

Watershed Districts In Action

Cedar River Watershed District is DNR 2012 Watershed District of the Year

Cedar River Watershed District has been named Minnesota's top watershed program for its work to reduce flooding and improve water quality in the Austin area. CRWD staff received the Watershed Program of the Year Award. Association of Watershed Districts' annual meeting in Alexandria. It is one of two major awards given at the event. "All of us with the CRWD – staff and board members – are greatly honored by this recognition," said Bev Nordby, CRWD Administrator. "Our motto is 'Reviving Our River,' and we will continue to work very aggressively to improve the Cedar River and other local waterways through a variety of approaches and partnerships." Administrating and staffing of the CRWD's work has been contracted annually to the Mower County Soil & Water Conservation District staff since the CRWD's inception in 2007.

Steve Hirsch, Director of the Minnesota DNR's Division of Ecological Resources Management Team, nominated the CRWD for the award, noting, among numerous efforts, the CRWD staff's work on alternative agricultural drainage demonstration projects with the University of Minnesota and other groups, including a two-stage ditch near Adams and a surge basin near Grand Meadow.

The CRWD also is involved in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Mississippi River Basin Initiative focused on water quality and has coordinated two TMDL-related contracts for the Cedar Basin, with a third contract coming soon for implementing a strategy for the Cedar River Watershed, Hirsch said.

"From the perspective of illustrating how the land conservation work of the (Soil & Water Conservation Districts) can be coordinated with the water management work of the (watershed districts) – this group in Austin is showing us all how it can be done," Hirsch said Dec. 1 at the MAWD event. Hirsch called the CRWD a "very good partner over years," and, given this partnership, the DNR recently extended a general permit to the CRWD for numerous types of projects proposed in public waters, helping the DNR with its work load. These types of projects include streambank stabilization, excavation and filling, bridges, culverts, intakes, outfalls and low water crossings.

"They have also been trying to come up with many different ways to lessen flooding in Austin, and we continue to work with them on this major historic issue," Hirsch said.

Two years ago, the CRWD also received statewide recognition when its resource specialist Justin Hanson was honored as the 2010 Outstanding Watershed District Employee at the MAWD event. In 2007, state and local officials formed the CRWD in response to the Cedar River Watershed's worst-known floods occurring in 2000 and 2004. The CRWD's top priorities are aimed at reducing flooding and improving water quality within the Cedar River Watershed.



Steve Hirsch, Director of the Minnesota DNR's Division of Ecological Resources Management Team, presented the DNR Watershed District of the Year award to Cedar Creek administrator Bev Nordby and district manager Mike Jones at the MAWD Annual Meeting in Alexandria.

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Capitol Region Watershed District Project Manager named Outstanding Watershed District Employee of the Year

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) is pleased to announce that project engineer Anna Eleria has been named 2012 Minnesota Watershed District Employee of the Year by Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke presented the award at the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts' annual convention in November. Since 2008, Anna has served as Water Resource Project Manager with CRWD and is responsible for implementation of watershed projects and oversight of capital projects that address water quality issues.

In 2012, Anna managed the Trout Brook Storm Sewer Tunnel Project, which involved the realignment of 800 feet of pipe buried beneath the Cayuga-35E Bridge. The project involved layers of challenges, including a 30-hour construction window, utility conflicts, and obtaining permits, all of which showcased Anna's negotiation and management skills. In addition to this complex project Anna also manages landscape design support for the City of St. Paul's multi-year Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which resulted in more than 95 rain gardens on 65 properties in 2011 and 2012. Anna also managed the design and installation of nine stormwater management projects as part of Metropolitan Council's Central Corridor Light Rail Transit project.



BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke presented the BWSR Outstanding Watershed District Employee of the Year Award to Anna Eleria of Capitol Region Watershed District. CRWD Administrator Mark Doneux said, "Anna's excellent project management skills enable her to understand complex project issues such as technical design, financial constraints, project sequencing and regulatory requirements. Every organization should be fortunate enough to have someone like Anna on staff." Anna holds a B.S. Environmental Studies from University of Minnesota, and an M.S. in Water Resources Engineering from Tufts University.

Capitol Region Watershed District
www.capitolregionwd.org

Watershed Districts are special purpose units of local government whose boundaries follow those of a natural watershed (an area of land in which all water flows to one outlet).

All other government units, such as states, counties and cities have political boundaries. Water, however, knows no political boundaries and instead goes where it wants to, when it wants to.



2012 MAWD PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

East Metro Water Resource Education Program

Participating Watershed Districts: Browns Creek, Carnelia-Marine-St. Croix, Ramsey-Washington Metro, Rice Creek, South Washington & Valley Branch

The East Metro Water Resource Education Program (EMWREP) is a partnership formed to develop a comprehensive water resource education and outreach program for the east metro area of St. Paul, MN, including all of Washington County as well as a small portion of Ramsey and Anoka Counties. The mission of EMWREP is to improve the quality of local surface and groundwater resources through education and outreach about non-point source water pollution. Formed in 2006, the program has been instrumental in the implementation of hundreds of stormwater practices and outreach to thousands of landowners, public officials and municipal staff.



From Left - Robert Johnson and Paul Ellefson - Ramsey Washington Metro, Brian Johnson - South Washington, Jack Frost - Ramsey Washington Metro, Dave Bucheck - Valley Branch, MAWD President Jerome Deal, Craig Leiser - Browns Creek, Jack LaVold - South Washington, Barbra Haake - Rice Creek, and Breanna Kobiela - MAWD Awards Committee Member.

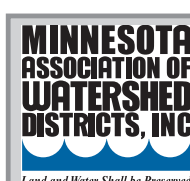
MAWD Awards Program

To encourage more nominations year, the Awards Committee asks for a simple, one page Preliminary Nomination Form to be completed in August. Based on the preliminary nominations, three finalists, in each category, will be asked to complete a more detailed project or program description.

Finalists are notified in August and have until October to submit the full project/program description. The Preliminary Nomination form requires a project/program description up to 250 words.

You can download both the informational PDF and the one page Preliminary Nomination Form at mnwatershed.org.

Include your watershed district in 2014!



2012 MAWD PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Maplewood Mall Runoff Reduction Retrofit Project

Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District

The Maplewood Mall project was a stormwater volume reduction retrofit project to infiltrate or filter the first 1 inch of stormwater runoff from the 35 acres of parking lot. This had to be completed with minimal parking space loss and meet our design treatment goals. The project was designed to be implemented over four phases in multiple years as funding was available through District levy funds or grants. The project was started in 2009 and completed in 2012 at a total cost of approximately \$7 million. The District received \$3.3 million in grant funds from the BWSR Clean Water Funds, 319 funds, and a TMDL implementation grant. The project included construction of nearly 2 miles of tree trenches, 55 rain gardens and planted 375 trees. It included four major BMPs including tree trenches, rain gardens, porous pavement and an enhanced sand filter.



Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District managers and staff are presented the Project of the Year award at the MAWD Annual Meeting banquet. From left: Ramsey Washington Metro Assistant Administrator Tina Carstens, Manager Jack Frost, MAWD President Jerome Deal, Paige Ahlborg, project manager, Manager Paul Ellefson, Manager Robert Johnson and Breanna Kobiela, MAWD Awards Committee member.



Last summer and fall the mall project signage and interpretive features were completed for the project Grand opening in September. The cistern, its interactive pumps and chimes were a big hit. The interpretive signage was completed and installed at the main entrance and other mall entrances. The signage illustrates how the tree trenches and rain gardens are constructed and how they work. Signage in the vestibule at the main entrance shows the mall in the watershed and how water travels from the Mall to the Mississippi River. This sign also shows where different stormwater features are installed around the Mall property.

