



2018 Itasca SWCD Active Programs and Funding Sources

As of 2/16/2018

Watershed / Water Quality Management:

- Comprehensive County Water Plan implementation, via “Implementation Committee” (WPIC) coordination; state BWSR funding, via delegation agreement with the County.
- City of Grand Rapids storm-water treatment and retention pond; west of new Ray’s Sport and Marine site. Mn Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) competitive Clean Water Fund Projects and Practices grant.
- Bigfork River Highway 6 bridge event based water sampling grant – two sites, Craigsville and next crossing south; Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) grant.
- In conjunction with MPCA, via competitive and non-competitive grants, “Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy” (WRAPS) planning for five of six primary Itasca County watersheds. Watersheds include Mississippi River Grand Rapids and Headwaters, Bigfork, Littlefork, and St. Louis. 2018 Little Fork WRAPS contract includes spring through fall monthly sampling of seven lakes.
- BWSR competitive grant to compile data and generate status and management recommendation reports for thirty-four remaining Itasca County lakes with adequate long term data for complete analysis; results recently made available. Reports for initial thirty-eight lakes with adequate data for analysis were completed in 2016; a link to all lake reports is available on the Itasca SWCD website. Funded with competitive BWSR “Accelerated Implementation Grant” (AIG).
- Cities of Coleraine and Grand Rapids storm-water assessment studies; assessment funding via North-central Mn (Area 8) SWCD Joint Powers Board (JPB), to be completed by environmental consultant HR Green. SWCD admin funded by County allocation and City contributions. Study results expected spring 2018.
- Landowner and environmental organization guidance and coordination. Organization examples include individual lake associations, Itasca Coalition of Lake Association (I-COLA), and Itasca Waters (formerly IWLP). Funded via BWSR Water Planning allocation.

Shoreland:

- Dayton Buffer Law Implementation, cost share, and enforcement programs administration. Implementation and cost share funding via BWSR, and state funded “enforcement”, via a delegation agreement with the County.
- Enbridge funded Eco-footprint grant; target watershed survey, sampling, and remediation efforts:



- Lake water quality and priority watershed survey components completed fall 2017.
- Underway and expected to be complete by December 2018: Follow-up remediation efforts via cost share funding and technical assistance offered to landowners, at survey identified high priority improvement locations.
- County wide eligible cost share soil and water saving projects with landowners through annual BWSR cost share funding.
- Co-administer the annual Shoreland Steward Award program, with I-COLA; fully supported via County allocation.
- Formal Mn DNR Adopt-a-River sponsor of the two mile stretch of the Mississippi River down-stream from the Pokegama bridge; fully supported via County funding.

Wetlands:

- Administer the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) in Itasca County, and provide wetland education and management assistance; BWSR funding, via delegation agreement with County.

Aquatic Invasive Species Management (AIS):

- Administer the Prevention, Awareness & Training, and Monitoring & Control component of the County program. We employ a full time AIS Coordinator and AIS Specialist/Monitoring and Control crew leader, and coordinate the employment of approximately twenty-five seasonal staff with an employment service company. Three staff and two supervisors are active members on the County AIS oversight committee. State funding, via delegation agreement with the County.

Precipitation and Ground Water:

- Mn DNR ground-water observation well contract to monitor and report ground water levels of four wells at three sites in Itasca County.
- Administer the Mn DNR rain gauge program in Itasca County. Fully supported by County allocation.

Forestry:

- General landowner assistance upon request; County allocation supported.
- BWSR contract to cost share water quality improvement forestry projects in high priority Tullibee Lake watersheds in Itasca County.

Wildlife and Fisheries:

- Administer BWSR and Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) perpetual conservation easement programs, adjacent high priority wild rice waters, and the Mississippi River in Itasca County. Easements prevent development and ensure sustainable natural resource management. Supplemental County funding used to cover all administration costs.

Agriculture:

- Work with Mn “Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program” (AWQCP) regional coordinator Ryan Clark, to promote the program in Itasca County. Minimal SWCD admin, but funded by County allocation.

Youth Education; fully supported via County funding:

- Present in the annual Itasca Waters Youth Water Summit, and regional Envirothon - a Mn environmental competition for junior and senior high students.
- Presentations upon request to students; typical demonstrations include ground water model/pollution dilution exercises, and our Enviroscape storm-water simulator.

Public outreach, services, and collaboration; staff time supported via County funding:

- Participate in bi-weekly growing season on site reviews of Itasca County Environmental Services Shoreland Alterations permit applications.
- Review of Mn DNR Water permits, and Planning Board/Board of Adjustment application review participant when relevant.
- Annual native tree and plant sale offering small quantities of northern hardy Mn native tree seedlings, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, sedges, seed mixes, and browse prevention products; supplemental funding is needed to cover all costs.
- Free general natural resource conservation project planning assistance offered to Itasca County landowners via phone and office.
- Information provided via brochure display, County Fair, County papers news releases, live on-air and public service announcements on KAXE radio, and Itasca SWCD website.
- Management and maintenance of the Itasca SWCD owned King Lake water control weir.

Fee for Service programs:

- More detailed natural resource conservation project planning at \$45.00/hr rate; most common examples include shoreland mitigation variance condition plans, and surface water sampling and reporting.
- Site visits, at \$85.00 flat rate.
- More involved wetland services, such as replacement/restoration plan, exemption certificate, wetland banking application, wetland delineation, and restoration/replacement order; fees vary, but are based on \$45.00/hour fees, to cover all costs.