

From DNR: This is to follow up on several questions raised by members at the Legislative Water Commission meeting on April 26 during the discussion of the DNR Pineland Sands study. Please note that the answers to questions 1-3 are estimated based on GIS information.

1. **Acreage in the Pineland Sands aquifer** (based on DNR GIS information)
 - a. 502,447 acres

2. **Acreage in the study focus areas** (based on DNR GIS information); acreages below are approximated based on preliminary boundaries.
 - a. Total: approximately 60,000 acres
 - b. By focus area:
 - i. North Wadena: 28,400
 - ii. Badoura: 15,600
 - iii. McKinley: 13,000

3. **Percentage of land in the Pineland Sands in agricultural production** (Data source: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), USDA - Cropland Data Layer 2014, Minnesota)

· Open Water	17,871 acres	3.5%
· Small Grains	9,979 acres	2.0%
· Corn, soybean, potatoes, other beans	48,466 acres	9.6%
· Pasture, Hay, Alfalfa & Barrens	66,137 acres	13.1%
· Forest & shrubland	239,643 acres	47.5%
· Herbaceous & Forested Wetlands	101,028 acres	20.0%
· Developed -low to high intensity	21,548 acres	4.3%

In addition, active water appropriations permits are associated with approximately 52,000 acres of land within the Pineland Sands aquifer area.

4. **Mandatory EAW thresholds**

There is no mandatory EAW threshold for the number of permits; we examine the potential environmental footprint on a case-specific basis and if we think there may be the potential for significant environmental effects we order an EAW.

There are mandatory thresholds associated with acreages:

- MR 4410.4300, subp. 24 requires EAW preparation for irrigation of 540 acres or more in a continuous parcel from a single water source. (DNR is RGU)
- MR 4410.4300 subp. 36 requires EAW preparation for land use conversions of 640 acres or more (LGU is RGU)
- MR 4410.4300 subp. 36a requires EAW preparation for land use conversions of 20 or more acres in a sensitive shoreland or 40 or more acres in a nonsensitive shoreland. (LGU is RGU) [MR 4410.400, subp. 27 requires EIS preparation for land use conversions of 40 or more acres in a sensitive shoreland or 80 or more acres in a nonsensitive shoreland.]

In determining the need for an EAW, we also need to factor in whether there are multiple phased or connected actions.