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House Legacy Finance Committee February
21, 2024



FY24-25 Supplemental Request, Recent Outcomes, and Agricultural Water Quality



SE Minnesota Public Health Response

- \$6.354M for public health response (MDH) to EPA petition on nitrate in private wells
- Builds on pilot county public health program & existing FY24-25 appropriation
- Identify wells, test, educate, Report results
- Alternative water with mitigation (new wells, RO systems)—constitutional discussion
- CWC doesn't want CWF as long-term approach for mitigation



Additional Southeast MN Nitrate Response

- \$1M to Nitrate in Groundwater program (MDA)
 - Technical assistance to farmers
- \$1.402M to Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program (MDA)
 - Low interest loans for equipment or safe drinking water
- \$2M Working Land & Floodplain Easements (BWSR)
 - Potential federal match



PFAS Response

- \$326,000 River and Lake Monitoring for PFAS (MPCA)
 - Adds PFAS to program
- \$90,000 Fish Contamination Assessment (DNR)
 - Adds PFAS to program
- \$384,000 Drinking Water Contaminants of Emerging Concern (MDH)
 - Health-based guidance for fish consumption





Other Supplemental Requests

- \$2M Critical Shoreland Easements (BWSR)
 - Backlog of requests for priority parcels in Rum River watershed
- \$1M Low-income SSTS grants (MPCA)
 - Supports 70 additional septic system replacements
- \$2M Watershed Partners Legacy Grants (BWSR)
 - Supports tribes & NGO projects
- \$1M Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Lakewide Action & Management Program (MPCA)
 - NE MN SWCD capacity, apply for match

Draft Impaired Waters List

- Required by U.S. EPA
- Minnesota looks for more contaminants in more places with often more protective standards so our list is BIGGER
- 10-20 year lag between detection and de-listing
- Metro waters had a head start

After more than 20 years, restoration of Kohlman Lake sees results



Kohlman Lake is one of several to come off the state's impaired waters list this year

Community effort saved this Stillwater lake; Why it won't be the last success story

Lily Lake spent 20 years on Minnesota's Impaired Waters List, but a big effort to change that offers hope for other troubled waters.

Good News: Phosphorus Loads Declining

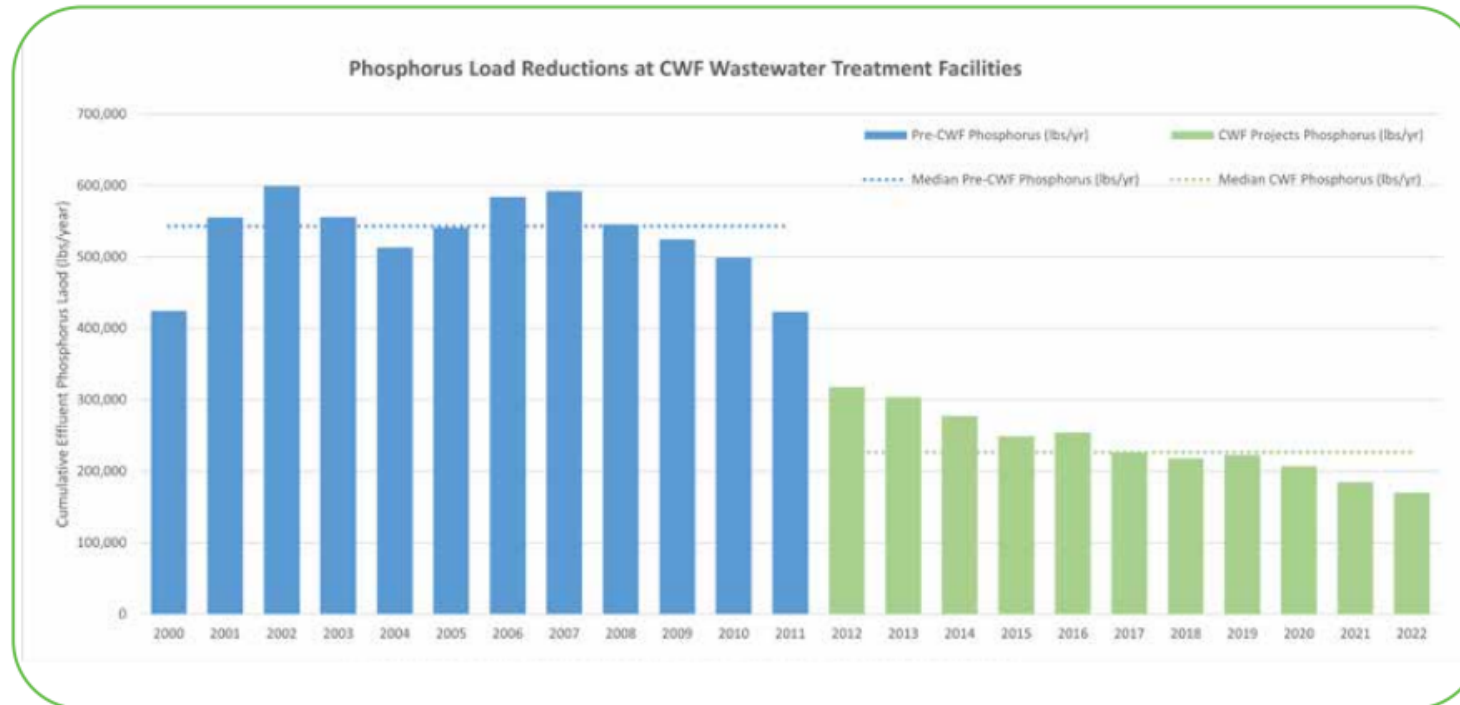


Figure 28. Phosphorus load reductions at Clean Water Funded wastewater treatment facilities.

Good News: Lake Clarity Mostly Increasing

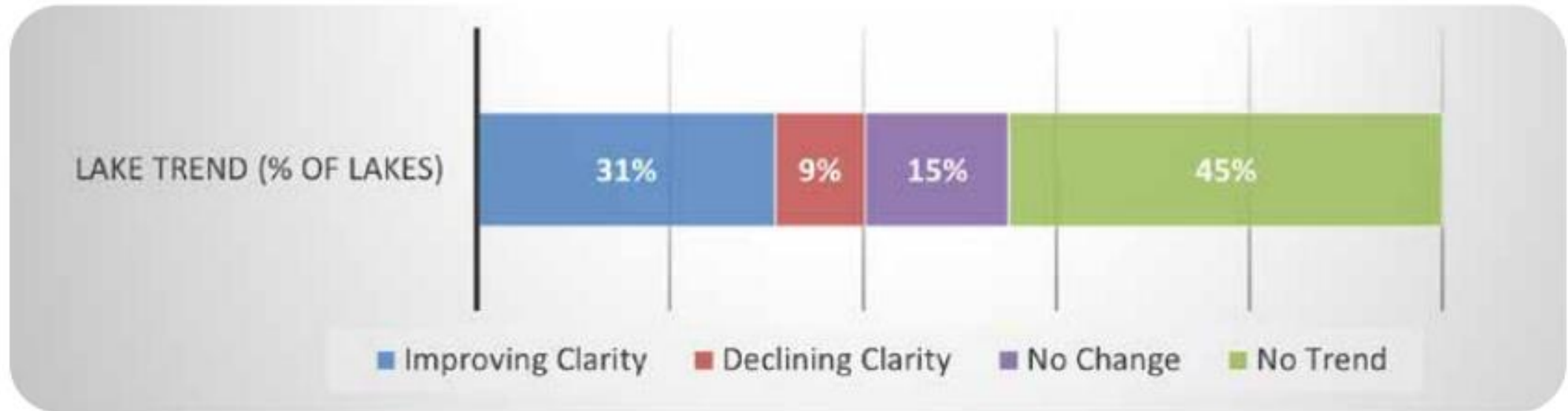


Figure 23. Trends in lake water clarity between 1973 and 2022. While water clarity, in general, is poorer in southern Minnesota, increasing and decreasing lake clarity trends are fairly evenly scattered through north and south-central Minnesota.

Bad News: Metro Chloride Increasing

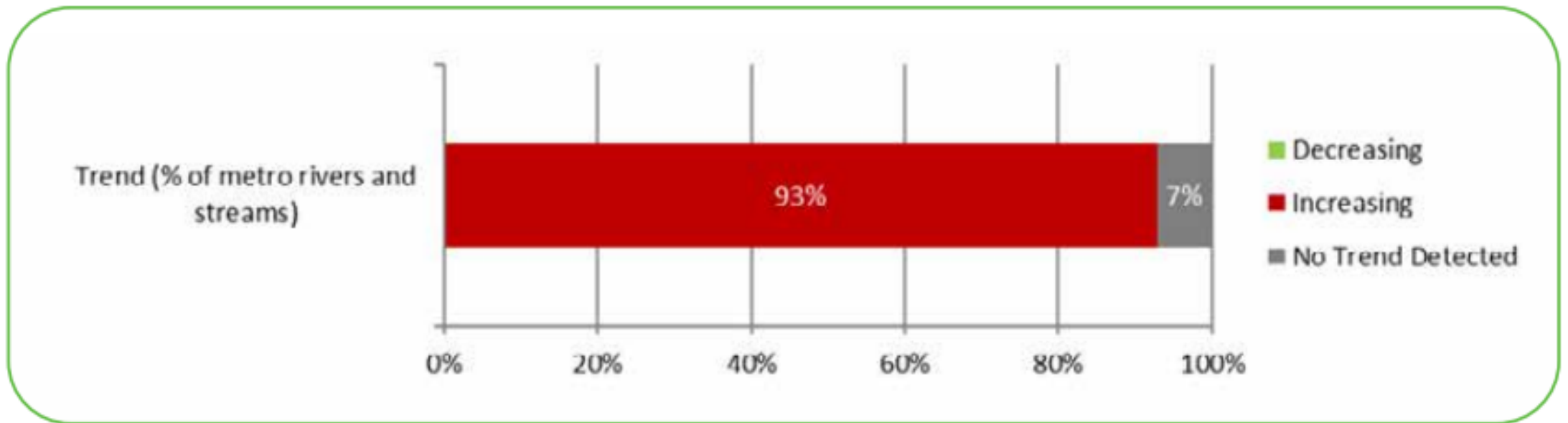


Figure 22. Among 28 rivers and streams in the Twin Cities metro area, including the Mississippi, Minnesota, and St. Croix Rivers, almost all are seeing a long-term increasing concentration trend in chloride.

Good News/Bad News: Phosphorus Down, Nitrate Up

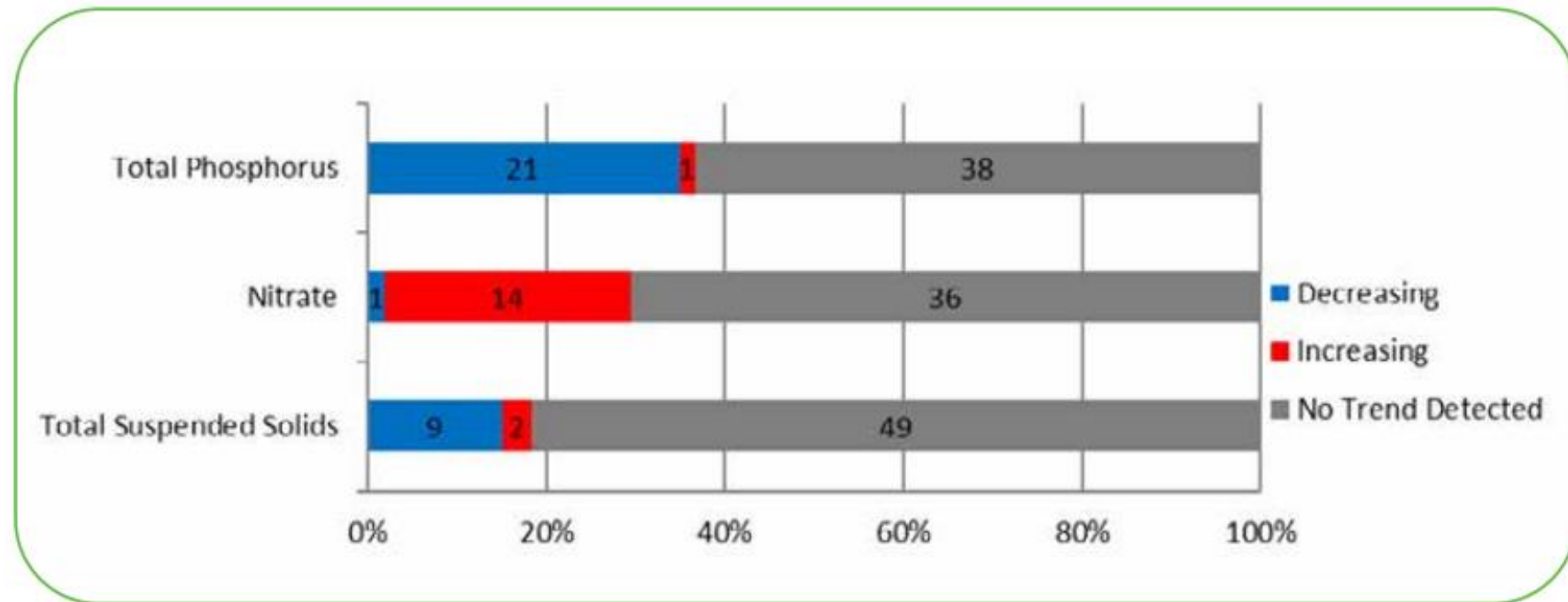


Figure 16. Where approximately ten years of streamflow and water quality data are available, phosphorus and total suspended solids concentrations in Minnesota's larger rivers are generally decreasing or staying the same, while nitrate concentrations are staying the same or increasing.

Agriculture and Water Quality: CWF Role

- Enhanced compliance and enforcement
 - Buffer law, SSTS, Groundwater Protection Rule
- Taking some land out of production with easements—23,830 acres
- Technical assistance
- Low interest loans for equipment
- Structural practices
- Promoting more vegetated cover
- Trends generally improve where we spend money





Persuasion Brings Results...Slow but Steady

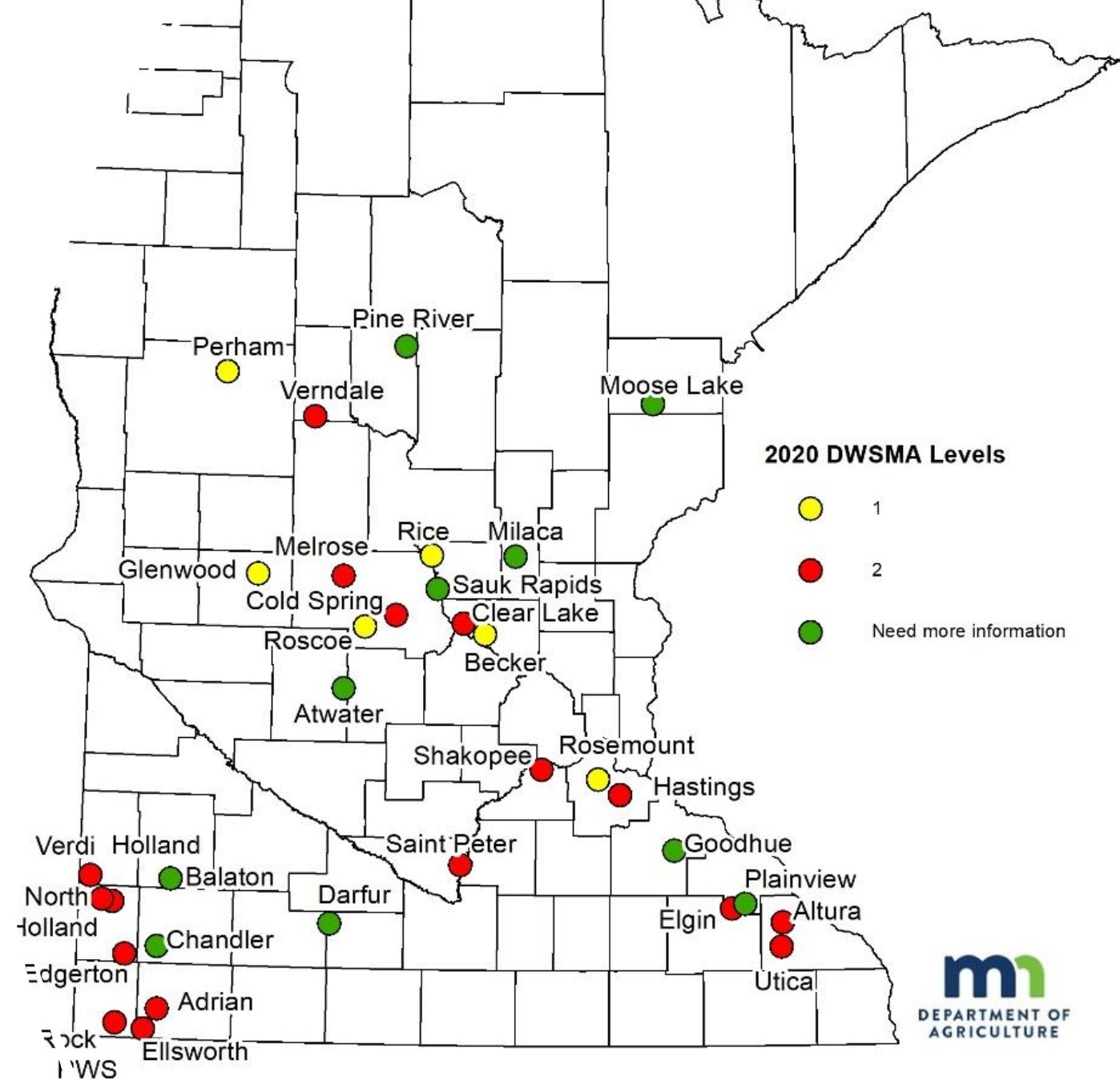
- "With the cover crops and reduced tillage alone, we have seen better yields during droughts and have reduced our waiting time to resume planting and harvesting after a heavy rain event due to the increased soil aggregation and water infiltration within our fields. Plus, we have also cut out a third of our fuel use."

- -Glenn Hjelle, Grant County farmer

- 1,450 farms and 1,000,000+ acres enrolled in Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

Groundwater Protection Rule

- Identify public water supplies with elevated nitrogen
- Target technical/financial assistance with CWF
- Modeling provides options for landowners
- Regulation kicks in if voluntary approach isn't working



Challenges

- Rented acres
 - Just under half of acreage
- Commodity markets
- Conservation lands dropped by >1 million acres between 2017 and 2022 (Federal CRP changes?)

