



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

I. Financial Report

II. Activity Report

A. Membership

B. Staff

C. 2021 Activity

D. 2022 Work Plan

E. Permits, Variances, and Enforcement

F. Storm Water Pollution Prevention Programs

G. Local Surface Water Plans

H. Consultant Services

I. Information Program

J. Expenditures

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www.RBWMO.org

I. Financial Report

The RBWMO has not expended or accrued funds during the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021. No financial audits are necessary. Richfield and Bloomington expended \$2.0M and \$5.3M respectively from their storm water utility funds in 2021 to manage surface and stormwater.

II. Activity Report

The RBWMO continues to function as an independent organization with Board membership consisting of the City Councils of both Richfield and Bloomington. The Staff of the RBWMO continues to be the staff of each City handling drainage and surface water issues within each municipality. Since each City addresses storm water and surface water issues on behalf of the RBWMO there is no official budget for the organization. Each municipality funds improvements and maintenance within the Watershed Management area within their City border via existing storm water utilities.

The 2018 Watershed Management Plan includes implementation of policies and programs that require financial resources from each member city. As in the past, costs to cover activities occurring in a particular city are borne by that city and activities transcending the municipal boundary will be shared equally.

Both Cities are permitted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) operators under the NPDES permit program and implement Storm Water Pollution Prevention Programs (SWPPP) including education and maintenance programs.

A. 2021 Membership

Name	Representing
Shawn Nelson	Bloomington
Tim Busse	Bloomington
Simon Trautmann	Richfield
Jack Baloga	Bloomington
Maria Regan Gonzalez	Richfield
Nathan Coulter	Bloomington
Dwayne Lowman	Bloomington
Ben Whalen	Richfield
Mary Supple	Richfield
Sean Hayford Oleary	Richfield
Patrick Martin	Bloomington
Jenna Carter	Bloomington

Richfield members can be contacted at:	Richfield City Hall 6700 Portland Avenue South Richfield, MN 55423 612-861-9700
Bloomington members can be contacted at:	Bloomington City Hall 1800 West Old Shakopee Road Bloomington, MN 55431 952-563-8700

B. Staff

Executive Director: (March 2020-March 2021)	Patrick Martin City of Richfield Water Resources/GIS Specialist 1901 E. 66th Street Richfield, MN 55423 612-861-9797
Assistant Executive Director:	Bryan Gruidl City of Bloomington Water Resources Manager 1700 West 98 th Street Bloomington, MN 55431 952-563-4557

In 2021 Executive Director, Patrick Martin, left the City of Richfield. Executive Director responsibilities were carried out by the Assistant Executive Director, Bryan Gruidl, for the remainder of the year. Jordan Vennes was hired by the City of Richfield as the Water Resources Engineer in June of 2021 to fill the vacancy. Jordan was active in coordinating and supporting RMBWO related activities. City staff from both cities cooperate to provide necessary staff support for the RBWMO.

C. 2021 Activity

Both cities perform the duties of the Local Government Unit (LGU) for BWSR for implementation of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). Storm water utilities also are in place in both cities providing a reliable funding source for storm water and surface water resources management and improvement activities.

The fee structures for both cities storm water utility include a water quality component and a water quantity component. A credit/adjustment policy is in place providing incentive for property owners to incorporate storm water best management practices into their sites.

The RBWMO works collaboratively with its member cities to include and promote best management practices (BMPs) from both cities storm water programs. Richfield completed inspection and maintenance of all structural pollution control devices within the permitted MS4, and performed six city-wide street sweeping passes. Additionally, the City is on track to complete inspections of all ponds and outfalls prior to the expiration of the General Permit.

Bloomington provided two annual sweepings of city streets in addition to targeted sweeping in priority watersheds and completed inspection and maintenance of 100% of the structural pollution control devices within the permitted MS4. Inspections of 20% of the city's MS4 outfalls, ponds and sediment basins were also ongoing in 2021. Associated maintenance as identified by the inspections was either scheduled or completed at the time of inspection.

Hennepin County Chloride Initiative (HCCI)– Working together to develop a strategic plan to increase adoption of best management practices with private applicators.

In 2018 the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) piloted a watershed-based funding program allocating \$1,018,000 to Hennepin County. Through a series of meetings with eligible entities it was agreed to dedicate 10% of County's Watershed-based Funding (\$101,800) to countywide chloride programming. This effort has become known as the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative.

The overall purpose of the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative includes:

- Gain an understanding of what private applicators (and those that hire them) do and why they do it – knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors
- Develop a strategic plan, based on that understanding
- Act, to move the needle on reducing chloride use by private applicators, property managers, and property owners (commercial, institutional, multi-family)

In 2019 research efforts with the University of Minnesota targeted private applicators to understand their experiences and practices during the winter season. During 2020 the group continued to work collaboratively to offer property manager trainings related to salt management and explored additional educational opportunities. Unfortunately, many of the hands-on trainings that were anticipated in 2020 were not able to be implemented due to impacts of Covid-19.

In 2021 the group worked with a consultant to develop winter maintenance chloride management templates. The consultant worked with a broad group of technical advisors on the project that included members of the HCCI group as well as several commercial property management personnel responsible for coordinating winter maintenance activities. The winter maintenance templates were completed in

September 2021 and were being piloted in a few communities for the 2021-2022 winter season.

In May 2021 the group discussed options and ideas for developing educational materials and/or a media campaign for targeted audiences noting that property managers were likely the highest priority group. A sub-set of the HCCI group met several times over the summer discussing outreach to different audiences or sections of property managers and communication strategies. Ultimately an RFP was developed to hire a professional marketing firm to develop a media campaign. MP+G Marketing solutions was selected to develop the campaign and will be working on the project into 2022.

The HCCI group was also participating with the Parkers Lake Chloride Project Facilitation Plan being led by the City of Plymouth with their consultant Young Environmental Consulting Group. The results of this project will: 1) Compile available land use data and chloride concentrations, 2) Develop consensus on the chloride sources to Parkers Lake and potential projects to address these sources, 3) Develop a recommendation for a future pilot project to reduce chloride concentrations in Parkers Lake that could be replicated in other areas of Hennepin County, like Parkers Lake, and 4) Help target education and training needs by land use.

The grant period was extended to December 31, 2022. A summary of activities is presented in the following table:

Original Budget	Grant \$101,800	Match: \$10,180
Task	Grant Funding Spent or Encumbered	Match Funding Spent
Qualitative research with private salt applicators, survey, and project report (2019 - 2020)	\$4,828	
Development of Smart Salting for Property Manager’s Guidebook (Fortin Consulting, Oct 2019)	\$10,000	\$10,500 (RPBCWD, NMCWD, LMRWD)
Development of Winter Management Plan Template (Fortin Consulting, March 2021)	\$9,950	
Parker’s Lake Chloride Project Facilitation Plan (BCWMC/Plymouth, March 2021)	Up to \$20,750	
Marketing Campaign targeting boards/committees with HOAs and faith based organizations	Up to \$48,000	
Total Spent/Encumbered to Date	\$93,528	\$10,500
Remaining Funds	\$8,272	-\$320

RBWMO has continued to work with the Minnesota River Basin group (Richfield-Bloomington WMO, Lower Minnesota River WD, Nine Mile Creek WD, and Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek WD) to further the chloride reduction efforts by developing a cost-share grant program. The program reduces chloride in the environment by providing cost-share grants to applicators to retrofit equipment with efficient technology to maintain sidewalks and roads.

In 2020 the group rolled out the Chloride Reduction Cost-Share Grant program to offer financial support and resources for businesses and local government units for tools and practices which reduce, directly or indirectly, chloride usage by that organization. Entities applying for a Chloride Reduction Grant must be currently Smart Salting certified through the MPCA. These are cost-share grants. That means the cost share grant covers part of the project cost, and the award recipient covers part. The grant amount is up to \$20,000 max, and up to 75% of the project cost.

While there were several inquiries about the grant opportunity in 2021 only one application was received and funded. As a result, the group began additional marketing of the grant opportunity in the fall of 2021. Currently two projects are in the process of being reviewed for funding. The Lower Minnesota River Basin Group grant period expires on December 31, 2022.

2020-21 Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) Program

In 2020 BWSR staff rolled out the FY20-21 Watershed-based Implementation Funding (WBIF) Program. Staff worked with BWSR and other agencies within the Lower Minnesota North basin through a series of meetings to ultimately determine a list of projects to receive funding from the 20-21 WBIF program.

The RBWMO submitted a youth education program for consideration and was awarded a grant of \$30,000 to implement the education program in early 2021. The RBWMO partnered with the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends (MVRF) to develop a youth education program with curriculum focused around basic hydrologic and ecological principles. The funding covers materials, educator fees, and transportation costs for approximately 400 students. Each session is ended by a field trip to the Minnesota River at the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Park. The goals of the program are to:

- Increase knowledge on hydraulic and ecological principles
 - basic understanding of a watershed
 - understanding of how water interacts with environment
 - understanding of water stewardship
- Increase ability to positively impact water resources
- Increase confidence to be a water steward

In 2021 the MVRF were contracted by the RBWMO and City of Bloomington to run the program. MVRF hired a professional educator to create and carry out the curriculum. The curriculum was designed to empower youth members of the RBWMO community to become water quality stewards. These students leave the program better able to protect water resources, enhance local ecology and be better equipped to support restoration initiatives. The curriculum is tailored to reference the Lower Minnesota River corridor. However, the topics covered in the curriculum pertain to drinking water, surface water and groundwater. Major concepts covered by the curriculum include: Watersheds, Storm water, Storm drains, Run off, Habitat, Pollution, Pollutant, Point source pollution, Nonpoint source pollution, Wetlands.

In 2021, the first session was successfully implemented. It was hosted in cooperation with a Bloomington summer school program. A total of 103 students took part in the programming though attendance fluctuated throughout the program. Pre and post assessments showed a marked increase in knowledge, ability, and confidence. The field trip was highly regarded.

Bloomington's summer school program cost was approximately \$12,000. In addition to the teaching costs, that number reflects one-time costs for materials and curriculum. Richfield Schools are currently implementing an online version of the course with a field trip planned for the spring of 2022. Bloomington is planning to

host another session at the 2022 summer school. Upon completion of the 2022 Bloomington summer school programming the grants funds along with the required matching funds will be expended. The BWSR grant period expires on December 31, 2023.

Website Maintenance – The website is updated with the current watershed management plan, contact information, and resource links for residents, the public and other agencies.

Technical Advisory Commission – In accordance with the 2018 Approved Watershed Management Plan, the RBWMO Technical Advisory Committee met on December 16, 2021. Minutes from that meeting are provided at the end of the report as Attachment 1.

Section V Implementation Studies and Programs Activities:

- a. Education and Outreach Program – Continue providing educational opportunities through the use of the Wood Lake Nature Center and in partnering with other watershed districts and watershed management organizations.

Youth education programming – The RBWMO, in partnership with the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends (MVRF), began implementation of a youth education program for fourth and fifth graders. This work is being funded by a BWSR grant as described above.

Adopt-a-Drain - RBWMO was also active with the Adopt-a-Drain program within the watershed in 2021. Adopt-a-Drain asks residents to adopt a storm drain in their neighborhood and keep it clear of leaves, trash, and other debris to reduce water pollution. Within the RBWMO there were 23 new participants who adopted 41 new drains. There are currently 103 total participants who have adopted a total of 183 drains in the RBWMO. Participants reported collecting 1,181 lbs of debris on 2021.

- b. Storm Water Monitoring Program – Identified as a high priority in the RBWMO both Richfield and Bloomington continue to conduct regular water quality monitoring as outlined in Section 5.4 of the approved watershed management plan. The monitoring is intended to establish long-term water quality data for Wood Lake, Richfield Lake, Smith Pond, and Wrights Lake.

Monitoring has been on-going at Wood Lake, Richfield, Lake, and Smith Pond since 2010. Monitoring began on Wrights Lake in 2013 including being monitored as part of the Hennepin County Wetland Health Evaluation Program from 2013-2015. The RBWMO has been committed to monitoring at least one waterbody each year has part of the Hennepin County Wetland

Health Evaluation Program (WHEP). However, Hennepin County did not offer the WHEP program in 2020 due to Covid-19 and the program is still being re-evaluated by the County and it is unknown if this program will continue in the future.

Staff completed autonomous sampling of conductivity, temperature and depth on Wrights Lake using a EnviroDIY monitoring unit. This comes after successfully piloting the project in 2020. Monthly water quality samples and aquatic vegetation surveys were conducted on Wrights Lake and Smith Park Pond. This information helps inform on future management decisions. A mechanical duckweed skimmer was pilot tested on Running Park Pond. The goal of mechanical removal is to minimize community desire for chemical plant control for aesthetic purposes and pull nutrients out of a water body.

Monitoring records are available upon request.

- c. 2020-21 Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) Program
The RBWMO submitted a youth education program for consideration and was awarded a grant of \$30,000 to implement the education program. The RBWMO partnered with the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends to develop a youth education program with curriculum focused around basic hydrologic and ecological principles.

Richfield Schools are currently implementing an online version of the course with a field trip planned for the spring of 2022. Bloomington is planning to host another session at the 2022 summer school.

- d. Sheridan Pond Dredging Project – Richfield– A wetland boundary survey was completed in 2021 to help facilitate project design. Construction is anticipated in 2022.
- e. I-494: Airport to Highway 169 – Staff continued to work with MnDOT and other stakeholders on surface and stormwater management challenges and opportunities throughout the I-494 corridor.

Projects:

- 77th Street Underpass – The City of Richfield coordinated the construction of underpass beneath TH77 connecting 77th St to the east and west of of TH77.

The project is currently ongoing and includes Construction of 4-lane divided road connecting 77th Street to realigned Longfellow Ave on East side of TH77, new bridge on TH77 carrying TH77 over 77th St. Reconstruction of southbound TH77 to westbound I-494 ramp, westbound I-494 to

northbound TH77 amp, and frontage road over new 77th St. Also includes rehabilitation and/or replacement of majority of city-owned utilities in project area. Stormwater management elements on the project include underground detention system beneath Washington Park. A SWPPP was developed for the project and MPCA Construction Stormwater Permit was obtained. Erosion control includes inlet protection, bioroll and silt fence perimeter control, stabilized construction exits, seed mix and sod.

- **Bloomington PMP Street Maintenance Project**
As part of the 2021-101 PMP Street Maintenance Project Bloomington coordinated the reconstruction of Park Rd, E. 88th Street, 13th Ave, and 14th Ave.

Project included 3,950 feet of fully-reconstructed bituminous pavement. Curb and gutter total length 7,600 feet with typical street width of 32-feet. Stormwater management elements on the project included: A SWPPP was developed for the project. MPCA Construction Stormwater Permit was obtained. Erosion control included inlet protection, perimeter control, and sod. The new storm sewer construction allowed for providing a stub-out for future connection to McAndrews Playlot and two sump MH. The sumps include a SAFL Baffle and a Preserver for comparing performance on the similar-sized subwatersheds.

D. 2021 Work Plan

Watershed Based Funding – Staff will continue to work on the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative to finalize the media campaign and Parkers Lake Chloride Project Facilitation Plan. Staff will also continue working with the Minnesota River Basin group on the cost-share grants for applicators to retrofit equipment to use efficient technology to maintain sidewalks and roads. As part of the FY20-21 WBIF staff will continue to work with Richfield and Bloomington educators and Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends to implement the youth education program.

Education and Outreach – Staff will look to partner with adjacent watershed districts to promote and sponsor educational opportunities such as Smart Salting and Summer Turf Maintenance workshops. Additionally, staff will look for opportunities to continue the goal of engaging with and educating youth about water and natural resources using the Wood Lake Nature Center and through partnerships with other watershed districts and water management organizations.

Education and Outreach Plan – One of goals of the WMO is to work more efficiently and effectively with public and private partners on engaging youth in area schools. This effort was initiated in 2020, but progress was impacted due to Covid-19 and limited work was completed in 2021. The WMO will use the experience with the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends and Bloomington and Richfield schools' youth

education program to continue developing an education and outreach plan geared towards specifically engaging with students. The education and outreach plan will consider ways to engage with schools, public and private partners and youth in an effort to incorporate water resources educational programming.

I-494: Airport to Highway 169 – Staff will continue to collaborate with other watershed districts and water management organizations for an acceptable approach to water management along the I-494 corridor. Staff will also continue working with MnDOT and other stakeholders on surface and stormwater management challenges and opportunities throughout the corridor.

Adopt-a-Drain – RBWMO Staff will continue to promote the Adopt-a-drain program for the area. This program is organized through Hamline University is now available to all interested entities in the metro area.

Ongoing Items – Staff will continue to implement ongoing studies and programs as outlined in the 2018 Watershed Management Plan, including:

- Website maintenance for distribution of education and WMO related information
- Water quality monitoring
- Continued TAC coordination

Projects – Sheridan Pond Dredging Project – A wetland boundary survey was completed in 2021 to help facilitate project design. Construction is anticipated in 2022.

E. Permits, Variances and Enforcement

Richfield had one wetland boundary approval for Sheridan Pond and Bloomington had zero actions relating to the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) within the RBWMO area in 2021. The WCA 2021 Annual Reporting Forms are available upon request.

In 2021, Bloomington staff completed erosion control inspections at four construction/redevelopment sites in Bloomington within the RBWMO.

- 8201 Old Cedar: Apartment Complex
- 8714 Portland Ave S: Portland Commons Ph. 2
- 1344 Park Rd: Single family home addition
- 1900 E 86th Street: Village Club

In 2021, Richfield staff completed erosion control inspections at five construction/redevelopment sites in Richfield within the RBWMO.

- Riley Apartments (600 West 64th Street)
- Chase Bank (66th and Lyndale Avenue South)

- Sheridan Hills Elementary School (6400 Sheridan Avenue South)
 - Novo Apartments (2400 66th Street West)
- Landsby on Penn Apartments (6228 Penn Avenue South)

F. Storm Water Pollution Prevention Programs (SWPPPs)

The RBWMO works collaboratively with its member cities to include and promote best management practices (BMPs) from both cities storm water programs consistent with the requirements of the MPCA Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Storm Water Program and the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). The Richfield and Bloomington SWPPPs address all of the six Minimum Control Measures (MCM) outlined in the permit and BMPs have been prepared for each measure as follows:

MCM 1 & 2 – Public Education, Participation, Outreach and Involvement

The RBWMO, through its member cities, has an established education and outreach program that focuses on illicit discharge recognition and reporting, as well as other specifically selected storm water-related issues such as chloride management. In addition, both cities continue to solicit public input on the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program. The RBWMO offers opportunities to learn how storm water can impact streams, rivers, and wetlands, and the steps people can take to reduce pollutants in the storm water runoff. These opportunities are offered on a continual basis at the Wood Lake Nature Center where the center receives 75,000 visitors per year (on average). In addition to educating various grades of student classrooms annually, additional education opportunities are provided through quarterly utility bill mailing inserts, Bloomington's Green Room (which is part of the City's biennial Home Improvement Fair), and Public Works Open House. Information is available on city websites, the RBWMO website, in city newsletters, and through employee training programs.

Public participation and involvement is solicited through public meetings and specific storm water project meetings, or open houses.

MCM 3 – Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

Both cities implement and enforce an illicit discharge program. Richfield's and Bloomington's staff keep up-to-date records of the storm sewer system identifying all ponds, lakes, streams, storm sewer pipes, conveyances, and outfalls leaving the RBWMO. Public Works staff annually inspects sanitary and storm sewer mainline pipes checking for defects such as fractures, cracks, open joints, or other defects that could lead to illicit discharges. Once identified, pipe distresses can be scheduled for repair or maintenance.

Bloomington continues to administer the curb-side-cleanup resulting in the proper handling and disposal waste and problem items helping to keep these items from entering stormwater and surface waters. Continued promotion of the Hennepin County Hazardous Waste disposal facility provides residents a resource for proper disposal of hazardous wastes.

MCM 4 – Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control

Both cities require site specific storm water management plans and erosion control plans for new development and redevelopment that meet the NPDES requirements. The required erosion control BMPs are monitored and inspected as the work progresses. Existing erosion control ordinances and development plan review procedures provide the mechanisms to help prevent soil erosion into the MS4.

MCM 5 – Post Construction Storm Water Management for New Development and Redevelopment

Storm water runoff rate control continues to be a critical component in Richfield and Bloomington development/redevelopment.

The current MS4 permit was approved in August, 2013. Post-Construction stormwater management requirements contain multiple components including: storm water volume reduction requirements for new development and redevelopment, regulating areas allowed for infiltration, allowable exceptions, mitigation provisions, long-term maintenance requirements of structural BMPs, and site plan review.

MCM 6 – Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations

Both cities continue to implement education and conduct inspection measure to ensure that good housekeeping practices are in place at their respective facilities.

Annually the City of Richfield completes several city-wide street sweeping passes and performs inspection and maintenance on all structural pollution control devices within the permitted MS4. Additionally, the City inspects all outfalls and ponds within the city's MS4 during each permit term.

Bloomington provides two annual sweepings of city streets and completes inspection and maintenance of 100% of the structural pollution control devices within the permitted MS4. Inspections of 20% of the city's MS4 outfalls, ponds and sediment basins are also completed annually. Associated maintenance as identified by the inspections is either scheduled or completed at the time of inspection.

G. Local Surface Water Plans

Bloomington's LSWMP received RBWMO approval on May 16, 2018.
Richfield's SWMP received RBWMO approval on August 23, 2018.

Subsequent to the March 5, 2018 approval of the RBWMO Plan, staff has reviewed each city's plan to ensure conformance with new policies and procedures.

H. Consultant Services

None

I. Information Program

A copy of the publication for the Bloomington Sun and Richfield Sun is included.
(Attachment 2)

The RBWMO website provides a location for the public and other agencies to view the Watershed Management Plan as well as find general contact information, and links to other water resources-related information. The website address is www.RBWMO.org

J. Expenditures

All RBWMO expenses are shared equally and paid through the member cities storm water utility funds.

Insurance for 2021 was \$2,279.00.