



## Section 319 and Clean Water Partnership Projects or Final Progress Report for TMDL/WRAPS Development and TMDL/WRAPS Implementation Projects

Doc Type: Reporting/Final Report

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) provides grants to organizations to help fulfill the agency's mission. Each grant project is required to complete a final report. Information from this grant report will be used to illustrate progress toward meeting the MPCA's goals and missions and will be shared with interested parties, targeted audiences, and legislators.

More information about preparing a final project report for a Section 319 grant can be found in the [Section 319 Final Project Reports Workshop](#) on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Polluted Runoff: Nonpoint Source Pollution website at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps>. This notebook describes the purpose of Section 319 final reports, the information that should be included in the report, examples of especially effective elements from 319 reports, and ways to expand the final report to be used for outreach and education, building partnerships, and many other uses.

**Instructions:** This grant report must be submitted **no later than 30 days after the end of the grant contract**. It must include results, in the form of data and information, that best demonstrate achievement of project goals and objectives.

Please follow the attached report format, referring back to the work plan and budget and any subsequent amendments to your grant agreement, contract, or work order. When completed, send an electronic copy of the completed report to your MPCA project manager for review.

### Grant project summary

Project title: Itasca SWCD WRAPS Support: Big Fork, Little Fork, & St. Louis River Watersheds

Organization (Grantee): Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District

Project start date: 9/15/2013 Project end date: 9/30/2015 Report submittal date: 10/27/2015

Grantee contact name: Kimberly Yankowiak (Slanga) [Previously Jim Gustafson] Title: Water Resources Specialist

Address: 1889 E. Highway 2

City: Grand Rapids State: MN Zip: 55744

Phone number: 218-326-0017 Fax: N/A Email: Kim.yankowiak@itascaswcd.org

Basin (Red, Minnesota, St. Croix, etc.) /Watershed & 8 digit HUC:: Lake Superior Basin & Rainy River Basin; Big Fork River Watershed (HUC 8 - 09030006), Little Fork River Watershed (HUC 8 - 09030005), St. Louis River Watershed (HUC 8 - 04010201) County: Itasca County

**Project type** (check one):

- Clean Water Partnership
- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)/Watershed Restoration or Protection Strategy (WRAPS) Development
- 319 Implementation
- 319 Demonstration, Education, Research
- TMDL/WRAPS Implementation

### Grant funding

Final grant amount: \$69,980.00 Final total project costs: \$40,632.99

Matching funds: Final cash: \$0 Final in-kind: \$0 Final Loan: \$0

MPCA project manager: Michael J. Kennedy

## For TMDL/WRAPS development or TMDL/WRAPS implementation projects only

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Impaired reach name(s): N/A

AUID or DNR Lake ID(s): N/A

Listed pollutant(s): N/A

303(d) List scheduled start date: N/A Scheduled completion date: N/A

AUID = Assessment Unit ID

DNR = Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

### Executive summary of project (300 words or less)

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The purpose of this project is for ICSWCD to participate in the Watershed Restoration and Protection (WRAPS) process and lead civic engagement activities in three major watersheds: Big Fork, Littlefork, and St. Louis River watersheds. This work is part of the MPCA's Strategy WRAPS efforts.

Funding for support to local governments and partners was a stated goal of the Clean Water Legacy Act (Chapter 114D.10 Subd.2.): The legislature finds that: (2) achieving the state's water quality goals will require long-term commitment and cooperation by all state and local agencies. Chapter 114D.20, Subdivisions 1-3 describe the cooperation and coordination among agencies and the goals, policies and implementation policies. To that end, the MPCA is building the capacity of ISWCD to be engaged and provide support in the WRAPS development process.

SWCDs are in a unique position to coordinate watershed based projects for improving or maintaining water quality, and work locally with private landowners. The local SWCD offices are the bridge between local landowners and state, Federal, and tribal resource managers.

Staffing for project work is a big challenge for the county based soil and water conservation districts. Attracting quality candidates for new project positions and keeping them through funding cycles is sometimes difficult. However, building this capacity at the local level is essential to achieving shared water quality goals in a sustainable way. With more phases of the watershed process to come, including future Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) work in lakes and streams in Itasca County, and more waters with the potential to be listed as impaired, the ISWCD is in a unique position to work cooperatively with local citizen groups, tribal, state and federal agencies to coordinate watershed based projects for improving and or maintaining water quality. The ICSWCD has worked cooperatively with Koochiching County Soil and Water Conservation District, the North St. Louis County Soil and Water Conservation District, and other entities to engage stakeholders and citizens in an effort to address water quality concerns in these three watersheds. MPCA staff also assisted in the development of consistent outcomes in the three watersheds.

### Goals (Three Primary goals for the project):

- Develop, implement, and evaluate the impacts of co-developed civic engagement outcomes for the St. Louis River, Big Fork River, and Littlefork River watersheds.
- Create a citizen understanding of the WRAPS process and the role citizen stakeholders can play in attaining water quality restoration and protection, and provide cooperative discussions working towards accomplishing restoration and protection priorities for high quality waters.
- Ensure that all technical and planning documents have input by SWCD staff to support the content and use of the documents in follow-up restoration and protection activities in these watersheds.

### Project highlights (one paragraph)

**Big Fork River Watershed:** Two Kick-off meetings were held in mid-September of 2014 in Marcell and Big Falls to introduce the community to the WRAPS process (these were attended by Noel Griese and/or Jim Gustafson of Itasca SWCD). A Data Assessment /TMDL community conversation was also held in Marcell on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015 to report some of the findings for potential impairments in the watershed, and RESPEC presented information on modeling derived conclusions. More meetings are scheduled in early 2016 to continue addressing the TMDL and WRAPS processes (this meeting was facilitated by Kim Yankowiak (Slanga) and Terry Schaedig of Itasca SWCD). (Cumulative attendance estimates between 37 and 54 people)

**Little Fork River Watershed:** Two Kick-off meetings were held in September of 2013, one in Cook, and one in Little Fork. A community event called Coffee with Commissioners+was held at the Carpenter Town Hall on April 23<sup>rd</sup> of 2014, which yielded a large turn-out, and some good discussion about the WRAPS process (all 2014 meetings were attended and facilitated by Jim Gustafson and/or Noel Griese of Itasca SWCD). Four meetings were held in 2015 regarding the health of the Little Fork River Watershed, and reported the Data Assessment Findings and TMDL listings as well as the next steps in the WRAPS Process for trying to find project areas (attended and facilitated by Kim Yankowiak (Slanga) as well as Andy Arens and Terry Schaedig of the Itasca SWCD). Assessment/TMDL meetings were held in Mid-January 2015 in Little Fork and Cook. Two WRAPS meetings were

held in mid-March in Littlefork and Side Lake, which had separate sections for Resource Professionals from agencies and local industries involved in Natural Resources to form collaboration or exchange information, and later a replicated meeting for the General Public to learn and exchange information. (Cumulative attendance estimates between 112 and 146 people)

**St. Louis River Watershed:** One Core-Team Meeting discussing the Data Assessment and Results was held in Duluth on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015, attended by Kim Yankowiak (Slanga). (Approximately 12 people in attendance)

**Itasca County Fair:** Display board with descriptions and maps of each of Itasca County's Watersheds, explaining the MPCA's 10-year WRAPS cycles, and what stage each watershed is currently in. Citizen Lake Monitoring Program information was also presented to the public at this week-long event. Kim Yankowiak and other Itasca SWCD staff rotated booth attendance and public outreach. (Estimated attendance for 2014 & 2015 was 45,000 people/year)

**Itasca Coalition of Lake Association Meetings:** Kim Yankowiak discussed the various aspects of the WRAPS process, and current status of each watershed, including information on up-coming Community Conversations and opportunities to be involved. (Approximately 30 members, and 3 meetings in 2015)

**Itasca Water Plan Implementation Committee Meetings:** Kim Yankowiak discussed the various aspects of the WRAPS process, and current status of each watershed, including information on up-coming Community Conversations and opportunities to be involved. (Approximately 13 members, and 3 meetings in 2015)

## Results (one paragraph)

Many UMN- Extension` tools and methods for civic engagement were used during these community conversations. These tools helped for facilitators to successfully connect with the stakeholders in each watershed, and to have fruitful discussions about resource management. Information that was garnered from the community conversations was applied to WRAPS planning for the Little Fork River Watershed very successfully, and will surely follow in the other watersheds, as the WRAPS process progresses. The communications networks built for each watershed are expected to continue yielding interested and active members of the community to participate in future efforts within each watershed. Many of the stakeholders had an interest in helping to monitor water quality near their homes, and contributing in any way they could, above and beyond attending the community conversations. Some delays have occurred in the WRAPS process for all three watersheds to varying degrees which did alter the expected timelines and activities as were originally planned for this project.

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## Partnerships (Name all partners and indicate relationship to project)

**Koochiching County Soil and Water Conservation District** - Worked cooperatively with Itasca SWCD to engage stakeholders and citizens in an effort to address water quality concerns in the Big Fork and Little Fork River Watersheds Itasca County SWCD provided support to Koochiching SWCD, and took the lead for meetings occurring within the Itasca County portion of the watersheds.

**N. St. Louis County Soil and Water Conservation District** . (When staffed) Worked cooperatively with Itasca and Koochiching County Soil and Water Conservation Districts to engage stakeholders and citizens in an effort to address water quality concerns in the Little Fork River Watershed. Due to staff absence and turn-over, Koochiching SWCD took over much of the duties of N. St. Louis SWCD throughout the active portion of this grant.

**Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc. (E.O.R.)** – Worked as the consultant hired to write the TMDL and WRAPS documents, as well as present technical information at meetings held for the Little Fork River Watershed.

**RESPEC, Inc.** – Currently Working as the consultant hired to write the TMDL and WRAPS documents, as well as present technical information at meetings held for the Big Fork River Watershed.

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## Executive Summary of Issues

### Problem

- **Little Fork River Watershed:** Results from the Monitoring and Assessment Report (2011) show that general water quality conditions are good. This watershed is characterized by remote, sparsely populated land, dominated by forests and shrub-land. The land cover is 46.5% wetland, 45.8% forested, and the remaining 7.7% is upland non-forest. Approximately 52% of the land in the Little Fork River watershed are Publicly managed, and another 44% is privately held property and corporate land holdings. The remaining 4% of land in this watershed belongs to the Nett Lake Reservation of Tribal lands. The general water quality problem is defined as excessive sediment and nutrient loading, primarily the result of channel instability and in-channel erosion. The channel instability is primarily the result of historical logging practices, along with fine sediments resultant of the geologic setting. The impairments for TSS and Turbidity are mostly confined to sections of the Little Fork River mainstem and some of its tributaries. Mercury impairments were also widespread for the lakes and stream segments within this watershed, with 12 of 14 lakes sampled in this watershed qualifying for inclusion in the

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## Minnesota Statewide Mercury TMDL

There have been TMDL and WRAPS documents completed by E.O.R. in the Little Fork River Watershed as of March 2015. The local partners are currently in the project implementation phase.

- **Big Fork River Watershed:** Results from the Monitoring and Assessment Report (2013) show that water quality throughout the watershed was generally excellent. Much of the watershed is undeveloped land, and only 25% is privately held. The impairments found are of both natural and anthropogenic causes. Of 120 lakes assessed, only 6 including; Round (2008), Island (2010), Shallow Pond (2014), Little Spring (2014), Jessie (2004), & Bowstring (2014) did not meet the standards for Aquatic Recreation primarily due to excess nutrients. Generally, these are shallow, polymictic lakes with a large fetch. Shoreland development only exacerbates the natural pressures. In addition to Nutrients, 12 lakes (and the Big Fork River Mainstem) were found to have high levels of Mercury in fish tissues, which is a widespread problem due to the nature of atmospheric deposition. As for streams, 33 of 41 segments assessed fully support aquatic life. The streams that were non-supporting were the result of channelized reaches, and low levels of dissolved oxygen available to organisms. These streams include; Popple River, Bowstring River, Rice River, Gale Brook, and an Un-named Creek in the headwaters. All were placed into the impairment inventory as of 2014. The low concentrations of Dissolved Oxygen are reflective of fine sediments and watershed inputs from large wetland complexes.

The TMDL is currently being drafted by RESPEC, and will provide more insight as to the problems identified in the Monitoring and Assessment Report.

- **St Louis River Watershed:** Results from the Monitoring and Assessment Report (2013) show that Lake water quality was generally considered good, though 25 lakes did not meet the standards for eutrophication. Primary anthropogenic causes of this include intensive land uses such as domestic wastewater discharges and iron mining. Other potential influences are likely due to shallow lakes draining large wetland complexes. Stream water quality results showed that the St. Louis River Mainstem is in good condition. Most of the impairments are located in the small tributaries throughout the headwaters which are often impacted by ditching and mining. Stream segments with Aquatic Recreation impairments were primarily located in portions of the watershed with intensive land use. High E. coli levels are likely the result of stormwater runoff, altered hydrology, mining impacts, and discharges of domestic wastewater from scattered cities on the iron range. Stream habitat showed issues only in small pockets of the watershed that had been impacted by ditching. Sediment sources within this watershed are primarily attributed to the geologic setting, stream geomorphology, and land use (both current and historic).

A TMDL will need to be completed to determine the sources of these problems as well as the scope of issues identified. Currently, the Monitoring and Assessment Report is the last document produced. Due to the contentious mining issues present in this watershed, the progress of the WRAPS process has been delayed.

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## Body of main report

### Section I – Work plan review

Briefly outline any approved changes from the original work plan, staff, or participating organizations.

Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District staff turnover occurred late in 2014. In October 2014, Noel Griese, the Watershed Specialist for Itasca SWCD vacated his position. Shortly after that in December 2014, Jim Gustafson, Itasca SWCD District Manager vacated his position and move to Itasca County Environmental Services. Kimberly Yankowiak (Slanga until 4/25/15) was hired as the Water Resources Specialist in December 2014, and started work at Itasca SWCD January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015, with no previous experience in Project Management. The two vacated positions were the two most active participants in this grant originally. In March of 2015, a new SWCD District Manager (Terry Schaedig) was hired, though in late September he was let go by the board. Currently, a staff member (Andy Arens) is performing as the interim District Manager.

Concurrently, there was major staffing turn-over at partnering North St. Louis County Soil and Water Conservation District, which left the SWCD largely inoperable and vacant for all of 2014. In February 2015, they hired a half time Administrator, and have since hired a Full-Time Conservationist. As a result, Koochiching SWCD provided extra support for this grant, and greatly helped the efforts in the Little Fork River Watershed as well as the Big Fork River Watershed, as new staff members of both organizations became established.

Please list and give a brief report on each activity/task identified in your work plan (Attachment A of the 319 Grant Agreement, contract, or work order) or most recently approved work plan amendment. For each task, briefly summarize the activities completed and describe any problems, delays, or difficulties that have occurred in completing the project work. Explain how problems were resolved or list any activities that were not completed.

**Objective 1:** Civic engagement planning and implementation for local partners and citizens in the Big Fork, Littlefork, and St. Louis River watersheds

**Task A:** Cooperated and participated in the development, use, and evaluation of the Big Fork River Watershed Civic Engagement Plan. Attended and actively participated in all Civic Engagement Team meetings for Big Fork River watershed. Assisted in the development of desired MPCA Outcomes for civic engagement in Big Fork River watershed. Created and used

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tools to effectively communicate desired WRAPS outcomes for civic engagement in Big Fork River watershed. Created and built an Itasca County trusted communications network to meet the diversity of stakeholder needs present in the Itasca County portion of the Big Fork River watershed. Assessed the diverse demographics of the stakeholders the Itasca County portion of the Big Fork River watershed. Assisted in the design, implementation, and evaluation 3 (+) focused community conversations about the environmental conditions, restoration strategies, and protection strategies for the Big Fork River watershed. Evaluated the civic engagement plan for effectiveness at achieving the desired outcomes, as outlined in the Effectiveness of Civic Engagement Tool used in the Civic Engagement Plan document attached.

**Task B:** Cooperated and participated in the development, use, and evaluation of the Littlefork River watershed civic engagement plan. Attended and actively participated in all Civic Engagement Team meetings for Littlefork River watershed. Assisted in the development of desired MPCA Outcomes for civic engagement in Littlefork River watershed. Created and used tools to effectively communicate WRAPS desired outcomes for civic engagement in the Littlefork River watershed. Assisted in the design, implementation, and evaluation of 10 focused community conversations about the environmental conditions, restoration strategies, and protection strategies for the Littlefork River watershed.

**Task C:** Cooperated and participated in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the St. Louis River watershed civic engagement plan. Attended and actively participated in all Civic Engagement Team meetings for St. Louis River watershed. Assisted in the development of desired Outcomes for civic engagement in St. Louis River watershed. Created and used tools to effectively communicate WRAPS desired outcomes for civic engagement in Itasca County's portions of the St. Louis River watershed. Assisted in the design, implementation, and evaluation of 1 focused community conversation about the environmental conditions, restoration strategies, and protection strategies for the St. Louis River watershed.

**Responsible Party:** Itasca County SWCD District Manager(s) and Water Resources Specialist(s), supported by other SWCD staff.

**Objective 2:** Reviewed and commented on documents, technical reports, draft planning documents, TMDL documents and plans, and other WRAPS products for the Big Fork, Littlefork, and St. Louis River watersheds

**Task A:** Reviewed and commented on Big Fork River watershed monitoring and assessment reports, stressor ID reports, modeling reports, and the preliminary TMDL technical and planning document. Attended and actively participated in all Big Fork River Watershed Core Team meetings as scheduled either in person, or via WebEx, phone, & email.

**Task B:** Reviewed and commented on Littlefork River watershed stressor ID reports, modeling reports, and the TMDL and WRAPS technical and planning documents. Attended and actively participated in all Littlefork River Watershed Core Team meetings as scheduled either in person, or via WebEx, phone, & email.

**Task C:** Reviewed and commented on St. Louis River watershed stressor ID reports, modeling reports available. As requested, commented on all applicable St. Louis documents related to WRAPS and TMDLs either in person or electronically. Attended and actively participated in all St. Louis River Watershed Core Team meetings as scheduled.

**Responsible Party:** Itasca County SWCD District Manager(s) and Water Resources Specialist(s), supported by other SWCD staff.

## **Section II – Grant results**

*For TMDL/WRAPS Development Projects describe the work products of the contract, such as a written TMDL/WRAPS or technical report, data files, maps, and any other attachments that were produced by the project.*

**Measurements:** Please describe your evaluation plan and its results.

We were overall very pleased by the support and results provided by the communities within these watersheds. Many of the communities are small and widely dispersed, so it was a true testament to the dedication of the citizens who devoted the time to come and participate in the conversations. This was the first ten-year intensive watershed monitoring cycle that has included Civic Engagement for the communities involved. The depth of content provided by the guest speakers allowed the stakeholders some insight into what is happening to protect the natural resources that they live and work in.

Our Evaluation plan consisted mostly of evaluations handed out at each meeting. These evaluations were gathered, and a weighted average statistical analysis was done after most meetings. The return rate varied significantly depending on number of attendees, and willingness amongst participants. At the last Big Fork River Watershed TMDL/Assessment meeting, we had attempted to distribute questionnaires pertaining to local knowledge of significant resources for protection, as well as known areas of environmental degradation, and potential projects to reduce point-source impacts. This approach, however, yielded no immediate feedback. If we could have encouraged better participation, it might have been a very valuable tool.

In general, some of the participation and general turn-out despite press releases, flyers, mailings, email invitations, and even radio-spots was not as great as would have been ideal. The Little Fork River Watershed Coffee with Commissioners held at the Carpenter Town Hall was perhaps the most successful event, with upwards of 65 people in attendance

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throughout the event. The central location of this meeting seemed to gather more people than our efforts to break the watershed into half, and duplicate our efforts in both the Northern area, and Southern area of the watersheds. Though those efforts were vocally appreciated by the attendees. The participation we did have in these rural watersheds, seemed to have a large impact on the local communities, with attendees commending the efforts, and showing interest in future events.

**Products:** Please list, and attach copies of any documents or products that have been produced during the reporting period, including monitoring data (if applicable, including the electronic summary of all data for the EQuIS data base), brochures, articles, special reports, tapes, CDs, etc. Provide relevant project photographs.

**Note about photos:** Photos may be scenes of the water resource in question and/or may illustrate installations, BMPs, or other measures that help show what the project accomplished. **Attached electronic files (e.g., JPGs) are preferred.**

**Note for TMDL/WRAPS development projects and TMDL/WRAPS implementation projects:** All project monitoring data must be approved in the EQuIS data system and all best management practices implementation activities must be inputted into the state eLINK system before the final report will be approved and final project payment will be made.

All data and documents will be submitted on a CD. Documents included for all three watersheds (Big Fork River, Little Fork River, and St. Louis River); Demographics reports on Itasca County, and some breakdowns of demographics for the watersheds, Contact network lists for each watershed, Meeting Evaluations and weighted averages of evaluations, Press releases and Flyers for meetings, Pictures of various meetings, Documents used in Civic Engagement and Technical Guidance documents, as well as some potential and current projects being done for the Watersheds.

In addition to the digital products, Itasca SWCD has had 2 large maps produced of each watershed both with and without the 2014 impairments layer. We will bring these to future meetings and allow stakeholders to place stickers with comments on places they know of issues for restoration, or places they value and would like to see protected.

**Public outreach and education:** If part of your work plan, please evaluate the effectiveness of public participation and education plans for the project. Also include the total numbers from project outreach and education activities, such as number of people reached, educational materials distributed, workshop participants, etc.

- **Long-term results:**

- *Do the results of this project build capacity that can increase the likelihood of long-term outcomes, such as:*
  - *environmental problems identified or understood*
  - *land use changes in the watershed*
  - *recommendations created*
  - *consensus for action created*
  - *increased ability to solve similar problems in the future, etc.?*
  - *if so, how?*

We were pleased with the attendance and feedback received during these events. There was an atmosphere of cooperative learning and sharing that mostly took form after the presentations, as one to one discussions between the facilitators, and the public. It was hard to get the attendees to put any of their ideas in writing as a solid take-away reminder of what was discussed, but there was exchange of ideas to help form connections and plan for the future. As a result, both the facilitators and the stakeholders became more aware of the problems occurring in each watershed, how land-use impacts water quality, as well as what we might be able to do for the future of water quality in each watershed.

Environmental problems and land use changes in the watersheds were identified by local participants, as well as other natural resource agencies. One example includes the potential selling of privately held industrial timberlands to private landowners if regulations and taxes on large timber industry continues to tighten profit margins. Another was simply the discussion of what might happen if full build-out potential is reached for shore lands within the Big Fork River Watershed. A primary focus of the Big Fork River Watershed participants continues to be the threats posed by the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), although that was outside the scope of the discussion on the impairments present. In the Little Fork River Watershed, there were many discussions on failing culverts, and the scouring & erosion that is resulting from improper sizing or placement of these structures. In all three watersheds, land management is a primary concern, as far as forest conversions due to pests or climate change, BMPs being under-utilized by loggers, and mining issues.

We did receive a number of recommendations for both restoration and protection, as well as a general consensus for action and interest in further participation. As far as an increased ability to solve problems of a similar scope in the future, Itasca SWCD staff have learned a lot through this experience in how to reach out to the community for local knowledge, priorities, and also partnerships in accomplishing goals for each watershed. This pilot experience should significantly increase our ability to be more effective in our stewardship of land and water resources in combination with our network of partners, agencies, and communities.

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- *Did you form new partnerships or alliances as a result of the project? If so,*
    - *What longer-term impact will this have on the project?*
    - *What future efforts are anticipated as a result of the partnership(s)?*
    - *Describe any activities you are aware of by others that benefited from the results of your project and/or resulted in implementation of similar projects in other locations.*

As a result of these efforts, Itasca SWCD has worked very closely with Koochiching SWCD for the benefit of the Little Fork & Big Fork River Watersheds. Koochiching SWCD staff were very instrumental in guiding new Itasca SWCD staff members through the WRAPS process. The impacts of this new relationship will be that the management of these watersheds will continue to be a partnership effort. There are still more Civic Engagement meetings scheduled for early 2016 for the Big Fork River TMDL, and we will continue our community conversations on the issues facing the Big Fork River Watershed. We will also continue to exchange ideas about project implementation for the two watersheds.

Another alliance formed was between Itasca SWCD and the consulting firms hired to compose the TMDL and WRAPS reports for each watershed (E.O.R. & RESPEC). Building the framework for future associations and cooperative exchanges of knowledge about the watersheds will undoubtedly benefit both parties and the watersheds we are working to protect. RESPEC is also working on another watershed WRAPS (Upper Mississippi River . Headwaters) that Itasca SWCD is associated with, so building a solid foundation for communication will likely benefit other aspects of watershed management within and beyond Itasca County. We may be able to borrow ideas from other watersheds to apply in Little Fork, Big Fork, and St. Louis, such as story maps, or a press release series on water-quality issues.

Stronger connections were also formed with the US Forest Service, MN Department of Natural Resources, County Forestry and Transportation Departments, and private timber industry such as Molpus and Boise. These connections have long-term potential for all future resource management efforts. We may be able to utilize some of the Federal and State data on BMPs and projects currently implemented under other jurisdictions to tie into our WRAPS efforts in the future.

Many existing alliances with the local lake associations and the Big Fork River Board were also strengthened through these community Conversation opportunities. Several members & presidents of lake associations attended meetings and offered assistance with monitoring water or outreach to their other members. Our alliance with the Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations (ICOLA) has been strong through many years of planning, monitoring, and project implementation. They continue to be a conduit for information and potential projects to benefit water quality in our County.

- *Is there a plan to continue the project beyond the end date of the grant agreement or contract? If so, explain.*

Yes. There are still at least two planned Community Conversations for the Big Fork River Watershed in 2016, that Itasca SWCD will be partnering with Koochiching SWCD, the MPCA, and RESPEC to present. Since the impairments are almost exclusively within Itasca County, we have scheduled the meetings to take place in Marcell. Cooperation of Itasca County SWCD will continue in whatever capacity is possible.

- *Describe how you shared the results of your project. List any information or technology transfer and dissemination (newsletters, web sites, training, reports, disseminated project activities, accomplishments, and lessons to the general public). Where and to what audiences have you made presentations?*

Among project partners and core team members, WebEx conference calls were used to plan and communicate ideas effectively for up-coming events. Email file sharing of scanned materials was also used to communicate results of the events amongst the core teams. As for the general public, press releases, flyers, mailings, and radio spots were used to advertise the details of each event. Kim Yankowiak also participated in an on-air radio discussion on the local public radio (91.7 KAXE) about watershed health, and the August 21, 2015 event for the Big Fork River Watershed in Marcell. The MPCA website link was featured several times in presentations, flyers, and hand-outs, as well as links to the local partner SWCDs.

- *What other audiences (media, businesses, other agencies, etc.) would be most interested in the results of this project?*

The public radio station in Grand Rapids, KAXE 91.7, has been a strong supporter of Water Quality messages, and will likely continue to provide media distribution of meeting announcements, and potentially, more in-depth stories on what is happening locally with regards to water quality protection and improvements. Broadcasting area extends from Bemidji area to the Ely area.

Other agencies, such as the US Forest Service and MN DNR have expressed interest in closer cooperation to share data and information on current and future projects occurring within these watersheds.

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- *Please describe any lessons learned during this project that would be valuable for future projects, even if the project didn't succeed as expected. What other recommendations or advice would you make for future activities related to this priority project area?*

Continuing to try different civic engagement tools and methods to engage the stakeholders and different times in the day/seasons will likely help us to find what works best for these rural watersheds with many seasonal households. The hardest part was stimulating attendance to the events. Some were great successes, and some had less than expected participation. We attempted to break people into small groups and do map & question exercises, though this seemed to just prompt many small conversations that were less focused on the questions posed than on general discussion about watershed conditions and projects. We may need to continue to hone our implementation of this method, if we use it in the future. Otherwise, continue to learn more methods and applications of civic engagement tools that might work better with our rural demographic. We may need to use other methods aside from only the Community Conversations, such as; Mailings/Surveys, Local Leader Interviews, Hands-on workshops (rain-garden, water monitoring, etc.) or other online tools like Story Maps.

- *Please provide any feedback or suggestions that you would like to share with the MPCA to improve their grant programs.*

This project was generally well executed, though there were issues with the continuity between former ISWCD staff and the new ISWCD staff. This Civic Engagement concept was new to the incoming staff, and there was much to learn both about this project and broader concepts of project management. The contract was originally geared more towards the District Manager doing most of this work, when the reality after turn-over was that the Technicians were doing nearly all of it. As a result, there was many hours left on the project under District manager, and no time left for the Technicians towards the end of the project. In addition, better communication about how specifically to use the funds available in the other categories, such as printing and materials & Supplies would be helpful to understand how to integrate those funds into the operations. Due to new staff being unclear about how these funds were intended to be managed, they did not get utilized to the extent they might have otherwise.

**Section III – Final Expenditures**

Projects should use the format they used in their work plan for the budget to report on the final expenditures. This should list the tasks or activities outlined in their original (or amended) work plan.

 <b>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency</b> 520 Lafayette Road North St. Paul, MN 55155-4194				<b>Attachment A</b> <b>Project Budget</b> <i>Doc Type: Contract</i>						
<b>Project title:</b> Itasca SWCD WRAPS Support: Big Fork, Littlefork, & St. Louis River Watersheds				SWIFT # 67051						
				CR # 6939						
	<b>1. Personnel</b>			<b>2. Other Expenses</b>				<b>Totals (Extended)</b>	<b>Totals (Extended)</b>	
<b>Project Budget</b>	District Manager	District Manager Expended	Water Plan Technician	Water Plan Technician Expended	Meeting Supplies and Materials	Meeting Supplies and Materials	Printing	Printing		
<b>\$ Rate per Hour/Unit</b>	\$57.00	\$57.00	\$53.00	\$53.00	Budgeted	Expended	Budgeted	Expended		
<b>Objective 1</b>										
<b>Task A</b>										
Sub-task 1	40	40	40	40						
Sub-task 2	20	3								
Sub-task 3	40	33	40	40	\$2,250.00	\$0.00	\$1,750.00	\$220.20		
Sub-task 4			40	40						
Sub-task 5			40	40						
Sub-task 6	100	55.5	60	55						
Sub-task 7	30	15	10	10						
Total Hours Task A	230	146.5	230	225						
Total Task A \$	\$13,110.00	\$8,350.50	\$12,190.00	\$11,925.00	\$2,250.00	\$0.00	\$1,750.00	\$220.20	\$29,300.00	
<b>Task B</b>										
Sub-task 1	40	30	40	40						
Sub-task 2	20	4								
Sub-task 3	40	32.5	30	30	\$1,125.00	\$178.90	\$875.00	\$220.20		
Sub-task 4	60	49	30	30						
Total Hours Task B	160	115.5	100	100						
Total Task B \$	\$9,120.00	\$6,583.50	\$5,300.00	\$5,300.00	\$1,125.00	\$178.90	\$875.00	\$220.20	\$16,420.00	
<b>Task C</b>										
Sub-task 1	40	11	40	40						
Sub-task 2	20	0								
Sub-task 3	40	3	30	17	\$1,125.00	\$0.00	\$875.00	\$220.19		
Sub-task 4	60	0	30	30						
Total Hours Task C	160	14	100	87						
Total Task C \$	\$9,120.00	\$798.00	\$5,300.00	\$4,611.00	\$1,125.00	\$0.00	\$875.00	\$220.19	\$16,420.00	
<b>Total Objective 1 \$</b>	<b>\$31,350.00</b>	<b>\$15,732.00</b>	<b>\$22,790.00</b>	<b>\$21,836.00</b>	<b>\$4,500.00</b>	<b>\$178.90</b>	<b>\$3,500.00</b>	<b>\$660.59</b>	<b>\$62,140.00</b>	
<b>Objective 2</b>										
<b>Task A</b>										
Sub-task 1	15	6.5	15	15						
Sub-task 2	20	0								
Total Task A hours	35	6.5	15	15						
Total Task A \$	\$1,995.00	\$370.50	\$795.00	\$795.00					\$2,790.00	
<b>Task B</b>										
Sub-task 1	15	0	10	10						
Sub-task 2	20	0								
Total Task B hours	35	0	10	10						
Total Task B \$	\$1,995.00	\$0.00	\$530.00	\$530.00					\$2,525.00	
<b>Task C</b>										
Sub-task 1	15	0	10	10						
Sub-task 2	20	0								
Total Task C hours	35	0	10	10						
Total Task C \$	\$1,995.00	\$0.00	\$530.00	\$530.00					\$2,525.00	
<b>Total Objective 2 \$</b>	<b>\$5,985.00</b>	<b>\$370.50</b>	<b>\$1,855.00</b>	<b>\$1,855.00</b>					<b>\$7,840.00</b>	
<b>Total Hrs</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>282.5</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>447</b>					<b>1120</b>	
<b>Total \$</b>	<b>\$37,335.00</b>	<b>\$16,102.50</b>	<b>\$24,645.00</b>	<b>\$23,691.00</b>	<b>\$4,500.00</b>	<b>\$178.90</b>	<b>\$3,500.00</b>	<b>\$660.59</b>	<b>\$69,980.00</b>	
									<b>Total Hours =</b>	<b>1120</b>
									<b>Total FTE =</b>	<b>0.54</b>