

2016 Project of the Year

Bald Eagle Lake Restoration Rice Creek Watershed District

Bald Eagle Lake, located in the northeast metro area, suffered from severe algae blooms. Phosphorus and algae concentrations regularly exceeded state standards by a factor of three, and the lake was listed as ‘impaired’. Using an innovative mix of funding sources, including a Clean Water Fund grant, a Clean Water Partnership loan, and a locally-petitioned special tax district, the Rice Creek Watershed District completed several major projects. First, the RCWD partnered with local homeowners to install approximately 16 neighborhood raingarden and shoreline restoration projects. Next, the RCWD and the City of Hugo acquired a Clean Water Fund grant to complete a multi-purpose stormwater re-use project. Finally, the RCWD and the Bald Eagle Area Association completed the State’s largest aluminum sulfate treatment. The results have been remarkable. Algae blooms are non-existent, and Bald Eagle Lake is meeting state water quality standards for the first time since water monitoring began in 1980.

What the Committee said:

“The fact that the Bald Eagle Area Association stepped up to the plate to help pay for the alum treatment demonstrated the trust that the District built with the local community.”

“From the letter; “... an example of good science strong collaboration and fiscal responsibility.”

“This project consisted of use of a variety of approaches to address existing water quality standards, including working with private homeowners, lakeshore homeowners, and a private business to achieve the project goals. A good example of how everyone needs to be a part of the solution to improve these regional water assets.”

“The ability to take a lake which exceeded the State Standard by a factor of 3 to its current state is most impressive.”



From left: Steve Wagamon, Mike Bradley, Barbara Haake, Phil Belfiori, Matt Kocian, Gerald van Amburg and John Waller