



Elm Creek
Watershed Management Commission
2010 Annual Activity Report

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Table of Contents

	page
Annual Activity Report	1
The Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission	1
Meetings	1
Consultants	1
The Elm creek Watershed	1
Table 1: Area of Members within the Elm Creek Watershed	1
Watershed Management Plan	1
Local Watershed Management Plans	2
Table 2: Status of Local Water Management Plans	2
Status of 2010 Objectives	2
Interest Proposals	4
Financial Reporting	4
Wetland Banking	4
2011 Work Plan	5

Appendices

- 1 Commissioners, Staff and Consultants
- 2 Project Reviews
- 3 Lake Monitoring
- 4 Stream Monitoring
- 5 River Watch
- 6 Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP)
- 7 Stream Health Evaluation Program (SHEP)
- 8 Media Release
- 9 Financial Reporting

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Annual Activity Report.

This annual report has been prepared by the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission in accordance with the annual reporting requirements of Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410.0150, Subp. 2 and 3. It summarizes the activities undertaken by the Commission during calendar year 2010.

The Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was established to protect and manage the natural resources of the Elm Creek watershed. A Board of Commissioners comprised of representatives appointed by the member communities was established as the governing body of the Commission. Its current members are the cities of Champlin, Corcoran, Dayton, Maple Grove, Medina, Plymouth, and Rogers and the Township of Hassan. The table in *Appendix 1* shows the names of the Commissioners appointed to serve in 2010.

Meetings. The Commissioners meet monthly on the second Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. at Maple Grove City Hall, 12800 Arbor Lakes Parkway. These meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. Meeting notices, agendas and approved minutes are posted on the Commission's website, www.elmcreekwatershed.org.

Consultants. Also listed in *Appendix 1* are the individuals/firms serving as the Commission's administrative, legal and technical support staff along with the members of the Commission's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Commission has no employees.

The Elm Creek Watershed covers approximately 130.68 square miles and lies wholly within the north central part of Hennepin County, Minnesota. The Crow and Mississippi Rivers demarcate the northern boundary. Although some areas in the north drain to the Crow and Mississippi Rivers, they are within the legal boundaries of the Elm Creek watershed. Table 1 shows the area share of the member communities in the watershed. A map of the watershed can be viewed on the Commission's website.

**Table 1:
Area of Members within the Elm Creek Watershed**

Local Government Unit	Area (Square Miles)	%age of Watershed
Champlin	3.08	2%
Corcoran	36.09	28%
Dayton	25.06	19%
Hassan	18.17	14%
Maple Grove	26.37	20%
Medina	9.35	7%
Plymouth	4.45	3%
Rogers	8.10	6%

Watershed Management Plan. The Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission adopted its second generation *Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan* on December 8, 2004. The plan is available for viewing at <http://www.elmcreekwatershed.org/mgmtplan.shtml>. In 2008, the Commission adopted a Minor Plan Amendment revising its Water Quality standards.

The second generation Management Plan includes a section that identifies a number of goals and policies that conform to the overall purpose specified in Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.201. These goals and policies were developed to preserve and use natural water storage and retention systems. They address issues related to water quantity, water quality, recreation, fish and wildlife, enhancement of public participation, information and education, and management of the public ditch system, groundwater, shorelands, wetlands, and soil erosion.

Local Watershed Management Plans. Every member community must prepare and adopt its own water management plan. Local plans must comply with MN Statutes, Sec. 103B.235 and MN Rules 8410.0160 and 8410.0170 regarding local plan content and the requirements of the Commission's Watershed Management Plan. The status of member communities' local plans at December 31, 2010, is shown below.

**Table 2:
Status of Local Plans**

Community	Date Submitted	Commission Actions	Status
Champlin	28-Oct-08	10-Jun-09	Approved.
Corcoran	2-Mar-09	10-Jun-09	Approved.
Dayton	7-Feb-07	11-Dec-07	Approved.
Hassan	8-Oct-07	13-Oct-10	Approved
Maple Grove	30-Sep-08	7-Jan-09	Approved.
Medina	15-Oct-08	12-Aug-09	Approved.
Plymouth	28-Jul-08	01-Dec-08	Approved.
Rogers	17-Apr-06	13-May-09	Approved.

Status of 2010 Objectives. Following is a summary of the work undertaken by the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission in 2010 to meet the goals, objectives, and projected work plan outlined in its *2009 Annual Report*.

§ Reviewed local development/redevelopment plans for conformance with the standards outlined in the second generation Watershed Management Plan. Projects are reviewed for erosion and sediment control, wetland, floodplain and stormwater management, as well as Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permits. The Commission's technical staff performed 37 project reviews in 2010. Staff also reviewed a local water management plan from one community. A list of each project, its location, and the critical areas reviewed is attached as *Appendix 2*.

§ Served as the local government unit (LGU) for administering the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) for the cities of Champlin and Corcoran and the Township of Hassan. In 2010 the Commission reviewed 15 plans involving wetlands and received no new wetland banking applications. They also participated in five TEPs. Six new potential Wetland Conservation Act violations within the watershed in 2010 were investigated.

§ Conducted lake and stream monitoring programs to track water quality and quantity conditions. The Commission began monitoring Elm Creek and its tributaries in 1975 and the lakes in the watershed in 1980. The Commission conducts chemical, physical and biological monitoring of the streams and physical and chemical monitoring of lakes.

§ Monitored Diamond, Fish, French and Weaver Lakes and the Champlin Mill Pond in cooperation with Three Rivers Park District. The Park District's 2010 lake sampling results are attached to this report in *Appendix 3*. Historical trend data is also included.

§ Funded the monitoring of Cowley, Henry, and Rice Lakes through Metropolitan Council's Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP). Excerpts from the 2010 CAMP Report regarding these three lakes will also be included in *Appendix 3* when they are available. The full report can be requested by contacting Brian Johnson of the Metropolitan Council, brian.johnson@metc.state.mn.us, or (651) 602-8743. A table in *Appendix 3* shows the Commission's lake monitoring schedule. As the Commission continues to implement its second generation Management Plan, goals for these lakes will be constantly evaluated.

§ Continued to operate the monitoring station in Champlin in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Located at the Elm Creek Road crossing in the Elm Creek Park Reserve, the station collects continuous flow data

and periodic event and base water quality data. Real time data from the station may be viewed at http://waterdata.usgs.gov/mn/nwis/uv/?site_no=05287890&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060. Additional stream monitoring data are included in *Appendix 4*.

§ Promoted river stewardship through the River Watch program. Under the guidance of the Hennepin County Department of Environmental Services (HCDES), students from Kaleidoscope Charter School monitored Site 4 on Rush Creek near the intersection of 101st Avenue and Lawndale Lane in Maple Grove and Wayzata High School students monitored Site 17 near the crossing of Elm Creek and Peony Lane in Plymouth. *River Watch 2010*, available from HCDES, includes results from all the Hennepin County monitoring sites. Excerpts from the report on the sites in the Elm Creek watershed included are included in *Appendix 5*. The complete report is available on the Hennepin County website at <http://www.co.hennepin.mn.us>, keyword River Watch.

§ Participated in the Minnesota Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP). Four wetlands were monitored in the Elm Creek watershed – three in Dayton and one in Corcoran. More information about the Elm Creek watershed WHEP sites will be included in *Appendix 6*. The 2010 *Wetland Health Evaluation Report* will include results from all the Hennepin County monitoring sites. The complete report will be available soon and can be requested from mary.karius@co.hennepin.mn.us.

§ Partnered with the Hennepin County Department of Environmental Services (HCDES) in the Stream Health Evaluation Program (SHEP). When available, data from the sites in the Elm Creek watershed will be included in *Appendix 7*. The 2010 Stream Health Evaluation Program Report includes results from all the monitoring sites and is also available from mary.karius@co.hennepin.mn.us.

§ Continued development of the Elm Creek watershed-wide TMDL and Implementation Plan. Assessment work in the subwatersheds will be completed in approximately two years. Results from the modeling and assessment work will be summarized to describe multi-stressor Wasteload Allocations (WLAs), Load Allocations (Las) and load reduction goals for various stakeholder groups on a subwatershed basis. The watershed-wide Implementation plan will address management activities for all the surface waters in the watershed, both impaired and unimpaired. Completion of the TMDL study and Implementation Plan is projected in the year 2014.

The TMDL is divided into five phases. Phase 1 began in the spring of 2009 and continued through the fall of 2010. It will characterize the dissolved oxygen impairment in lower Elm Creek and identify the relative oxygen demand (OD) loading (biological and chemical) from landscape inputs, upstream reaches and internal processes. Phase II is being conducted in the Rush Creek subwatershed and will identify the source(s) of the Biological Impairment in Rush Creek, Nutrient Impairment in Henry Lake and the downstream contribution of OD loading to lower Elm Creek. Phase III began in spring 2010 and will carry through fall 2011 (possibly 2012, depending on the potential listing of Bacteria and Chloride impairment in Rush Creek).

In 2010 a Stakeholder Committee was formed consisting of representatives from each community in the hydrologic watershed and the agencies that perform water monitoring in the watershed as well as members of the citizenry. They will meet quarterly to review progress on this project. The committee reviewed the Initial Scoping Document. The goal of this document is to establish a common understanding of the watershed-wide TMDL. It will be revised and updated throughout the TMDL process based on feedback from the various stakeholders.

The Elm Creek project web page is located on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) website at: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/project-elm-creek-watershed.html>.

§ Throughout 2010 the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met in work session to update the Commission's Capital Improvement Program and to discuss alternative mechanisms for funding capital projects.

§ Together with the Bassett Creek, Pioneer-Sarah Creek, Shingle Creek and West Mississippi Watershed Management Commissions formed the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) Together they created a west metro-wide education and public outreach plan. Members of WMWA and other metro watershed organizations collaborated to develop and distribute two brochures, Commercial Snow and Ice Care and Residential Snow and Ice Care.

Awarded Water Quality Education Grants to the City of Dayton for a Demonstration Rain Garden, the City of Plymouth for a Road Salt Applicators Workshop, and to the Nature's Crossing neighborhood for their project, *Watersheds for All: Civic Responsibility through Watersheds*.

Exhibited at the Plymouth Yard and Garden Expo where information to improve water quality was distributed; approved Commission's membership in Blue Thumb, an educational program of the Rice Creek Watershed District, and co-sponsored a series of Metro Blooms Rain Garden Workshops for residents in Champlin and Plymouth in conjunction with its Education and Public Outreach Program.

Together with the other members of WMWA, the Elm Creek Commission developed a series of educational workshops targeting three topics: stormwater volume management to reduce runoff; nutrient management to improve water quality; and integrating TMDLs into city planning and management. A goal of the workshops is to help key decision-makers and their advisors make informed decisions that will protect and improve water quality, sustain property values, and make the most effective use of tax dollars. The workshops will be held early in 2011.

§ Maintained a website www.elmcreekwatershed.org to provide news to residents of the watershed and beyond. The Watershed Management Plan, monthly meeting materials, project reviews, Annual Reports, water monitoring results, watershed-wide TMDL updates and links to other watershed-related information are posted there. In addition, from time to time, news releases are provided to the member cities and their official newspapers for publication. (*Appendix 8*) In 2009 the Commission accepted a bid to redesign the website to incorporate the latest technologies and interactive capabilities. The website was updated in 2010 as budget allowed.

§ At their May 12, 2010 meeting the Commissioners adopted a 2011 operating budget totaling \$364.650, with total member assessments of \$188,000. (*Appendix 9*)

§ Published an annual report summarizing the Commission's yearly activities and financial reporting. The *2009 Annual Report* was approved by the Commission at their April 14, 2010 meeting.

Interest Proposals. The required biennial solicitation for interest proposals for administrative, legal, technical and wetland consulting services will be published in the January 31, 2011 edition of the *State Register*. The Commission's current consultants are listed in *Appendix 1*.

Financial Reporting. *Appendix 9* includes the Commission's approved budget for 2010, a report of revenues and expenditures for 2010, and the 2010 Audit Report prepared by Johnson & Company, Ltd., Certified Public Accountants. The Commission's Joint Powers Agreement provides that each member community contributes toward the annual operating budget based on its share of the total market value of all property within the watershed. The 2010 cost allocations to the members are shown as part of the Operating Budget found in *Appendix 9*.

Of the \$402,700 operating budget approved by the Commission for 2010, revenue of \$29,000 was projected as proceeds from application fees, \$3,500 from partnership revenue, \$101,000 from grant revenue, and \$2,000 from interest income, resulting in assessments to members totaling \$180,000. \$87,200 was projected as coming from reserves.

The Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission maintains a checking account at US Bank for current expenses and rolls uncommitted monies to its account in the 4M Fund, the Minnesota Municipal Money Market Fund. Amounts paid by the Commission per the 2010 Audit (*Appendix 9*) are as follows:

General engineering	\$ 60,406
General administration	\$ 97,167
Education	\$ 11,053
Programs	\$ 34,995
Projects	<u>\$ 85,285</u>
Total	\$288,906

General engineering work includes review of local plans, review of development/redevelopment projects, attendance at meetings and other technical services. General administration includes support to technical staff, attendance at meetings, insurance premiums, annual audit, legal counsel, tracking grant opportunities, watershed planning, and other non-engineering services.

Wetland Banking. The Elm Creek Commission does not have a wetland banking program.

2011 Work Plan. The Commission has identified the following activities in 2011.

- § Continue to review local development/redevelopment plans for conformance with the standards outlined in the Commission's second generation Watershed Management Plan.
 - § Serve as the local government unit (LGU) for administering the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) for the cities of Champlin and Corcoran and the Township of Hassan.
 - § Conduct lake and stream monitoring programs to track water quality and quantity conditions.
 - § Continue to operate the monitoring station in Champlin in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey (USGS).
 - § Promote river stewardship through the River Watch program. Encourage participation by local school students and their teachers.
 - § Participate in the Minnesota Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP).
 - § Partner with the Hennepin County Department of Environmental Services (HCDES) in the Stream Health Evaluation Program (SHEP).
 - § Continue to identify projects for inclusion in a revised Capital Improvement Program and finalize preferred mechanisms for funding capital projects. Develop a Management Plan amendment to incorporate these revisions.
 - § Continue development of a watershed-wide TMDL and Implementation Plan. Phase II of the TMDL is currently underway in the Rush Creek subwatershed and will identify the source(s) of the Biological Impairment in Rush Creek, Nutrient Impairment in Henry Lake and the downstream contribution of OD loading to lower Elm Creek. Phase II began in spring 2010 and will carry through fall 2011 or possibly 2012. Phase III will be conducted in the upper Elm Creek subwatershed and will identify the source(s) of dissolved oxygen (DO) impairment in upper and lower Elm Creek and Nutrient Impairment in Rice and Fish Lakes. Phase III will extend from spring 2011 to fall 2012 (possibly 2013, depending on the potential listing of Elm Creek for Bacteria and Chloride impairment).
 - § Continue as a member of the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA). Continue to support the workshop series Protecting Our Water Resources – A Forum Series for Policymakers. Participate as an exhibitor at Plymouth's Yard and Garden Expo.
 - § Co-sponsor Rain Garden Workshops in conjunction with the Commission's Education and Public Outreach Program.
 - § Continue to repopulate and maintain the Commission's website www.elmcreekwatershed.org to provide news to residents of the watershed.
 - § Adopt a 2012 operating budget.
 - § Publish an annual activities report summarizing the Commission's yearly activities and financial reporting.
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Appendices