



## 2023 Watershed Organization of the Year presented by the DNR

Dan Lais, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Central Region Manager, Ecological and Water Resources Division attended the Minnesota Watersheds annual conference to present the DNR's WD of Year award. On behalf of all DNR staff, he acknowledged the great work and partnerships with all the watersheds across the state.

This year's Watershed of the Year Award was presented to the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District. They have been an outstanding partner with agencies and local governments, working across jurisdictional boundaries to manage approximately 81 square miles of land, 31 lakes, three designated trout streams, hundreds of acres of wetlands, and more than 17 miles of river shoreline.

The Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District does a tremendous amount of work with property owners and the DNR to protect and restore natural shorelines and address other shoreland issues.

Specifically, the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District:

- formed a Shoreland Compliance Advisory Team with government partners to improve coordination and communication when addressing shoreland violations.
- coordinates shoreland technical evaluation panels, bringing together state, county, and local staff to combine their efforts and communicate clearly with landowners.
- conducts robust, quantitative surveys of its largest lakes using the DNR's "Score Your Shore" method to develop baseline data and targets for improving shoreline health.

Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District staff also presented on natural shorelines and bioengineering at a local government forum hosted by the DNR and co-presented on the benefits of natural shorelines with DNR staff at a Workshop-on-the-Water event.

Congratulations to the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District on their outstanding efforts!

