Community Water Meeting
Discussion Guide

“I ask all Minnesotans to join me in finding solutions that will ensure our children and grandchildren inherit clean water to drink, swim, and fish in. This is everyone’s challenge, and everyone’s responsibility.” – Governor Mark Dayton

Overview
Thank you for hosting a Community Water Meeting! The purpose of these meetings is to give Governor Mark Dayton feedback on Minnesota’s 25% by 2025 Water Quality Improvement Goal. He wants to hear from people across the state about how we can reach this goal together, and what our priority actions should be.

We are gathering public input through October 5th, 2017 from Community Water Meetings, ten regional Town Halls, and comments submitted on line (please see www.eqb.state.mn.us/25by25 for more details). Your comments will be compiled along with other feedback we are gathering from people in your region. We will use this feedback to determine regional 25% goals and the top 10 proposed ideas for action steps or policy. We will present these results to the public in a report in the winter.

How to Host a Meeting
• Gather a group of friends, neighbors, or colleagues.
• A group size of 4-20 people is ideal. Anyone can participate—no specialized knowledge is required.
• We recommend 75 minutes for your discussion.
• Download and print the information packet for your region at www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting. We recommend having at least one packet for every three people.
  o You can also request up to 10 informational packets by mail at least two weeks in advance of your meeting. Please contact Katie Pratt at Katie.pratt@state.mn.us or 651-757-2524 for assistance.
• Click the “Submit Your Input” link on this same website to send your feedback.

**If you would like more detailed instructions about how to organize your meeting, pages 3-6 of this document give an example structure you can follow.**

Discussion Questions
Please discuss with your group the following three questions. Submit your input at www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting. All questions are optional and your responses will not be associated with your name or email.
1) Governor Mark Dayton is asking Minnesotans to set a 25% water quality improvement goal that makes sense for their region. Example goals are listed on the last page of this document or you may have other ideas. What would your group like to see as the 25% improvement goal for your region? Please list your top three ideas.

2) Your information packet describes some actions that work for improving water quality in your region. You may have additional ideas. Please discuss with your group what actions you think are most important in helping to achieve the 25% improvement you listed in question one. As you discuss, think about actions at the individual, community, state, and federal levels and consider where we should focus our attention.

3) Are there barriers to taking the actions you discussed in the previous question? Or is support needed to take action? If so, please describe the top barriers we face in taking meaningful action on water quality improvement, or specific support that is needed to overcome these barriers.

4) Do you have additional input you would like to share about accelerating the pace of progress toward water quality improvement in Minnesota? Please give us your thoughts.

Submit your input at www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting.

If you do not have access to a computer or smart phone with an internet connection, you can mail your input to Katie Pratt at 520 Lafayette Rd, St. Paul, MN 55155. You can also contact Katie with questions at katie.pratt@state.mn.us or 651-757-2524.
Detailed Discussion Guide

The following pages give detailed instructions on how to organize your Community Water Meeting and submit feedback on Minnesota’s 25% by 2025 Water Quality Improvement goal. Feel free to adapt this discussion guide to your needs. Please remember to submit your feedback online at www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting.

Materials you will need:

- Download and print the information packet for your region at www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting. We recommend having at least one packet for every three people.
  - You can also request up to 10 informational packets by mail at least two weeks in advance of your meeting. Please contact Katie Pratt at Katie.pratt@state.mn.us or 651-757-2524 for assistance.
- Post-it notes and pens (or use scrap pieces of paper)
- Someplace to organize the post-it notes like a table or blank wall
- Optional: a computer or a smart phone with an internet connection (this will allow you type your feedback directly into the online form as you go)

Tips for organizing your discussion:

- The discussion is intended to take around 75 minutes. A time breakdown is suggested for each section, but you can move at a pace that suits your group.

- You may need to make adjustments to this discussion guide depending on your group size. For groups of more than 10 people, we recommend dividing into smaller groups of 4-5 for the discussion questions in step three. You can report back to the larger group after each question, and the facilitator can help your group come to consensus on your top ideas.

- We recommend assigning the following two roles to group members:
  - Discussion Leader
    - Gives the group instructions and helps move conversation along.
    - Helps the group decide on their top ideas to submit.
  - Note Taker
    - Submits the top ideas from your discussion at www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting. If you have a computer or smart phone and an internet connection, you can fill in this information online as you go.
PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS (10 minutes)
The following activities are intended to get you thinking about our individual and collective values around water. Please choose one of the following three activities to begin your session.

Optional Activity A: Sharing our stories
Facilitator: "We are going to listen to a 3-minute audio clip. Becky and Don Waskosky live on the bluff of the Le Sueur River. In 2010, a mega rainstorm sent a torrent of water down the river and put their home in peril. They describe their reasons for learning about and getting involved in water issues. After we listen, we’ll introduce ourselves and share our reason for being here today.”

[click to play: http://arcg.is/2d7FIBk]

Facilitator: “If Don and Becky were here today they might say that protecting their home is a reason they came. What has happened in your life that inspired you to be here today?”

Optional Activity B: Bringing water
If you have a way to communicate with your group in advance, you can use this introduction activity. Ask attendees to bring a small amount of water from a place with a special meaning – it can be tap water or outdoor water, from near or far. The leader needs to bring a pitcher that can hold everyone’s water.

Facilitator: “Before we talk about specific water issues, we are going to take a moment to introduce ourselves. Please share your name and tell us about the water you brought. Then, pour your water into the common vessel. If you forgot to bring water today, you can tell us what water you would have brought to share.”

Let the vessel sit in the middle of the room during your meeting. At the end of the meeting, have the group decide what to do with the water (e.g. give it to a tree).

Optional Activity C: Serving water
Set cups and pitchers at each table.

Facilitator: “For our introduction activity, we will serve water to each other and share how we serve—as in help, or care for—water. When it is your turn, fill the glass of the person to your left then introduce yourself to your table and share a way that you "serve" water in your own life.”
PART 2: GETTING TO KNOW YOUR REGION (15 minutes)
Please have group members spend a few minutes reviewing the information packet for your region. This packet explains water quality challenges your region faces, strategies for improvement, and resources for involvement. You may have additional ideas about water in your area.

As you read, write down one key point from the packet that resonates with you. Write this on a sticky note and post it on a wall or big piece of paper. When all group members have posted their sticky note, discuss any common themes that emerge. The facilitator can arrange the sticky notes by category if that is helpful for visualizing your collective responses.

PART 3: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (50 minutes)
For each of the following discussion questions, we are asking you to come to consensus on your top three ideas as a group. To facilitate this and to have a productive conversation, you may want to split into small group or pairs to first discuss the question. Use sticky notes to record key ideas from the conversation. Post these on the wall where the facilitator can help group them according to theme.

**Question 1: 25% Water Quality Improvement (15 minutes)**
Governor Mark Dayton is asking Minnesotans to set a 25% water quality improvement goal that makes sense for their region. Example goals are listed on the last page of this document, but you may have other ideas. What would your group like to see as the 25% improvement goal for your region? Please list your top three ideas.

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<th>Idea 1:</th>
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<td>Idea 2:</td>
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<td>Idea 3:</td>
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**Question 2: What Action is Needed? (15 minutes)**
Your information packet also describes some actions that work for improving water quality in your region. You may have additional ideas. Please discuss with your group what actions you think are most important in helping to achieve the 25% improvement you discussed in question one. As you discuss, think about actions at the individual, community, state, and federal levels and consider where we should focus our attention.

Please list your top three ideas for action steps below.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Action 1:</th>
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Choose the level of your first action:
Federal  State  Community  Individual  Other____________________
Action 2:

Choose the level of your second action:
Federal   State   Community   Individual   Other____________________

Action 3:

Choose the level of your third action:
Federal   State   Community   Individual   Other____________________

**Question 3: Barriers to Action (15 minutes)**
Are there barriers to taking the actions you discussed in the previous question? Or is support needed to take action? If so, please describe the top barriers we face in taking meaningful action on water quality improvement, or specific support that is needed to overcome these barriers.

**Barrier and/or Support 1:**

Choose the level of your first barrier/support:
Federal   State   Community   Individual   Other____________________

**Barrier and/or Support 2:**

Choose the level of your second barrier/support:
Federal   State   Community   Individual   Other____________________

**Barrier and/or Support 3:**

Choose the level of your third barrier/support:
Federal   State   Community   Individual   Other____________________

**Question 4: Other Thoughts or Ideas (5 minutes)**
Do you have additional input you would like to share about accelerating the pace of progress toward water quality improvement in Minnesota? Please give us your thoughts here.

Please continue to the next page for details about submitting your ideas...
**STEP 4: SUBMIT YOUR IDEAS**

- When your discussion is complete, please submit your comments online at [www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting](http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/CommunityWaterMeeting)
- You will be asked to include the zip code of the meeting and the number of participants.
- Please submit one response that summarizes the conversation in your meeting. If individual participants have additional comments they would like to submit, than can do so at [www.eqb.state.mn.us/25by25](http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/25by25).

We are gathering public input through October 5th, 2017 from Community Water Meetings, [ten regional Town Halls](#), and comments submitted online (please see [www.eqb.state.mn.us/25by25](http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/25by25) for more details). Your comments will be compiled along with other feedback we are gathering from people in your region. We will use this feedback to determine regional 25% goals and the top 10 proposed ideas for actionable steps or policy. We will present these results to the public in a report in the winter.

**Share your ideas with Minnesota! #25by25MN**

**Thank you for your participation!**
DRAFT 25% WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GOALS

The list below shows examples of possible 25% water quality improvement goals and reflects some of the common concerns Minnesotans have about water. This list is intended to help spark ideas and get the conversation started—your group might have other thoughts about the top goals for your region.

- 25% reduction in phosphorus levels in streams and lakes
- 25% reduction in sediment streams and lakes
- 25% reduction in nitrogen in surface water and groundwater
- 25% increase in lakes/rivers/streams being removed from the state Impaired Waters list
- 25% increase in wells sealed
- 25% increase in the number of private wells tested
- 25% reduction of nitrates in our public water supply wells
- 25% fewer non-compliant septic systems
- 25% reduction in beach closures
- 25% fewer days of restricted recreation due to algae blooms
- 25% reduction in bacteria levels in local streams
- 25% reduction in Aquatic Invasive Species (such as curly-leaf pondweed)
- 25% increase in lake associations on developed lakes and rivers
- 25% reduction in trash in lakes and streams
- 25% improvement in lake water clarity
- 25% increase in fish counts
- 25% increase in acreages protected by permanent protection measures.
- 25% increase in acres planted in perennials on public and private lands
- 25% increase in river, bluff, and shoreland native vegetated buffers
- 25% more wetland restorations (improved water retention)
- 25% of our row crops in cover crops
- 25% increase in no till practices
- 25% increase in rain gardens or rain catchment systems
- 25% more parking lots with pervious surfaces
- 25% less storm water running into our streams, lakes and rivers
- 25% less salt usage for ice (especially by individuals for driveways and sidewalks)
- 25% reduction in chloride level in our lakes, rivers and streams
- 25% increase in water capture and reuse in our community
- 25% less water used
- 25% increase in water quality related education (and/or education field days)

- Other ideas______________________________________________________