

## Watershed District Launches Updated Website

As part of the Clearwater River Watershed District's ongoing efforts to engage citizens in the District's work, the Board of Managers approved an update of the District's website to create more opportunities for citizen/board interactions.

The website, [www.crawd.org](http://www.crawd.org), has been designed with the idea that most users of the website are looking for four things: what the District's purpose is, what the District is doing to fulfill its purpose, how can others become involved with the District's work, and how to get in contact with the District.

With those four ideas in mind, the District's website has a simple, minimalist design to decrease load times, increase the amount of information available, simplify searching, and increase site usability.

The website is built around six tabs, which will take users to our publications & reports, the District's incentive programs, our projects, how the user can help with the District's work, how to contact the District, and "about the District." Each tab has sub-tabs allowing the user to dig deeper into each category.

A search bar is included on each page to assist the user in finding specific information. Also, each page has a link to the District's Watershed Management Plan. This document is the overarching guide for all District activities, and has lots of useful information.

Be sure to check out the "See the Project Near You"



map. This interactive map allows the user to search project information using a map interface. If you want to see what District projects are near you, this tool is a great place to start. The map also has information for each of the District's major lakes, and the legal boundary of the District. So, if you always wondered where your property is in the District, now you can easily find out.

Finally, the District is now on Facebook. Check out our Facebook page by clicking on the link at the bottom of our website's homepage, or by searching "Clearwater River Watershed District" on Facebook.

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### We're looking for participants

**If you have land in agricultural production upstream of Lake Betsy, we want to talk with you about our targeted fertilizer application program. Give our office a call at the number listed above.**

## District's Purpose: Then & Now

Have you ever wondered how the District got to where it is today? What started out as a means to rectify water quality issues in the Clearwater Chain of Lakes has developed into a comprehensive, water management organization dedicated to promoting, preserving, and protecting water resources within the District's boundaries.

The District was formed on April 9th, 1975 by citizen petition to the Minnesota Water Resources Board. These citizens were concerned with the declining water quality in Clearwater Lake and the upstream Chain of Lakes. As such, the CRWD instituted the Clearwater River Chain of Lakes Restoration Project through the 1980s into the mid-1990s to correct these problems.

From the mid-90s until the completion of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process in 2010, the District's focus expanded to address other concerns, such as: Cedar Lake and its upstream lakes, sewage and stormwater treatment around area lakes and in the District's cities, and shoreline restoration.

With the completion of the TMDLs and the update of the Watershed Management Plan in 2010, the District has positioned itself to tackle the ongoing issues of the watershed using a watershed-wide approach. Though the issues the District faces are large, they are not insurmountable, and together we can all reach our goals of good water quality for today and many tomorrows.

## District Focuses Upstream for Greater Cost / Benefit

For the past several years, the District has been working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) on creating Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for each impaired water body in the CRWD. A TMDL is simply the maximum daily load a water body can receive of a particular pollutant before it causes an impairment. This process culminated with the creation of the CRWD's TMDL Implementation Plan, which was incorporated into the District's Watershed Management Plan in 2010.

The TMDL Implementation Plan is the guide by which the District will implement projects, practices, and programs to meet the goals established by the TMDL process. As a local government unit funded by local taxes, the Board of Managers recognized early on the need to focus implementation efforts in upstream areas of the District first in order to maximize the costs/benefits received.

This approach is based on a simple idea: since water flows downhill, then completing work in upstream areas first will have a trickle-down effect on all water bodies downstream.

For example, if the District installs a sedimentation pond that keeps X amount of phosphorous out of Lake Betsy (south of Kimball), then all waters downstream of Lake Betsy (Scott, Louisa, Marie, Caroline, Augusta, Clearwater, Grass, Wiegand, Mississippi River) will receive a benefit of that removal, since the phosphorous is also kept from entering those downstream waters.

Based on these ideas, the CRWD has already initiated several projects in the upstream areas of the District, such as: Clearwater River Streambank Restoration near Watkins, Targeted Fertilizer Application Program on agricultural land upstream of Lake Betsy, and the City of Kimball Stormwater Treatment.



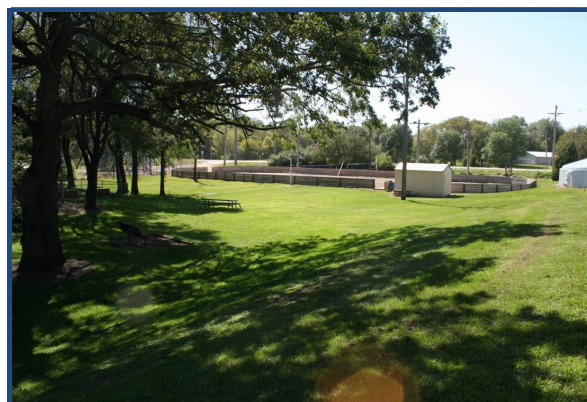
### Did you know?

- ♦ The CRWD is 158.8 square miles, has four municipalities within its borders, covers 10 townships (whole or in part), and has 46.1 sq. mi. in Meeker, 54.2 sq. mi. in Stearns, and 58.5 sq. mi. in Wright Counties.
- ♦ The headwaters of the Clearwater River are located in Meeker County, and the river is about 39 miles long.
- ♦ The largest land use is agricultural.

## District & City of Kimball Continue Partnership on Stormwater Treatment

If you've been to Kimball recently, chances are you've seen some work being done in the area around the city hockey rink / beach volleyball court. Where once there was horseshoe pits and open mowed grass areas, now there is a large basin used to treat stormwater runoff coming from the City of Kimball. In the next couple of years, motorists passing by will notice native plants growing around the "Welcome to Kimball" sign, part of the rain garden built in conjunction to the basin on the other side of the rink.

This project, officially titled "Reducing Phosphorus Loads to Lake Betsy by Protecting Willow Creek," is the result of cooperation between the District, the City of Kimball, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Department of Health (DOH), and Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The District received a \$70,900 from the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment through BWSR for the design and construction of a Stormwater Infiltration and Reuse basin, along with the rain garden and drain control structure. Together, these components make up an stormwater management system that captures runoff from rain events up to 1.5 inches over a 428 acre drainage area. The District contributed \$43,000 for design, engineering, and administration. The City of Kimball contributed \$3,500 for raising the rink as part of construction, allowed construction on city park land, and will maintain the system. The DNR, Stearns SWCD, and DOH provided technical assistance with designing the project.



This system reduces phosphorus loads to Lake Betsy, a listed impaired water by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), by an estimated 240 lbs. per year. Runoff volumes to Willow Creek, a designated trout stream, are also reduced. Groundwater recharge in the area of the trout stream has been improved, along with a reduction in water temperatures in the creek, thereby improving habitat.

This system will effectively treat stormwater runoff from a large portion of the City of Kimball for years to come. But that's not all. The District was recently awarded \$738,750 from the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment through BWSR for construction of the second phase of treating stormwater runoff from the city. This project is currently in the design phase, but within the next few years you will see more work being done to tackle Kimball's stormwater runoff.

If you have questions or comments about these projects, be sure to contact us. Also, check out our updated website for more information.

## Your District: Simple Steps for Water Quality

With so much discussion being held recently regarding water quality in our state, it is easy to become overwhelmed. After all, water is an integral part of our daily lives, so much so that we often don't even notice this precious resource. We cook with it, play with it, clean with it, flush with it, work with it, move with it...even our bodies cannot function without water. As such, it is the responsibility of us all to make sure we're doing everything we can to protect our water resources. Here are 5 simple steps you can take to help improve your water's quality:



Tile intake harvested for hay

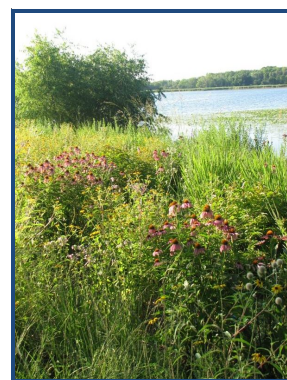
1. If you own residential property, consider implementing some simple practices to control your stormwater runoff, such as rain gardens, rain barrels, bagging lawn clippings, or pervious pavement.

2. If you are an agricultural producer, or work for one, consider implementing some practices that will help protect your waters, such as targeted fertilizer application, tile intake buffers, and conservation drainage. Oftentimes these practices offer a boost to your bottom line as well.

3. If you own property along shoreline, consider native landscaping/lakescaping instead of mowing up to the shore and/or placing rock along the shoreline. This practice protects for erosion, provides habitat for all sorts of critters, and is easy to maintain.

4. Don't flush chemicals down your toilet! From pharmaceuticals to household cleaners, your sewage treatment systems (from municipal to individual septic) cannot treat all of these chemicals, and they find their way into our waters.

5. Finally, increase your knowledge! There are a vast number of resources available for your use, geared towards assisting you in living with our water in mind. The more you know, the more you can help to



Native shoreline

clean up our waters and keep them clean.

We hope you can see there are many things we all can do to protect, promote, and preserve our water resources. If you have questions or ideas, feel free to contact the District. And be sure to check out our updated website, which has lots of resources for your use.

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### Did you know?

- ♦ The District has around 8,626 acres of open water.
- ♦ The Clearwater River begins at 1,160 feet elevation. It outlets at 940 feet.