

2019 Legislative Platform - RESULTS

MN Association of Watershed Districts

TOP 2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The following top priorities have been set by the MAWD Board of Directors for 2019.

1. Remove (or increase) the \$250,000 general fund levy limit while keeping the not-to-exceed levy limit of 0.048 percent of estimated market value. – MN Statute § 103D.905 subd. 3 (**Unable to find authors**)
2. ► **PASSED** Allow a project tax levy to serve as matching funds for all types of state and federal grants, not just for Clean Water Partnership grants (that no longer exist). – MN Statute § 103D.905 subd. 9
3. ► **RESOLVED** Remove (or increase) the \$2M limit on outstanding loans for watershed districts, especially for those entities that serve as drainage authorities. – MN Statute § 103D.335 subd. 17
4. ► **PASSED** Improve coordination and remove duplicative efforts of water management planning as currently required by various local, state, and federal laws. – MN Statutes 114D and 103D
5. Reinforce existing rights to maintain/repair drainage systems that operate under Statute 103E. (**Ongoing**)
6. ► **PASSED** Increase maximum daily manager per diem rates. – MN Statute § 103D.315 subd. 8
7. ► **PASSED** Remove permitting restrictions when hiring contractors to remove common carp from lakes.

LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS WE SUPPORT (BUT LED BY OTHERS)

The following issues are supported by MAWD, but legislative efforts are being led by others.

- Obtain a strong allocation for the flood hazard mitigation funding program. LEAD: Red River Watershed Management Board (**Efforts will continue next year since bonding typically happens in even-numbered years.**)
- Provide limited liability protection to certified commercial salt applicators. LEAD: Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association and Stop Over Salting
- ► **PASSED** Provide drainage authorities a voluntary alternative option for apportioning drainage system repair costs. LEAD: Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Drainage Work Group (DWG) partners
- ► **PASSED** Update statutes to allow for faster compensation of ditch buffer strips. LEAD: BWSR, DWG
- When approved by the MAWD Board, bills for single watersheds will be supported. Examples: appropriation for Lower MN River dredging **PASSED**, Bois de Sioux pilot to update drainage system values (**Withdrawn by WD**)

ISSUES TO HANDLE ADMINISTRATIVELY (FOR NOW)

MAWD will continue (or begin) working with state agencies to address the following issues:

- Ensure watershed districts are given opportunities to provide input on stormwater reuse standards. (**Ongoing**)
- Ensure timely updates to Wildlife Management Area (WMA) plans. (**Not started**)
- Require watershed district permits for the Department of Natural Resources. (**Not started**)

ISSUES TO WATCH AND PLAY DEFENSE (IF NEEDED)

MAWD will keep a close eye on potential threats to watershed organizations.

- **COMPLETED** Protect Clean Water Funds that focus on local implementation plans and projects.
- **COMPLETED** Monitor for pending legislation that impacts rulemaking, local planning, or other authorities.
 - HF 1887 / SF 1766 – Watershed district provisions modified (a.k.a “Developer’s Bill of Rights”) **DEFEATED**
 - HF 2314 / SF 2372 – Rice Creek watershed district spending and reporting requirements **DEFEATED**