



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting
Wednesday, July 16, 2025

Agenda Item

Item 4. A. – LMRWD 2025 Workplan – second quarter report

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

The 2nd quarter 2025 report on the status of projects listed in the 2025 LMRWD Workplan has been prepared by the team at Young Environmental Consulting Group. Della Young will be on hand at the Board meeting to answer any questions the Board may have.

Attachments

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District – Projects and Programs Quarter 2 Progress Report

Recommended Action

No action recommended

Technical Memorandum

To: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Will Lytle, PhD, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD)

From: Della Schall Young, CTF, CPESC, PMP, Principal Scientist
Jennifer Mocol-Johnson, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager

Date: July 10, 2025

Re: Lower Minnesota River Watershed District—Projects and Programs Quarter 2 Progress Report

This report presents the second-quarter status updates of LMRWD projects and programs that Young Environmental Consulting Group, LLC (Young Environmental), has completed to date in 2025. This report includes performance metrics or key performance indicators, which show the effectiveness of programs and the progress of projects against budget and timeline.

PROGRAMS

Individual Project Permit Program

The District continues to review permit applications for projects within cities that do not maintain their own local controls under an approved Municipal LGU Permit, along with MnDOT projects and LGUs that have opted to delegate permitting to the District. As of Q2, the LMRWD managed 37 open permits and issued two new permits.

Annual inspections are required for all active and construction-complete sites. These inspections confirm vegetation establishment, removal of temporary BMPs, and proper operation of permanent stormwater BMPs. For projects under Rule B (Erosion and Sediment Control), Rule C (Floodplain and Drainage Alteration), Rule D (Stormwater Management), or Rule F (Steep Slopes), inspections include as-built reviews against approved plans.

- Eight (8) inspections (approximately 22%) were completed by the end of Q2.
- Inspection frequency is based on site conditions and compliance history. Findings are documented with permittees, with a summary memo planned upon completion of the annual inspection cycle.

Performance metric and assessment

Reviews are on track to meet statutory time frames. The inspection program is progressing toward full annual coverage. Young Environmental's updated expense tracking system, implemented October 1, 2024, continues to provide enhanced transparency by billing general engineering, private permit reviews, and public permit reviews separately.

Municipal LGU Permits and Coordination

The Municipal LGU Permit Program allows cities to administer permitting under local ordinances

consistent with LMRWD rules, with permits valid for five years. Savage is updating its ordinances and plans to submit revised materials.

The current municipal audit cycle began in December 2024. An initial meeting in February included Carver and Burnsville. Carver had no relevant projects in 2024 and exited the audit process. Audit inspections in Burnsville occurred on May 28, and a summary memo is underway. The MAC audit is scheduled for Q3.

Performance metric and assessment

- 90% of LGUs either maintain an approved permit or delegate permitting to the District, exceeding the 80% target.
- 50% of planned audits are complete, with remaining audits on track for Q3 completion.

Water Resources Restoration Fund

The WRRF provides cost-share grants up to \$100,000 annually, funding up to 25% of total project costs. In 2025, grants were awarded to Eden Prairie's Low Salt City Center project and Shakopee's Downtown Stormwater BMP.

In Q2, Eden Prairie submitted substantial completion invoices (April 17), and a site inspection occurred May 29. A recommendation memo is in the July Board packet. Additional project site reviews and final reimbursement processes are scheduled for early Q3.

Performance metric and assessment

- Participation: Two LGUs applied (approximately 15% of eligible entities).
- Budget: 85% of administrative funds utilized, with roughly 87% of administrative tasks completed.

Education and Outreach Program

Q2 efforts advanced the District's outreach and engagement strategy. Staff completed and published the 2024 Annual Report and the Listening Session Report, providing transparent summaries of District activities and public input.

The Citizen Advisory Committee met monthly, hosted two educational site tours, and welcomed two new members, continuing efforts to build diverse representation. Educator mini-grants were awarded to support hands-on classroom water resource activities. Preparations began for the Minnesota River Boat Tour scheduled in August, with event logistics, partner coordination, and targeted outreach to community leaders initiated in Q2.

Additional work included routine updates to the District's website and social media platforms, which will be expanded into larger campaigns in Q3 to meet the work-plan target of at least four annual campaigns. Staff also began coordination with Tunheim to implement a refreshed PR and communications approach, supporting consistent messaging and broader public visibility.

Performance metric and assessment

- Budget: \$31,777 spent (38%), consistent with planned spending tied to seasonal event preparation.
- Schedule: 38% of activities completed, with all program elements on track to meet annual outreach and engagement benchmarks.

Fen Stewardship Program

Drain tile mapping was completed for Gun Club, Nicols, Seminary, and Savage fens in Q2, with GIS data and summary memos finalized in June. Coordination with MnDNR continued through two meetings, ensuring data and management plans align with state fen protection priorities.

The invasive species management effort moved forward with an RFI in April, contract award to MNL in May, and site access coordination in June. Field mapping will occur in July and August, with draft management plans to follow.

Performance metric and assessment

- Budget utilization: \$33,992 (40%), reflecting substantial progress on early work-plan tasks.
- Overall schedule: Ahead of initial targets, with critical mapping and planning steps progressing into Q3.

Gully Restoration Feasibility Studies

Q2 field work prioritized reassessment of gullies previously deemed inaccessible. Nine of 11 sites were evaluated and incorporated into the updated inventory. A summary memo was completed in early Q3. Feasibility study development and final design work for SHK16 are planned for later in 2025.

Performance metric and assessment

Project is approximately 40% complete versus the Q2 target of 50%, with no anticipated schedule risks. Budget utilization stands at 52%.

Sustainable Lake Management Plans

Q2 work focused on Quarry Lake, after determining that Brickyard and Courthouse Lakes did not require surveys. Shoreline assessments and field reconnaissance were completed, with bathymetric surveys scheduled for July and reporting anticipated in early Q3.

Performance metric and assessment

Project is approximately 80% complete, with only 22% of the budget expended, indicating strong cost efficiency and no concern regarding timeline or financial performance.

Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan—Land and Natural Resources Inventory

Draft sections on climatology, open space, habitat, and rare features were completed in Q2. Remaining sections covering water quality, land use, pollutant sources, and groundwater will be finalized by August.

Performance metric and assessment

Approximately 26% or \$7,600 of the allocated budget has been used. The inventory remains on schedule, with full draft completion expected in Q3.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Area 3 Bluff Stabilization

Barr Engineering completed the 90% design documents in Q2. The project triggers Rule B (Erosion and Sediment Control) and Rule C (Floodplain and Drainage Alteration) under LMRWD rules. A request for an extension of the existing MnDNR Public Waters Permit was submitted. Additional

required permits include a City of Eden Prairie Land Alteration/Grading Permit, a Right-of-Way and Utility Permit, an updated MnDNR NHIS review, and confirmation under the USACE Section 404 General Permit. Final plans are expected by August; bidding in September; award in October; and construction in winter 2025–2026, with final site restoration in spring 2026.

Performance metric and assessment

- Schedule: Project remains on target, with design milestones achieved.
- Budget: Work is progressing within approved allocations, and permitting coordination is proactively managing schedule risk.

Floodplain Model

Regulatory comments were resolved in Q2. Calibration is delayed pending additional high-water datasets, with targeted outreach underway to local agencies to secure required data.

Performance metric and assessment

Calibration work is behind initial targets, but active coordination is expected to mitigate long-term schedule impacts.

Spring Creek Stabilization (Sites 1 and 2)

This project addressed erosion that is threatening structures along Spring Creek. ISG completed plans and led bidding in fall 2024, with Sunram Construction selected. Construction began in November 2024 and included mass grading, soil lifts, coir logs, riprap, and dormant seeding. Live stakes, shrubs, and perennials were installed in April and May 2025.

- The project reached substantial completion on May 21, 2025.
- As-built documentation and final acceptance were issued in June.
- Final site walks ensured coir log stabilization and sediment log removals through early July.

Vegetation continues to mature toward the 70% final cover target. The contractor holds responsibility for a three-month plant establishment period, followed by a one-year performance bond and an additional three-year warranty bond. Young Environmental recommends final payment and proceeding with the compliance certification to close out the USACE General Permit.

Performance metric and assessment

Project completed under budget (\$92,433 vs. \$107,036 estimate) and on schedule, with maintenance and warranty protections in place to secure long-term stability.

Vernon Avenue Improvements

Construction on Vernon Avenue in Savage, has reached substantial completion in early July. All shouldering, grading, and restoration were finished, with minor punch-list items being addressed by GMH under City oversight.

Performance metric and assessment

Project achieved substantial completion on time and within budget, with no outstanding concerns.