

1.1.1 2015-2024 Monitoring Program

The Third Generation Monitoring Program, which is set forth in more detail in Appendix D, has two organizing principles: continuation of routine flow and water quality monitoring Elm Creek and Sentinel Lakes, and rotating monitoring of other streams and lakes by the Commission and by volunteers.

The Third Generation Plan outlines a monitoring program for the next ten years. Each year the Commission will evaluate the proposed program and make modifications as necessary based on the most current data needs. The monitoring objectives guiding the Elm Creek monitoring program and the assessment of data are shown below.

MONITORING PROGRAM GOALS

1. To quantify the current status of streams and lakes throughout the watershed in comparison to state water quality standards.
2. To quantify changes over time, or trends, in stream and lake water quality in the watersheds.
3. To enhance the value of previous monitoring data by extending the period of record.
4. To track and quantify the effectiveness of implemented BMPs throughout the watersheds for the protection of water quality.
5. To evaluate progress toward meeting TMDL load reduction and other goals.

In general the components of the monitoring program include the following:

- Continuing routine flow and water quality monitoring on Elm Creek in partnership with the USGS.
- Periodic flow and water quality monitoring at additional upstream sites on Elm Creek (ECW and EC77); Rush Creek (RCSL); North Fork Rush Creek (RC116); and Diamond Creek (DCZ) on a rotating basis.
- Continuing the partnership with Hennepin County Environmental Services to obtain macroinvertebrate collections by volunteers each year through RiverWatch and the Stream Health Evaluation Program.
- Periodic macroinvertebrate collections on biotically-impaired streams to assess progress toward meeting those TMDLs, and periodic longitudinal dissolved oxygen surveys on those streams with a dissolved oxygen impairment. Annual monitoring of four "Sentinel Lakes:" Fish Lake, Rice Lake, Diamond Lake, and Weaver Lake. In the past this monitoring has been completed by the Three Rivers Park District under contract to the Commission.
- Continuation of the partnership with the Metropolitan Council to conduct lake surface water quality monitoring of other lakes by volunteers every two to three years through the Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP).
- Each year Three Rivers Park District prepares a report on current water quality and trends, and reports water quality monitoring data to the state's EQuIS database.

The schedule and monitoring program set forth in Appendix D is intended to collect data sufficient to evaluate progress toward meeting TMDL goals, and is consistent with the recommendations in the draft Elm Creek Watershed TMDL.