Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

March 5, 2026
Littlefork Community Building

Introduction

The Advisory Committee met in Littlefork to review actions and implementation tables that have been developed by the Steering Committee. Implementation tables define the actions used to achieve plan goals. Following this review, April's meeting will work towards finalizing plan details (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Timeline for the LFRW 1W1P.

Plan Programs

An important component of the implementation tables are plan programs. These plan programs are standardized across 1W1Ps in the Rainy Basin. There are four main programs: Planned Landscape Management ("Manage It"), Constructed Environmental Enhancements ("Fix It"), Protected Lands Maintenance ("Keep It"), and Data Collection and Outreach ("Know It"). These programs balance differently in different watersheds based on the needs of that specific watershed. For this watershed, the "Keep It" program is lighter because of the higher percentage of public land. The "Manage It" and "Fix It" have more of the focus (**Figure 2**). All programs are balanced on "Know It", which is collecting and distributing information and essential for implementation of the other three categories.

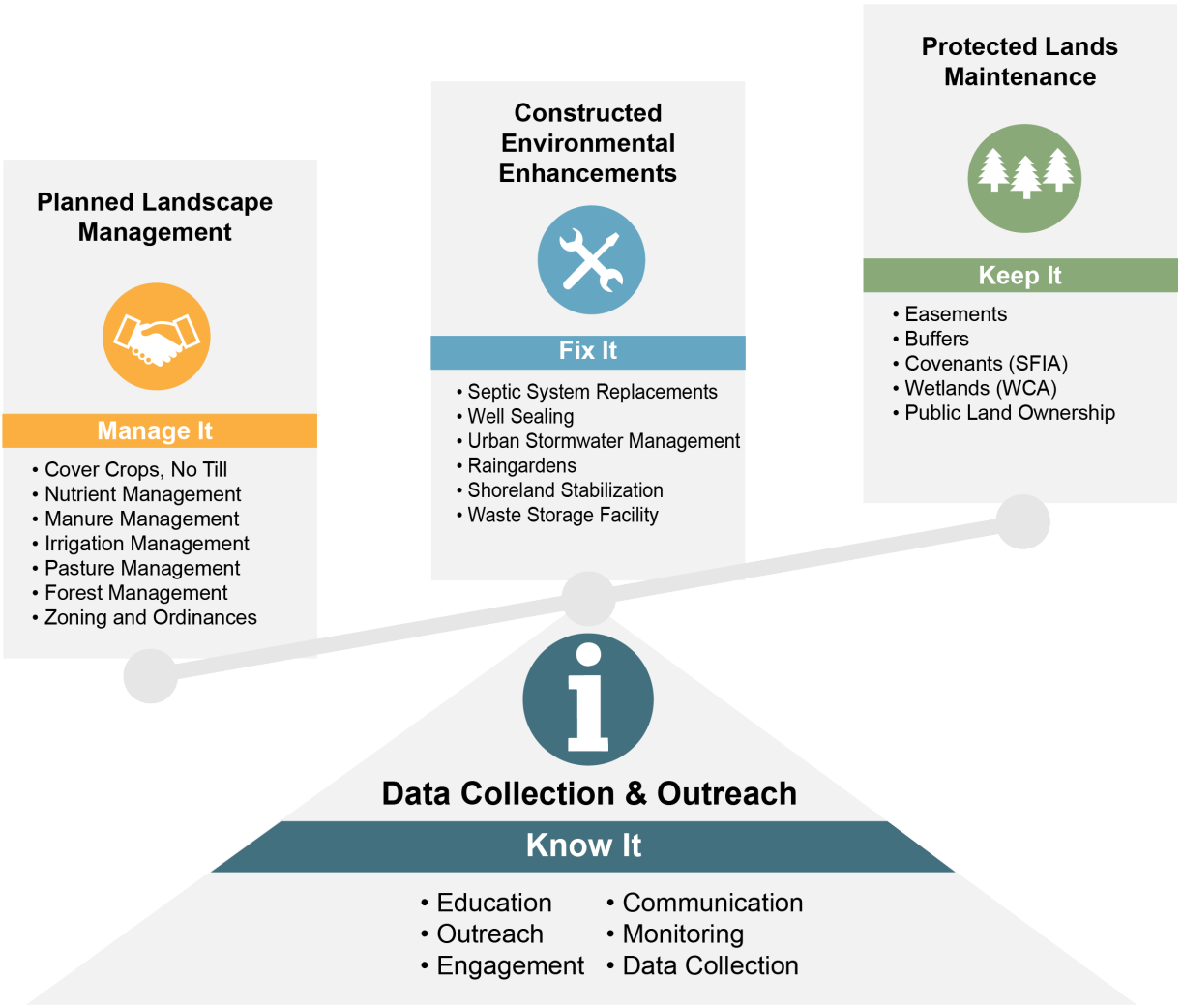


Figure 2 Plan programs for the LFRW.

Implementation Table Review

The meeting's main activity was to review the drafted implementation tables. Implementation tables include actions that will be taken during the 10-year planning process. These tables include the following information for each action:

- Program Type: Fix it, know it, keep it, or manage it
- 10-year Outcome: Outcome from the action
- Priority Areas: Areas for implementation
- Lead/Supporting Entities: Who is leading (in bold) and who is supporting the action
- Timeline for Implementation: What years will the action be occurring
- Tracking Output: Does the action provide direct or indirect progress towards plan goals (see below)
- Funding Level: Which level of funding will provide resources for this action. Funding levels for the LFRW are summarized in Table 5.1
- Total Costs: 10-year cost for implementing the action

The Advisory Committee members were asked to focus on a few aspects of the implementation tables: the action description, 10-year outcome, priority areas, lead/supporting entities, and timeline for implementation. Committee members were also asked to supply any new actions, as needed.

Attached to this report are the comments from advisory committee members. Since some members were connecting virtually, there are two sets of comments, one in whiteboard form with post it notes (online group) and one with handwritten comments. All tables that had comments are attached.

Data Gaps Brainstorm

An additional activity was brainstorming data gaps: where additional data collection, monitoring, surveys, or studies may be required to complete plan actions. The following ideas were discussed:

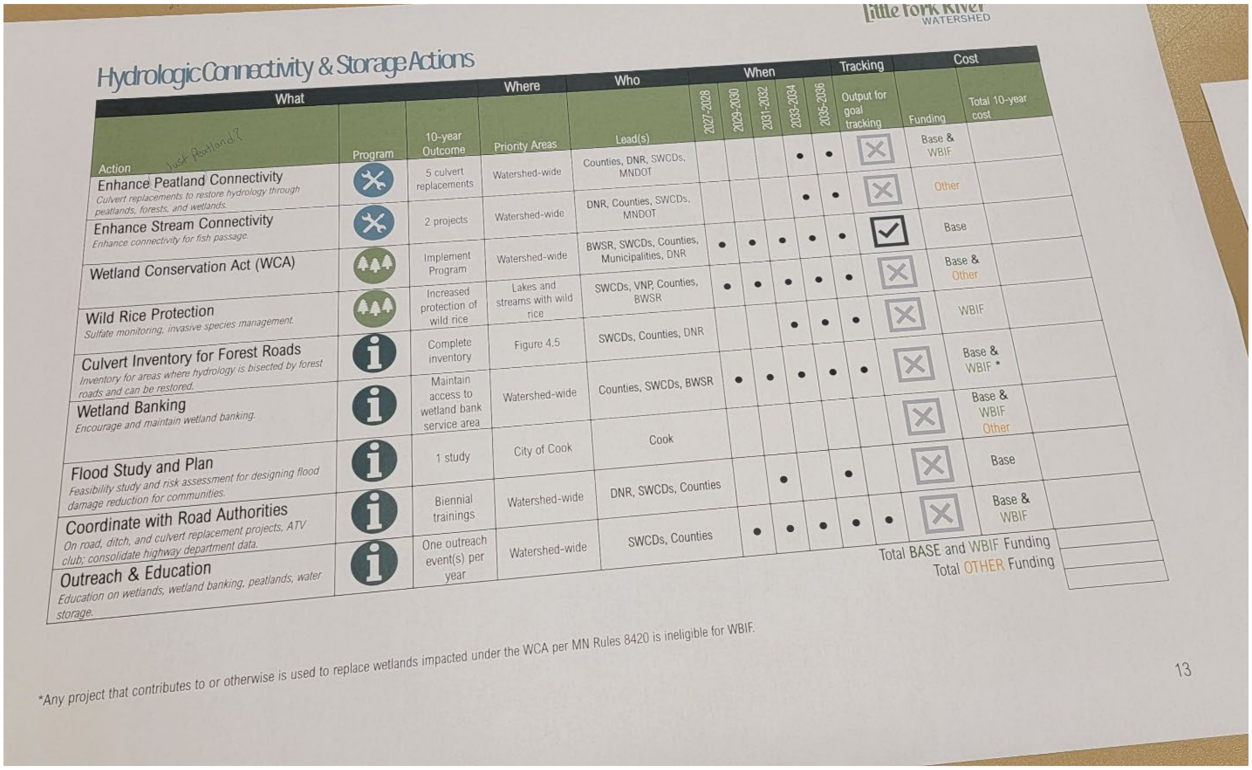
- Unified watershed geologic atlas
- Wider Buffers
- Citizen monitoring program outreach
- Beaver impoundment data
- Sturgeon spawning activity data
- Sediment reduction feasibility study
- EAB management data
- Trout spawning areas
- Updated LiDAR comparisons with older LiDAR data
- Baseline erosion data using LiDAR
- Identifying key areas of landowner engagement

Meeting Attendees

- Andy Arens – Itasca SWCD
- Austin Steere - Itasca SWCD
- Austin Wallin – Koochiching SWCD
- Ada Tse – St. Louis County
- Chad Severts - BWSR
- James Aasen – Koochiching SWCD
- Jim Hansen - DNR
- Jeff Hrubes- BWSR
- Jólen Simon – Koochiching SWCD
- Mike Kennedy - MPCA
- Matt Picklo– Itasca SWCD
- Matt Gutzmann - Itasca SWCD
- Mitch Brinks, GIS
- Pam Tomevi - Koochiching SWCD
- Phil Norvich – North St. Louis SWCD
- Phil Talmage – DNR

- Skyler Webb – St. Louis County
- Whitney Sims - Koochiching County
- Aaron Frankl - Houston Engineering

Hydrologic Connectivity & Storage

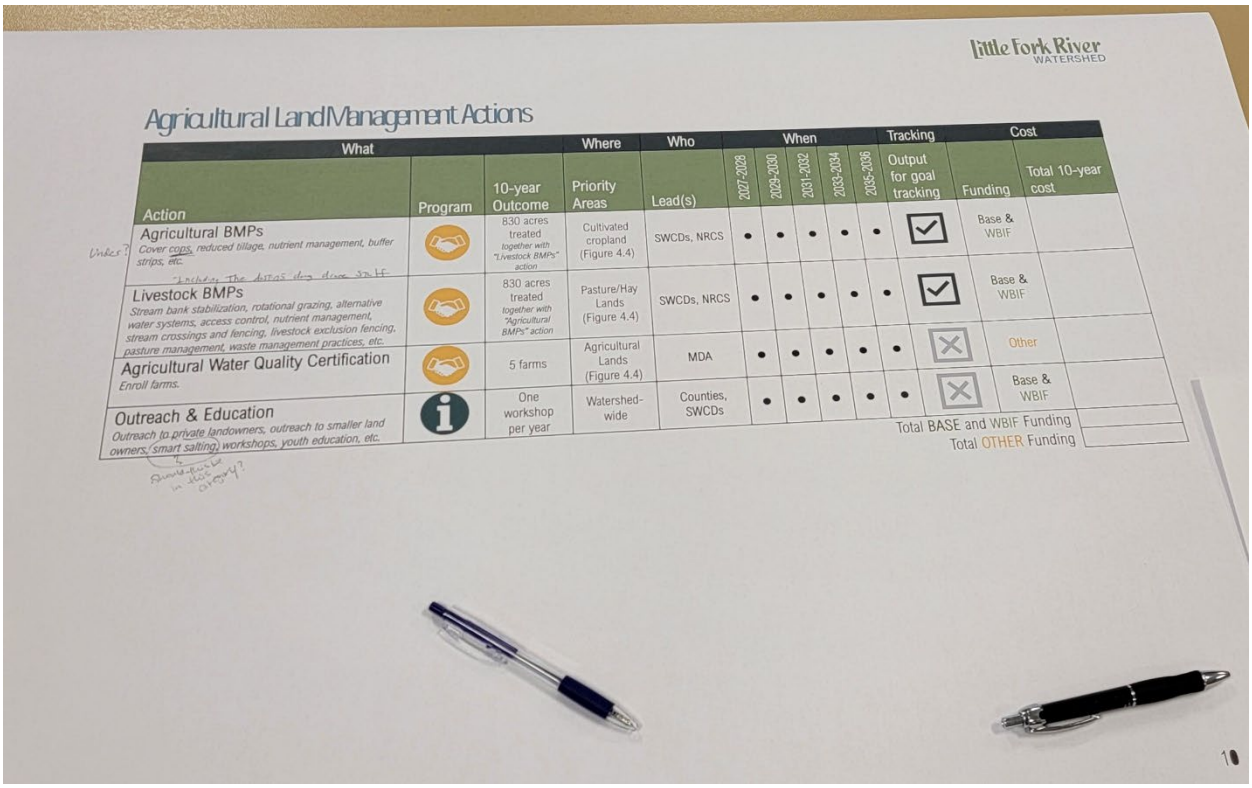


Hydrologic Connectivity & Storage Actions

What: Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Where: Priority Areas	Who: Lead(s)	When: 2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Tracking: Output for goal tracking	Cost: Funding	Total 10-year cost
Enhance Peatland Connectivity *Culvert replacements to restore hydrology through peatlands, forests, and wetlands.*	(tools icon)	5 culvert replacements	Watershed-wide	Counties, DNR, SWCDs, MNDOT				•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Enhance Stream Connectivity *Enhance connectivity for fish passage.*	(tools icon)	2 projects	Watershed-wide	DNR, Counties, SWCDs, MNDOT				•	•	☒	Other	
Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)	(trees icon)	Implement Program	Watershed-wide	BWSR, SWCDs, Counties, Municipalities, DNR	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Base	
Wild Rice Protection *Sulfate monitoring, invasive species management.*	(trees icon)	Increased protection of wild rice	Lakes and streams with wild rice	SWCDs, VNP, Counties, BWSR	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & Other	
Culvert Inventory for Forest Roads *Inventory for areas where hydrology is bisected by forest roads and can be restored.*	(i icon)	Complete inventory	Figure 4.5	SWCDs, Counties, DNR			•	•	•	☒	WBIF	
Wetland Banking *Encourage and maintain wetland banking.*	(i icon)	Maintain access to wetland bank service area	Watershed-wide	Counties, SWCDs, BWSR	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF *	
Flood Study and Plan *Feasibility study and risk assessment for designing flood damage reduction for communities.*	(i icon)	1 study	City of Cook	Cook						☒	Base & WBIF Other	
Coordinate with Road Authorities *On road, ditch, and culvert replacement projects, ATV club; consolidate highway department data.*	(i icon)	Biennial trainings	Watershed-wide	DNR, SWCDs, Counties		•		•		☒	Base	
Outreach & Education *Education on wetlands, wetland banking, peatlands, water storage.*	(i icon)	One outreach event(s) per year	Watershed-wide	SWCDs, Counties	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
											Total BASE and WBIF Funding	
											Total OTHER Funding	

*Any project that contributes to or otherwise is used to replace wetlands impacted under the WCA per MN Rules 8420 is ineligible for WBIF.

Agricultural Land Management



Frame 1

Agricultural Land Management Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Agricultural BMPs *Cover cops, reduced tillage, nutrient management, buffer strips, etc.*		830 acres treated *together with "Livestock BMPs" action*	Cultivated cropland (Figure 4.4)	SWCDs, NRCS	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Livestock BMPs *Stream bank stabilization, rotational grazing, alternative water systems, access control, nutrient management, stream crossings and fencing, livestock exclusion fencing, pasture management, waste management practices, etc.*		830 acres treated *together with "Agricultural BMPs" action*	Pasture/Hay Lands (Figure 4.4)	SWCDs, NRCS	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Agricultural Water Quality Certification *Enroll farms.*		5 farms	Agricultural Lands (Figure 4.4)	MDA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Other	
Outreach & Education *Outreach to private landowners, outreach to smaller land owners, smart salting, workshops, youth education, etc.*		One workshop per year	Watershed-wide	Counties, SWCDs	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
										Total BASE and WBIF Funding		
										Total OTHER Funding		

Maybe ad MDA, not bold, regarding the Mn Ag cert programs they sometimes can provide funding.

Add an r; although cover cops sounds pretty cool!

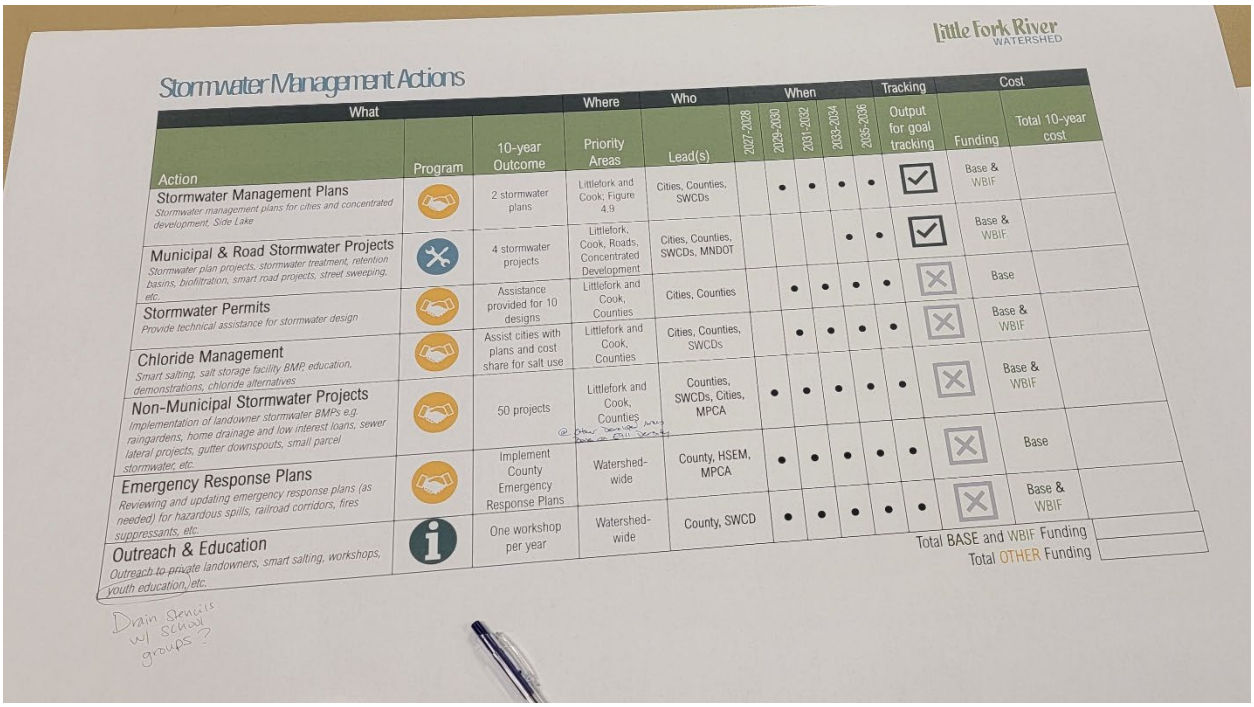
Streambank is probably under streams and rivers. Here it would be in conjunction with access control

Does smart salting belong here?

Identifying marginal ag lands

Maybe add SWCD and NRCS non-bold

Stormwater Management



Little Fork River WATERSHED

Stormwater Management Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Stormwater Management Plans *Stormwater management plans for cities and concentrated development, Side Lake*		2 stormwater plans	Littlefork and Cook; Figure 4.9	Cities, Counties, SWCDs		•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Municipal & Road Stormwater Projects *Stormwater plan projects, stormwater treatment, retention basins, biofiltration, smart road projects, street sweeping, etc.*		4 stormwater projects	Littlefork, Cook, Roads, Concentrated Development	Cities, Counties, SWCDs, MNDOT				•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Stormwater Permits *Provide technical assistance for stormwater design*		Assistance provided for 10 designs	Littlefork and Cook, Counties	Cities, Counties		•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
Chloride Management *Smart salting, salt storage facility BMP, education, demonstrations, chloride alternatives*		Assist cities with plans and cost share for salt use	Littlefork and Cook, Counties	Cities, Counties, SWCDs		•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Non-Municipal Stormwater Projects *Implementation of landowner stormwater BMPs e.g. raingardens, home drainage and low interest loans, sewer lateral projects, gutter downspouts, small parcel stormwater, etc.*		50 projects	Littlefork and Cook, Counties	Counties, SWCDs, Cities, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Emergency Response Plans *Reviewing and updating emergency response plans (as needed) for hazardous spills, railroad corridors, fires suppressants, etc.*		Implement County Emergency Response Plans	Watershed-wide	County, HSEM, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
Outreach & Education *Outreach to private landowners, smart salting, workshops, youth education, etc.*		One workshop per year	Watershed-wide	County, SWCD	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	

Total BASE and WBIF Funding

Total OTHER Funding

Drain Stencils w/ School Groups ?

Frame 6

A. are there 10 stormwater design opportunities in addition to the projects listed above?

B. is there an intersection of stormwater management and shoreland requirements? Should there be?

Building relationships with the small non-MS4 communities will be key here...LF, Cook, especially

ST. Louis County Planning & Zoning does not issue stormwater permits. MPCA permit required for land disturbance of 1 acre or more.

We also do not work directly with landowners on stormwater projects.

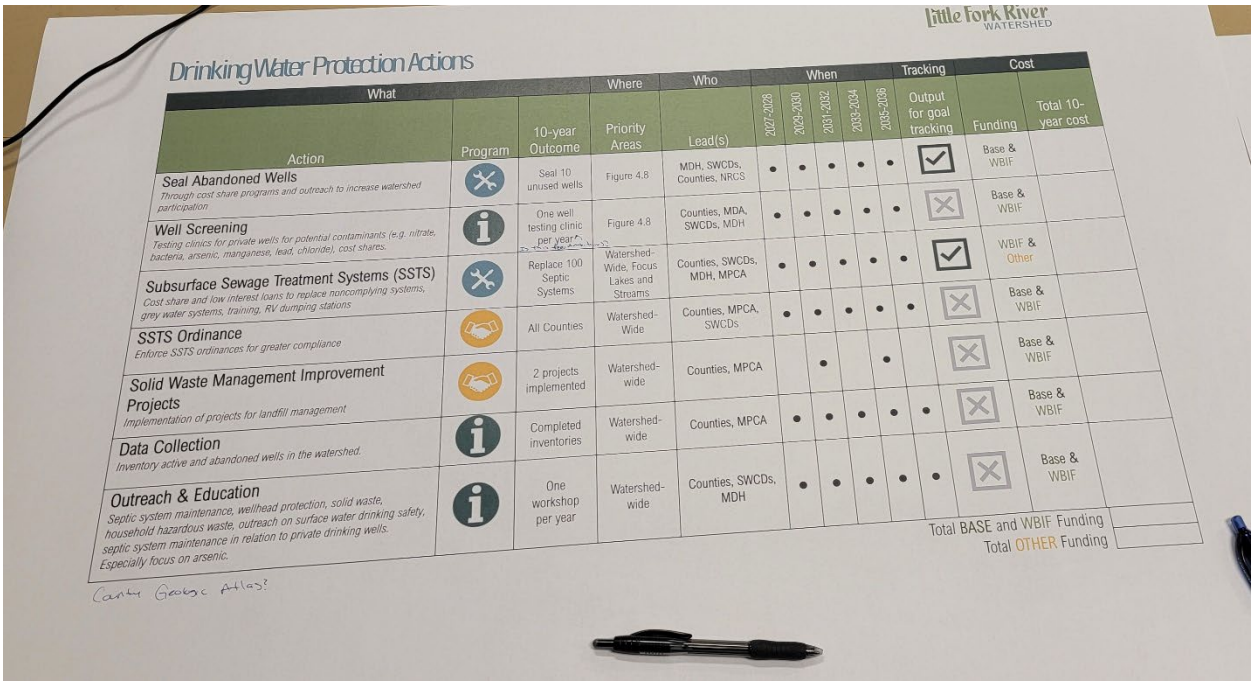
Stormwater Management Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Stormwater Management Plans *Stormwater management plans for cities and concentrated development, Side Lake*		2 stormwater plans	Littlefork and Cook; Figure 4.9	Cities, Counties, SWCDs		•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Municipal & Road Stormwater Projects *Stormwater plan projects, stormwater treatment, retention basins, biofiltration, smart road projects, street sweeping, etc.*		4 stormwater projects	Littlefork, Cook, Roads, Concentrated Development	Cities, Counties, SWCDs, MNDOT				•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Stormwater Permits *Provide technical assistance for stormwater design*		Assistance provided for 10 designs	Littlefork and Cook, Counties	Cities, Counties		•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
Chloride Management *Smart salting, salt storage facility BMP, education, demonstrations, chloride alternatives*		Assist cities with plans and cost share for salt use	Littlefork and Cook, Counties	Cities, Counties, SWCDs		•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Non-Municipal Stormwater Projects *Implementation of landowner stormwater BMPs e.g. raingardens, home drainage and low interest loans, sewer lateral projects, gutter downspouts, small parcel stormwater, etc.*		50 projects	Littlefork and Cook, Counties	Counties, SWCDs, Cities, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Emergency Response Plans *Reviewing and updating emergency response plans (as needed) for hazardous spills, railroad corridors, fires suppressants, etc.*		Implement County Emergency Response Plans	Watershed-wide	County, HSEM, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
Outreach & Education *Outreach to private landowners, smart salting, workshops, youth education, etc.*		One workshop per year	Watershed-wide	County, SWCD	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	

Total BASE and WBIF Funding

Total OTHER Funding

Drinking Water Protection



Little Fork River WATERSHED

Drinking Water Protection Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Seal Abandoned Wells *Through cost share programs and outreach to increase watershed participation*		Seal 10 unused wells	Figure 4.8	MDH, SWCDs, Counties, NRCS	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Well Screening *Testing clinics for private wells for potential contaminants (e.g. nitrate, bacteria, arsenic, manganese, lead, chloride), cost shares.*		One well testing clinic per year	Figure 4.8	Counties, MDA, SWCDs, MDH	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) *Cost share and low interest loans to replace noncomplying systems, grey water systems, training, RV dumping stations*		Replace 100 Septic Systems	Watershed-Wide, Focus Lakes and Streams	Counties, SWCDs, MDH, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☑	WBIF & Other	
SSTS Ordinance *Enforce SSTS ordinances for greater compliance*		All Counties	Watershed-Wide	Counties, MPCA, SWCDs	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Solid Waste Management Improvement Projects *Implementation of projects for landfill management*		2 projects implemented	Watershed-wide	Counties, MPCA		•		•		☒	Base & WBIF	
Data Collection *Inventory active and abandoned wells in the watershed.*		Completed inventories	Watershed-wide	Counties, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Outreach & Education *Septic system maintenance, wellhead protection, solid waste, household hazardous waste, outreach on surface water drinking safety, septic system maintenance in relation to private drinking wells. Especially focus on arsenic.*		One workshop per year	Watershed-wide	Counties, SWCDs, MDH	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
										Total BASE and WBIF Funding		
										Total OTHER Funding		

County Geologic Atlas?

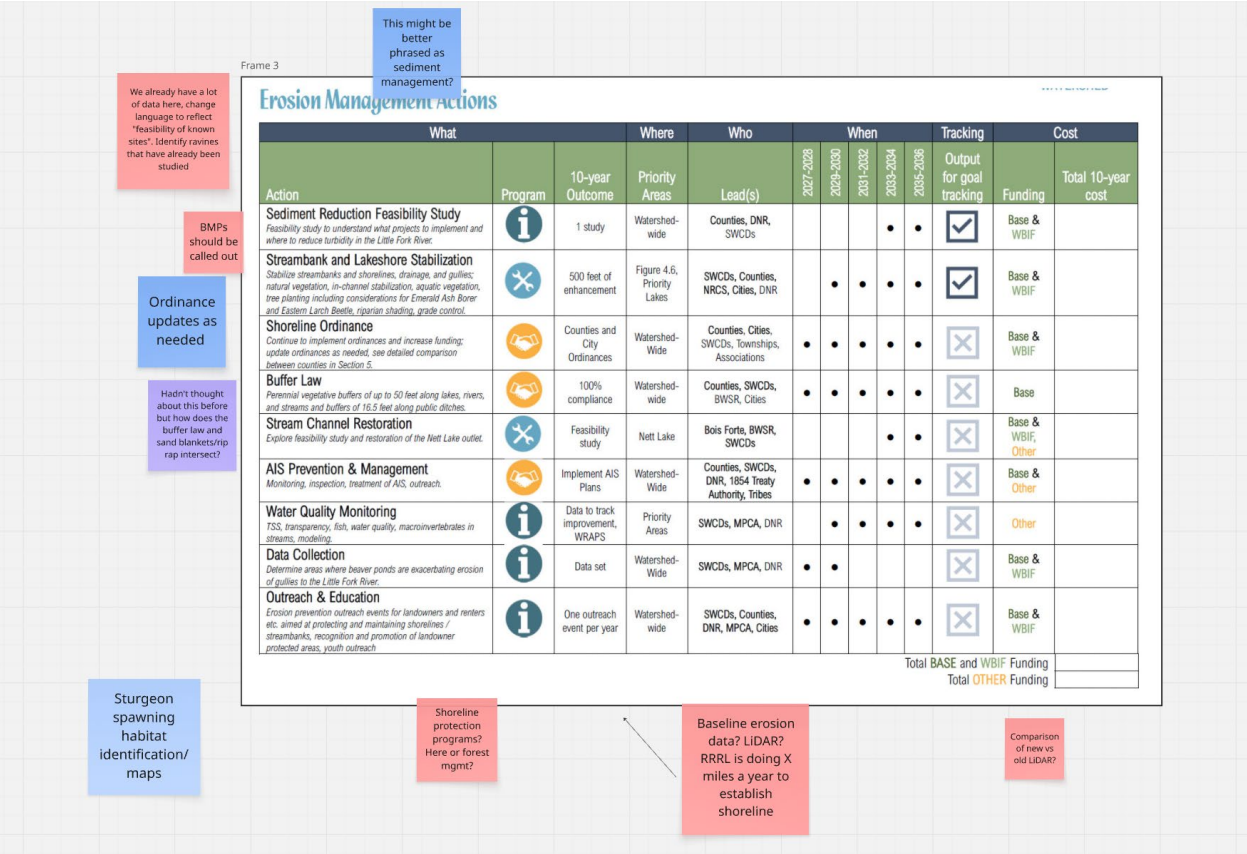
Frame 5

Drinking Water Protection Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Seal Abandoned Wells *Through cost share programs and outreach to increase watershed participation*		Seal 10 unused wells	Figure 4.8	MDH, SWCDs, Counties, NRCS	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Well Screening *Testing clinics for private wells for potential contaminants (e.g. nitrate, bacteria, arsenic, manganese, lead, chloride), cost shares.*		One well testing clinic per year	Figure 4.8	Counties, MDA, SWCDs, MDH	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) *Cost share and low interest loans to replace noncomplying systems, grey water systems, training, RV dumping stations*		Replace 100 Septic Systems	Watershed-Wide, Focus Lakes and Streams	Counties, SWCDs, MDH, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☑	WBIF & Other	
SSTS Ordinance *Enforce SSTS ordinances for greater compliance*		All Counties	Watershed-Wide	Counties, MPCA, SWCDs	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Solid Waste Management Improvement Projects *Implementation of projects for landfill management*		2 projects implemented	Watershed-wide	Counties, MPCA		•		•		☒	Base & WBIF	
Data Collection *Inventory active and abandoned wells in the watershed.*		Completed inventories	Watershed-wide	Counties, MPCA	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Outreach & Education *Septic system maintenance, wellhead protection, solid waste, household hazardous waste, outreach on surface water drinking safety, septic system maintenance in relation to private drinking wells. Especially focus on arsenic.*		One workshop per year	Watershed-wide	Counties, SWCDs, MDH	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
										Total BASE and WBIF Funding		
										Total OTHER Funding		

Seems to imply that folks are not complying with SSTS ordinance--More effective administration? Are there any technologies or system enhancements that would help with ordinance admin?

Erosion Management



Erosion Management Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Sediment Reduction Feasibility Study *Feasibility study to understand what projects to implement and where to reduce turbidity in the Little Fork River.*		1 study	Watershed-wide	**Counties, DNR,** SWCDs				•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Streambank and Lakeshore Stabilization *Stabilize streambanks and shorelines, drainage, and gullies; natural vegetation, in-channel stabilization, aquatic vegetation, tree planting including considerations for Emerald Ash Borer and Eastern Larch Beetle, riparian shading, grade control.*		500 feet of enhancement	Figure 4.6, Priority Lakes	**SWCDs, Counties, NRCS, Cities,** DNR		•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Shoreline Ordinance *Continue to implement ordinances and increase funding; update ordinances as needed, see detailed comparison between counties in Section 5.*		Counties and City Ordinances	Watershed-Wide	**Counties, Cities,** SWCDs, Townships, Associations	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Buffer Law *Perennial vegetative buffers of up to 50 feet along lakes, rivers, and streams and buffers of 16.5 feet along public ditches.*		100% compliance	Watershed-wide	**Counties, SWCDs,** BWSR, Cities	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
Stream Channel Restoration *Explore feasibility study and restoration of the Nett Lake outlet.*		Feasibility study	Nett Lake	**Bois Forte, BWSR, SWCDs**				•	•	☒	Base & WBIF, Other	
AIS Prevention & Management *Monitoring, inspection, treatment of AIS, outreach.*		Implement AIS Plans	Watershed-Wide	**Counties, SWCDs, DNR, 1854 Treaty Authority, Tribes**	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & Other	
Water Quality Monitoring *TSS, transparency, fish, water quality, macroinvertebrates in streams, modeling.*		Data to track improvement, WRAPS	Priority Areas	**SWCDs, MPCA,** DNR		•	•	•	•	☒	Other	
Data Collection *Determine areas where beaver ponds are exacerbating erosion of gullies to the Little Fork River.*		Data set	Watershed-Wide	**SWCDs, MPCA,** DNR	•	•				☒	Base & WBIF	
Outreach & Education *Erosion prevention outreach events for landowners and renters etc. aimed at protecting and maintaining shorelines / streambanks, recognition and promotion of landowner protected areas, youth outreach*		One outreach event per year	Watershed-wide	**SWCDs, Counties, DNR, MPCA, Cities**	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
											Total BASE and WBIF Funding	
											Total OTHER Funding	

Forest Management

Frame 4

Forest Management Actions

What			Where	Who	When					Tracking	Cost	
Action	Program	10-year Outcome	Priority Areas	Lead(s)	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	Output for goal tracking	Funding	Total 10-year cost
Forest Stewardship Plans *Management plans on private parcels, small parcel management including riparian areas*		75 plans written; 10,000 acres managed	Figure 4.7	SWCDs, DNR, Consultants, BWSR, Cities	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Base & WBIF	
Noxious Weeds & Terrestrial Invasive Species Management *Coordinate invasive species management/monitoring activities on private land, Noxious Weed Program.*		Maintain current programs	Watershed-wide	SWCDs, DNR, Counties, NRCS, Cities	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Coordination of Forest Management		Enhanced Coordination	Watershed-wide	SWCDs, Counties, DNR	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
Forest Health Management *Technical assistance and cost-share for practices such as Forest Stand Improvement, tree planting, Climate Assisted Migration, prescribed burning, EAB and ELB risk planning and mitigation, wildfire response, coordinate harvesting for forest age diversity, implementation of MFRC site level BMPs.*		1,000 acres	Watershed-wide	SWCDs, NRCS, Counties, Cities, DNR	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base & WBIF	
Forest and Land Conservation *SFIA, conservation easements, Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements on priority private uplands, riparian, and shorelands, wild rice protection.*		1,000 acres	Figure 4.7	SWCDs, BWSR, DNR, Cities	•	•	•	•	•	☑	Other	
Small Parcel Management *Explore options for developing a local program for parcels smaller than 20 acres*		Develop program, manage 100 acres	Watershed-Wide	SWCDs. DNR, Consultants, Counties, BWSR		•	•	•	•	☒	WBIF Other	
Outreach & Education *Local foresters, workshops, tourism, stewardship programs, invasive species identification*		One outreach event per year	Watershed-wide	SWCDs, DNR, NRCS, BWSR, Counties, Cities	•	•	•	•	•	☒	Base	
											Total BASE and WBIF Funding	
											Total OTHER Funding	

Does this mean Coordination amongst private, local, state, federal, tribal partners will happen to all things forestry or are there more specific items in mind (such as timber harvest timing/location coordination?

It's implied and obvious to most here but for WBIF, the forest management has to be for water quality. Might not hurt to lead with that.

Maybe explain if/how this is different than the small parcel mgmt in the first action item

why not track goals for small parcels?