



Hennepin County Minnesota

# Hennepin Natural Resources Partnership

Randy Anhorn, & Stacey Lijewski  
Hennepin County Department of Environmental  
Services

July 22, 2014

# Today's Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions (Randy Anhorn)
- Why are we here? (Randy Anhorn)
  - Redefining Hennepin County DES roles—What we do/how we can best serve our partners
  - Common themes
- WA Co. Water Consortium (Stephanie Souter/Jessica Pilarski)
- What's Next (Stacey Lijewski)
  - Beneficial?
  - How often?

# Why Are We Here?

- Two main reasons leading to *Partnership*
  - 1) New Supervisor of Land and Water Unit “*trying to figure things out*”
  - 2) County assuming all duties and authorities of SWCD

# 1) New Supervisor of Land and Water Unit

– Tried to figure out

- a) What DES actually did/does
- b) What DES's working relationship with potential partners was
- c) And, ultimately, how we could best serve Hennepin County and potential partners (looking for new opportunities)

# a) Our Current Work

- **Provide technical and financial assistance**

*Financial:*

- Award cost-share grants to implement best management practices that protect natural resources.
- Provide well-sealing funding to landowners to seal abandoned wells
- Provide funds to remediate contaminated lands
- Environmental education grants

*Technical:*

- To landowners, and local units of governments (WMOs)
- Manage the County's Lake Improvement Program
- Uphold the integrity of WCA
- Agricultural inspector (noxious weeds)





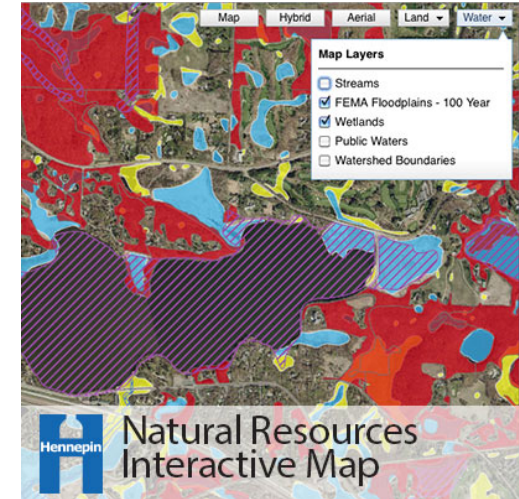
## a) Our Current Work

- **Protect and Preserve the County's Natural Resources**
  - Implement natural resource enhancement projects
  - Establish and manages conservation easements (County and RIM)
  - Prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species
  - Demonstrate best management practices



# a) Our Current Work

- **Update and Maintain County-Wide Natural Resources Data**
  - Maintain Natural Resources Inventory
  - Conduct wetland assessments and inventories
- **Provides Environmental Education and Volunteer Opportunities**
  - Operating volunteer monitoring and outreach programs
  - Participating in planning and implementation of environmental education
  - Provide environmental education grants (Green Partners)





## a) Our Current Work

- *Currently developing a natural resources strategic plan with the objective of:*
  - Better positioning the County and partners in promoting environmental stewardship, preserving existing natural resources, and restoring impaired natural resources.
  - Positioning ourselves and partners to more successfully leverage Amendment dollars.



## **b) Determined Working Relationships with Potential Partners**

- Have had conversations with many of you (water management organizations, cities, park districts and state agencies) to see where our current work fits into, and/or how we can better work together to meet common goals.

# Some Common Themes From Conversations

- Continue to provide technical assistance to LGUs in support of their programs
- Initiate groundwater coordination
  - Coordinating county-wide groundwater planning
- Develop partnerships with other groups on conservation easements/acquisitions
- Partner on grant applications where applicable
- Facilitate County-wide group to promote better collaboration and jointly address natural resource management issues that transect political and hydrologic boundaries.

## c) How can we help?

- As a result, we thought that most of the common themes mentioned could be addressed through our convening this ad-hoc group.
  - Our goal is to coordinate natural resource management (including surface and ground water) to provide for a more comprehensive approach to resource management throughout Hennepin County.

## 2) Assuming Duties and Authorities of SWCD

- As a result of the recent discontinuance of the Hennepin Conservation District (HCD), DES has assumed all duties and authorities of HCD and has taken on the lead role of fulfilling the delivery of soil and water conservation throughout the county.

# What Does This Mean?

- We (with help from partners) can determine the direction of the delivery of soil and water conservation in the county
- Availability of financial assistance provided to SWCDs
  - State Cost-Share
  - BWSR Block Grant
  - SWCD technical service areas (TSA) funds
    - Subwatershed assessments

# How can we best serve Hennepin County and our partners?

There are enough entities (cities, WD/WMOs, park districts) within the county undertaking land and water management responsibilities (required or not), so we do not need another

# How can we best serve Hennepin County and our partners?

## Look at new opportunities

- Coordinate the collaborative efforts of all land and water management throughout the County
  - Convene partners to facilitate better management and restoration of natural resources
    - Promote collaboration, sharing of information and resources
    - Partner to leverage resources
    - Work together on county-wide policy issues
      - Groundwater/surface water coordination
        - Groundwater planning
        - Tracking Metro water supply issues



# So, Here We Are

- Natural Resource Partnership
- Something similar in WA Co. (Water Consortium)
- Thought it may be beneficial here
- Provide a forum for discussion on water and natural resource issues
- Shared vision
- Transect political and hydrologic boundaries

- Possible topics
  - Common themes mentioned earlier
  - Better LGU/WMO collaboration
  - Education
  - Shared services
  - Partnerships on grant opportunities
  - Recent County AIS funding
  - Shared success/failure stories

# What Next

- Discussion
- Is this worthwhile?
- What would you like this to be?

# What Next

- What are the most important Natural and Water resource issues/topics or opportunities that should be addressed by this group?
- Seeking feedback

# What next

- Next meeting will be a more facilitated effort to define what this group should be and what some of the initial topics should be.