



## Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

### MEMO

To: BCWMC Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners  
From: Administrator Jester on Behalf of Plan Steering Committee  
Date: February 8, 2024

#### **RE: Plan Steering Committee Recommendations Following January Commission Meeting**

On January 18<sup>th</sup> the BCWMC held a commission workshop on issue statements, desired future conditions, and 10-year goals for several issues proposed for the 2025 Watershed Management Plan. After a brief overview of the planning process, attendees broke into four small groups to discuss the Plan Steering Committee's recommendations. Then the full group came back together to report on small group discussions and discuss some items in the larger group. A complete set of workshop notes is found [here](#) which were reviewed by the Plan Steering Committee.

At their meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Plan Steering Committee developed the following recommendations in response to the input received at the workshop.

- A. Revisions to issues and goals (shown with tracked changes in [this document](#))
  - i. Add goal under impaired waters: Maintain or improve fish index of biologic integrity for Medicine Lake. [Medicine Lake is the only waterbody in BCWMC eligible for a potential fish bioassessment goal due to its size.]
  - ii. Revise chloride issue statement: High chloride loading from ~~over~~use of winter deicers across the Bassett Creek watershed negatively impacts lakes streams, and groundwater water quality.
  - iii. Revise language in the third goal to match language in similar goals: ~~Protect~~ Maintain current conditions or improve water quality in priority lakes meeting State eutrophication standards, currently these lakes are: Cavanaugh Pond, Crane Lake, Parkers Lake, Sweeney Lake, Twin Lake, Westwood Lake, Wirth Lake
- B. Clarify in the goals section that the term "priority lake" refers to both priority 1 and priority 2 lakes.
- C. Revisit lake classifications that were developed for 2015 Plan ([Appendix C](#)) to make sure they are still appropriate.

- D. Keep priority level of “medium” for the following issues. The PSC reminds commissioners that while the Commission can do a lot – it can’t do everything everywhere and that if everything is classified as a high priority, then nothing is really a high priority.
- i. Streambank and gully erosion: Streambank and gully erosion is closely tied to the high priority issues and goals for impaired waters. Addressing streambank and gully erosion could be viewed more as a tool or strategy to address water resource issues but the PSC believes it should remain a standalone issue at a medium priority level. Although in a broad sense the issue is a medium priority, in some cases it may be determined that eroding streambanks or gullies contribute high amounts of pollution to a priority waterbody and therefore would be a high priority to address.
  - ii. Lakeshore erosion: Lakeshore erosion is also closely tied with high priority impaired waters issues and goals, and addressing lakeshore erosion may be viewed as a tool or strategy rather than a standalone issue. Again, it’s possible that subwatershed assessments may determine that addressing lakeshore erosion is an important practice to restore or protect water quality of priority waterbodies in some cases. Education and outreach to lakeshore owners and offering lakeshore restoration workshops will likely be included as strategies for addressing this issue.
  - iii. Education and Outreach: “Education and outreach” is its own issue category that will be discussed in depth in future PSC and commission meetings. The PSC recognizes education is a very important tool that will be used in the implementation of actions to achieve nearly every goal in the plan. It’s possible that it will be the only viable strategy to use in certain circumstances. However, the PSC recommends that it stays as a medium priority because of the level of time, funding, and effort required to implement a robust education program and the relatively unknown “return on investment” in terms of water quality improvements.

In addition to discussing the recommendations above, the PSC began a discussion on the possible need to increase the Commission’s staff capacity to better implement the programs, projects, and policies being considered as the 2025 Watershed Plan develops. The Budget Committee will review potential budget impacts of a full-time administrator or other project management staff. The PSC will continue to review options and will bring discussion points to the Commission in the future. The PSC also discussed the need to find ways for commissioners to fully understand and be actively engaged in commission projects and programs. The Administrative Services Committee began a similar discussion last year and may continue with that item this year.