

Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District named District of the Year

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The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District accepts its District of the Year award at Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts annual meeting on Dec. 2. Pictured left to right are staff member Michelle Jordan; board member Mary Bisek; DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division Director Luke Skinner; District Citizens Advisory Committee member David Ziegler; board member Richard Chadwick; board member Jill Crafton; staff member Zach Dickhausen; board member Leslie Yetka; board president Perry Forster; District Administrator Claire Bleser and staff member Josh Maxwell.

The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District was recently named the District of the Year by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, according to a news release.

The district received the award on Dec. 2 at the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts annual meeting in Alexandria. The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District has existed since 1969, and this is the first time it has received the watershed of the year award. To be considered for the award, a district must be nominated by a DNR area or regional hydrologist.

“The district is honored to be recognized by the DNR, and looking forward to continuing the work of protecting, managing, and restoring water resources in the years ahead,” said Perry Forster, president of the district’s Board of Managers, in the release.

In 2016, the watershed district implemented 10 projects including its first ever creek restoration, and a spent-lime filter that removes phosphorus pollution from stormwater. The district collaborated with 19 partner organizations in its work including the DNR, local cities, and counties. Other accomplishments that were noted were the district’s efforts to engage the community in the process of updating its watershed management plan, and its success in seeking over \$300,000 in grants, the release said.