Guiding Principles for
The Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework

Project goal from the authorizing legislation: Develop a 25-year comprehensive statewide sustainable water resources detailed framework to protect, conserve, and enhance the quantity and quality of the state's groundwater and surface water.

A. Principles to guide the content of the Framework recommendations:

1. **Sustainability:** The Framework ensures sustainable water use. Water use is sustainable when the use does not harm ecosystems, degrade water quality, or compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Framework recognizes the necessity of protecting, conserving, and enhancing water systems to ensure economic, ecologic, and social sustainability.

2. **Comprehensiveness/Interconnectedness:** The Framework addresses water resources in all forms recognizing the interconnections among the components of the water system, whether above or below ground. The Framework also addresses the connectedness of the water system to other systems such as land, air, and habitat. The Framework recognizes effective water management requires intentional collaboration to avoid managing one part of the system in isolation from the entire system.

3. **Quality of Life:** The Framework acknowledges that healthy aquatic systems contribute to enhanced quality of life and that social change may be necessary to achieve sustainable water use.

4. **Efficiency:** The Framework serves as a guide to integrate, coordinate, and increase efficiencies in water planning, management, and monitoring systems.

5. **Science-based, Flexible and Adaptive:** The Framework is founded in the most widely accepted current science and awareness of on-going efforts while fostering generation of, and adaptation to, new information, changed conditions, and new solutions.

6. **Implementation and Attainability:** The Framework will focus on factors that Minnesotans can positively influence within the 25-year time frame and that are measurable, attainable, and recognizable.

B. **Principles to guide Framework process and product:** The following principles are to guide the process and product only, not to guide the content.

1. **Inclusiveness:** Representatives of all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, academia, and citizens provide input to the Framework.

2. **Clarity:** The Framework is easy to understand.

3. **Persuasive:** The Framework is compelling and clearly explains issues and how recommended actions will benefit people and ecosystems.