

## **What's up with the One Watershed One Plans (1W1P)**

Over the past several years you may have heard about how local government partners including Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), Counties, and Watershed Districts have been working together to develop Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans commonly referred to as One Watershed One Plans. Through this process, plans drafted identified priority water resource concerns and focus areas for each watershed. These watershed plans set 10-year goals that if accomplished will help to improve and/or protect our local water resources. Currently, most of Minnesota's watersheds now have approved plans, and the last few have started the planning process. You can find out more about that here <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/one-watershed-one-plan>.

So, what happens once the plans are approved and adopted? After formally adopting the plans, the local government partners mentioned earlier use them to help focus their staff and financial resources on those things that were identified as priority concerns and/or focus areas. For instance, the Toad River was identified as a focus area in the Otter Tail River Watershed Plan because of a known E. coli impairment in segments of that river. The East Otter Tail (EOT) & Becker SWCDs are currently promoting their various conservation programs to landowners in that subwatershed to encourage them to adopt conservation practices that help prevent E. coli from getting into the stream. The EOT and Becker SWCDs recently mailed out a postcard to all landowners in that focus area letting them know they may be eligible for cost-share assistance for project implemented on their properties. By doing this the SWCDs are focusing their resources on a known problem identified as a priority in the plan.

Unfortunately, not everything can be a priority. Keep in mind that the local government partners mentioned have limited resources. They have a limited number of staff and funding available to offer financial incentives or cost-share to landowners willing to implement conservation projects. They have other programs that they remain responsible for implementing and there are landowners that are not if the focus areas of the plans that would also like to implement conservation practices on their properties. The local partners are doing their best to prioritize their work to help accomplish the goals in the plans and balance that with their other responsibilities and requests for assistance from landowners not in priority areas of these One Watershed One Plans.

It helps greatly that the Minnesota State Legislature has committed to providing funding from the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment to help implement each of these plans. The local government partners are doing their best to use this funding source to get conservation projects implemented that help to improve or protect our water resources.

If you want to find out what is in each of our local plans, you can go to the EOT SWCD website here: <https://eotswcd.org/one/>.

If you are interested in adopting conservation practices on your property, we encourage you to contact your local Soil & Water Conservation District. They will help you or connect you with someone else who can.