staff make with target communities, the Organizer will continue to work with the District to assess the best opportunities within the District for organizing citizens into lake/stream associations.

Potential New Groups

- Work with District staff to identify areas where groups are needed and/or establish contact with possible new leaders.
- Where needed, mentor forming groups on essential steps to creating a new group.
- Promote WAI initiatives through Freshwater and MCWD communications.

Support New Groups

In addition to the resources outlined above for Existing Groups, newly forming groups will receive ongoing one-on-one consulting with the organizer on the following:

- Lake Ecology and Water Quality
- Forming a Lake or Stream Group
- Becoming an official non-profit
- Utilizing the Mini-grant funds to help your group form
- Building consensus
- Working with local and state level agencies

Outcomes:

Priority water bodies and organizational development needs will be identified through working with the MCWD staff and through outreach to citizen contacts. New partners and communities within the watershed will be recruited for organizing new groups that work to support the MCWD mission.

Local Government Outreach

In working with both new and established groups, promoting and establishing positive relationships with the appropriate local government officials is important.

Ensure groups identify and engage with relevant officials

- Provide a primer on effective engagement with local government.
- Encourage new associations to develop relationships with municipal government elected officials.
- Provide contact information and initiate contact where appropriate.
- Encourage all groups to participate in local planning efforts

Outcome:

Participating groups gain a better understanding of the important local government partners in their area and the tools and avenues available for effective engagement.

WAI Program Marketing and Promotion

Maintain media contacts

- Work with communications staff at the District as well as Freshwater to ensure up to date information on relevant media contacts.

Post program announcements and events

- District and Freshwater websites and social media
- Local media event calendars
- Press releases

Mini-Grant Promotion and Administration

The Organizer will work with MCWD staff to manage the 'mini-grant' program using district funds. The Mini-Grant promotes and supports organizational capacity building activities for new and existing lake, stream or watershed associations.

Mini-grant funds, applications, and guidelines will be made known to all qualifying citizens and groups. Coordinating with MCWD Education Manager, the Organizer will track and administer the Mini-Grant funds.

Lake/Stream Group Reporting

The Organizer will report on the progress of each forming and established lake and river group within the MCWD. A comprehensive summary will be provided in the 6 month and year end reports. These reports will include detailed information of each group's challenges and successes as well their level of involvement and participation with the WAI.

Update/use Citizen Leaders and Group Database

- Track all groups involved in WAI to identify successes and common trends
- Notify MCWD of group progress, common needs

Outcomes:

The interim and final reports provide in-depth program assessment and future reference to continue building strong and effective citizen-led groups working towards lake and stream protection throughout the MCWD.

Watershed Association Initiative

Budget and Payment Schedule

January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

Services

Organizer services \$22,105

Expenses

Meeting Expenses
Facility Rental (if needed), meals and supplies \$595

Travel (mileage at .55/mi) \$1800

Printed materials, office supplies \$500

TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT **\$22,105**

Proposed payment schedule:

\$ 12,500 (50%) January 1, 2016
\$ 10,000 (40%) July 1, 2016
(upon receipt and approval of written progress report)
\$ 2,500 (10%) December 1, 2016
(upon receipt and approval of final contract report)

Total Contract Payments
\$25,000

Watershed Association Initiative

Annual Report

November 1, 2014 – October 31, 2015



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

 **FRESHWATER SOCIETY**

Watershed Association Initiative

2014-2015
Workplan

WAI Mission:

To engage and empower citizens in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed to assist the MCWD in meeting its established water quality and lake/stream management goals.

Program Goals:

Leadership:

- Empower citizens to help meet local water quality goals by strengthening stewardship practices.
- Support existing and provide support to newly forming lake and stream groups within the District.
- Assess groups for ability and willingness to participate in advanced leadership programs (like the Master Water Stewards) and recruit individuals.

Education:

- Educate property owners on ways to form healthy, effective, and sustainable citizen-led, water focused organizations.
- Provide workshops to newly forming and established water protection groups to help them create Action Plans to meet organizational goals.
- Expand property owner's knowledge base and skill sets for engaging in stewardship practices aligned with MCWD's water quality and lake/stream management goals.

Collaboration:

- Strengthen groups' capacity to collaborate with local businesses, government, non-profit, and citizen-led lake, stream or wetland associations
- Promote a network of peer-to-peer learning and opportunities for citizen groups

These goals support an informed and engaged citizenry who are better able to work with their local municipality and the watershed district to accomplish mutual water quality and lake/stream protection goals.

Working Relationships:

The Organizer is an employee of the Freshwater Society. The Organizer will provide regular reports as requested to the MCWD Education Manager on overall initiative progress. Written materials and major initiative decisions must be reviewed and approved by the MCWD Education Manager. The MCWD Education Manager will evaluate contract progress and will approve invoices according to the payment schedule as outlined in the contract.

Introduction:

The Freshwater Society is glad to submit the following report for the Watershed Association Initiative. This reporting year saw a lot of activity in the various groups WAI works with, and is rounding out with two new lake associations in the process of forming. Especially exciting is the aligning of two Minnehaha Creek Watershed District programs—the Master Water Stewards Program and the Watershed Association Initiative—where the Organizer is leveraging the resources of each for mutual benefit and greater success. This is described further on page 7. The Freshwater Society is thrilled and grateful to be a part of this exciting time for each of these programs.

Objective 1: Outreach, Education, and Support for Existing Groups

From the workplan: *The WAI now works with many existing associations as well as a coalition of associations from throughout the MCWD. The Organizer will work to accomplish the following objectives to promote healthy and sustainable organizations.*

Provide Organizational Development Assistance

- *The Organizer will solicit opportunities to meet with all known groups at least once a year to maintain contact, offer resources and assess their organizational needs.*
- *Through meeting facilitation the Organizer will help groups determine priorities and develop action plans.*
- *The Organizer will work with groups to assess opportunities to advance recommendations from the ‘Civic Organizing Framework’ report finalized last summer. The focus will initially be looking at groups’ abilities to participate in the Master Water Stewards program.*
- *Additional support will be provided to groups as needed through workshops or one-on-one consulting in the areas of fundraising, annual planning and communications as requested by groups.*

The Organizer maintains a contact database for 30 lake associations and 14 neighborhood associations in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. Consistent emails to the full group sharing opportunities, events, and resources were sent to the group frequently. Individual emails to each group soliciting meetings were also sent, especially as the former Organizer left and the current Organizer got started.

The Organizer has met at least once and often more than once with representatives from the following groups (for details on outcomes and group activity, see Lake/Stream Group Reporting):

- Area Partnership for Pierson Lake Enhancement
- Friends of Bass Lake
- Friends of Diamond Lake

- Friends of Minnehaha Creek
- Lake Minnewashta Improvement Association
- Mooney Lake Association
- Christmas Lake Homeowner's Association
- Wassermann Lake Association
- Windsor Lake Recovery Group
- Coalition of Minnehaha Creek Waters

A meeting with Lake Williams has been scheduled for November 2 and another with the Gleason Lake Improvement Association has been scheduled for November 5, both of which fall after the close of the reporting period.

Additional support in the form of workshops or events has not been requested during this reporting period. However, trends such as difficulty with webpage management or dealing with leadership turnover have been noted, and workshops are being considered. Descriptions of the Metro Summit for Lake and River Groups and the Shallow Lakes Forum are included in the next section.

From the Work Plan: Provide Education, Training and Networking Events

- *Assess needs and offer groups support in organizing programs as needed such as workshops or other networking style events.*
- *The Metro Summit, an annual information and dinner networking event, will be promoted throughout the District as well as the 7 county metro area to build on the larger network of involved citizens and experts in the area.*
- *The topics for these events will be chosen through utilizing citizen leader feedback and input; conducted both formally and informally.*
- *The events will be strategically marketed throughout the MCWD to optimize WAI community outreach, visibility and ultimately to maximize citizen engagement.*

Metro Summit for Lake and River Groups

The Organizer planned and implemented the 2014 Metro Summit for Lake and River Groups on November 5, 2014. Over 60 attendees from around the metro attended, including many from within the watershed district, and were able to participate in networking and information sessions on Aquatic Invasive Species Funding and Outreach Strategies.

Planning for the 2015 Metro Summit for Lake and River Groups is also underway, with the date set for Tuesday, December 1. The Summit remains open to all concerned members of MCWD, as well as surrounding metro watersheds. The 2015 Summit will focus on shoreline restoration and management, understanding what a healthy lake means, and a discussion of early detection of AIS as well as tools and resources available to address AIS. As of the end of October, there are already 20 registrants for the 2015 Summit.



Tony Brough of Hennepin County discusses AIS funding at the Metro Summit

Shallow Lakes Forum

The Organizer was part of the planning team and participated in the Shallow Lakes Forum on April 25, 2015. Over 50 attendees from across the metro saw presentations by resource experts on shallow lake ecology and management, and featured a focus on vegetation management.

The Organizer continues to be involved in the Shallow Lakes Forum planning team, and met with the team most recently on Friday, October 30. The Organizer was involved in helping to shift the focus of the Forum to more of an action-oriented event.



Janna Kieffer of Barr Engineering talks about why lakes turn green at the Shallow Lakes Forum

Additional workshops

Through formal and informal communications, the Organizer worked to assess what additional topics were most relevant for groups and to garner interest in partnering on delivering additional workshops. Recently, several groups have shown interest in a webpage management and digital communication workshop, and the Organizer is beginning initial planning for this hands-on opportunity.

Objective 2: Outreach, Education, and Support for New Groups

From the work plan: *Building upon previous assessments and ongoing contacts, and depending on the contacts District staff make with target communities, the Organizer will continue to work with the District to assess the best opportunities within the District for organizing citizens into lake/stream associations.*

Potential New Groups

- *Work with District staff to establish contact with possible new leaders.*
- *Where needed, mentor forming groups on essential steps to creating a new group.*
- *Promote WAI initiatives through Freshwater and MCWD communications.*

Three groups of individuals have approached MCWD about forming lake associations, and the Organizer is following up on those conversations. The first group, comprised of residents around Hannan Lake, are concerned about the observed decline in water quality. The Organizer has reached out to the group contact, but has not been able to set up a meeting with the group at this time. The second interested group is comprised of residents around Windsor Lake in Hopkins. The Organizer met with residents and staff from MCWD to help the group understand issues with Windsor Lake, and is now working with the group to help it formalize. The third group is Lake William, who the Organizer will be meeting with for the first time on November 2nd.

Additionally, in the new Organizer's orientation to the program, MCWD staff were asked to share lakes of concern where no known group existed. Lakes identified at this meeting include:

- Twin Lake
- Hiawatha (currently, an active neighborhood association is involved)
- Forest Lake

MCWD staff were encouraged to report back to the Organizer as other lakes in need of a formal association were identified.

Program Synergy: In addition to the information described above, the Organizer has developed a list of Master Water Stewards that live near water bodies with inactive or struggling groups or near lakes

without active groups that have been targeted for one by MCWD staff. The Organizer will work in the coming year to cultivate new or re-energized groups in these areas, leveraging the time, energy, and knowledge of Master Water Stewards to support these groups. With the required volunteer hours Stewards must fulfill, the potential for increased capacity for any lake association is great. Already, the Organizer has connected a 2015 Master Water Steward to the Friends of Bass Lake group, who will begin meeting with the group before the close of the year. Targeted recruitment for the Master Water Stewards program is also taking place around these locations, as well as near lakes with Associations that are seeking new membership.

From the work plan: Support New Groups

In addition to the resources outlined above for Existing Groups, newly forming groups will receive ongoing one-on-one consulting with the organizer on the following:

- *Lake Ecology and Water Quality*
- *Forming a Lake or Stream Group*
- *Becoming an official non-profit*
- *Utilizing the Mini-grant funds to help your group form*
- *Building consensus*
- *Working with local and state level agencies*

Friends of Bass Lake, though not entirely new in terms of number of years it has been around, is still in its early stages as an organization. This year, it gained its status as an official 501c3 organization, and applied for and received a mini-grant from WAI/MCWD. In addition to addressing concerns with Bass Lake, they are also working to build their membership base. More details about the activities of this Lake Association are included in the last section of this report.

Residents concerned about degrading water quality in Windsor Lake approached MCWD in October. After meeting with MCWD staff and the Organizer for an initial assessment of the lake, these residents are now working with the organizer to identify next steps. More details about the activities of this Lake Association are included in the last section of this report.

Though a meeting will not occur during this reporting period, one has been scheduled with Lake William representatives on November 2 to discuss the process of formalizing the group and identifying priorities. More details about the activities of this group are included in the last section of this report.

Objective 3: Local Government Outreach

From the work plan: Ensure groups identify and engage with relevant officials

- *Provide a primer on effective engagement with local government.*
- *Encourage new associations to develop relationships with municipal government elected officials.*
- *Provide contact information and initiate contact where appropriate.*

During this reporting period the Organizer was active in providing guidance to leaders of the Friends of Bass Lake in their efforts to engage with staff from the City of St. Louis Park. In response to a request for assistance in navigating jurisdiction and identifying who to contact to address water resource concerns and find resources, the Organizer is currently looking to update the primer for effective engagement with local government. Additionally, the Organizer is helping the group to understand how to most productively engage the staff working with them.

The new groups that are just forming are still too new for this component of WAI, and the Organizer will facilitate relationships and connections in the coming year between the new groups and local government.

Objective 4: WAI Program Marketing and Promotion

From the work plan: Post program announcements and events

- *District and Freshwater websites*
- *Local media event calendars*
- *Press releases*

The 2014 Metro Summit for Lake and River Groups was promoted in the October 2014 Facets of Freshwater, Freshwater Society's newsletter. The 2015 Summit has already been promoted on Facebook, and viewed by more than 900 people. The Summit has a dedicated page on the Freshwater Society website.

The Watershed Association Initiative also receives promotion in meetings in the community. At the September 23 meeting of the Excelsior Rotary club, Steve Woods (Executive Director of the Freshwater Society) included the program in the presentation. It was received with active discussion of potential groups, tie-ins to the Master Water Stewards programs, and connections to other rotary outreach efforts. The program has also been promoted to area congregations wanting to engage in water stewardship, as well as faith groups with interest in environmental action. These groups are being encouraged to support their local lake associations and, for interested members, they are encouraged to volunteer their time as members of their local lake associations.

Objective 5: Mini-Grant Promotion and Administration

From the work plan: *Mini-grant funds, applications, and guidelines will be made known to all qualifying citizens and groups. Coordinating with MCWD Education Manager, the Organizer will track and administer the Mini-Grant funds.*

The Friends of Bass Lake submitted a mini-grant funding request to help pay for a membership recruitment event. They received the funds at the end of October, 2015. New groups have been notified of this assistance, and current groups will be receiving reminders of its availability in a year-end newsletter to all participating groups.

Objective 6: Lake/Stream Group Reporting

From the work plan: *The Organizer will report on the progress of each forming and established lake and river group within the MCWD. A comprehensive summary will be provided in the 6 month and year end reports. These reports will include detailed information of each group's challenges and successes as well their level of involvement and participation with the WAI.*

Area Partnership for Pierson Lake Enhancement: The group's focus continues to be threefold – carp management, managing runoff from nearby agricultural land, and AIS prevention.

1. In dealing with carp the group has been successful in the past at organizing the community to participate in harvests. Due to challenges with access to the harvest point and the ongoing carp study being conducted by MCWD, the group has discontinued those efforts.
2. Partnering with Carver County and local landowner's, the group was an important partner in converting some key area's near the lake to CRP, preventing what has been an ongoing run-off issue. They are currently working with the MCWD and other local partners to determine if other practices can be used on another part of the landscape that drains agricultural fields.
3. Efforts at AIS prevention have mostly taken the form of participating as an active partner in the CMCW, working with partner lake groups to plan and implement a regional inspection model for Carver County.

Christmas Lake Homeowners Association: Given the high quality of the lake, most of the efforts of the group are targeted towards AIS prevention. Much of the last year has been spent engaging around the discovery of zebra mussels in Christmas Lake and the subsequent treatment. Even though zebra mussels have been found in other reaches of the lake, the community remains very proud of their collaborative effort, and is now reevaluating what next steps are available to them.

Coalition of Minnehaha Creek Waters: At its founding in 2012, the CMCW chose to focus on AIS prevention and stormwater runoff as its main priorities. Since then, its focus has mostly been on working with LGUs, including Carver County and the MCWD, to develop and implement a regional AIS inspection pilot for local lakes. The group feels that its efforts have only been partially successful and is working to decide how to move forward as an organization. To date, the issue of stormwater runoff has been a challenge and the group has not developed priorities or an action plan for moving forward. This is somewhat due to the diverse nature of how stormwater runoff affects different member lakes as well as different levels of interest in the topic.

Friends of Bass Lake: Officially formed in 2009, the Friends of Bass Lake has maintained a low profile for most of its existence, struggling to find both a focus and the time to dedicate to efforts. With the addition of some new members and the recent focus of the City of St Louis Park on the lake and its adjoining park lands, the group has become an active partner with the city in evaluating opportunities for improvement, specifically looking at how to spend \$10 million appropriated by the city council for Bass Lake. After building to a point of contention, the organizer worked with two parties to ease tensions, and both the city and the group have identified constructive next steps that aim to allow both to achieve their goals. At present, the group continues to seek to build its membership base. In September, it held its first of many membership recruitment events. It is currently looking to develop a website to assist with marketing and communications, and continues to look to press releases as a way to build community awareness and a broad base of support and political will for water quality efforts. At the end of 2015, a graduate of the Master Water Stewards program will begin to meet with the group and engage with them on both increasing their reach in the community as well as assist in leveraging the opportunity to restore Bass Lake.

Friends of Diamond Lake: Following in the spirit of its success with the GoBlue! effort in 2009, the group has been partnering with the MCWD, Metro Blooms, and the Master Water Stewards to look at where to focus community efforts going forward, with a specific interest in stormwater runoff from alley ways. The group continues to be interested in looking for ways to manage the sediment delta building up from one of the stormwater inlets to the lake, and has started reaching out to address another larger piece of land that contributes runoff to the lake.

Friends of Minnehaha Creek: Formerly known as Citizens for the Minnehaha Creek Corridor, the group continues to work to establish its new identity. They continue to struggle with a shift in leadership (active members leaving, new members trying to learn the ropes), but are ready to begin working towards completion of a rebranding effort. This will involve setting direction, improving and diversifying communication methods, increasing local visibility, and growing the membership base. Currently, the group is working with the Organizer to prioritize next steps, investigate the creation of a new website, and identifying strategies for bringing financial support and new members to the group. Additionally, the Organizer is coaching the group on how to resolve internal interpersonal conflicts that are causing delay and tension.

Lake Minnewashta Improvement Association: The LMPA continues their founding mission of managing aquatic vegetation – mostly curly leaf pondweed and Eurasian milfoil – through collecting member dues and working with the DNR to obtain permits for the work. The group has also had an

ongoing interest since developing their lake management plan in managing the flow of organics to the lake through local stormwater infrastructure. They will be partnering with the city of Chanhassen to clean stormwater gutters during the fall of 2015. The LMPA remains active in AIS prevention efforts, working with county and watershed district efforts to provide inspections at the public access. They are currently looking to address the number of access points to the lake in an effort to funnel as much access as possible through the regional park, where an inspector paid through the LMPA is working throughout the season. They are also an ongoing member of the CMCW. They are preparing for a review and refresh of their lake management plan in 2016.

Mooney Lake Association: Mooney Lake has been very successful at gathering information about the lake through public and private channels and creating constructive relationships with watershed district and municipal partners. They have a comprehensive assessment of their lake and have developed and acted on nutrient pollution mitigation efforts. They remain an active partner of the CMCW.

Wassermann Lake Association: The group has been interested since its inception in 2011 in identifying and addressing the causes of the poor water quality in Wassermann Lake. Partnering with MCWD and working with the Organizer to create a Lake Management Plan, the group was initially focused on carp management. After the watershed district determined that internal loading (and subsequently, carp) was not as big a contributor to water quality decline as initially thought, the group has worked to re-define their interests and mission. They have since looked into aeration systems for the lake, discussed strategies for working with developers to incorporate clean water BMP's into new neighborhoods and worked with Dick Osgood to conduct a more in depth analysis of the lake.