

Legislative Water Commission Update 12-1-17

ERRORS? OMISSIONS? If found, please notify barb.huberty@lcc.leg.mn.

Interested reader: each week, I gather general information for Legislative Water Commission members to help keep them apprised about water issues in Minnesota. This update contains a roundup of easily attainable MN water news, as well as articles from beyond MN that may inform member thinking. It also includes summaries of meetings I have monitored and reports I have read, as well as information about upcoming events. During the Legislative Session, updates on water-related legislation and committee activities are added. Any errors or omissions are inadvertent.

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MN NEWS

WATER ACTIONS

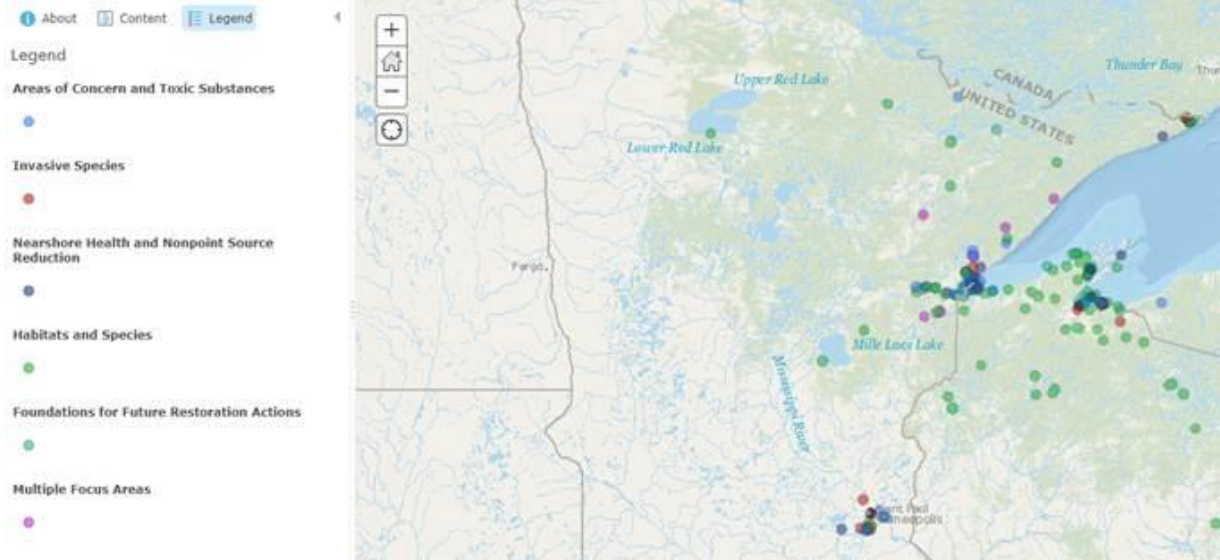
- MPCA: [Environmental economists: A pinch of this, a dash of that](#)
- Strib: [Minnesota paddler wants to send a message about state's waterways](#)
- MPCA: [Clean Water Partnership loans](#); now being offered at 0%
- MPCA: [Minnesota's Impaired Waters List](#); now open for public comment
- MPCA: [2017 triennial standards review](#) [public meeting on 1/10/17, see Upcoming Events section]

SURFACE WATER/STORMWATER

- Jamestown Sun: [Governors say diversion task force unlikely to see consensus](#); Whapeton-Breckenridge Daily News: [A compromise coming for Fargo-Moorhead?](#)
- Echo Press: ['As high as I've ever seen it:' Two lakes reached record highs in October](#)
- Met Council: [Partners in Water Quality Monitoring: Developing Leadership in the Next Generation](#)
- Brainerd Dispatch: [Crow Wing County Board: Crow Wing partners with Cass to protect watershed](#)
- MPCA: [Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\) projects](#); Hawk Creek and Pine River TMDLs approved by EPA in November

GREAT LAKES

- The Globe: [Dredged sand may bolster Duluth beach eroded by high level of Lake Superior](#)
- WPR: [US-Canadian Agency Outlines Challenges Facing Great Lakes Water Quality](#); ABC: [Agency says US, Canada fall short on protecting Great Lakes](#); Duluth News Tribune: [International Joint Commission wants faster Great Lakes cleanup](#); MPR: [Report: U.S., Canada fall short on protecting Great Lakes](#)
- International Joint Commission: [IJC calls on governments to set specific targets to accelerate Great Lakes restoration, protect drinking water and eliminate releases of untreated sewage](#)
- InfoSuperior: [Bipartisan Support for Great Lakes](#)



WATER SUPPLY

- Strib: [Cities across Minnesota are racing to replace aging water pipes, sewer systems](#); Access News: [Minnesota Politicians Rush to Replace Sewer Systems and Aging Infrastructure](#)
- Strib: [Minnesota AG's lawsuit asks: What did 3M know about PFCs?](#); South Washington County Bulletin: [Cottage Grove watches state-3M lawsuit closely](#); PiPress: [Real World Economics: 3M PFC lawsuit classic example of economics of external costs](#)
- Inforum: [Horizon West water tested for contaminants after students show flu-like symptoms](#); elevated copper level found in Moorhead school's water after kids had flu-like symptoms

WASTEWATER

- MPR: [To avoid 'fatbergs,' keep grease, wipes out of sewer](#)
- Marshall Independent: [Marshall's wastewater plant upgrades headed to design process](#)
- KIMT: [Mantorville Sewer Project to get Millions from the State](#); DEED: [PFA Approves \\$2.34 Million for Mantorville Project](#); project details can be seen on the PFA [website](#) (lower right corner)
- Bemidji Pioneer: [Progress continues on Kelliher infrastructure project](#); DEED: [Kelliher Awarded \\$2 Million for Water and Sewer Projects](#); project details can be seen on the PFA [website](#) (lower right corner)
- Austin Daily Herald: [Austin sewer rates in 2018 to climb 25 percent; City facing \\$55M in improvements to collection, wastewater systems](#)

AG & WATER

- Marshall Independent: [Amended Lyon County buffer zone ordinance approved](#)
- MPR: [South Dakota dairy plan worries Lake Hendricks, Minn.](#)
- Echo Press: [Brandon farmer protects water](#)
- Albert Lea Tribune: [Funds available to farmers tackling conservation](#)
- Austin Daily Herald: [Ag loans expand for more pollution prevention; State extends eligibility to include larger livestock operations](#)
- Mille Lacs Messenger: [Silvopasture for water quality in the North](#)
- AgWeek: [Luverne, Minn., embraces shrimp enterprise](#)
- Wadena Pioneer Journal: [Wadena County farms now water quality certified](#)

- Post Bulletin: [Discovery Farms provide water quality data for Minnesota](#)
- West Central Tribune: [Willmar to host conservation tillage conference Dec. 5-6](#)
- West Central Tribune: [Kandiyohi County sets hearing on buffer ordinance](#)
- Isanti County News: [Medvecky's recognized for outstanding conservation](#)

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

- Strib: [Controversial measures to clear way for more Minnesota mining spark debate in U.S. House](#); Duluth News Tribune: [Vote delayed on Twin Metals bill](#); The Timberjay: [Land exchange bill helps clear way for PolyMet](#); Congresswoman McCollum's Office: [McCollum Floor Remarks Opposing H.R. 3905, Toxic Mining Adjacent to Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness](#); Duluth News Tribune: [Nolan bill forcing PolyMet land swap clears House](#); Duluth News Tribune: [House passes bill to reopen areas near BWCAW to copper-nickel exploration](#); Bemidji Pioneer: [House passes Twin Metals mining bill](#); The Ely Echo: [MINER Act passes House](#)
- HuffPost: [Keith Ellison Calls Out Proposed Minnesota Pipeline After Keystone XL Wins Approval](#)
- Midwest Energy News: [Minnesota ruling upholding frac sand mining ban sparks interest in other counties](#)
- DNR: [Minerals Exploration Plan on State Nonferrous Metallic Minerals Leases](#); Kennecott Exploration Company plans work in Aitkin Co
- Winona Post: [District court upholds county frac sand ban](#)

OPINIONS

- Austin Daily Herald: [Boundary Waters advocates fighting mining legislation](#)
- St Cloud Times: [Are Minnesota's public lands up for sale?](#)
- Inforum: [LaDuke: Are pipeline spills the new normal?](#)
- St Cloud Times: [Don't underestimate Enbridge opposition](#)

BEYOND MINNESOTA

REGIONAL

- University of Denver Water Law Review: [Cities explore the future of urban stormwater](#)
- MPR: [Brewery makes algae beer to spotlight threat to Lake Erie](#)
- TimesUnion: [New York considers limits on PFOA contamination in drinking water](#)
- Strib: [3M tells Alabama that it underreported chemicals in river](#)
- US Water Alliance: [One Water Spotlight: NEW Water, the brand of the Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District](#)
- E&E News: [Prairie protection hits headwinds on Great Plains](#)
- Capital Press: [Cargill settles Puget Sound pollution suit](#)

NATIONAL

- The Hill: [Science holds the key to a more sustainable farm future](#)
- Circle of Blue: [Panel Recommends Changes to Two-Decade-Old EPA Water Affordability Guidelines](#)
- Circle of Blue: [When It Comes To Water Service How Expensive Is Too Expensive?](#)
- USDA: [USDA Helps Rural Communities Restore Water Systems Damaged by Disasters](#)
- Water Environment Federation: [Water Environment Federation Urges Congress to Protect Funding for Water Research](#)
- The Week: [The future of farming is in the cloud](#)
- USDA: [Saving Money, Time and Soil: The Economics of No-Till Farming](#)

- Reuters: [U.S. drinking water regulations tied to reduced arsenic exposure](#)
- Congressional Research Service: [Private Flood Insurance and the National Flood Insurance Program \(NFIP\)](#)

MEETINGS

LCCMR

The Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources had two meetings this week. The first was of a subcommittee that is looking at what the role of LCCMR should be in helping to address the state's wastewater issues. They assembled a [packet](#) of the materials they have reviewed, including [language](#) proposed by Sen Westrom, both of which were advanced to the full LCCMR.

After reviewing and approving 2 work plan amendments and the LCCMR's proposed 2018 bill language, the Commission began discussing their Emerging Issues Account. Because those decisions would likely be entwined with wastewater actions, the agenda was amended to bring the subcommittee's wastewater report forward. Discussion ensued for over an hour, with many concerns expressed, including: the appropriateness of using the trust fund for grants, whether the intent of the enabling legislation was to fund infrastructure projects, what other types of wastewater projects might be a better fit for trust funds, and whether members had enough time to make an informed decision. Several members proposed alternative funding formulas that would help insure trust fund money would only be available for capital projects after a certain level of bonding was made available. Ultimately, they decided to amend the proposal to provide LCCMR funding up to \$10M when there is \$10M in bonding/year for wastewater infrastructure funding program, until June 30, 2021 for the grants. Discussion then turned to the new Request for Proposals, which must be consistent with 12/2013 Strategic Plan (which was reviewed last year). The RFP is essentially the same as the 2018 RFP, with the exception of changed due dates, schedules, member lists and new provisions to support small grant applications. The 2018 LCCMR schedule was approved. The 2018 package bill, with the new Westrom amendment and Emerging Issues appropriation, was approved.

CWC

The Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) of the Clean Water Council met this month to continue their process of evaluating the ten-year funding directions for agency programs. Staff from MPCA, DNR and MDH gave brief overviews of their programs that have been supported with Clean Water Funds, as well as projections for their future needs. The BOC concluded their work by deciding whether funding for each program area should remain steady, increase, decrease, or be eliminated across three time horizons: FY20-21, FY23 (5 yr), and FY28 (10 yr). Those recommendations will be presented to the full CWC at their December 18th meeting.

REPORTS

STATE OF MN WATER

- DNR: MN Stream Flow Report – ended for the year
- National Drought Mitigation Center [11/30/17](#)

NEW REPORTS

- International Joint Commission: [First Triennial Assessment of Progress on Great Lakes Water Quality](#)
- Met Council: [2015 Study of the Water Quality of 164 Metropolitan Area Lakes](#) (released Oct 2017; includes data and grades [A good, F poor] for each lake monitored)

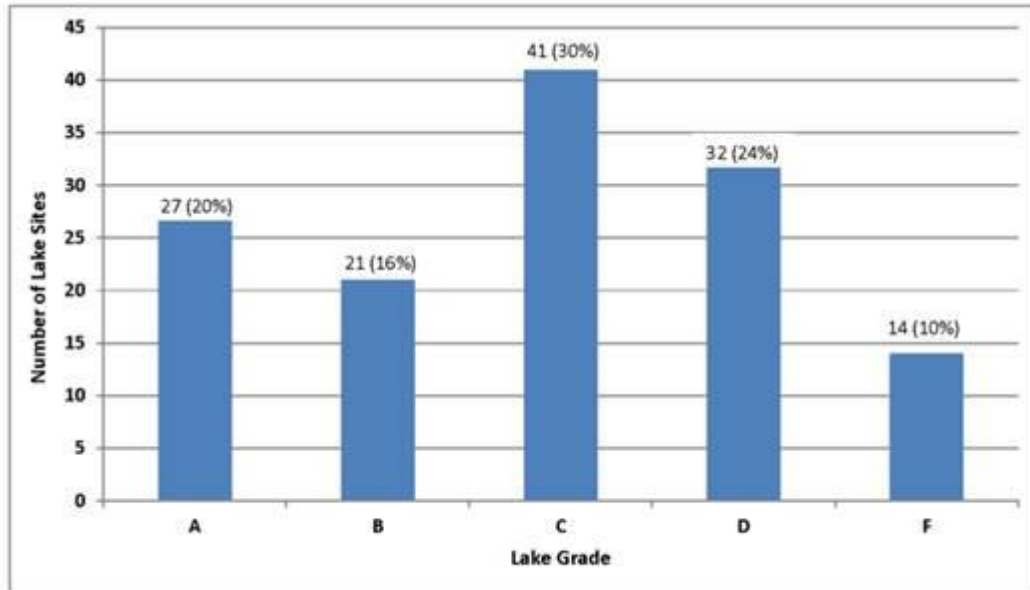


Figure 6. Distribution of 2015 Lake Grades

- MPCA: [Annual Report of MPCA's Water Quality Standards Development Work](#)
- EPA: [Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force 2017 Report to Congress](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec 3-5: **MASWCD 27th Annual Trade Show & Conservation Information Fair**; Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington-Minneapolis South; info [here](#)
- Dec 15: BWSR & the Great Plains Institute: **Bioeconomy Forum** to discuss market opportunities for innovative perennial and cover crops; 9am – 2pm; TIES conference center (1644 Larpenteur Ave W, St Paul); the event is free but registration is required; see the event details and registration link [here](#)
- Dec 19: **LWC Meeting – Wastewater Roundtable #3**, 9:30 – 12:30, MN Senate Building 2412
- Jan 10: MPCA's **Triennial Standards Review** public meeting; MPCA (520 Lafayette Rd, St Paul); 3:30 until complete or 7 pm, whichever comes first
- Jan 18, 2018: Water Technology Roundtable: Issues in Groundwater Resources; contact Steve.Riedel@state.mn.us for more info
- Feb 8, 2018: Freshwater Society's **17th Annual Road Salt Symposium**; details to come
- Feb 15: Rinke Noonan Wetland and Drainage Seminar; St Cloud; info to come
- Mar 6-8: **MRWA Water & Wastewater Technical Conference**; St Cloud; more info to come
- Mar 19-20: DNR's **The Science of Healthy Waters: The Ditching Dilemma** workshop; Blue Earth, more info to come [here](#)
- April 12-14, 2018: Freshwater Society's **The State of Water Conference**; details to come
- May 1-3: MN-ND-SD AWWA **Surface Water Treatment Workshop**; Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead; info to come @ www.AWWAND.org
- May 10, 2018: **Smart Water Technology Roundtable: Workshop for IOT Solutions in Water Treatment**; Uponor, 5925 148th St W, Apple Valley; contact Steve.Riedel@state.mn.us for more info
- June 3-7, 2018: American Society of Civil Engineers **World Environmental and Water Resources Congress**; details to come at www.ewricongress.org
- July 10-12, 2018: US Water Alliance's **One Water Summit** will be at the Hyatt hotel in downtown Minneapolis; details to come