

## Weekly LWC Update 5-19-17

**ERRORS? OMISSIONS?** If found, please notify [barb.huberty@lcc.leg.mn](mailto: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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### LEGISLATURE

Here are the latest 2 water-related bills to be introduced. As of 5/19/17, 354 of 5,114 (7%) introduced bills are water related.

House File	Chief/LWC Authors	Senate File	Chief/LWC Authors	Description (as introduced, not as amended)
<a href="#">2681</a>	Theis	None	None	establishes water management practices to prevent waterborne diseases and requires investigations of Legionnaire's disease
<a href="#">2687</a>	Fabian, Torkelson	None	None	allows drainage system repairs without further actions where as-built records, re-established records, or prior DNR concurrence exists; where these are absent, the DNR must be notified if the repair is in, through or adjacent to a public water and the DNR must concur or not concur within 60 days; failure to act in 60 days is deemed concurrence

The Senate passed these bills with water-related provisions this week:

- 5/15: SF2214 (higher ed) and SF1937 (jobs) passed the Senate floor
- 5/16: HF1717 (ag policy) passed the Senate floor

The House took action on these bills with water-related provisions this week:

- 5/15: SF2214 (higher ed), SF 1937 (jobs), and SF803 (public safety) passed the House floor
- 5/16: the House Ways and Means Committee passed a resolution to increase the budget target for the capital investment bill and then passed HF892 (the bonding bill) to general register; HF892 was then incorporated as a delete all amendment in HF575
- 5/17: HF575 (bonding) did not pass the House floor; on a vote of 70 ayes to 62 nays, the 3/5ths majority of 81 votes was not reached; read this Pioneer Press article: [Minnesota Legislature: \\$800 million public works bill falls short in House](#)
- 5/18: HF1265 (environment & natural resources trust fund) passed the House floor

At its meeting Thursday night, the Legacy Conference Committee presented a delete all amendment that merged the House and Senate bills into one compromise bill. Two other amendments were accepted: one to give consideration to a grant to fund the Lake Superior aquarium's planned river ecosystem exhibit within the arts appropriations and another to provide funding for buffer compensation to 9 counties in NW MN that were not part of the CREP territory from the clean water fund appropriations. HF707 now moves to both the House and Senate floors for voting sometime before midnight on Monday.

On 5/16, Gov Dayton vetoed the following five bills:

- [Chapter 62, HF 861](#): (omnibus transportation finance bill); to read the veto letter, [click here](#)
- [Chapter 63, SF 803](#): (omnibus public safety and judiciary finance bill); to read the veto letter, [click here](#)
- [Chapter 64, SF 1937](#): (omnibus jobs and energy finance bill); to read the veto letter, [click here](#)
- [Chapter 65, SF 2214](#): (omnibus higher education finance bill); to read the veto letter, [click here](#)
- [Chapter 66, HF 4](#): (omnibus tax bill); to read the veto letter; [click here](#)

## **MN NEWS**

### **WATER ACTIONS**

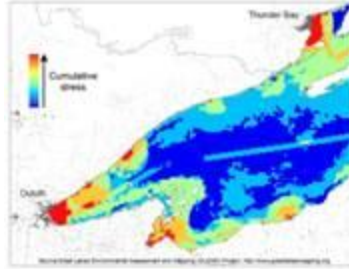
- Austin Daily Herald: [Minnesota Ikes hold annual meeting](#)
- Woodbury Bulletin: [Watershed District recruits 10 water stewards](#)
- LillieNews.com: [Minnesota communities join forces to launch water education campaign](#)
- Met Council: [Grant Program Seeks Integrated Solutions to Water Problems](#); applications are due 7/17
- MPCA: [It's a good year to become a water monitor](#)
- Echo Press: [City leaders urge Legislature to boost aid to cities](#)
- MPCA: [9 tips for keeping our lakes and rivers clean](#)
- Albert Lea Tribune: [Agencies collaborate with goals of clean water](#)

### **SURFACE WATER/STORMWATER**

- International Falls Journal: [County to conduct AIS checks](#) [if you've never seen a mobile decontamination unit, check out this article]
- Aitkin Age: [AIS inspections ramp up at public accesses across county](#)

### **GREAT LAKES**

- Strib: [Senate OKs bill limiting state regulation of ballast water](#); Rochester Post Bulletin: [Senate OKs bill limiting state regulation of ballast water](#); *"A U.S. Senate committee has voted to create one national standard for ballast water discharges from commercial ships and prohibit states from imposing tougher requirements."*
- Rochester Post Bulletin: [\\$20M federal grant supports new Great Lakes research center](#); the new Cooperative Institute for Great Lakes Research includes UMD
- InfoSuperior: [Mapping Environmental Stressors on the Great Lakes](#); the map (created by analyzing, weighting, plotting and merging 34 environmental stressors) illustrates the cumulative impacts of human activity across the Great Lakes; for more details, go to: [Great Lakes Environmental Assessment and Mapping Project](#)



Environmental stress mapped across the surface of the Great Lakes. This map is a closer look at the cumulative influence of 34 different environmental threats on Western Lake Superior. The colours represent stress levels compared to other parts of the five lakes. (Image: University of Michigan)

## WATER SUPPLY

- Water Online: [Even This Water-Rich State May Consider DPR](#)
- Valley News: [Contaminated water in Verndale, MN could be harmful to infants](#)
- The Timberjay: [Tower, Breitung water supplies meet safety standards, but just barely](#)
- Le Center Leader: [Ordinance prohibiting private wells in Le Center passes](#)

## WASTEWATER

- Strib: [From flush to fertilizer? Researchers search for benefits in ash from human waste](#)
- Austin Daily Herald: [Looking for help; Wastewater treatment upgrades could top \\$70M](#)
- MPCA: [Salty issue: What to do about chloride in wastewater](#)
- The Kenyon Leader: [State bonding bill discourse hits close to home for city of Dennison](#)
- **ERRATA:** On page 8 of the 5/12 weekly update, the link to a KARE11 story about St. Francis's hope for wastewater bonding money had a side note saying St. Francis was not in the bonding bill; that was incorrect. According to the PFA, St. Francis is in line for about \$6M in additional grant funds through bonding appropriations that would go to the PFA for its PSIG and WIF grant programs.

## AG & WATER

- Strib: [Water buffer law: Intent is fine, but it isn't ready to be implemented](#); Fergus Falls Daily Journal: [Ag organizations and rural counties call for delay of state water buffer law](#)
- Austin Daily Herald: ['An incredible tool'; Conservation program opens another chapter in Mower County](#)
- DL Online: [MN CREP sign-up begins May 15, 2017](#)
- MN Farm Guide: [Information technology shapes farming today and tomorrow](#)
- Tri-State Neighbor: [Online tool connects cover crop farmers, cattle producers](#); MDA: [Cropland Grazing Exchange](#)
- Tri-State Neighbor: [Crop Watcher: Drainage issues vital to southwestern Minnesota farmer](#); Mr. Hicks was this year's U of MN Farmer of the Year
- Winona Daily News: [Walz meets with local conservation group to talk Farm Bill goals](#); "Among the Land Stewardship Project's top proposals are restoring and expanding the Conservation Stewardship Program to increase payments to farmers and encourage conservation practices. They are also seeking to reform subsidy programs and crop insurance — revising policies to reward diverse crop rotations and require adoption of approved conservation plans to be eligible for public subsidies from the crop insurance program."

## EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

- St Cloud Times: [Consultant concerned about PolyMet's funds](#); Strib: [New report says PolyMet mine risk fund is millions short](#)
- Duluth News Tribune: [PolyMet dam permit applications advance](#)
- Timberjay: [Hoping for a political end-around](#)
- Strib: [Nolan meets with Trump Cabinet officers in bid to revive BWCA-area copper mining](#)
- DL Online: [Residents look to join environmental groups in Enbridge dispute](#)
- Yahoo Finance: [Enbridge commits to greater disclosure on indigenous and environmental issues](#)
- MPR: [New environmental review weighs alternative routes for Enbridge pipeline](#); Strib: [Enbridge pipeline could cause more damage than alternatives, but it's not largest spill risk](#); Pioneer Press: [Minnesota comment period kicks off on Enbridge Line 3 pipeline review](#); WCCO: [Comment Period Open For Aging Northern Minnesota Pipeline Replacement](#); Mankato Free Press: [Comment period kicks off on Enbridge Line 3 pipeline review](#); City Pages: [Enbridge pipeline report ignores alternatives \(like not building a new one\)](#); US News: [Comment Period Kicks off on Enbridge Line 3 Pipeline Review](#); MnDOC: [Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Line 3 Pipeline Project](#); public meeting schedule below:

Public Meeting Schedule		
Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Enbridge Line 3		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
T, 6/6	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Rice Lake Community Center 13830 Community Loop Bagley, MN 56621
T, 6/6	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	IRA Civic Center 1401 NW 3rd Ave Grand Rapids, MN 55744
W, 6/7	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Park Rapids High School Cafetorium 401 Huntsinger Ave Park Rapids, MN 56470
W, 6/7	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Palace Casino Hotel 16599 69th Ave NW Cass Lake, MN 56633
Th, 6/8	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Downtown Fair Building 107 W 7th Ave Floodwood, MN 55736
Th, 6/8	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Central Lakes College Classroom E54, 501 West College Drive Brainerd, MN 56401
F, 6/9	11:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Maslowski Wellness & Research Center 17 5th Street Southwest Wadena, MN 56482
M, 6/12	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Grand Casino Hinckley 777 Lady Luck Drive Hinckley, MN 55037
M, 6/12	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	East Lake Community Center 36666 State Hwy 65 McGregor, MN 56718
T, 6/13	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Fond du Lac Community College 2101 14th Street Cloquet, MN 55720
T, 6/13	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Intercontinental Hotel Saint Paul 11 E. Kellogg Boulevard St. Paul, MN 55101
W, 6/14	11:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Staples Community Center 122 6th Street NE Staples, MN 56479
W, 6/14	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Initiative Foundation 405 1st Street Southeast Little Falls, MN 56345
Th, 6/15	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Henry's Catering and Banquet Hall 6774 MN-25 Foley, MN 56329
Th, 6/15	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Phoenix Hotel & Banquet Center 210 MN-23 Milaca, MN 56353
F, 6/16	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	The Grand Event Center 2025 Rowland Rd Mora, MN 55051
T, 6/20	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Marshall County Central Schools 310 West Minnesota Avenue Newfolden, MN 56738
T, 6/20	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Hallock City Hall 163 3rd Street SE Hallock, MN 56728
W, 6/21	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Ralph Engelstad Arena, Imperial Room 525 Brooks Avenue North Thief River Falls, MN 56701
W, 6/21	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Plummer Senior Citizen Center 185 Minnesota Street Plummer, MN 56748
Th, 6/22	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Gully Community Center 120 Main Street Gully, MN 56646
Th, 6/22	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Sanford Center & George Nielson Convention Center 1111 Event Center Drive NE Bemidji, MN 56601

## OPINIONS

- Duluth News Tribune: [Reader's view: Pipeline is about profits for oil execs](#)
- The Timberjay: [Nolan and Twin Metals](#)
- International Falls Journal: [LETTER: Support local control over water, protect Rainy Lake](#)
- Echo Press: [Echo Press editorial: Who will pay for clean water?](#)
- Strib: [Lakes with zebra mussels are goners. Lock the trouble there.](#)
- Aitkin Age: [Water quality is a forest product](#)

## BEYOND MINNESOTA

### REGIONAL

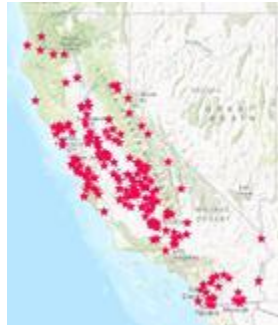
- Science Nation: [Engineers design new lead detector for water](#); U of WI-Milwaukee scientists are developing a home-based, real-time lead monitoring detector
- US News: [Republican State Lawmakers Ask for Laxer Phosphorous Rules](#) for WI
- KCUR: [Kansas Researchers Say Climate Change Will Deteriorate Midwest Water Quality](#); *"Drought tends to stop nutrients from entering our water systems. The nutrients accumulate in the soil when it is dry and, when heavy rain comes along, the nitrate that is not absorbed by plants as food is flushed into the water system."*
- Phys.org: [Novel use of satnav saves precious water](#); at test sites in Kansas, a private company will compare reflected and direct satnav signals to show the moisture content of soil and crops; they estimate this knowledge will save farmers about 30% in irrigation operating costs (for both water and energy), while improving yields by 10–12%
- mlive: [Flint water line replacements have 22 percent failure rate](#); *"More than one in five excavations performed by crews removing lead and galvanized water service lines in Flint so far have been dead ends, leading to copper pipes that do not pose a threat of leaching lead."*
- The National Law Review: [Indiana on Cutting Edge of Lead Service Line Replacement for Water Utilities](#); *"The Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) will provide low-interest loans to help East Chicago replace all lead service lines in its system. The IFA lowered the interest rate and increased the principal by \$3.1 million to provide enough funds for East Chicago to replace the customer service lines without increasing annual debt service payments."*
- Iowa Learning Farms: [Should prairie potholes and other wet areas be farmed?](#); extent of the referenced Des Moines Lobe:



- AG Alert: [Critical deadline in groundwater law approaches](#); *"Just weeks away from the deadline, counties, irrigation districts, farmers and other entities are finalizing agreements to form locally*

controlled groundwater sustainability agencies in affected basins across the state.” The focus is on basins designated as medium or high priority.

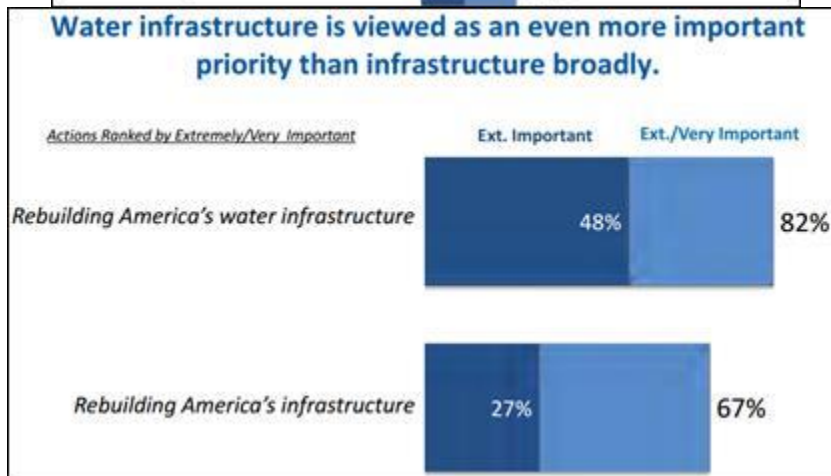
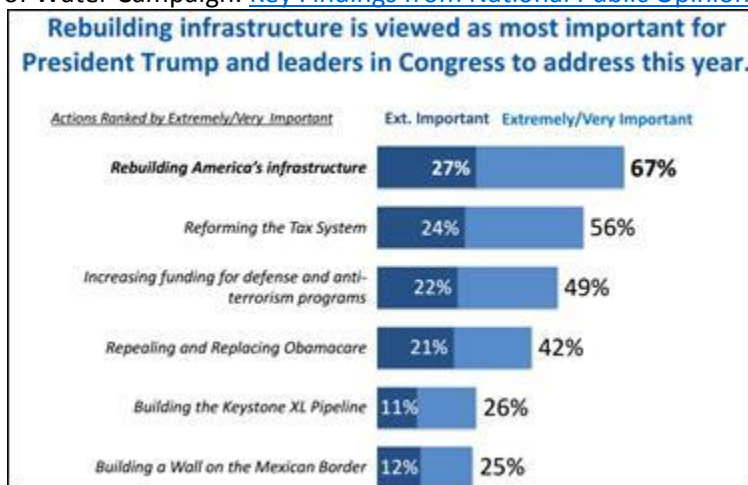
- Record Bee: [Website addresses drinking water crisis](#); [www.SafeWaterForCA.org](http://www.SafeWaterForCA.org) shows out of compliance systems:



- MinnPost: [EPA's reversal on Bristol Bay raises risk of destructive mining in Minnesota, too](#); Reuters: [U.S. EPA paves way for stalled copper and gold mine in Alaska](#)

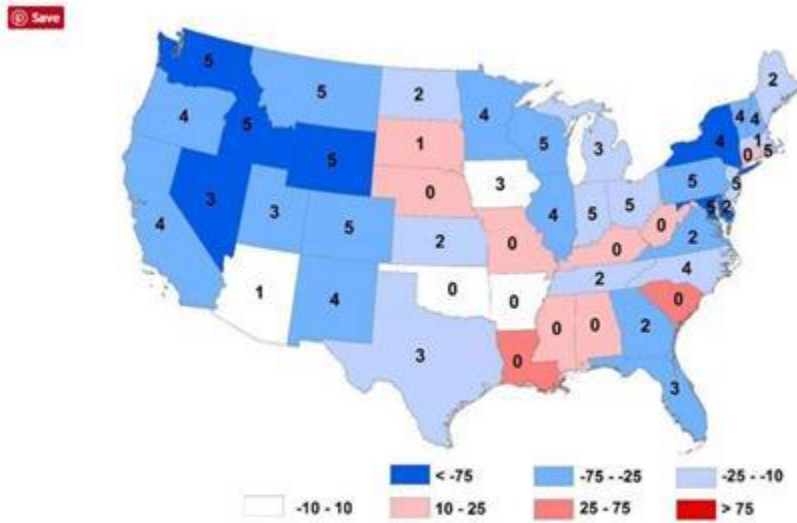
**NATIONAL**

- Water Online: [Value of Water Kicks Off Infrastructure Week With New Poll Results And Events Across The Country](#); Value of Water Campaign: [Key Findings from National Public Opinion Poll May 2017](#)



- Sightline Institute: [Stormwater Management: Lessons from our Forests](#); a new [report](#) recommends biomimicry-inspired design elements for cities to wrangle their rainfall

- Public Works: [60% of Americans Don't Read Local Water Quality Reports](#)
- Phys.org: [Water efficiency in rural areas is getting worse, even as it improves in urban centers](#)



This map shows spatio-temporal patterns of water-use efficiency (per-capita consumption) across the continental United States. Colors indicate the change in per-capita consumption, in gallons per day per person, computed as the difference between 2010 and 1985 estimates. The numbers shown in each state indicate the number of 5-year periods each state reduced its per-capita withdrawals from 1985 to 2010. Credit: Sankar Anumugam

- Circle of Blue: [Price of Water 2017: Four Percent Increase in 30 Large U.S. Cities](#)
- Strib: [EPA sued a second time over Lake Erie's toxic algae problem](#)
- The Washington Post: [EPA asked the public which regulations to gut — and got an earful about leaving them alone](#); MPR: [Public to EPA on cutting regulations: 'No!'](#)
- EPA: [Waters of the United States \(WOTUS\) Rulemaking](#); EPA launched this new website
- Circle of Blue: [Congress Budget Deal Protects Water Programs](#)
- Inforum: [Conservation freeze: Popular program sees change](#); USDA ended enrollment in the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program on 5/3 because the parent Conservation Reserve Program's acreage cap was reached; applications for CCRP are still being made, but new enrollments can't happen until 10/1 (new fiscal year)
- American Farmland Trust: [Measuring Water Quality Outcomes – Six Success Stories](#); some factors leading to success:
  - Rely on local conservation districts
  - Foster farmer leadership to decide how to respond to the pollution problem in their watershed
  - Model environmental outcomes
  - Use geographic targeting tools to identify the fields with the highest potential for pollution and target the right conservation practices to mitigate it
  - Use paired (upstream/downstream and before/after) watershed monitoring programs to detect key water quality parameter improvements having credible conservation practice attribution

The full report will be released on 5/24/17; a webinar explaining the report will be held on 5/24 (see upcoming events)

- Wallace Farmer: [Putting nutrient loss reduction practices to work](#); download the free [Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll 2016 Summary Report](#) from Iowa State University
- Phys.org: [Public divides over environmental regulation and energy policy](#)
- ColorLines: [U.S. Bank Pulls Funds from All Oil and Gas Pipeline Construction](#)



## GLOBAL

- The Star: [Sewage plant technology hailed as most advanced in Canada](#)
- Strib: [Scientists find hundreds of tons of plastic floating in Arctic Ocean](#)

## MEETINGS

### CWC

At this month's Clean Water Council meeting, members heard two of the presentations given to the LWC at their April meeting: an update of activities in the N & E Metro Lake area by DNR staff and an explanation of USGS's recent research findings for this same area. They also heard a summary of the Freshwater Society's most recent groundwater report – stretching supplies. A procedural presentation reviewing MN's open meeting laws was given by Dept of Administration staff.

Finally, EQB staff gave on an update on plans for the Governor's 25 by 25 initiative. More details for the 10 town halls will be shared in June, but they plan to use the "world café" meeting format so very small group discussions can take place. They are also exploring technology options to expeditiously share the small group input. EQB is already seeing many inquiries from people that might be interested in hosting a local community water meeting. CWC members will receive training in how to host a local community water meeting at their June meeting. EQB staff explained that the selected locations for the town hall meetings balanced population centers with locations of issue areas. Although the Governor is hoping this effort will identify 2018 legislative initiatives, other objectives are for the regional groups to take ownership of community-based actions and for individual participants to commit to actions they can take to accelerate the pace of water quality improvements.

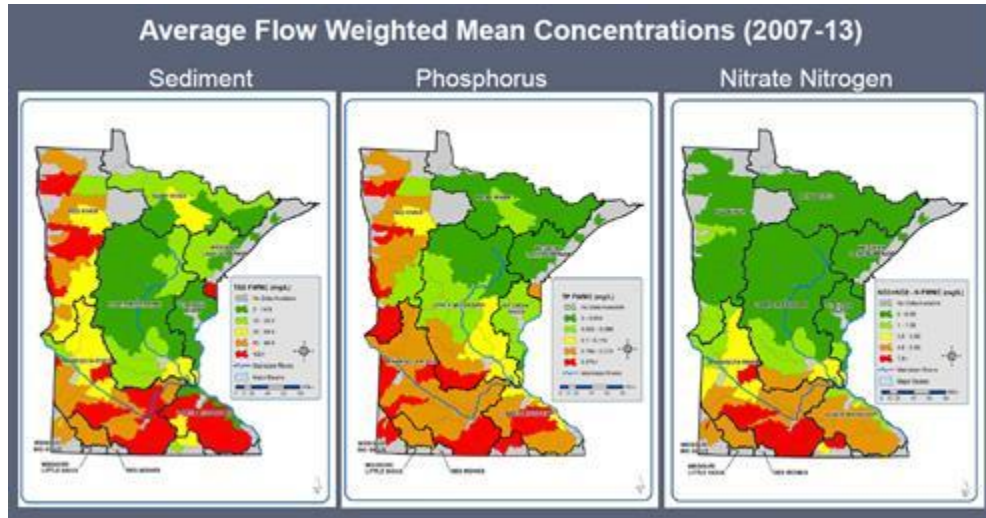
### 8<sup>th</sup> MN RIVER CONGRESS

Thanks to Kim Musser, Mankato State University Water Resources Center Director, for reporting out on the 8<sup>th</sup> MN River Congress held Th night in Redwood Falls. Attendees learned about water issues and successes in the MN River watershed: the Governor's initiative to improve water quality 25% by 2025; the history of progress in the MN River Basin; water quality conditions, pollutant sources, and delivery dynamics in the Basin, progress of the MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program; findings from the Collaboration for Sediment Source Reduction project, actions by the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance, and the history and future of the Continuous Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in the Basin.

Kim Musser set the stage for the evening's presentations by describing the breadth of economic and recreational opportunities provided in the MN River watershed, as well as the pollution challenges. The beginnings of cooperative water quality improvement efforts in the Basin started with Governor Arne Carlson's 1992 goal of improving the quality of the MN River in 10 years. His interest generated a MN River Basin Assessment Report in 1994, along with a plan to restore the MN River. Kim highlighted accomplishments made by several committed watershed groups within the basin: the Chippewa River 10% project, the Freeborn Co soil health team, the Le Sueur River Watershed Network, and the Beaver Creek project in the Hawk Creek Watershed. Other success stories included a 35% reduction in phosphorous discharges by wastewater treatment plants in the Basin by 2010 and the enrollment of over 100,000 acres into permanent easements through the CREP program.

Patrick Baskfield, MPCA hydrologist, explained the Agency's Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network, which tracks the loading of sediment, phosphorus and nitrogen throughout the state. (Pollutant loads are essentially the product of water discharge and the concentration of a pollutant in the water. To learn concentrations, samples must be collected in the field and analyzed in a laboratory. To learn discharge, the flow data is obtained from stream gages.) Because of the availability of Clean Water Funding, Minnesota has a robust watershed pollutant monitoring network that is the envy of other states. The collected data is used to support the development of Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies, identify pollutant sources,

make statewide water quality comparisons, and assess trends. Despite being only 7% of the drainage area, the Greater Blue Earth River Basin contributes disproportionately large amounts of total suspended solids (55%), phosphorus (20%), and nitrate-nitrogen (30%), as a percentage of the load that reaches lock and dam #3 on the Mississippi River. Most pollutant transport happens from March through June and loads are often linked to only a few storm events.



Another highlight of the evening was hearing from two farmers who shared their passion for economically viable agriculture that improves soil health and protects the environment. Grant Breitzkreutz, who operates a cow-calf operation on Stony Creek Farm near Redwood Falls, explained how he converted his operation to no-till, cover crops and pasture. He believes that healthier soils make cleaner water and has been motivated by the Sustainable Farming Association's 5 soil health principles (see graphic, below). A farmer-member of the Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative explained their 30% goal of having 36,000 acres of cover crops across 120,000 acres in order to reduce phosphorous loss. With time, farmers learned that fields with cover crops were more profitable; fields seeding with oats (at \$4/acre) were seeing profits of \$50/acre. After 9 years, they far exceeded their 30% goal and have 100,000 acres (83%) in cover crops. Read more at Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative: [Protecting Waterways](#).



## REPORTS

### STATE OF MN WATER

- DNR: MN Stream Flow Report [5/14/17](#); low flows in the westernmost bump correspond with abnormally dry areas on the Drought Monitor, below
- National Drought Mitigation Center: [5/16/17 MN Drought Monitor](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 22-25: **Central States Water Environment Association**; 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, InterContinental Riverfront Hotel, St Paul; links to agenda and registration info [here](#)
- May 24: American Farmland Trust and World Resources Institute **Water Quality Targeting Success Stories webinar**; 12:30PM – 2:00PM **EST**; for more info and the registration link, go [here](#)
- June 8: **Open House on the Minnesota River Valley Recreation and Conservation Master Plan**; Redwood Falls Public Library community room; 4:30 to 7:30 pm
- **June 15: LWC Meeting, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm; Rm 5 State Office Building**; more details to come [here](#)
- June 21-23: **MN Association of Watershed Districts Summer Field tour**; details [here](#)
- July 31: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Rochester, details to come [here](#)
- Aug 1-3: **Farmfest**; more information [here](#)
- Aug 7-9: **WaterWorks! Drinking Water Institute for Educators**; Lakeville; details [here](#)
- Aug 16: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Marshall, details to come [here](#)
- Aug 17: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Mankato, details to come [here](#)
- Aug 22: MN Technical Assistance Program Intern Symposium; U of MN McNamara Alumni Center; more info [here](#)
- Sept 5: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Crookston, details to come [here](#)
- Sept 6: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, St Cloud, details to come [here](#)
- Sept 12: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Ely, details to come [here](#)
- Sept 13: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Bemidji, details to come [here](#)
- Sept 19-20: **Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting**; Duluth Entertainment Convention Center; more details to come
- Sept 26: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Minneapolis, details to come [here](#)
- Oct 4: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Burnsville, details to come [here](#)
- Oct 5: **“25 by 25” Water Quality Town Hall**, evening, Maplewood, details to come [here](#)
- Nov 1-3: **BWSR Academy** Cragun’s Conference Center; Brainerd; registration to come in August