

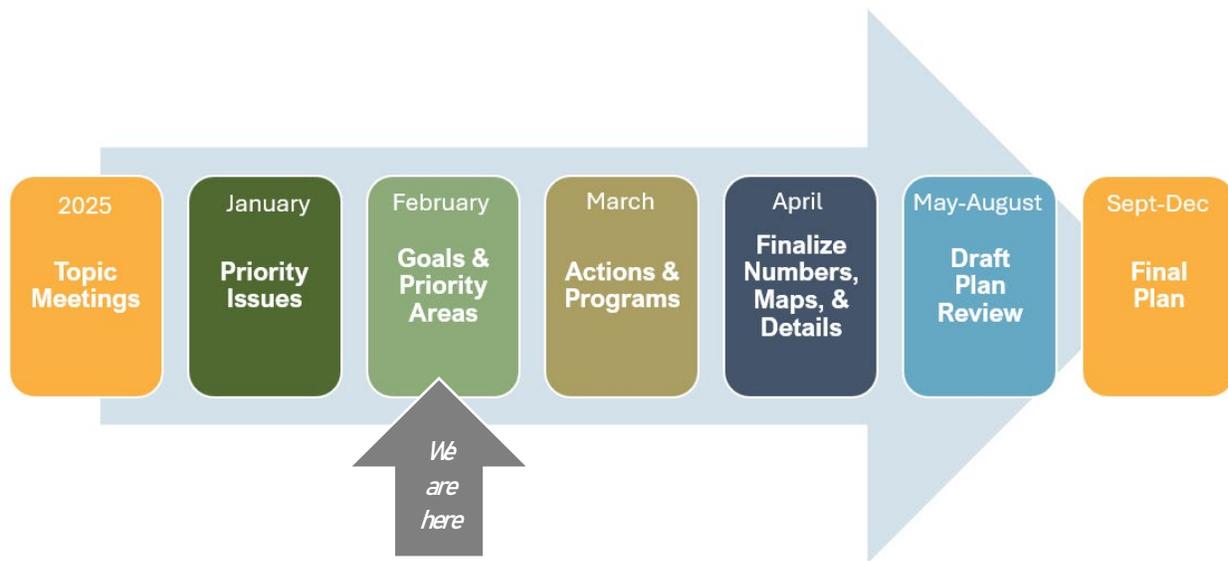
Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

February 5, 2026
Littlefork Community Building



Introduction

The Advisory Committee met in Littlefork 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 the current status of the Little Fork River Watershed Plan.



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 streams, cisco/trout lakes will be prioritized, as well as those with sediment concerns. 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 (**Figure 1**). In the LFRW 91 of the 108 lakes are over >75% protected and fall under the vigilance prioritization category. Only one lake (Dark) is impaired (Sulfate), and only 6 have declining trends. 17 other lakes are less than 75% protected. A focus shoreline projects and land protection around those lakes will be prioritized in the plan.



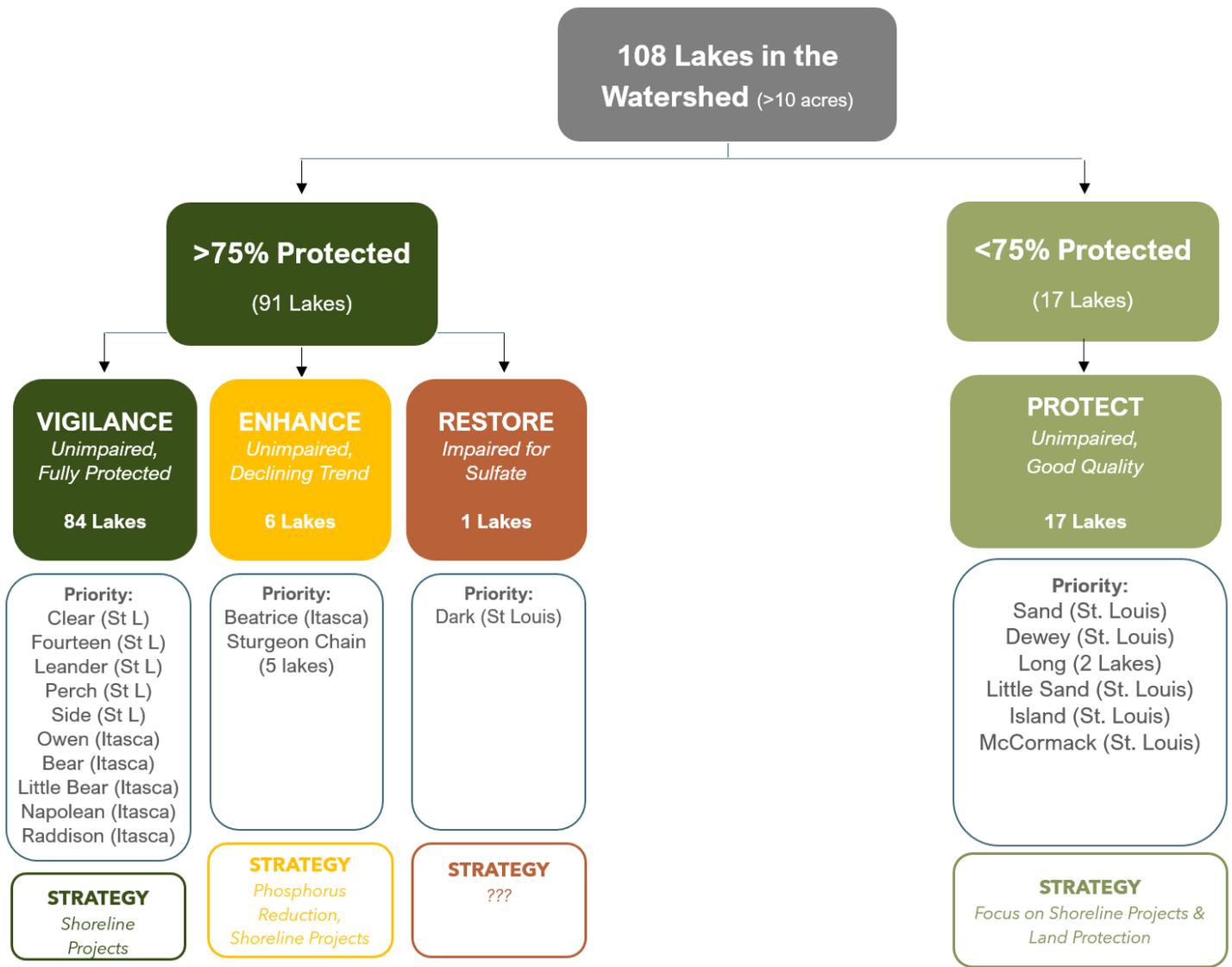
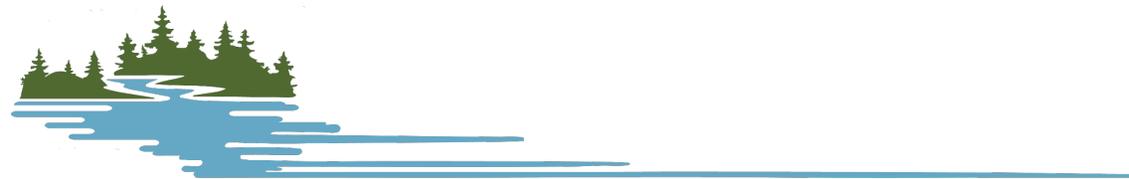


Figure.1 Lake prioritization draft for the LFRW.



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. **Table 1** provides the current state of the goals following this meeting.

Table 1 Draft goals for the LFRW plan, developed at the February 5th meeting.

Goal Name	Short Term Goal	Long Term Goal/Desired Condition
Voluntary Land Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 980 acres protected with SFIA & easements (5% progress towards desired future) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19,592 acres (Based on the Landscape Stewardship Plan)
Agricultural Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 827 acres of agricultural BMPs (5% of all crop and pasture acres in the watershed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,653 acres of agricultural BMPs (10% of all crop and pasture acres in the watershed)
Hydraulic Connectivity & Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore road infrastructure hydrology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No net change in discharge
Erosion Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 feasibility study for sediment reduction & • 1 project for Little Fork River Impairment • 500 feet of riparian enhancement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and prioritize projects
Forest Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74 plans & 10,000 acres (10% of LSP long-term goals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 744 plans & 99,391 acres (100% of LSP long-term goals)
Drinking Water Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 wells sealed • 100 septic systems replaced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All priority wells sealed • All failing septic systems replaced
Stormwater Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook and Littlefork stormwater plans • 4 stormwater projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All communities have stormwater management plans and prioritized project list

Vision Statement

A vision statement was previously developed during the January meetings. The group made no changes to the current statement: “Forests and waters sustaining healthy Northwoods communities.” The vision statement may continue to be developed during the planning process.



Meeting Attendees

- Andy Arens – Itasca SWCD
- Austin Steere - Itasca SWCD
- James Aasen – Koochiching SWCD
- James Hansen - DNR
- Jeff Hrubes- BWSR
- Joe Jackson
- Jólen Simon – Koochiching SWCD
- Matt Gouin – Koochiching County
- Matt Gutzmann - Itasca SWCD
- Matt Meyer, MnDOT
- Mitch Brinks, GIS
- Pam Tomevi - Koochiching SWCD
- Phil Norwich – North St. Louis SWCD
- Phil Talmage – DNR
- Rian Reed– DNR
- Skyler Webb – St. Louis County
- Whitney Sims - Koochiching County
- Moriya Rufer - Houston Engineering
- Aaron Frankl - Houston Engineering

