

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



LAC QUI PARLE YELLOW BANK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

Courthouse, 600 6th Street #7
Madison, MN 56256

ESTABLISHMENT DATE: APRIL 19, 1971

Included Counties: Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine, &
Lincoln

Website: www.lqpybwatershed.org

OFFICE

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District Office is located at:

Courthouse, 600 6th Street, Suite #7, Madison, MN 56256



Office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Website: www.lqpywatershed.org

Phone: 320-598-3117

Fax: 320-598-3117

MEETINGS

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District holds its regular meeting the first Tuesday of the month at the Lac qui Parle County Commissioners Room, located at the Courthouse, 600 6th Street, Madison, MN. Notification for each of these meetings is published in the Western Guard, Canby News, & Hendricks Pioneer Press, along with a radio announcement on KLQP 92.1 FM. Notices are also mailed to the local agencies, Auditor's, and Commissioners of each County. The meeting date is posted on the Districts web-site.

In 2014 the Board held twelve monthly meetings and one special meeting.

WEBSITE

The District's website can be found at www.lqpywatershed.org. The site enables the District staff to update and maintain the District's projects and reports. The residents of the Watershed District have found the site helpful and it is used often.

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District 2014 Board of Managers



Left to right: David Craigmile, Willis Beecher, John Cornell, Darrel Ellefson, & David Ludvigson

A Board of Manager governs the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District. The Lac qui Parle County Commissioners appoint three managers, the Yellow Medicine County Commissioners appoint one manager, and the Lincoln County Commissioners appoint one manager to serve a three year term for the Watershed District.

The Managers of the District and their terms are:

NAME	OFFICE	ADDRESS	COUNTY	TERM-ENDS
Darrel Ellefson	Chairman	Dawson, MN	Lac qui Parle	03/31/2015
Willis Beecher	Vice-Chairman	Canby, MN	Yellow Medicine	03/31/2015
David Ludvigson	Treasurer	Madison, MN	Lac qui Parle	03/31/2017
David Craigmile	Secretary	Boyd, MN	Lac qui Parle	03/31/2016
John Cornell	Publicity	Canby, MN	Lincoln	03/31/2015

Manager Willis Beecher turned in his resignation to retire from manager of the Watershed District effective December 1, 2014. Manager Beecher had served as a manager on the Watershed District since April 1, 1975. A retirement party was held for him on Friday, December 12, 2014. We wish him well on his retirement!

DISTRICT STAFF

In 2014, the District maintained a staff of three to carry out the works of the District. This staff consists of Trudy Hastad, District Administrator, Mary Homan, Coordinator/WCA delineator in training, and Ronald Fjerkenstad, Park manager. The Administrator and the Coordinator are housed in the Lac qui Parle County Courthouse, and the Park Manager office is located in the park house at Stonehill Park/Del Clark Lake.

2014 ADVISORY BOARD

Ron Antony	Yellow Medicine County Commissioner
Curtis Blumeyer	Lincoln County Commissioner
Roy Marihart	Lac qui Parle County Commissioner
Menno Fokken	Yellow Medicine County SWCD
Dennis Johnson	Lincoln County SWCD
Terry Wittnebel	Lac qui Parle County SWCD
Harvey Swenson	Lac qui Parle Ag Producer
Roger Ellefson	LQP Pheasants Forever/Local Surveyor
Nate Ludvigson	Lac qui Parle Contractor

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed Advisory Committee did not meet in 2014 due to some conflicts. They have been kept up to date with the Watershed activities via minutes and e-mail. If they had a question, comment, or concern they were encouraged to contact the District Office.

LEGAL SERVICES

Steve Torvik of the law firm Nelson, Oyen, Torvik serves as the Districts general legal counsel. John Kolb of the law firm Rinke Noonan is on retainer for the District's legal ditch counsel.

OPERATING BUDGET

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District approved the 2014 levy of \$285,000 after the public hearing held on September 3, 2013 meeting #523. The 2014 budget was also approved at this meeting.

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District Mission Statement

To serve as a partner in water planning and management with the State agencies, Counties, Cities, & Soil & Water Conservation Districts and assist with the management of water quality and quantity within the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed boundaries.

HISTORY OF THE LAC QUI PARLE-YELLOW BANK WATERSHED DISTRICT

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District was established on April 19, 1971. The purpose of the District was to aid local citizens who had requested help in controlling flooding in the watershed. Much cross-over flooding had occurred over farm land between sub-watersheds, and had been identified as the highest priority need for the new district to address.

The District as it currently exists consists of approximately 1,712 square miles with 976 in Minnesota and the remaining 736 in South Dakota. Approximately 74% of the land surface is located in Lac qui Parle County, 19% in Yellow Medicine County, and 7% in Lincoln County.

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District starts out at Lake Hendricks in Lincoln County. The Lac qui Parle River flows northeastward through Yellow Medicine and Lac qui Parle Counties before entering the Minnesota River near Watson into Lac qui Parle Lake. In the first 60 miles of drainage, the elevation drops more than a thousand feet from the Prairie Coteau. Major tributaries of the Lac qui Parle are the Florida, Canby, and Ten Mile Creeks.

The original Watershed District Plan was established, as required by law, in October 1972. The second update of the 10-year management plan was approved by BWSR in 2009.

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District currently is governed by Minnesota Statutes 103D, which provides a broader scope for a local unit of government to manage quality and quantity of water within the hydrological boundaries.

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Clean Water Partnership 2014

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Clean Water Partnership is a special project of the watershed district that concentrates on water quality of local water resources and provides educational outreach in the watershed. The CWP is currently targeting the North and South Fork Yellow Bank Rivers with a protection grant from MPCA. Incentives are offered to landowners that enroll in a Continuous CRP filter strip contract, replace open tile intakes with either pattern tile or rocks, and cost share of up to 75% for construction projects. A low interest loan program to upgrade non-compliant sewage systems and landowner share of selected BMP's. A Clean Water Fund grant received in 2013 is for completing a GIS Terrain Analysis throughout the watershed and will provide essential planning information. The analysis will identify and map highly sensitive areas in the watershed and will assist with BMP selection. In October the watershed entered into an agreement with MPCA to assist with pre-planning and developing a workplan for the Lac qui Parle River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS). The water quality monitoring of selected lakes and streams will begin in May of 2015 and continue into 2016.

Education and Outreach activities in 2014 included the following activities:

- ◆ The Southwest Minnesota Civic Engagement Cohort, a 16 month program to enhance skills to engage with stakeholders to have meaningful conversations about water quality management. Skills are presented and then practiced to promote an in-depth understanding from stakeholders. This program was completed in May, 2014.
- ◆ Fifteen minute radio shows are broadcast weekly from mid-April through October featuring various environmental topics. Some topics included septic system loans and maintenance, GIS Terrain Analysis, canoe trips, incentives and cost share programs, recycling opportunities, WRAPS, and local water resource concerns.
- ◆ Newsletters were designed and sent to landowners in the North and South Fork landowners to promote BMP's and provided a pictorial review of a field day held in the watershed that replaced traditional intakes with a pattern tile intake.
- ◆ TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) meetings were held as needed throughout the year to provide direction for grant programs and Clean Water Partnership activities. Special TEAM this year featured WRAPS that allowed input on the water chemistry sites to be monitored and HSPF model that is being developed for the watershed study.
- ◆ Women's educational activities were planned with Yellow Medicine and Lac qui Parle SWCD's. In Yellow Medicine women toured some of the unique landscapes features found in western Yellow Medicine County. The Yellow Medicine Women's event received third place at the annual MAWD conference in December.
- ◆ Ground-truthing of culverts was completed as part of the GIS Terrain Analysis project.



- ◆ A tillage transect survey of the watershed was conducted with assistance from LqP, Lincoln and YM SWCD's. This is completed when the majority of spring planting is complete and will be continued the next two years to develop a trend.
- ◆ The annual canoe trip was postponed due to high water flows in the area. A lunch of hotdogs and chips was served. This event attracts new people each year and has proven to be a great way to get people on the river to increase their value of the river and its resources.
- ◆ The Lac qui Parle county fair display encouraged attendees to reflect on "Where Does Your Water Shed?"
- ◆ The Photography Contest was held again this year with very good participation. Calendars are made and distributed to partnering agencies and contest participants.
- ◆ The low-interest septic loan program assisted six landowners to upgrade their systems.
- ◆ The BWSR Academy and MAWD conference were attended with excellent speakers and networking opportunities.

PERMITS

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Managers find that a permit program is needed to help ensure wise development and conservation of the District's water resources in accordance with the District's watershed management plan. Work that requires a permit from the District may not be undertaken until a permit is issued. Obtaining a District permit does not relieve an applicant from the responsibility of obtaining all other required Federal, State, and local permits. All applicant's for a District permit must be submitted on the District's application form along with drawings or plans that adequately depict the proposed project and information required by the application form. The District does not currently charge a permit fee. The Board reviews all permit applications at the regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board may add reasonable conditions to the approval of a permit to address site-specific or activity-specific concerns. The requirements of any other permission (NPDES permit, wetland determination, public water permit, etc.) required for the proposed activity are incorporated into the District permit. A violation of other required permits is a violation of the District permit.

In 2014, the Board approved 372 permit applications. There were 310 permits issued in Lac qui Parle County, 50 permits in Yellow Medicine County, and 12 permits in Lincoln County. Permits were issued for main tile, seepage tile, ditch cleanouts, culvert replacement, terracing, alternative intake replacements, 638 projects, & pumps. The Board requests a detailed map of the completed project be sent to the office to be filed with the approved permit application when project is completed.

WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed managers are the LGU for the WCA program in Lac qui Parle County. In 2014 the LGU approved 310 permits and staff reviewed 344 applications for wetland impacts. Cropping history information was requested from eleven landowners to verify 8 years out of last 10 years to be kept with their watershed application permits. TEP reviewed three ag banking sites and two landowners have hired consultants to develop plans for enrollment in the banking program. One no-loss application was approved by the LGU. Staff attended training in wetland delineation review in August and BWSR Academy wetland track in October.

LQP-YB WATERSHED DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

The Watershed Board of Managers are responsible for overseeing the maintenance and repair of the following drainage systems in the Watershed District:

LQP Watershed Ditch #1	LQP Lateral A of Watershed Ditch #1
LQP Watershed Ditch #2	LQP Lateral A Watershed Ditch #85
LQP Watershed Ditch #81-82	LQP Watershed Ditch #88-1
LQP Watershed Ditch #32	LQP Watershed Ditch #92
Lincoln Watershed Ditch #11	Lincoln Watershed Ditch #55

In 2014 the Board received a petition for outlet to LQP Watershed Ditch #1 which was approved. There were nine maintenance orders on the Watershed Ditches that were completed. FEMA money was applied and received for work done on LQP Watershed Ditch #1. The Watershed Board held a final hearing on the Lac qui Parle County Improvement of Br 11 County Ditch #27 in December 2014. This project will let for bid in 2015. Watershed Ditch #92 was sprayed to control brush & weeds.

Lac qui Parle County Ditch Maintenance

The Lac qui Parle County Commissioners turned the maintenance of the 103 Lac qui Parle County Drainage systems over to the Watershed District in 2007. The Lac qui Parle County Commissioners remain as the Drainage Authority.

In 2014, the Watershed staff received 98 requests for maintenance on the Lac qui Parle County drainage systems. These were for ditch cleanouts, sinkholes, tile repairs, culvert replacements, crossing washouts, inlet repairs, & nuisance beaver dam removals. A ditch report is done monthly and reviewed with the Lac qui Parle County Commissioners. The County contracts with B&W Control to spray the ditches on a three-year rotation. The Lac qui Parle County Commissioners are in agreement that redetermination of benefits need to be done on a lot of the County systems but want it to be requested by landowner petition. The County Board received a petition for repair on Lac qui Parle County Ditch #70. Hearings were held and the project let for bid in November of 2014 with work to begin in the spring of 2015.

Nuisance Beaver Program

In 2014, the Watershed District paid cost-share on 176 nuisance beavers and three dam removals. The District funds a nuisance beaver program to help deter overland flooding and stream bank erosion caused by beaver dams in streams and ditches in the Watershed District. In 2014, the Board authorized 75% cost-share up to \$250 per beaver dam removal and \$12.50 per nuisance beaver with a total budget of \$5,000. The District requires paperwork be submitted with landowner signature and description of where and how many nuisance beaver are trapped. The front feet of each beaver must be turned into the District prior to payment being made. The trapper must be in compliance with DNR rules & regulations.

STONEHILL PARK & DEL CLARK LAKE



This earthen dam was built in the fall of 1985 as part of the Canby Creek Project to prevent the City of Canby from yearly flooding that cost thousands of dollars of damage annually. This dam is one of the largest earthen dams built in Minnesota. To get the cost/benefit ratio for the project, the Watershed District was required to include a recreational area which was named Stonehill Park/Del Clark Lake. Del Clark Lake/Stonehill Park offers a handicap accessible dock and pier, one of the few in the State of Minnesota.



There is a nice sandy beach and many days you can find a group sunning and or/playing volleyball on the beach. The lake is 154 acres and has a maximum depth of 30 feet. The park and lake are a popular destination and estimate that approximately 8,000 people visit the park from several states & Canada throughout the year. Ice fishing is a very popular activity in the winter months.



The park currently has 69 campsites. Area A has 33 sites with 28 of them being seasonal and 5 spots open for weekend/week campers. Area B has 6 spots open for weekend/week campers, and “the glenn” is used for seasonal spots. There are 5 spots available in the overflow for weekend/week campers as well. The Watershed Board is getting more requests for seasonal spots than they can fill. The Watershed District hires a manager who is required to live on site in the park house/office and they hire three seasonal employees. The camping season begins May 1 and ends October 1 each year.



UPCOMING PROJECTS

- Continue to seek funding of \$500,000 from the legislature for engineering analysis for two floodwater retention projects as identified in the PL 87-639 study at sites located in Norman Township, Yellow Medicine County on the West Branch of the Lac qui Parle River and Florida Township Yellow Medicine County.
- Begin the WRAPS monitoring program with MPCA. The Watershed District will be administering the grant and will work with agencies and landowners within the Watershed District.
- Complete the contract with the University of Minnesota on the LiDar GIS Terrain Analysis for the Watershed District. This will be used to identify critical source areas of erosion in the impaired reaches of the Lac qui Parle River and tributaries. Funding was awarded from a Clean Water Legacy grant.
- Pursue funding for three grade control structures on Del Clark Lake to protect the Lake from sediment and nutrients depositing into the lake.
- Provide 15% cost-share for building and repair of private retention structures to help with hydrology management.
- Continue to offer a SSTS low interest loan to upgrade private septic systems and landowner share of constructed practices that enhance water quality within the Watershed District thru a grant from MPCA. The interest rate is 3.5% for 10 years through a special assessment on landowner property taxes.
- Continue with education programs such as a weekly radio program photo contest, canoe trip, Earth Day event, and working with local schools, ladies groups, & 4-H groups to name a few.
- Provide a \$12.50 incentive for nuisance beaver in the Watershed and cost-share up to \$250 for beaver dam removal up to a \$5,000 yearly maximum.
- Continue the Volunteer Citizen Monitoring & Rain Gauge monitoring program.
- Work with landowner requests for ditch maintenance on the LQP County Ditch systems and continue to inspect the systems for sediment, weeds, brush, beaver dams and other obstructions to flow.
- Apply for grant dollars to install BMP practices/projects to target impairments listed in the approved TMDL for the Watershed.
- Target the sub-watershed of the North & South Fork of the Yellow Bank Rivers with cost-share up to 75% for replacing open tile intakes, grade control structures, stream bank stabilization projects, sediment and water control basins along with filter strip incentives with a grant received from MPCA.