

**South Central 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 South Central Minnesota?

Reduce road salt by 40%
Limit farm chemical use per acre.
Build a dam and hold the water back
Increase water storage
Increase awareness
Sediment Erosion
Increase education
Encourage buffer strips
Education regarding sediment
Introduce no till farming
Educate the public
Put more family farmers in the land, not large corporate operations
Legacy money to fund projects
Provide solutions to Farmers who question the efficacy of alternative methods
Manage the movement of water to allow for filtration into the ground.
Increase cover crops, perennials, soil health.
Compensate farmers for establishing conservation practices
Set realistic and obtainable water quality standards.
Education regarding the cause of high nitrates in water - the rural areas put it in and the cities have to take them out
Reduce lawn fertilization by 50 percent
Accountability for water usage - charge heavy water users
Plant slow growing grasses
Increase the number of water quality projects by 2025 by 10
Reduce detergents used by households
Manage ag land by soil health instead of yield.
Change practices on lawn care consider use of more native plants. Less chemical use and making sure we use right grasses.
Most essential goal Increase public engagement and education
Establish a water quality trading program
Increase acres of perennials
Increase water storage (soils, structures, wetlands)

Increase the number of people taking committed personal action for water quality improvement.
Accountability - require manure management
More funds needed for smaller water treatment plants
Get more people on the water
Increase water storage- both rural and urban, utilize CSSR tool that was developed in the LeSuer watershed by Peter Wilcock
Need more Farmer to Farmer forums
Encourage increased use of cover crops to protect soil erosion and to help recharge the aquifer
Return Minnesota to future generations so they can enjoy our lakes and streams
Reduce chemicals from lawn care, town usage that goes down to river Find sources of natural usage that are more safer, rain garden
Improve communication between government agencies create a unified strategic plan that involves all units.
1) Cut down use of harmful chemicals that end up in our drinking water by 25%. 2) Reduce water use by 25%. 3) Increase by 25% the usable recreational water bodies. 4) Leave this region better f next g
Increased funding for infrastructure updates Update of ditch law and increase the number of ditch views teams Increased for water storage and retention structures
Increase outreach and communication to more people who don't see the impacts first hand.
Reduce peak flows in our river, stabilize the hydrograph
2. Increase recycling and better composting
Optimize nutrient management for efficient and economic applications and solutions.
Water quality standards for swimming and recreational activities
Increase perennials

Encourage farmers to sample soil every 3-5 years to determine actual fertilizing/nutrient needs. Would save farmers money on fertilizer and prevent over-application.
Provide increased funds for incentives and allow for flexibility in programs and practices
Educating people about soil health because most people are clueless. Ideas about cover crops should be out there. It absorbs more water and heals the soil.
Increase upland water storage.
Upland water retention.
Increase funding for Best Management practices.
Increase citizen input on water quality locally by county at least four times per year
Bridge the gap between urban and rural understandings of water quality issues
Slow water, off to off set drainage
Reduction of pollutants
Think big picture
Educate all citizens about water quality and their part in promoting it.
Rough fish control
Increase market for small grains or perennial plants.
Protection of drinking water
Building soil health using new practices not excluding cover crops.
Insentivize better enforcement of existing rules.
Ravine stabilization and taking care of the trees that fall into the tributary waters.
Encourage land owners voluntary participation
Use of flow control structures on tile lines that feed into drainage ditches
Encourage market for algae harvesting.
Revisit policies (including eminent domain) that allow cities to destroy wetland for development purposes.
store more water/ slow down the flow, holding ponds
Reduce pollutants in water to improve drinking water quality and recreation quality
Make conservation more economically viable
Lake vegetation mint in the lake and shoreline
Education regarding the water cycle, aquifers and Karst topography
More cooperation between everyone

Increase public outreach and education
Swimmable lakes all summer long
Improve erosion control
Provide methods to capture storm water runoff prior to entering lakes
Increase the number of private wells that are regularly tested & map all the well testing results.
Wetland preservation/restoration. Wetlands slow the water flow and promote denitrification.
Connect value of water quality & show value for the need of protection
reduce urban chemical usage and find safer alternatives
Exclude livestock from streams and lakes
More local influence on water projects and practices
Create a regional source of funding dedicated to a regional stormwater funds. Eg sales tax
Slowing the water movement off of the landscape by increasing the infiltration rate or water impounding. Ex: water retention areas. Reduce tillage or cover cropping.
increase involvement and education on soil health and farming practices such as cover crops
Speed up the approval processes of conservation projects. Wet land banking two to three years to get approval and farmer has to front the money.
Holding more water on the land both rural and urban
Increase water quality education and outreach.
Restore wetlands and reduce flooding
Examine ancillary chemical relationships and combined effects: IE When herbicides and pesticides combine with phosphorus and nitrogen they seem to accelerate suitable conditions for cyanobacteria.
Hold water on the landscape to reduce peak flows & return to a more natural hydrologic system
Protect drinking water
Make markets for a third crop such as industrial hemp as a cash crop. Ex: reduce legislation on how this can be accomplished.
Fix CREP payment rates. Stop subtracting CRP payments from RIM

*Source water protect plan *Incentivize nutrient trading b/n point sources and non-point sources *Interagency collab among MPCA, MDH, Ag, MSU resources center *Charge fees for big profit such as chem c
Raise soil organic matter
Increase cover crops and more no-till
Increase water capture programs to small urban towns and communities.
Get the fertilizer into the plants/crops as directly as possible regardless of method or source.
Neighborhood Community should clean their local lakes by 25%, Create opportunity for school children to test and improve their local Waters, and everyone should think of themselves as point of solutio
Holding ponds in city and farm areas for both water quality and flood prevention.
Plan and design for larger rainfalls.

a. Improving Water retention and addressing drainage issues – hold the drop of rain where it falls
Make conservation programs easier to enroll in.
More precision farming. Control Aerial spraying overspray.
Work with communities to manage the whole watershed
Increase infiltration rates and soil water storage capacity; Increase soil organic matter – spreads water over a larger area; Improve soil health; Change tillage practices
Incentivizing farmers to get back into livestock. And graze them on cover crops. Third crop?
Thank Governor Dayton. That's an idea...
Preserve soils on fields
Municipal water use should be reduced by 25%

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

Incentifying Farmers
Educate homeowners
Tax lawn care equipment, supplies, and lawn service Businesses
Promote Adopt a River more
Adopt a river program
Each ag producer in the county should be notified about the goal that is being set up at 25by25.
Creating market for alternative crops
Have someone to organize the efforts on a small watershed and builds ownership, such as 7 Mile Creek. They had an organizer; Lake Crystal is another example. Build trust over time. Monitor it
Moratorium on factory farms
Educate the public
Implement the Buffer Law
Engage people. Especially engage the people that are affected.
Prohibit the spreading of manure that is laced with antibiotics
Increased funding
Simplify the process to enroll land in proven programs.
Political support for the initiatives
Encourage cover crops
Increase educational efforts for water quality through increased U of MN extension, local cooperatives, and agribusiness consultants.
Demonstrate new techniques several places across the state
Build larger communities working on water quality issues
There is no cooperation from agencies like DNR with the people who are affected. They must be engaged. They have to cooperative with the people and not just contact them for survey only and charge.
Incentivize
Put animals back on the land, not CAFOs
Improve soil health

Affected people should be informed prior to charging taxes from government agencies.
Increase incentives for best management practices.
Encourage crop diversity
Increase funding to implement projects
Incentives and penalties
Pressure large corporations to change policy
Education and public awareness
Use of precision ag
Control tile drainage because of them the land acts as sponge , collects more water in the long run and the water is drained subsequently.
Increase and restore the volume of water that is held in agricultural areas.
Ditch management
Practices to manage water
Establish Clearing House to assist in approval process in securing financing on water projects.
Take Checkoff dollars and force them to pay for Environmental cleanup
Voluntary actions with more time given for voluntary landowner participation to make changes
Reduce time to get BMP grants to make it more feasible for farmers to get grants and plan for next year's crop
End the ethanol mandate
Expand water action by expanding statewide or local tax options. Perhaps create more watershed distrcts.
Daylighting farm tile into retention ponds
Better define what water bodies are being proposed on regulations. Be specific
Reuse city wastewater
Controlled drainage systems in high sensitive areas
Education using existing programs on water useage
Upstream temporary water storage
Watershed-wide planning and funding

Hold water on the land by using a variety of methods.
Marketing plan for promoting perennials and soil health
Change tillage practices and timing of fertilizer applications.
Move more Legacy funds quicker to increase SWCD projects
Prohibit more factory farms
Awareness through media.
have a statewide referendum to authorize a state sales tax for water quality initiatives. Similar to legacy amendment
Develop obtainable goals that people can understand. Educating people about farming and urban nutrient practices.
What role does BWSR play with local boards and much better improved communication can take place between groups
Soil health outreach and education
Snow dumping site moved outside of the plain
Encourage collaboration among agencies, landowners, residents, cities, and engineers.
More money available for projects through legislation. Create new revenue.
Drainage water turbidity
1. Create a market for cover crops. For example, there is a demand for grass-fed beef, which could create a market for alfalfa.
Educate all on water quality needs and actions.
Incentives farming practices that promote Best Management Practices!
We need funding for soil and water staff.
Enlist legislative champions for incentivizing adoption of soil health initiatives.
Education is crucial in the urban areas for proper nutrient and pesticide usage.
Educate people on writing proposals for legacy funds

Use less salt on streets/roadways or use alternative methods
Increase and retain forestation requirements.
Slowing down H2O into rivers
Local trust must be rebuilt again from the buffer disaster that broke rural trust of the governor
Educate about and Follow BMPs
Educating farmers about cover crops. What's going to be profitable for them. and saving nutrients and water run-off.
Adopt a waterway program
Target projects - bang for buck
More flexibility within government agencies regarding solving a problem
Further testing of water
Reduce red tape.
ID point sources of pollution
Mitigation through trading credits
Farmer building coalitions with cities
Increase organic matter and incentives for soil health practices.
Fix failing septic systems; promote no till and cover crops; research and develop cover crop systems for more situations and make implementing practices easier if regulations are getting in the way.
Give business models and tools to achieve we goals
Make citizens curious. Curiosity leads to understanding which leads to change.
Incentivize vs mandate
Same regulations for urban and rural - equal responsibility Stormwater retention construction.
Incentives a decrease in chemicals across the board including city and residential use!
More research regarding cover crops and what works in Minnesota.
Increase funding ... clean water is a common good
Implementations need to be cost effective
Cover crop research

Educational outreach. Convey personal impact awareness. Implementation of temporary water storage areas. Study and implement key success features of Crystal Waters Project, water physics diffusers.
Small groups of farmers and community folk.
Reducing municipal water use by limiting water applied to grass limiting usage of private swimming pool's and limiting per household use of clean water by 25% by the year 2020

No more chemicals allowed in private and public pools
More perennial crops with markets- intermediate wheatgrass, field pennycress, cuphea, camelina, hazelnuts, etc.
Reduce acres that are fall till. Increase cover drops by 25%

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

Additional funding
Increased people capacity
BMP, working with local SWCD, incentives on cover crops.
Identify and coalesce partners
Incentives be made available to people who have cover crops.
Better cooperation and coordination among all units of government- local, state and federal
Improvement on ditches.
Accelerate education of technological advances / BMPs which improve water quality
Education at all levels
Advocate public and private crop and cover crop breeding.
Meetings with corporations to encourage change in policy - no more factory farms
Full scale design for best management practices.
Testing of waterways
Better enforcement and levying of penalties
Reestablishment of prairie grasses.
Proper sizing for water storage
End the red tape! Get people who know what they are doing to run conservation programs.
Regular convening of stake holders groups
Legacy money for southern Minnesota
Enforcement of existing regulations, e.g filing of manure management plans and requiring factory farms to obtain water appropriation permits
Have more localized decision making. Allow for a more diverse group of options to fix the problem instead of one size fits all regulations.
Restoration of wetlands, natural waterway areas should be left as natural.
See what people are actually doing to improve water quality visit farms water resources

Empower grassroots organizations
Insurance should be provided on crops.
More updated information data is not current
Make funding more readily available to farmers and have less competitive grants. Get projects off the ground.
Bridging the understanding of water issues between rural and urban audiences.
Promote grey water retrofitting
One state agency that over-sees water resources to accelerate water improvements
Focus incentive programs on water storage value and slowing the flow
More Clean Water funds into Ag BMPs, multipurpose drainage management
Look to set which projects are funded first say just the big ones down to the small ones
Educating the public
CRP and voluntary programs should be encouraged
Take federal Checkoff dollars and use funds to cleanup Environmental damage from factory farms
Dedicating funding for clean water funding.
Identify hotspots in each watershed for water management, priority pollutants/issues, and maintain management/monitoring in these areas
Put specific water storage goals in state watershed plans (1w1p and WRAPS)
Outreach and education from SWCD offices, building trust with local citizens.
Less urban expansion
Fully implement current drain ditch laws and bmps
Increase funding for water storage and retention.
More communication and cooperation amongst stakeholder groups
Fund the Forever Green Initiative to develop perennial crops AND markets for the crops

Promote this CERTA program and BMPs
Focus on business models in MN where they can survive. Business climates are better in other states. Regulations, red tape, risk of nuisance lawsuits can be more difficult in MN.
More holding ponds in both urban and rural areas
Accepting it's an everyone issue
Have SWCDs work with crop advisors to promote conservation practices.
Minnesota Agri Growth Council - encourage a water ethic
Every watershed needs a champion to educate and pull people together--like Mike Roll!
Commit to holding civic engagement listening sessions at a small scale
Market for other crops and and encourage cover crops
Educate, educate, educate
Education
Upland storage
Educate citizens, both farmers and urban dwellers, about fertilizers.
Create opportunity to non-farmers to visit farms and learn about their challenges. School children test different types of Waters in science class and inform their families and Community.
Dedicate more funding to conservation programs and education
Role out communication and education campaign to raise awareness of water scarcity/quality/value - similar to "Earth Day" awareness raising used with kids
Provide more funding for best management practices at the legislative level.
Invest in pilot farms demonstrating soil restoration projects.
Stop factory farms
Reduce red tape and speed up flow of funding for conservation practices -> Streamline the process for CRP

Education creating ownership of the problem, curiosity about the problem and what I can do, and motivation to act; reducing roadblocks to solving the problem; learning the skills of collaboration.
Townships should create land ownwer led committees to identify water quality improvement opportunities.
Charge heavy water users
Make available grants and funding to back projects and education
Increase public/ private interaction in regards to assisting buffer law implementation
Celebrate where we live!
End the ethanol mandate
Allocate CWF to support more community discussions on water and 1-on-1 interactions with landowners. Missing education and communication piece in allocation of current funds
Encourage, require or/and fund water retention requirments for smaller communities.
Buffers that include the people(lawns) that live along water bodies
Show value to participants and funding organizations.
Rethink pricing of water to reflect the value of it - drinking water is of different value (higher) than water for agricultural or commercial use
Educate on what makes healthy soil
Fund more state grants to local swcd and ditch authority.
Put animals back on the land, not CAFOs
Pollutants other than sediments need to be assessed.
Support sewerage treatment plant upgrades in smaller towns that don't have the financial means to upgrade systems themselves
Encourage the development of more solid health teams similar to the work being done by Freeborn SoIL Health Team
Source water protection plans for rivers

Prohibit antibiotic use in factory farms and do not allow manure laced with antibiotics to be spread on the land
Keep things voluntary
Reinstate the citizens board
Ensure accountability across all roleplayers
Moratorium on factory farms

Fund Forever Green Initiative!
No extra chemicals allowed to be used in private swimming pools in public swimming pool's and in public water parks
Limit public and private usage of water pools
Educate the legislators