



Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

House of Representatives


Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

Jan 11, 2023

John Jaschke, Executive Director

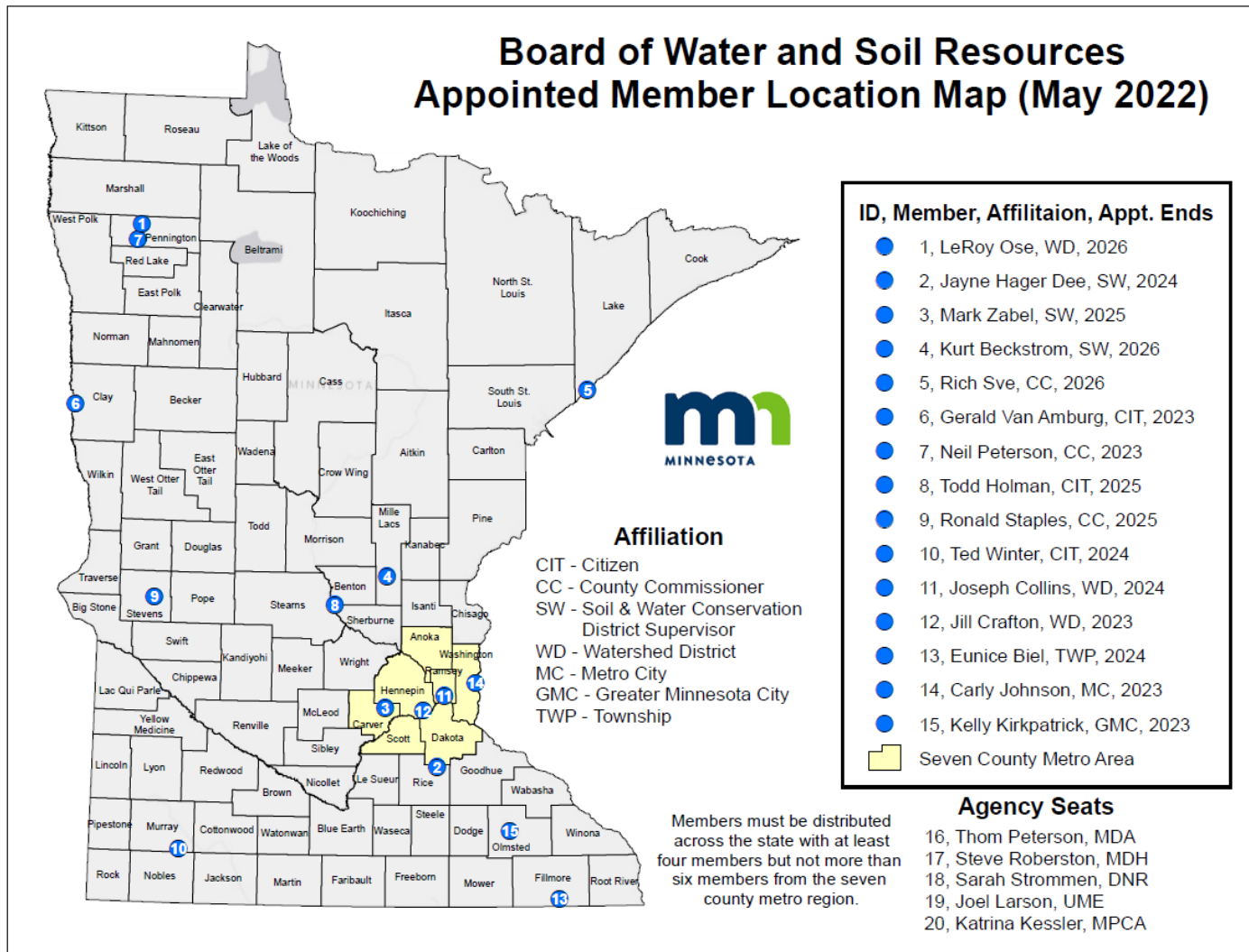
Andrea Fish, Assistant Director

Our Mission

A photograph of a wetland landscape. In the foreground, tall, thin grasses with some brown seed heads are visible on the left. The middle ground features a body of water reflecting the sky, with a dense line of reeds or marsh grasses on the opposite shore. The background shows a flat horizon under a sky with soft, white clouds.

Improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.

BWSR Structure



Governor-Appointed 20-member board:

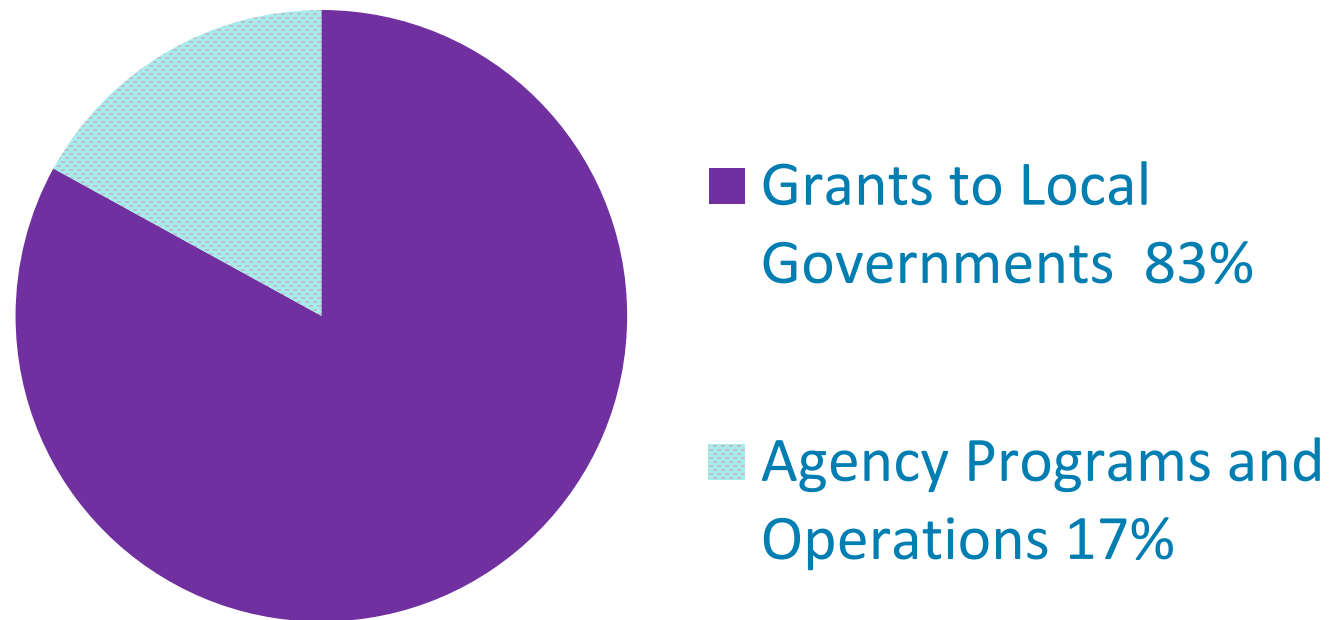
- Local Govts
- Citizens
- State Agencies

Who We Work With

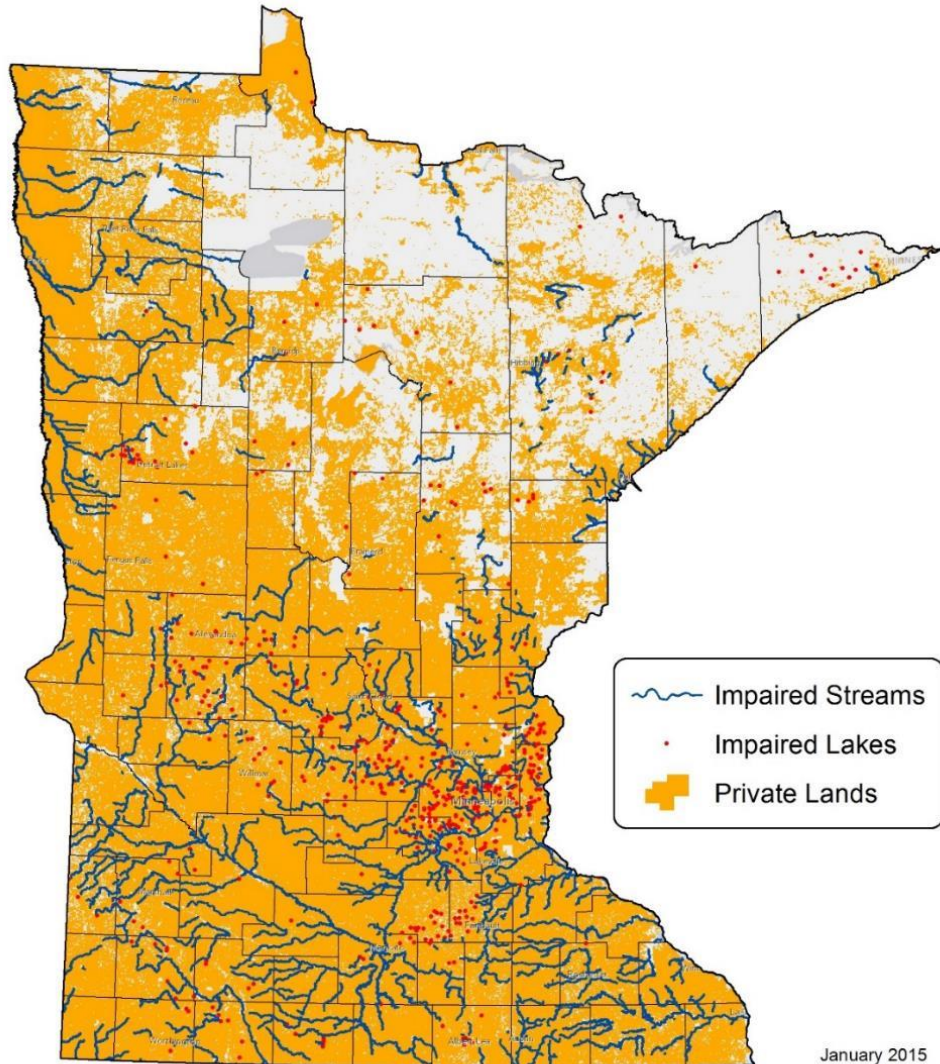
- **88** Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- **45** Watershed Districts
- **87** Counties
- Joint Powers Organizations
- State and Federal agencies
- Agricultural and Environmental NGOs
- Tribal Governments



- Local government delivery system (1000 +)
- On-the-ground conservation results



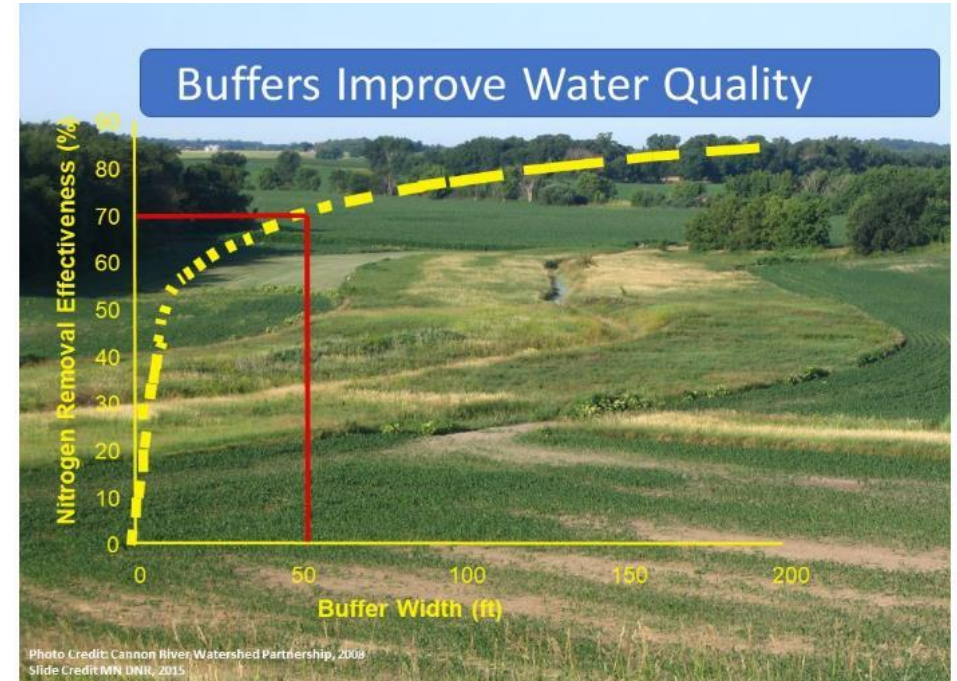
Partnership with Private Landowners



- 76% of Minnesota's lands are privately-held
- Many of our programs directly impact privately held land of all sizes – farms, utilities, and residences.
 - **RIM** Reserve Conservation Easement Program has successfully restored and protected more than 300,000 acres of private lands over the past 30 years
 - One of our most popular programs, **Lawns to Legumes**, focuses on residential properties and neighborhoods

Enhancing Programs is a Priority

- Enhancing Existing Programs
 - Wetland Banking
 - Program climate/conservation enhancements
 - Land Use/Permit Programs:
 - Buffers
 - Drainage
 - Wetland Conservation



Local Government Roads Wetland Replacement Program

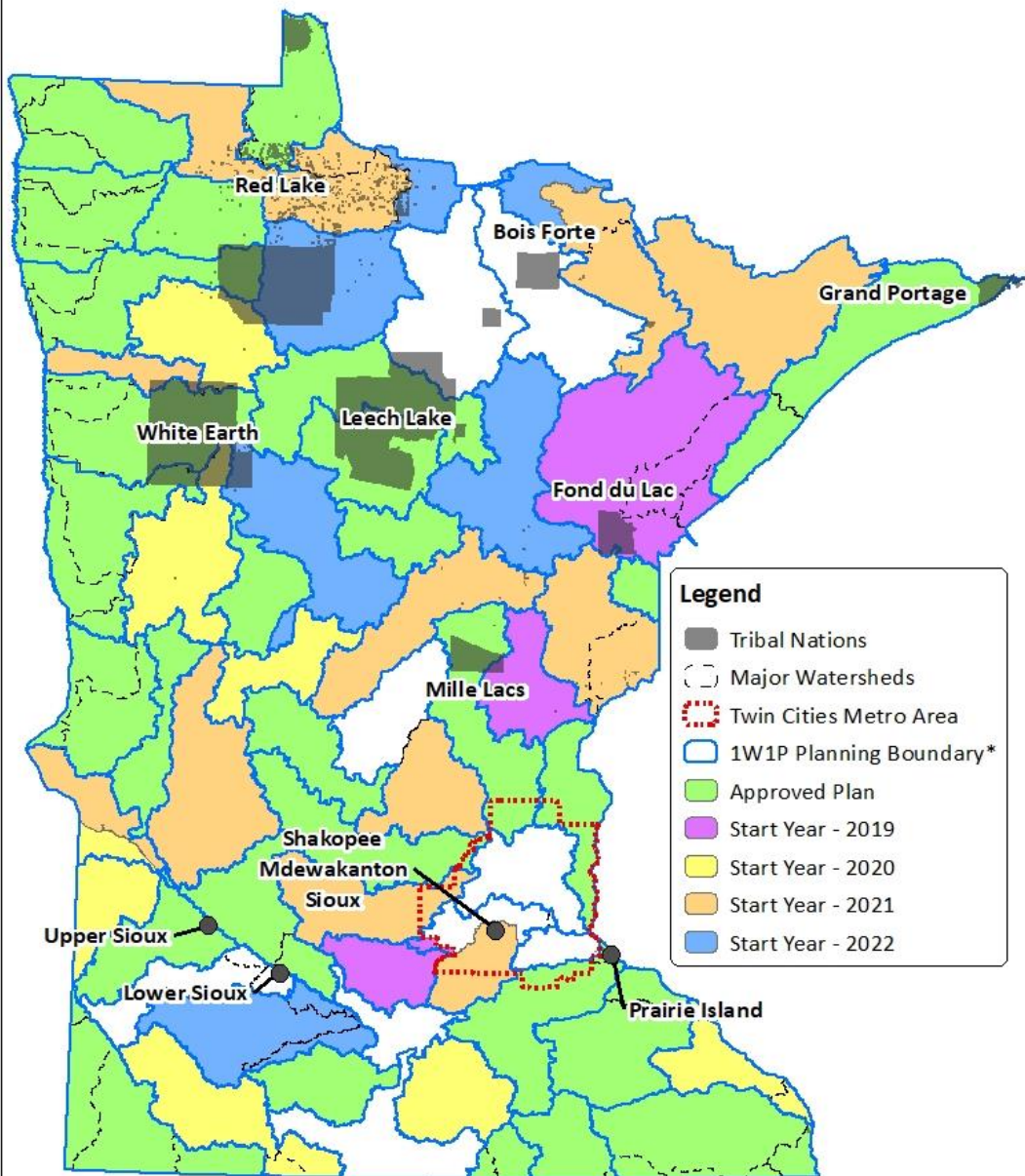
Bonding - \$20 million



- Larger, higher-quality wetland mitigation
- More cost-efficient
- Expedited permitting



One Watershed One Plan Participating Watersheds



Watershed-Based Approach to Resource Management



LEECH LAKE RIVER WATERSHED COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN



Woods, water, wildlife, and people:
A healthy watershed and a vibrant economy



Erosion curbed in Roseau County



“

Instead of just putting tax money into cleaning, we can work with (landowners) and do programs like side-inlets, buffers, to keep that topsoil on the landscape vs. in the water.

”

– Tracy Halstensgard,
Roseau River Watershed District administrator

Lake McCarron Protection: Upper Villa Park Volume Reduction and Stormwater Reuse

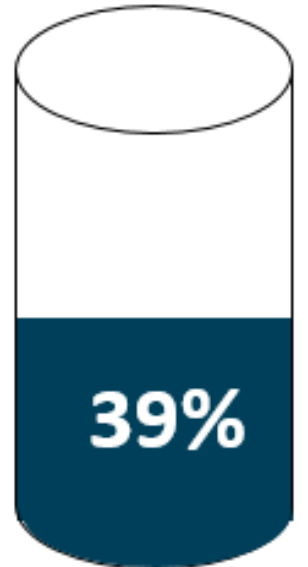


**Projected Pollution
Reduction:
Phosphorus (45 lbs/yr)**

50
40
30
20
10
0



100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
10%
0%



Progress
towards goal



Clearing up Serpent Lake



Serpent Lake hasn't been this clear since 1991.

With two of three phosphorus-reducing projects complete and runoff-regulating ordinances adopted, the lake is poised for a rebound.



Grand Marais Outlet Project and Cut Channel Stabilization

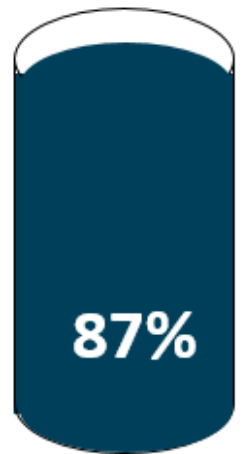


“The amendment was the catalyst we needed to move forward. This is our legacy.”



637 tons of sediment annually kept from entering the Red River.

100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
10%
0%



Progress towards goal



Safeguarding St. James' Drinking Water

“

I just thought it was the right thing to do for the land, being it was marginal land, to put it in a program like this so it helps protect our water.

”

— Curt Peterson, landowner

“

It's in the prairie grass. You don't have to spray. No fertilizer. No nitrates in the water will seep through. The land is just back to nature.

”

— Rich Enger, Watonwan SWCD Board chairman



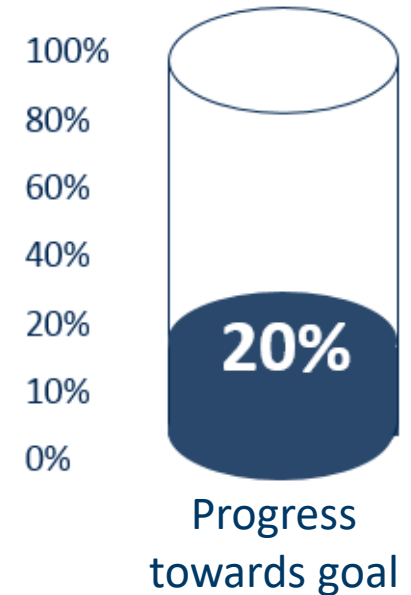


Targeting Conservation: Sand Creek



Results to date:

- 💧 Streambank stabilization: **300 feet**
- 💧 Shoreline protection: **405 feet**
- 💧 Buffered waterways: **3,840 feet**
- 💧 Cover crops: **595 acres**
- 💧 Native grass plantings: **53 acres**
- 💧 Grade-control structures: **16**
- 💧 Restored wetlands: **4.3 acres**



Local Water Management

“

This is how you have to think, as a watershed, not as ‘I’m part of this county,’ or ‘I’m part of this district.’ The watershed isn’t just isolated to our county. As projects are being done upstream, it’s ultimately going to help us downstream.

— Ron Antony, Yellow Medicine County Commissioner

”

Climate Action Framework Goals

BWSR Focus Areas

Framework Goals



Clean
transportation



**Climate-smart
natural &
working lands**



**Resilient
communities**



Clean energy &
efficient buildings



Healthy lives &
communities



Clean economy

Support of New Programs is a Priority

- Supporting the **Climate Action Framework**
 - Interagency *Natural and Working Lands + Resiliency and Adaptation* teams (BWSR, DNR, MPCA, MDA)
- BWSR-centered initiatives:
 - Soil Health Practices (for carbon sequestration and preserving topsoil)
 - Accelerated water storage
 - Peatland and Grassland restoration and protection
 - Biodiversity: Lawns to Legumes, Habitat Enhancement Landscape Program (HELP), and Habitat Friendly Utilities Program



Federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA)

USDA-NRCS Climate Conservation Funding



	IRA funding in millions					
	Current- '22	2023	2024	2025	2026	IRA total
EQIP	\$ 1,800	\$ 250	\$ 1,750	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,450	\$ 8,450
CSP	\$ 800	\$ 250	\$ 500	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,250
RCPP	\$ 300	\$ 250	\$ 800	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,400	\$ 4,950
ACEP	\$ 450	\$ 100	\$ 200	\$ 500	\$ 600	\$ 1,400

Re-Invest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve



- Wetlands
- Wild Rice Lakes
- Riparian Buffers
- ACUB – Camp Ripley
- Wellhead Protection
- Critical Shoreland Protection
- **CREP**



Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MNCREP) Bonding - \$9.9 million

Benefits:

Carbon Sequestration, Water Quality, Habitat

- State-held easements: wetlands, grasslands, riparian areas, wellhead protection.
- Targeted to marginal ag lands and environmentally sensitive areas
- Federal leverage up to \$350 million (with state match)
- Up to 60K acres (at approx. 40K+ acres)



Lawns to Legumes



This award-winning program offers a combination of workshops, coaching, planting guides, and cost-share funding for installing pollinator-friendly native plantings in residential lawns.

Since the program launched as a pilot in 2019 with LCCMR-ENRTF funding, it has supported more than 2,252 residential pollinator projects in 87 Minnesota counties.

Lawns to Legumes: 3 Components

Public Education and Outreach Campaign

- DIY Resources: BWSR, Blue Thumb, and Local Partners

Individual Landowner Support

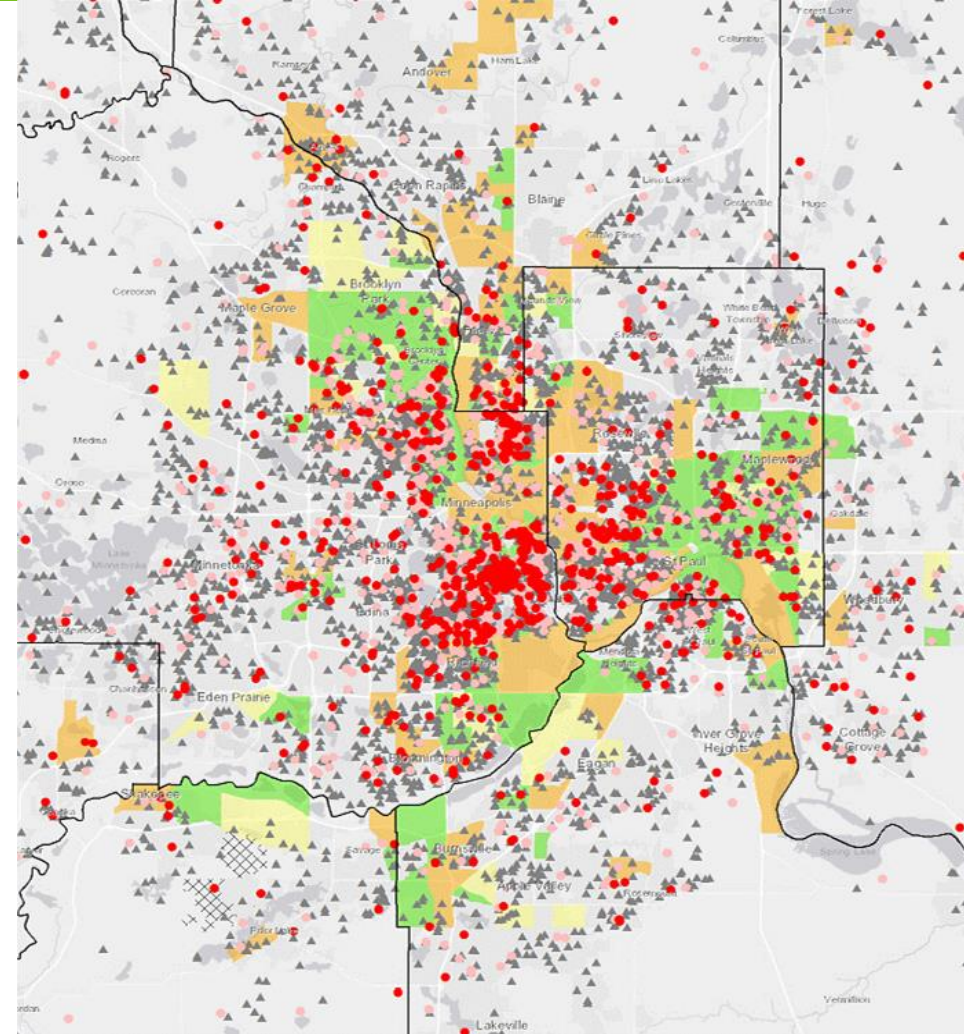
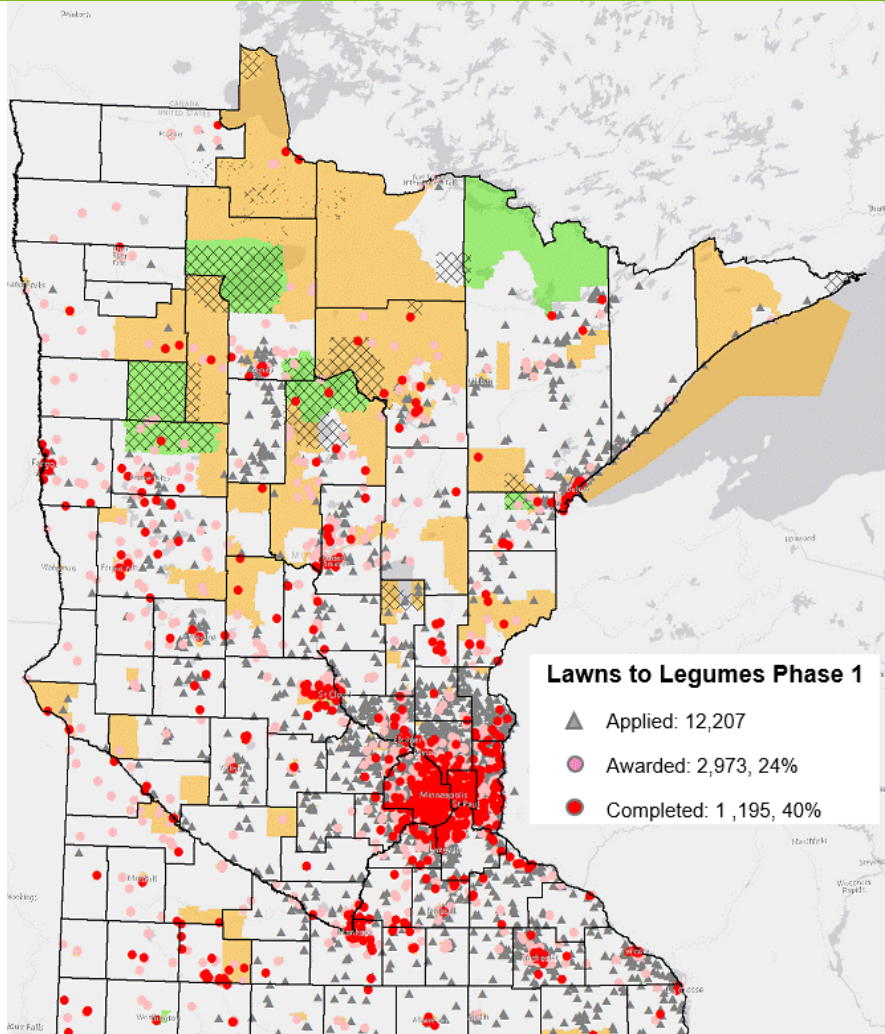
- \$350 Grants to establish Pollinator Habitat
- Coaches, Workshops

Demonstration Neighborhoods

- \$20k-\$40K Grants to build corridors for at-risk species in partnership with local communities
- enhance pollinator habitat in key corridors, raise awareness about residential pollinator protection and showcase best practice

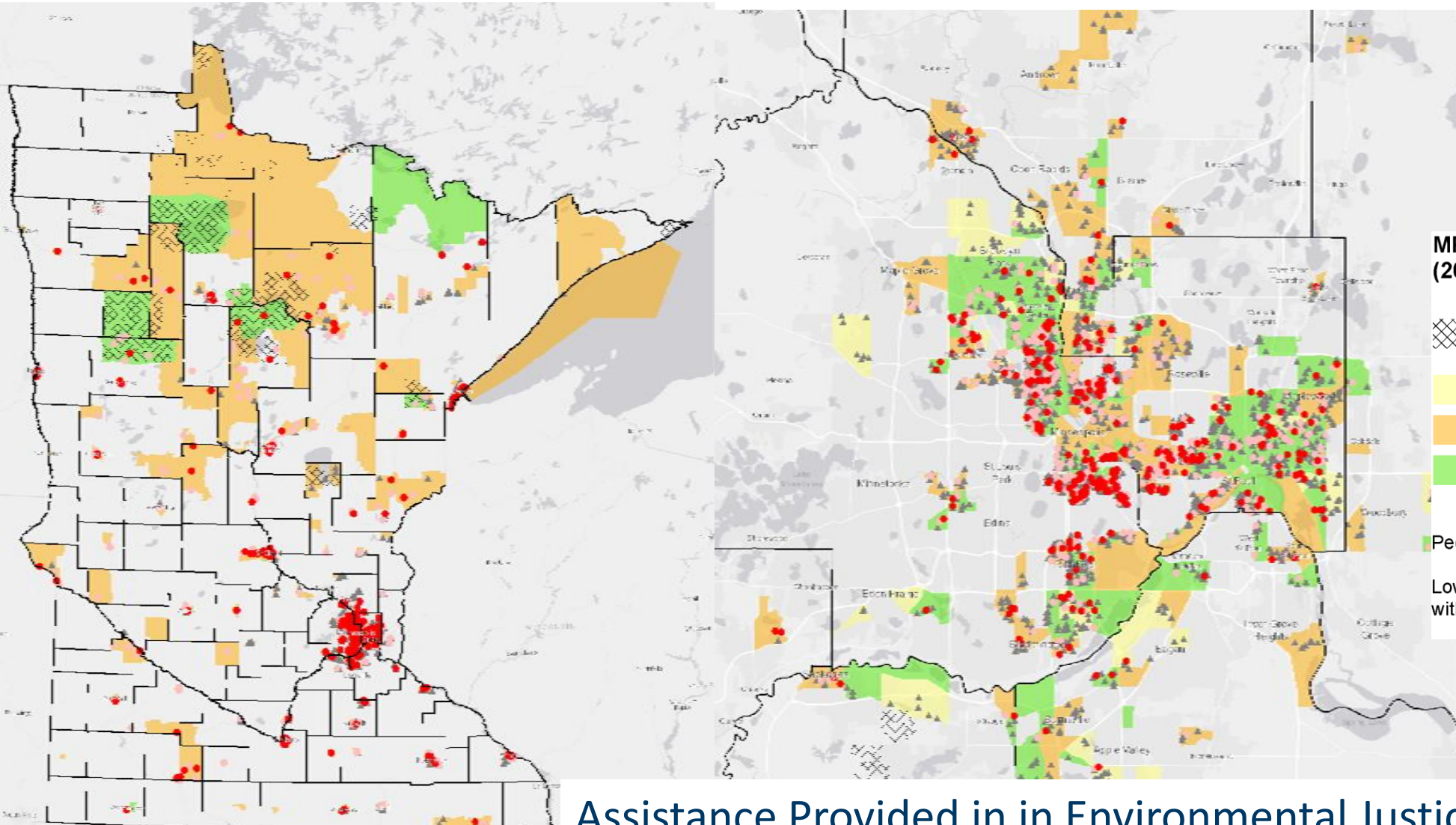


Phase 1 Key Outcomes: Grant Awards and Completions








Awards in 86 of 87 Counties

Phase 1 Key Outcomes: Equity Considerations



MPCA environmental justice map
(2020 census, publication date 6/29/2022)

-  Tribal areas
-  People of color
-  Low income
-  Low income and people of color
-  People of color (statuspoc) = 50% or greater

Low income (status185x) = 40% of population or greater
with income 1.85 times the federal poverty threshold

Assistance Provided in Environmental Justice Areas



The Lawns to Legumes Program

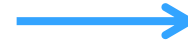
Four Practice Types



← 1) Native Pocket Plantings

- Raingardens
- Boulevard Plantings
- Lakeshore Buffer

2) Beneficial Trees and/or Shrubs



← 3) Pollinator Lawns

4) Pollinator Meadows



Program Outcomes to Date (August 2019-December 2022)

- **3.5 million** total square feet of pollinator habitat created
- **2,252** plantings completed by Minnesota residents (923 in environmental justice areas)
- **27** Demonstration Neighborhoods established
- **\$897,198** in matching funds provided by Lawns to Legumes gardeners
- **17,707** applications received for individual support grants
 - *Approximately 12,000 of these applications cannot proceed without additional funding*
- **148** volunteer coaches recruited
- **128** pollinator habitat workshops held attended by **5,745** people
- **31** public presentations attended by 2,427 people
- **336,852** program website visits (BWSR and Blue Thumb webpages combined)

Demonstration Neighborhood Example

Carlton Pollinator Corridor Carlton SWCD 2020 Grant

- 27 planting projects (40+ with both grants)
- Over 100 inspired DIY projects
- Raingarden workshop/plantings to protect trout stream and help pollinators
- Collaborated with Oldenburg Arts & Cultural Community, Xerces Society, Fond du Lac Band, and others to create the Northeastern MN Bee Friendly Corridor



Demonstration Neighborhood Example

Pleasant Valley Pollinator Corridor Healthy Lake Winona

- 40 planting projects
- 8.46 acres of new pollinator habitat
- Partner with Prairie Moon Nursery, USFWS, Xerces Society, Prairie Enthusiasts
- Workshops and Field Trips
- Reported/documentated 11 Rusty patched bumblebee sightings



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