

Annual WD Award Nomination

Nominee:

Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District

189 County Road 8 NE

Spicer, MN 56288

320-796-0888

www.mfcrwd.org

Nominated By:

Ethan Jenzen

Area Hydrologist

DNR Ecological and Water Resources

164 County Road 8 NE

Spicer, MN 56288

320-796-2161 x232

I am pleased to nominate the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District for consideration of the annual MAWD recognition award. The MFCRWD has been a local leader in water quality improvement, resource protection, and community collaboration efforts with the purpose of resource enhancement over the past year. The 3-person staff and 5-member board are open minded, cooperative and effective partners in water and natural resource management.

Water Regulation: MFCRWD is an effective partner in protecting the character and quality of basins within the watershed as a portion of their stormwater and erosion control permit programs. The working with the DNR on public waters work permits. Staff also provide technical analysis and often provide input to other regulatory programs, including shoreland management for the cities of Spicer and New London. The staff is very active in early coordination and reaching out to DNR staff to address potential issues with permit applications prior to issues arising. They assist in pre-construction and reviewing with permittees the authorized permitted project and conditions associated with those permits.

Watershed Planning: RRWD is the one of the sponsor LGU's for the North Fork Crow River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies efforts (WRAPS), and has been a leader in the NFC Watershed in the preliminary stages of Phase 2 WRAPS development. MFCRWD staff have consistently provided technical expertise and guidance for the WRAPs through coordinating watershed prioritization data and information. The MFCRWD staff have also been leaders in the ongoing execution of the One Watershed, One Plan efforts in the North Fork Crow watersheds, actively coordinating implementation efforts as a portion of this recently developed plan.

Water Quality Improvement: The MFCRWD has been an essential partner in the completion of a number of basin water quality improvement projects within the watershed. The Hubbard/Schultz/Wheeler (HSW) Lakes project is an innovative, cooperative, multi-year effort with MNDNR and Ducks Unlimited to enhance water quality in the aforementioned basins and downstream receiving waters through temporary basin water level manipulation. TMDL studies indicated that the watershed for these basins supplies approximately 70% of

runoff-generated phosphorus to downstream (impaired) Diamond Lake, and this project was developed to address water quality issues in these basins, with goals of improved water quality with benefits for aquatic species and wildlife habitat. The HSW project is the first in the area to attempt to manipulate a chain of basins in succession to achieve water quality benefits for all basins and downstream waters. Construction of the project was completed in 2018, and drawdown completed in early 2019. This effort represents an excellent collaborative effort resulting from MFCRWD's coordination with local, agency, and federal non-profit partners.

The WD also has a number of ongoing projects with local municipal partners to address stormwater issues. A Clean Water-funded study was recently completed to identify areas where nutrient addition to runoff is highest, and to prioritize these areas for implementation in partnership with the municipalities.

Stream Stabilization and Stream Restoration: The MFCRWD has recently completed an assessment project related to addressing streambank erosion on the entire length of the mainstem Middle Fork Crow River, with the goal of promoting stream bank stabilization and restoration work to reduce sediment loading to downstream receiving waters. They are actively working with landowners to address erosion issues as they arise, and advocate project designs that are beyond traditional hard armoring and promote incorporation of revetment bank stabilization, native plantings, j-hooks, rock vanes, rock riffles and toe wood sod mats, while exploring potential for channel re-meandering in historically channelized regions.

Local Monitoring efforts: The WD coordinates water quality monitoring on 11 local lakes and five stream sites, and is an active partner for all local lake associations in addressing water quality and vegetation management related issues. The WD also has recently coordinated the installation of a new real-time flow monitoring station on the mainstem MFCR.



From Left: Robert Hodapp, Manager; Jay Hedtke, Manager; Shane Braegelman, Manager; Ruth Schaefer, Manager; Margaret Johnson, Administrator and Nathan Kestner, NW Regional Manager – DNR