

2015 Program of the Year

Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek



The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD) took home the Program of the Year award at the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts' annual meeting in December. The winning program, Creek Restoration Action Strategy (CRAS), is a tool for identifying stream reaches in greatest need of restoration. Prioritizing projects can be challenging, especially when the potential sites span multiple creeks and cities. The CRAS is a method of comparing among sites and determining which locations are in most need of help. District staff laid the foundation of the strategy by walking the length of each of the three creeks (Riley, Purgatory, Bluff) and assessing wildlife habitat and the amount of erosion. Other factors that are considered in the evaluation include: water quality, infrastructure risk, and the potential for partnerships and education.

RPBCWD Administrator Claire Bleser was excited not only for the award, but also for the potential of this new tool: "The CRAS has helped us to better understand our creeks, and to focus District efforts on high-benefit projects in a cost-effective manner. As we continue to update it with new information over time, we will continue to grow this understanding, and our capacity to protect, manage, and restore our water resources."

The CRAS was developed by the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD) and Barr Engineering, with input by community, city, and state partners.

For more information please visit:

http://www.rpbcwd.org/files/7114/4952/2230/Final_CRAS_Report_Nov_2015_2.pdf



From left to right: Richard Chadwick (manager), Mary Bisek (manager), Leslie Yetka (manager), Josh Maxwell (staff), Jill Crafton (manager), Michelle Jordan (staff), Claire Bleser (staff), Perry Forster (manager) and Gerry Van Amberg

