



# Minnesota's Local Watershed Government Entities: Who We are. What we Do.

## WHAT ARE WATERSHED DISTRICTS AND WATER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS?

Minnesota established Watershed Districts (WDs) in 1955 with the passage of the Watershed Act and established Water Management Organizations (WMOs) in 1982 with the passage of the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act. Jurisdictions are established using watershed boundaries and not political ones. Both work on the water resources issues of greatest concern for constituents. WD Managers are appointed by county commissioners. WMO Commissioners are appointed per a joint powers agreement between the cities and counties in which the organization operates. WDs have rule-making and taxing authorities whereas WMOs do not.

## WHAT WE DO

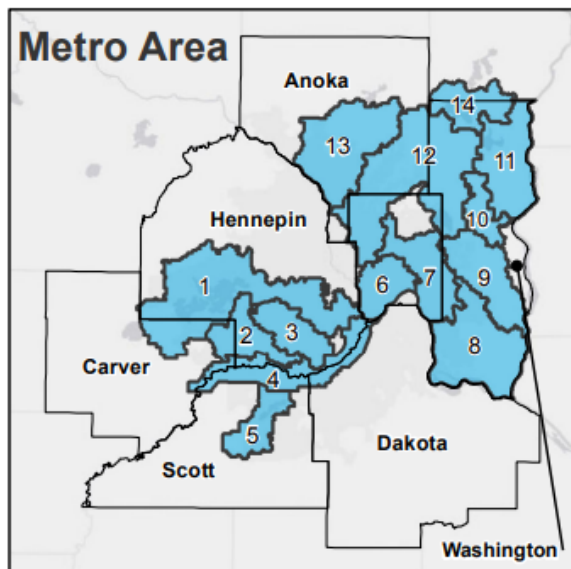
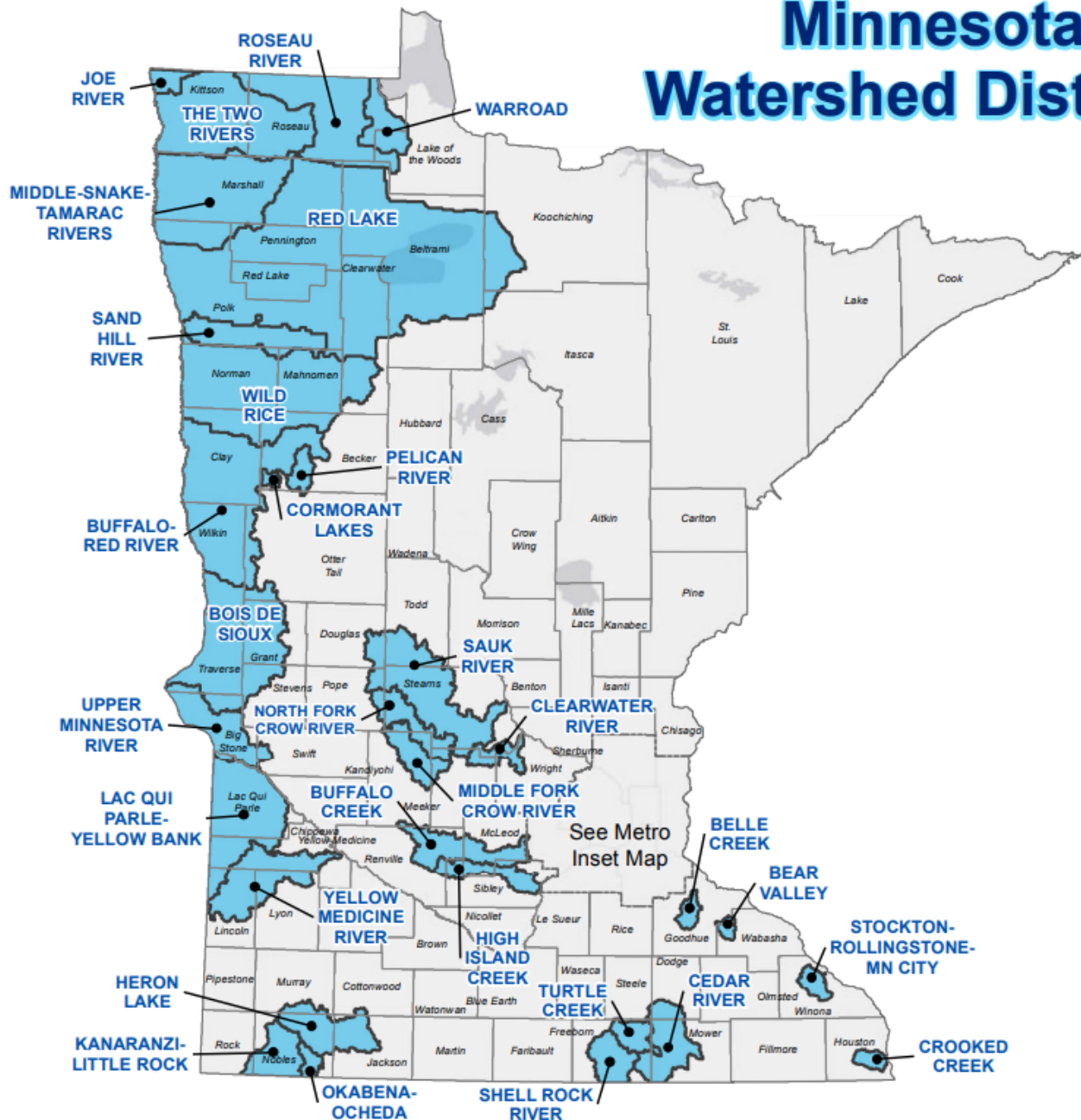
Each watershed sets its own mission, but typical work includes:

- Build projects that improve and protect water resources
- Partner in watershed planning and management with the state and other local governments
- Monitor for pollutant loads such as chloride, nutrients, bacteria, and other harmful substances
- Ensure development properly handles stormwater, reducing flooding and improving water quality
- Monitor for invasive species and work with the DNR to control the spread
- Install flood mitigation projects to handle large rain events in both rural and urban settings

## EXAMPLES

- The **Capitol Region Watershed District**, in partnership with the City of Falcon Heights, developed the Curtiss Pond Improvement Project. The OptiRTC system has successfully collected stormwater runoff from the watershed and prevented flooding in the surrounding playground and residential areas.
- The **Bois de Sioux Watershed District** has prioritized the modernization of legal drainage systems, which has led to significant water quality enhancements. These projects involve collaboration with various stakeholders and require compliance with Minnesota drainage law statutes. Over the past seven years, the district has modernized seven public systems.
- The **Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District** joined the City of Newfolden and local landowners to remove the east side of the city from FEMA's 100-year flood plain. Through an extensive communication based on the Red River Valley Work Group process, the first component of the project, a three-span 105-foot railroad bridge was completed in early 2023. A 2,000 acre-ft impoundment will be constructed in 2024.
- The **South Washington Watershed District** and its partners have successfully stabilized eroding banks, improved habitat conditions, and restored fish migration in Trou Brook a tributary to Lake St. Croix. Funding for the project was secured through grants from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and Lower St. Croix Watershed-Based Implementation Funds.
- The **Bassett Creek WMC** recently completed a project that expanded an existing pond and created new stormwater ponds in Medley Park in cooperation with the City of Golden Valley. The project created 8.8 acre-feet of flood storage, removing six structures from risk of flooding during a 100-year event. The project also improved habitat for pollinators and will improve water quality in Medicine Lake by removing about 16 pounds of total phosphorus per year from stormwater runoff. Project funding came from property taxes collected by Hennepin County on BCWMC's behalf along with a Clean Water Fund grant from BWSR.

# Minnesota Watershed Districts



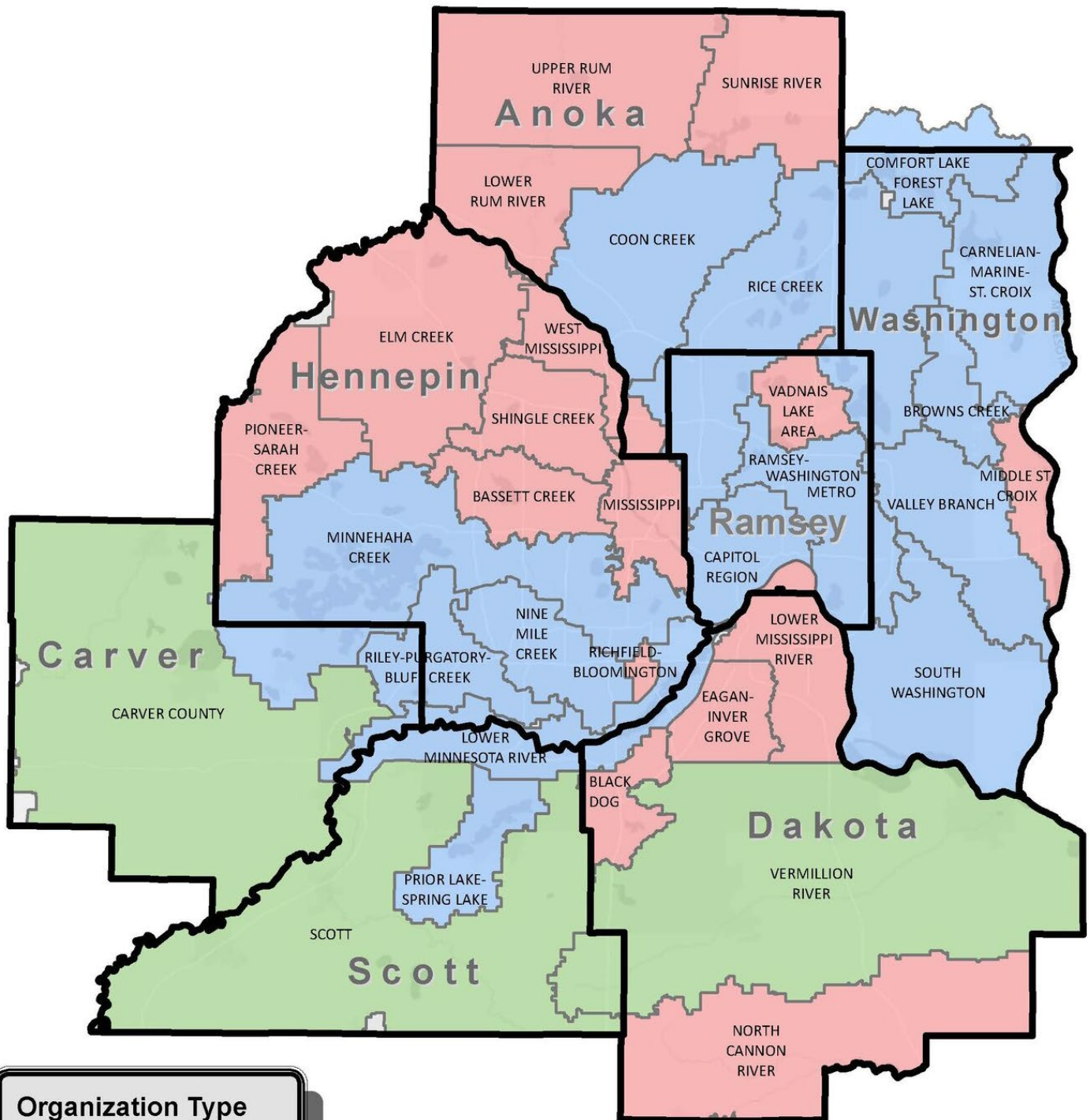
## Metro Watershed Districts

- 1, MINNEHAHA CREEK
- 2, RILEY-PURGATORY-BLUFF CREEK
- 3, NINE MILE CREEK
- 4, LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
- 5, PRIOR LAKE-SPRING LAKE
- 6, CAPITOL REGION
- 7, RAMSEY-WASHINGTON METRO
- 8, SOUTH WASHINGTON
- 9, VALLEY BRANCH
- 10, BROWNS CREEK
- 11, CARNELIAN-MARINE-ST. CROIX
- 12, RICE CREEK
- 13, COON CREEK
- 14, COMFORT LAKE FOREST LAKE



Updated Nov. 2016

# Metro Watershed Management Organizations (Metro WMOs)



**Organization Type**

- Watershed District
- Joint Powers WMO
- County WMO
- County Boundary



Updated January 2020