



LAC QUI PARLE YELLOW BANK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

2015

ANNUAL REPORT

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District

Courthouse, 600 6th Street

Suite #7

Madison, MN 56256

ESTABLISHMENT DATE: APRIL 19, 1971

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

Website: www.lqpybwatershed.org

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.

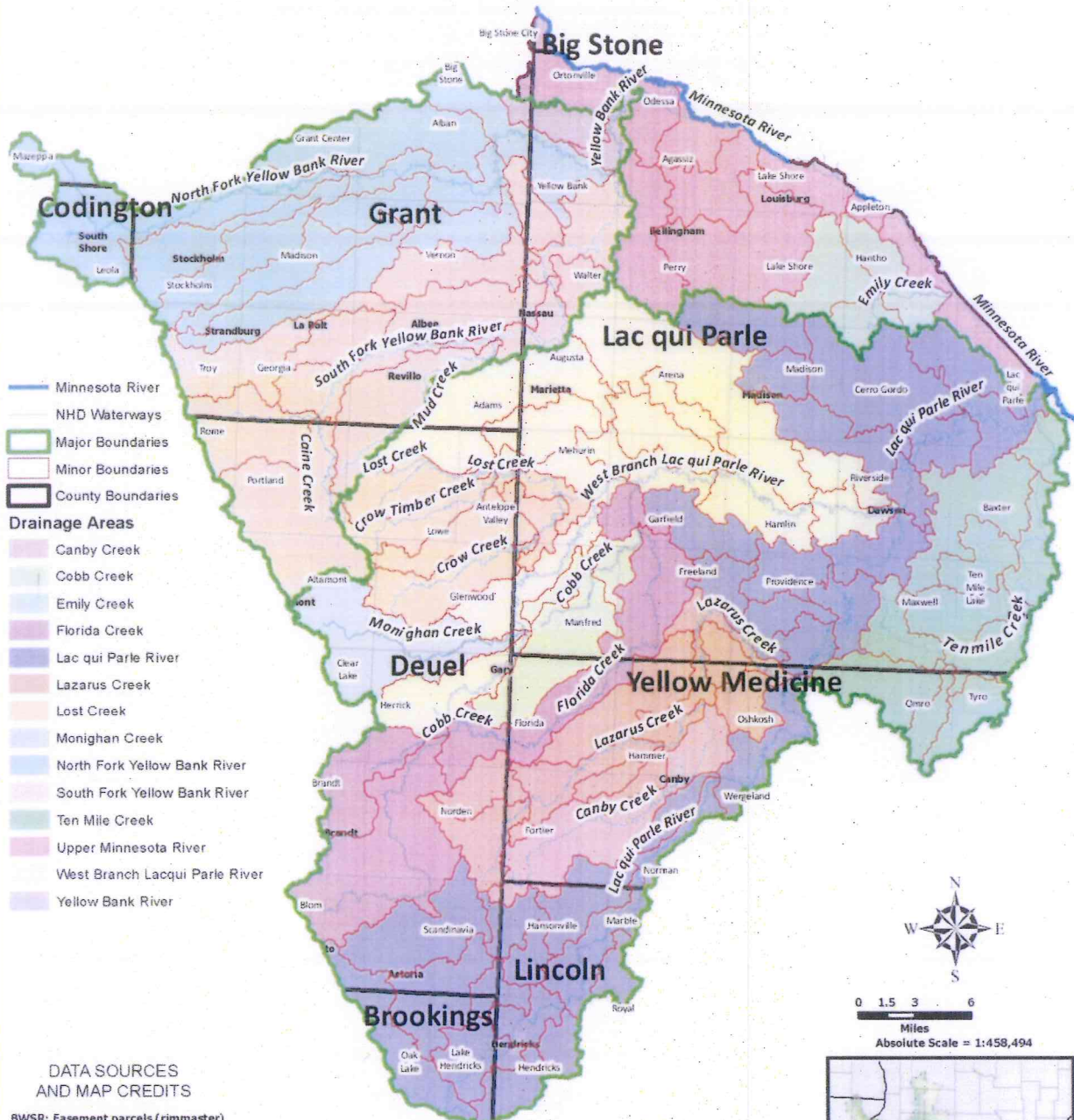
The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District starts out at Lake Hendricks in Lincoln County. The Lac qui Parle River flows northeastward through Yellow Medicine and Lac qui Parle Counties before entering the Minnesota River near Watson into Lac qui Parle Lake. In the first 60 miles of drainage, the 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.

POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District



DATA SOURCES AND MAP CREDITS

BWSR: Easement parcels (rimmaster)
 MNDOT: Roads, Municipalities, Ditches
 MNDNR: National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)
 Hydrogeology
 MRBDC: (Minnesota River Basin Data Center)
 Watershed boundaries, Streams, Lakes
 USGS: National Land Cover Dataset
 National Hydrography Dataset
 30 Meter Digital Elevation Model
 NRCS: US General Soil Map (STATSGO)

Map Prepared by: Rick Moore
 Water Resources Center
 Minnesota State University, Mankato
 February 12, 2008

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.
Phone: 320-598-3117

Website: www.lqpybwatershed.org
Fax: 320-598-3125

MEETINGS:

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District holds its regular meetings 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 & Commissioners of each County. The meeting date is posted on the District web-site. In 2015, the Board held twelve monthly meetings and four special meetings.

WEBSITE:

The District updated the website and gave it a new look in 2015. The website can be viewed at www.lqpybwatershed.org. The site enables the District staff to update and maintain the District's projects and reports. The website is very user friendly to residents of the Watershed District and they use it often to look up upcoming meeting information, projects, and to download various forms to fill out prior to coming into the office.

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District 2015 Board of Managers



Left to right: David Ludvigson, David Craigmile, Darrel Ellefson, Joe Ferguson, & John Cornell

A Board of Managers 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. In January, Joe Ferguson was appointed manager by the Yellow Medicine County Board to fill the unexpired term of Willis Beecher and then was appointed to a three year term in April.

2015 OFFICES AND TERMS OF THE MANAGERS OF THE DISTRICT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>TERM-END</u>
Darrel Ellefson	Chairman	Dawson, MN	Lac qui Parle County	03/31/2018
John Cornell	Vice-Chairman	Canby, MN	Lincoln County	03/31/2018
David Ludvigson	Treasurer	Madison, MN	Lac qui Parle County	03/31/2017
David Craigmile	Secretary	Boyd, MN	Lac qui Parle County	03/31/2016
Joe Ferguson	Publicity	Canby, MN	Yellow Medicine County	03/31/2018

District Staff:

The District maintains a staff of three full-time employees to carry out the works of the District. This staff consists of Trudy Hastad, Administrator, Mary Homan, Coordinator/WCA delineator -in-training, and Ron Fjerkenstad, Park Manager. The Office's for the Administrator & Coordinator are located in the Lac qui Parle County Courthouse, and the park manager office is located in the park house at Stonehill Park/Del Clark Lake rural Canby, MN.

2015 Advisory Board

Ron Antony
Joseph Drietz
Roy Marihart
Menno Fokken
Dennis Johnson
Terry Wittnebel
Harvey Swenson
Nate Ludvigson
Roger Ellefson

Yellow Medicine County Commissioner
Lincoln County Commissioner
Lac qui Parle County Commissioner
Yellow Medicine County SWCD
Lincoln County NRCS
Lac qui Parle County SWCD
Lac qui Parle County Ag Producer
Lac qui Parle Contractor
LQP Pheasants Forever/Local Surveyor

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Advisory Board met on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in the Lac qui Parle County Commissioner' Room, Courthouse, Madison, MN. Introductions were held and Roy Marihart was appointed Chairman with Nate Ludvigson as Recorder. The Board was updated on current projects in the Watershed and discussed how often they wished to meet. They felt a spring and fall meeting might be more beneficial to help keep them current with events in the Watershed. E-mail addresses were updated and they were reminded to use the District web-site. The minutes of the meeting can be found at the end of the annual report.

Legal Services:

The District obtains the service of Steve Torvik with the law firm Nelson, Oyen, Torvik for general legal counsel. John Kolb with the law firm Rinke Noonan Attorneys is on retainer for the District's legal ditch counsel.

Operating Budget:

A public hearing was held on September 2, 2014 (meeting #535) to approve the 2015 levy & budget of \$290,000. No one attended the public hearing, so there being no opposition, the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed managers approved the 2015 levy of \$290,000 along with the 2015 budget.

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 of 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 Watershed Managers were petitioned for Improvement of Br 11 CD #27 in Lac qui Parle County, and in 2015 bids were let and the project was completed in late fall of 2015. There were four maintenance orders on the ditches that were completed. Watershed Ditch #1 was sprayed to control brush & weeds.

Permits for Drainage:

In 2015, the Board approved 307 permit applications. There were 263 permits issued in Lac qui Parle County, 41 in Yellow Medicine County, and 3 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.

The Board finds 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 applicants for a District permit must be submitted on the District's application form along with maps, 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.

LGU – Wetland Conservation Act:

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed managers are the LGU for the WCA program in Lac qui Parle County. In 2015, the LGU approved 263 permits and staff reviewed 297 applications for wetland impacts. Cropping history information was requested from thirteen landowners to verify 8 years out of last 10 years to be kept with their watershed application permits. TEP reviewed four banking applications with one withdrawing his application. The other three applications are in various stages of the banking procedure. All sites have some unique circumstances that have slowed the process. There were two potential violations reviewed extensively with the area BWSR wetland specialist and were resolved. Lac qui Parle County had road work impacting 2.64 acres of wetlands which were eligible for the BWSR Local Government Wetland Replacement Program. Staff attended a Wetland Conference in January, WCA Administration and WCA training in March, & the BWSR Academy Wetland track in October.

Lac qui Parle County Ditch Maintenance:

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed managers & staff have been responsible for the maintenance of the 103 Lac qui Parle County Drainage Systems since 2007. The Lac qui Parle County Commissioners remain as the Drainage authority and contract with the Watershed District for the maintenance. This arrangement has worked out well.

In 2015, the Watershed staff received 80 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 Board as drainage authority received & held hearings for four petition for outlets. There were informational land owner meetings held on CD #12, CD #57, CD #63 to discuss the need for improvement on the systems. Landowners were going to get together and decide if they were going to petition for an improvement vs. repair. The County Board received a petition for repair on CD #70 in 2014 with the project completed in 2015, along with a redetermination of benefits. This is a tile system that outlets into the river. The County contracted with B & W Control to spray the ditches. The ditches are sprayed on a three-year rotation to remove brush & weeds.

Nuisance Beaver Program:

In 2015, the Watershed District paid cost-share on 181 nuisance beavers and four 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 2015, 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.

Tree Snag Program:

The Watershed District authorized \$5,000 to be used towards tree snag removal. Two quotes must be received for snag removal. In 2015, the Board received requests for two tree snag removals.

Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Clean Water Partnership 2015

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Clean Water Partnership (CWP), a special project of the Watershed District, focuses on water quality and provides education outreach in the Watershed. The CWP has targeted the North and South Fork Yellow Bank Rivers with a protection grant from MPCA. Incentives are offered to landowners to enroll in a Continuous CRP filter strip contract, replace open tile intakes, and cost-share of up to 75% for erosion control construction projects. A low interest loan program designed to upgrade non-compliant sewage systems assisted thirteen systems in 2015. A Clean Water Fund grant received in 2013-2015 completed a GIS Terrain Analysis throughout the Watershed that identifies and maps highly sensitive areas which can help with selection of conservation practices. A training session to use the Terrain Analysis was held with over twenty people attending. A Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) was received to monitor 29 sites in the Lac qui Parle and Minnesota River Headwaters Watershed during 2015 & 2016. This information is part of the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS). In October, a contract was signed with MPCA to coordinate the Lac qui Parle River WRAPS through 2019 that includes a work plan that was developed with partnering agencies.

CWP Education and Outreach Activities in 2015:

- Presentations on WRAPS were made at several local service clubs and annual township meetings in the Watershed.
- Weekly radio shows continue to be popular from mid-April through October. Various environmental topics and concerns are discussed along with government program guidelines.
- An Earth Day event was held at Del Clark Lake with information available on citizen monitoring, WRAPS, Watershed trivia, and tours of the park.
- Newsletters were designed and sent to landowners in the North and South Fork Yellow Bank Rivers.
- The annual canoe trip started at the Lac qui Parle County Park and paddled to County Road 31 where the USGS monitoring station and SWAG monitoring was demonstrated.
- TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) meetings were held to develop the work plan for the WRAPS report.
- Tillage Transect survey was conducted with assistance from Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, and Yellow Medicine SWCD's Conservation Corp Interns. This was completed after the majority of spring planting was completed. It provided an opportunity for the Interns to explore the Watershed in their respective counties.
- An opportunity was provided to view a biological crew from MPCA electrofishing in the Yellow Bank River. They then identified and counted the fish species and returned them to the river. About 15 people enjoyed this and asked many questions.
- A special meeting was held for landowners in the North and South Yellow Bank River to provide information about the buffer legislation.
- Homan was a presenter of the Water Cycle at the Area 5 Environmental Fair sponsored by Area 5 SWCD's.
- A Cover Crop Field Day was held along the South Fork Yellow Bank River. NRCS representative, fertilizer plant manager, agronomist, and other local producers with cover crop experience were invited to discuss their experiences. Many questions were asked and everyone went away learning something about cover crops.
- The Photography contest was held again this year with very good participation. Calendars are made and distributed to partnering agencies, contest participants and others.
- The BWSR Academy and MAWD Conferences were attended.

STONEHILL PARK & DEL CLARK LAKE:

Del Clark Lake is actually an earthen dam that 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 dollar 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. Stonehill Park/Del Clark Lake offers a handicap accessible dock and pier, one of the few in the State of Minnesota. The lake is 154 acres and has a maximum depth of 30 feet. The park and lake are a popular destination and in 2015 estimated that approximately 5,000 people visited 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 five spots available in the overflow for weekend/week campers as well. The Watershed Board continues to get more requests for seasonal spots that 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:

- ❖ SWAG Grant will be completed in 2016 with staff collecting final water samples in June, July, & August.
- ❖ Continue the WRAPS program with MPCA.
- ❖ Partner with the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District for the Minnesota River Headwaters WRAP Program.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Pursue funding for three grade control structures on Del Clark Lake to protect the Lake from sediment and nutrients depositing into the lake.
- ❖ Continue to offer SSTS low interest loans 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 15% cost-share for building and repair of private retention structures to help with hydrology management.
- ❖ Provide \$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.
- ❖ Apply for grant dollars to install BMP practices/projects to target impairments listed in the approved TMDL for the Watershed.
- ❖ 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.