



Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

February 4, 2026

Introduction

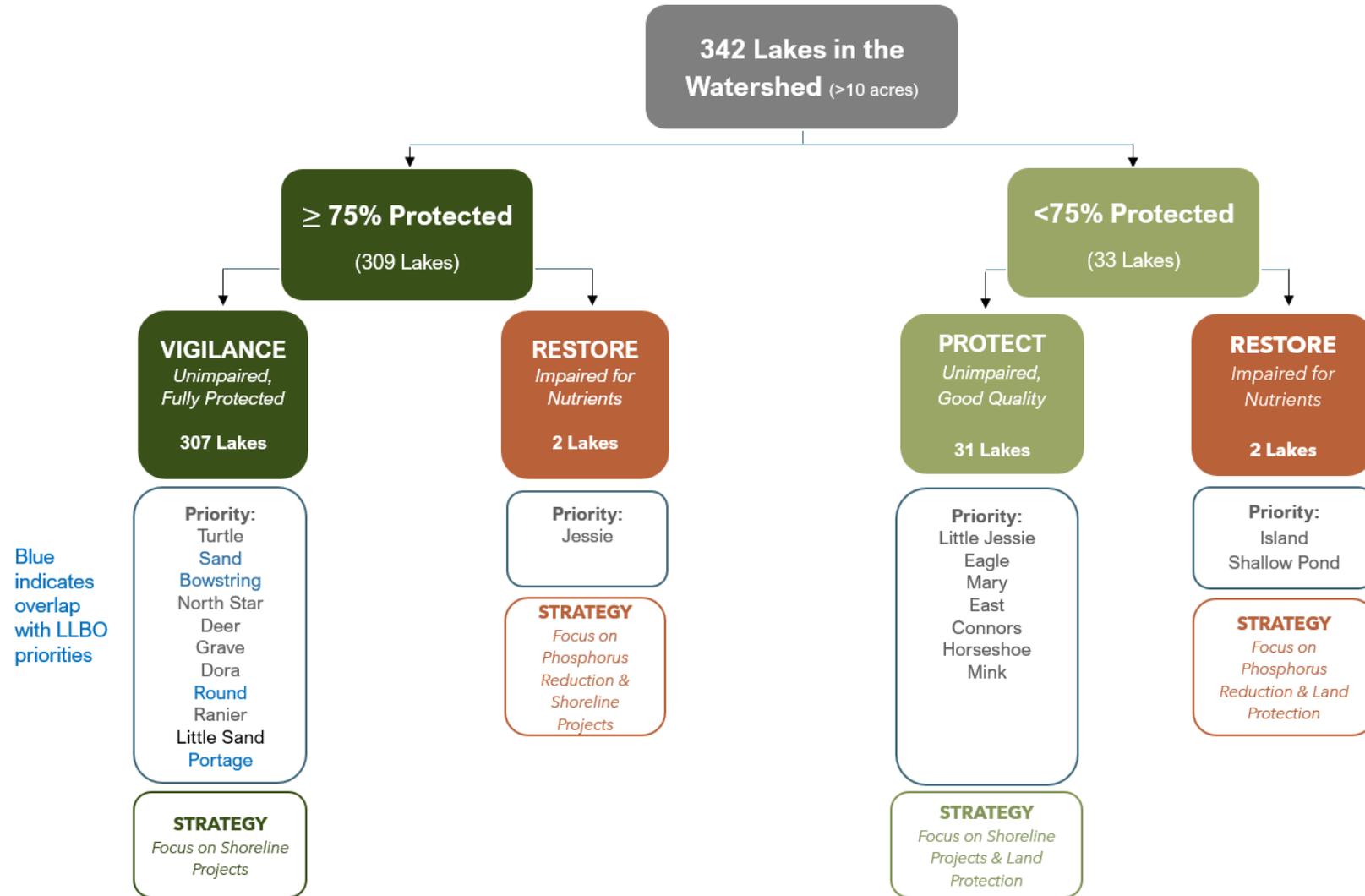
The Advisory Committee met in Marcell to review resource prioritization and draft plan goals, as well as to continue working on crafting a vision statement. The plan timeline is shown below with our current status.



Resource Prioritization

The first topic of the meeting was to discuss resource prioritization in the watershed. Resource prioritization is a process that identifies lakes and streams that can be best targeted to effectively use plan funds to generate the greatest positive impact. These lakes and streams generally have characteristics that make them at greater risk of degrading in water quality or contain important resources, either economically, culturally, or as a habitat. For lakes, lakes with a lower percentage of protected lands (public lands, easements, SFIA, and wetlands) in their sub watershed, as well as impairments or declining water quality trends are considered for prioritization. In the BFRW 309 of the 342 lakes are over >75% protected and fall under the vigilance prioritization category. There are four lakes that are impaired for nutrients. 33 other lakes are less than 75% protected. A focus shoreline projects and land protection around those lakes will be prioritized in the plan.

Lake Prioritization



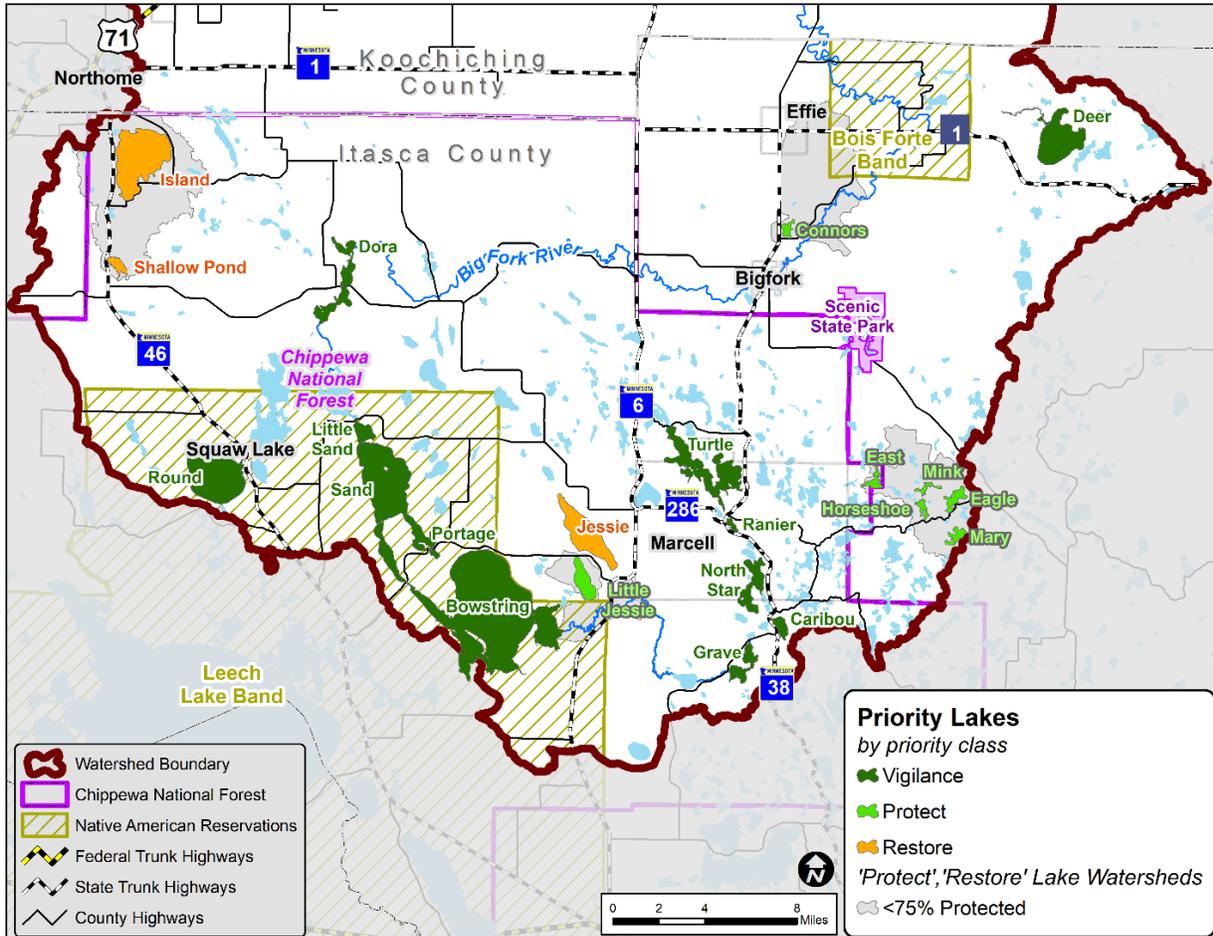


Figure 1. Priority lakes in the BFRW.

Draft Goals

An important part of the planning process is developing quantifiable goals that address the issues identified by plan partners. During this meeting, plan goals were shaped and measurable goals were brainstormed based on previous work completed in the watershed, and priorities moving forward. The figure below provides the current state of the goals following this meeting.



Visioning

The Advisory Committee reviewed the draft Vision Statement from the last meeting. These are the three options for the statement. The group decided to have the Policy Committee decide.

“Where healthy woodlands and waters support vibrant communities”

“Preserving our Big Fork wilderness, wisely growing our northern communities”

“Conserving our Big Fork wilderness, growing vibrant northern communities”

Meeting Attendees

- Matt Gutzmann (Itasca SWCD)
- Matthew Picklo (Itasca SWCD)
- Cal Saari (Itasca SWCD Board)
- Moriya Rufer (HEI)
- Christina Traner (HEI)
- Dan Disrud (MDH)
- Whitney Sims (Koochiching Environmental Services)
- Lindsey Krumrie (MPCA)
- Mitch Brinks (Area 8 GIS Specialist)
- Chad Severts (BWSR)
- Jeff Hrubes (BWSR)
- Jolen Simon (Koochiching SWCD)
- James Aasen (Koochiching SWCD)
- Austin Steere (Itasca SWCD)
- Austin Vinar (Koochiching SWCD)