UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROJECT

PROJECT SUMMARY
November 2009

Background

- The Mississippi River is the sole source of drinking water for St. Cloud and Minneapolis, and the primary source for St. Paul.
- Working collaboratively, the three Cities' water utilities have successfully prepared Source Water Protection Plans (Plan) through the Upper Mississippi River Source Water Protection Project (UMRSWPP).
- Funding for the UMRSWPP was provided by the MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the individual water suppliers, and the MN Department of Health (MDH). The Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA), and Metropolitan Council are also project sponsors.
- Project participants include the U.S. Geological Survey, the St. Croix Watershed Research Station, the Minnesota Geological Survey, and several local units of government in the project area.
- Each Source Water Protection Plan includes:
    1) A delineated Source Water Protection Area, including Priority Areas A and B (see maps on UMRSWPP website),
    2) An inventory of potential point and non-point contaminant sources within the area, and
    3) A description of Management Strategies and Objectives for Plan implementation.
- The combined Source Water Protection Areas created a "Composite Source Water Protection Area" of approximately 7,700 square miles (see map).
- The MDH, on behalf of the State of Minnesota, has endorsed the Source Water Protection Plans.
- The Plans, and additional project information, are available on the project website, **WWW.UMRSWPP.COM**.

Major Project Activities To Date

- Delineation of Source Water Protection Areas for St. Cloud, St. Paul and Minneapolis.
- Time of travel estimates for the Mississippi River main stem and the Sauk, Rum, Elk and Crow Rivers, and Elm, Rice and Coon Creeks.
- Development of Mississippi River Time of Travel Charts, tributary time of travel data, and supporting information for use by first responders, emergency managers, and others in the event of a contaminant release to the Mississippi River or its tributaries.
- Establishment of geographic and contaminant priorities to frame the inventory of potential contaminant sources within the delineated Source Water Protection Areas.
- Development of effective management strategies to address contaminant threats to the source water.
- Investigation of a methodology to determine areas where the Mississippi River discharges to, or is recharged by, ground water, to determine the potential for contaminate transport.
- Identification of sources of sediment loading to the Mississippi River in the South Fork Crow River watershed.
- Formulation of education and outreach activities to reach audiences in the Composite Source Water Protection Area.
- Coordination of surface water protection with wellhead protection in the project area.
- Collaboration with and support of the work of watershed and other local government groups to advance the common goals of watershed management and source water protection.
- Participation with the MPCA on the Upper Mississippi River Bacteria TMDL Project.

Implementing the Source Water Protection Plans

- The Plans describe the following Management Strategies for implementation over the next ten years:
    1) Source Water Protection Education and Awareness
    2) Urban Stormwater Management Practices
    3) Agriculture Management Practices
    4) Transportation Corridor and Spills Management Practices
    5) Commercial and Industrial Management Practices
    6) Well and Individual Sewage Treatment System Management Practices
    7) Data Collection and Analysis Management Practices
    8) Administration
- Challenges for St. Cloud, St. Paul and Minneapolis in implementing the Plans include:
    1) The size of the respective Source Water Protection Areas.
    2) The large number of potential point and non-point contaminant sources within the Composite Source Water Protection Area.
    3) A large number of local units of government having jurisdiction in each of the Source Water Protection Areas.
- Each water supplier has begun refining the Potential Contaminant Source Inventory, based on the geographic and contaminant priorities established.
- Plan implementation will prominently emphasize partnerships with local units of government, particularly watershed organizations.
- The following local organizations have worked with the UMRSWPP on implementation objectives:
    - The Sauk River Watershed District
    - The Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance
    - The Stearns Soil and Water Conservation District
    - The Elk River Watershed Association
    - The Crow River Organization of Water
    - The Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
    - The Rice Creek Watershed District
- The St. Cloud, St. Paul, and Minneapolis water utilities continue to work with local, state, and federal units of government to integrate source water protection into the existing frameworks of water quality, land use, and watershed protection and management in the Composite Source Water Protection Area.
- The UMRSWPP will continue to work with the MPCA and other state agencies to integrate source water protection with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, the Upper Mississippi River Bacteria TMDL Project, and the agency's federal Clean Water Act programs.

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