

Water Management Unification Initiative
Work Plan
Fall 2000—September 2002
December 19, 2000

Purpose of the 2000—2002 phase

The purpose of the Fall 2000-September 2002 phase of the Water Management Unification Initiative is to build upon statewide and basin efforts reported in *Minnesota Watermarks: Gauging the Flow of Progress, 2000 – 2010*. It will include the following:

- Measurements available for the 10 statewide indicators reported in Watermarks and basin indicators
- New targets selected for indicators
- Recommendations and strategies in response to these questions:
 1. What are the information and assessment priorities? Who should be responsible for collecting, disseminating and using information to measure progress toward the goals, objectives, indicators and targets established in *Minnesota Watermarks*?
 2. What new approaches should be taken by federal, state and local governments to focus, coordinate or unify efforts to attain the goals and objectives established in *Minnesota Watermarks*?

The results will be summarized in a report due to the legislature in September 2002. The recommendations and strategies are timed to be available for use in developing the next biennial budget.

Major Responsibilities

The Environmental Quality Board will oversee the continuation of work toward Governor Ventura's Water Management Unification Initiative and resolve conflicts.

The EQB Water Resources Committee will make key decisions that provide overall guidance for this effort.

The Water Management Unification Task Force will provide technical support and help with implementation.

The seven basin teams formed in 1999 will build on work reported in *Minnesota Watermarks: Gauging the Flow of Progress 2000—2010* and involve local entities, tribes and citizens in the process.

December 2000 through January 2002

The EQB Water Resources Committee with Task Force assistance will carry out the following tasks:

- Measure progress on the 10 indicators identified in *Watermarks*. Progress will be measured within the limits of existing resources. When information and

assessment priorities are developed, it is expected that more resources will be needed to better indicate the extent of progress toward desired outcomes.

- Decide whether to select targets for the statewide indicators, and if positive, develop targets.
- Decide whether the basin framework fits specific resources such as groundwater and lakes. If not, adopt a specific process, such as directing the interagency lake coordinating committee to develop recommendations and strategies based on the two questions stated in the purpose section.
- Gather input and evaluate current water-related efforts to decide where changes are warranted. Consider whether programs/rules are efficiently and effectively helping to meet objectives or whether they could be retooled or refocused to better meet today's needs.
- Develop preliminary recommendations or strategies for new approaches by federal, state or local governments to focus, coordinate or unify efforts to attain the goals and objectives. The intent is to increase funding for activities that achieve desired outcomes, decrease or eliminate funding for activities that are not reflecting progress, and support new initiatives which would focus, coordinate or unify efforts in ways that would improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The Committee with Task force assistance will take the following steps to ensure the process is clear and participatory:

- Affirm who should be on basin teams and specify work expectations;
- Decide on ways to involve local government, tribes, water interests and citizens;
- Work and communicate routinely with basin teams; and
- Keep interested parties informed by posting timely information on the EQB water web site (www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/water)

Basin Teams will build on existing efforts and engage local government, tribes, water interests and citizens in work efforts for the following:

- Basin teams with basin specific indicators and targets will suggest responsibilities to measure results if feasible or recommend priorities for measuring results
 - Basin teams without specific indicators and targets will continue the process started in 1999 for specifying basin environmental and pressure indicators and setting targets
 - State agencies should encourage existing and developing local government structures to take a leadership role on the basin teams.
 - Gather input and evaluate current water-related efforts to generate ideas and recommend what new approaches would focus, unify or coordinate efforts to best help achieve the goals and objectives.
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- Gather input on whether funds for local government actions are effectively achieving desirable outcomes. If not, recommend changes.
 - Develop recommendations for new approaches or strategies to focus, unify or coordinate state and local efforts in reaching the goals and objectives.

February 15, 2002

Teams will report results that have been measured and any new indicators and targets to the EQB Water Resources Committee. Teams will also report recommendations or strategies to focus, unify or coordinate federal, state and local efforts in reaching goals and objectives.

February 2002 to May 2002

The WRC with Task Force assistance will gather information and finalize recommendations for the September 2002 water policy report including:

- Measured results for the 10 statewide indicators and selection of targets;
- Priorities for measuring progress toward the goals and objectives;
- Strategies and recommendations for new approaches for focusing, unifying or coordinating water-related efforts to meet goals and objectives.

Information reported by basin teams will be summarized.

May 2002 to August 2002

The Water Resources Committee with Task Force assistance will prepare the draft water policy report.

August 2002

- Draft report to EQB Water Resources Committee for approval
- Draft report to Environmental Quality Board for approval to transmit to the Legislature.

September 2002

- Report transmitted to the Legislature.