Northwest Minnesota 25 by 25 Water Quality Town Hall:
Table discussion input

Question 1: What goals could be established to improve water quality by 25 percent in Northwest Minnesota?

Better protection policies for lake water quality.
Why fix a system that isn't broken... upper Midwest has some of the cleanest water in the state.
Have accurate water quality tests for NW Minnesota
Reduce run off by sub surface tiling.
Upgrade septic systems at all levels, from single family homes, farms and cities.
If buffers are needed, annual compensation given to land owner.
Retension ponds. Allow sediment to settle prior to leaving water run.
Protecting drinking water quantity and quality
Inspection of septic systems throughout state
Reduce road salt use statewide.
More science behind localized regulations.
Take care of pet waste in metro areas, figure out how to tax private homes in metro and stop targeting farmers in new Minnesota where the water is the cleanest
Test all wells for water quality and educate the public on what they are drinking.
Reducing suspended solids in rivers and streams
Protect Drinking Water
Increase retention/detention measures where appropriate and allow for their multi-use (uses that ensure improved water quality).
Increase Public Engagement
Reduced erosion on our rivers. Need engineering controls.
Keep upto date on technologies, like replacing road salts with less harsh chemicals
Scientificly substantiate the need of a 25% reduction.
Increase Water Protection on Agricutural Lands
Dealing with altered hydrology
Use of Native plantings to control runoff

Remove the poison neurotoxin "Flouride" from drinking water. If education is important to this administration the success and health of children and adults would benefit from the removal of fluoride.
Be able to provide a way to check rural drinking wells for contamination, then provide financial assistance to fix a contaminated well.
Protect the recreational value of the waters in the region.
Capture the water from draintiles and reuse.
Increased monitoring for invasive species. Volunteer efforts needed
The state has very different soils and the state needs a regional structure
Reduction of sediment and nutrients in lakes and streams.
Reduce wind erosion through planting cover crops with beets.
Reducing nitrites in groundwater
Reduce lead contamination in municipal service lines.
Stop treating the water quality issues as separate, single issues. There are many connections that all contribute to the results we have today.
Continue using best management practices. Don't change a thing.
More use of independent crop consultants for proper application of fertilizers
Education for urban conservation for nutrient runoff.
Agricultural buffers
Regional nitrogen requirements
Restore county ditches into 2 stage channels and restore natural streams within watershed by 25%.
Less fertilizer use on residential lawns, more flood retention areas, and more enforcement to prevent illegal dumping in public waterways.
more education about the water quality issues in three region.
Reducing nitrites in groundwater

Equal regulations for farmers and town civilians
Consistency between counties for regulations, example septic systems
Restore natural streams that have been ditched and straightened.
Lake home owners responsibility
More research on fertilizers and how they affect ground water
1. Agree on the actual problem and causes 2. Collaboratively research cold climate, flat landscape Gmo's 3. Use tools to target conservation In communities and rural landscapes
Landowner and farmer education. Not necessarily the same person
We should have incentives for each citizen including urban and rural communities to execute voluntary improvements.

Regional action plans both rural and urban
Please streamline permitting by giving more weight to local authorities...i.e. earth reviews vs. map reviews.
Continue to use science based research to make all decisions for determining water quality. simplify the testing of public and private waters to remove the fear of ramifications.
Investment help farmers
Bring back state leaders to have a question and answer session. This format did not allow for information sharing to the group that came to hear about policies
Before we can set goals we need a clear idea of what the water quality issues are.

Question 2: What actions are needed to get to these goals for Northwest Minnesota?

We have been using best management practices, why change we have clean water address problem areas. Please leave us out of your plans.
Reduce runoff sediment in retention ponds.
More funding for SWCD'S to increase water quality
Plan and zone areas. Better land management.
Educate landowners, city planners, and youth on the impacts and solutions to improve water quality in NW Minnesota.
Better sciences
Use the research being done on types of water grasses and their nitrogen loads to inform landowners of effective grasses that help reduce these loads.
Targeted septic inspections, funding for low income homes, low interest loans for septic system improvements, and inspections during real estate transactions.
Tile drainage would reduce surface runoff
Use the plans that have already been developed by local SWCD, water shed districts, and counties! I.e. WRAPS
A better water quality testing certification program and more citizen involvement.
Increase the use of best management practices
Have region specific measurements
Increase the use of side water inlets
Allocate funds for the creation of detention sites through partnerships between private land owners and watershed districts.
Have PTMApp and 1W1P completed with good public participation. Also allow the PTMApp to be user friendly to local government units.
Grade and stream bank stabilization.
Side inlet pipes
More private well testing in NW MN

More education for our youth similar to, or increased involvement, with River Keepers
More appropriate fitting measures - not a "one size fits all". Local flexibility to meet the agreed upon goals.
Recharge zones protection - more like Moorhead.
Improve collaborative opportunities across jurisdictions.
Increased number of private Wells tested for contaminants
More money for SWCDs.
Soils health practices
We need people in administration and legislation that are pushing for renewed laws and keep progress florishing.
Education of non farming community of realities and changes in farming.
Educate the public on what BMPs make sense in their operations to provide water quality benefits.
Increase citizens awareness through visual demonstration to increase citizen involvement.
Cover crops and tree rows and new improved tillage
Implement the buffer law
Please streamline permitting by giving more weight to local authorities...i.e. earth reviews vs. map reviews.
Educate non-ag communities on farming operations and what actually goes on in agricultural fields.
Science! Use this to make decisions. Local watershed no large government.
Use subsoil maps instead of surface soil maps to determine soil types for policies.
Use plans that have already been developed locally by SWCD, Watersheds, counties, etc. i.e. WRAPS.
Taxes breaks for citizen involvement and voluntarily installing projects/bmps.

Question 3: What specific next steps are needed to move the actions forward now?

Can't do anything without the funding...
Improve funding for the action steps listed in the previous question.
Landowner participation
More integration between the various agencies on data being used to establish policies.
Mandatory that every real estate transaction has to have septic compliance
Need to agree on the problem of water quality and the causes in the Red River Valley.
Promote tile drainage
Increase funding to help with we'll testing.
Promote side water inlets
Fund one watershed one plan
Develop school curriculum - for all ages but mostly youth - around water quality/saftey/usage
More resources and education for watershed districts. They need the capabilty to make good decisions
Relate best management practices to financial gain
Slow down and get more input, collect more data before implementation
Any permit that LGUs write needs to have septic inspection
State should look at local plans (swcd, co, wd) and fund the good plans already out there

Streamline the process to implement water quality practices. Reducing redundancy. Locally regulated.
What is currently being done with requirements for retention ponds on housing and parking developments is a good thing!
Utilize technology (apps, barcodes) to enhance public education, anonymous reporting, and data gathering.
More control of farming road ditches
research on cold climate and flat lands best management practices for urban and rural areas...southern Minnesota practices don't work in northern Minnesota.
Increase funding to projects.
Increased staff for LOCAL agencies. Staff time is currently a limiting factor for the amount of implementation that can be done.
use tools to target conservation practices in urban and rural areas..ex...PTM (prioritize, target and management) application.
Use of technology and make it more available.
Education directed to each group of people. Target the audience.
Taxes breaks for citizen involvement and voluntarily installing projects and bmps.
Quit blaming agriculture!
Where is the science?? Science and research solutions are key