



2016

ANNUAL REPORT

Lac qui Parle–Yellow Bank Watershed District

Courthouse, 600 6th Street, Suite #7

Madison, MN 56256

Established April 19, 1971

Included Counties: Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine, Lincoln

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.

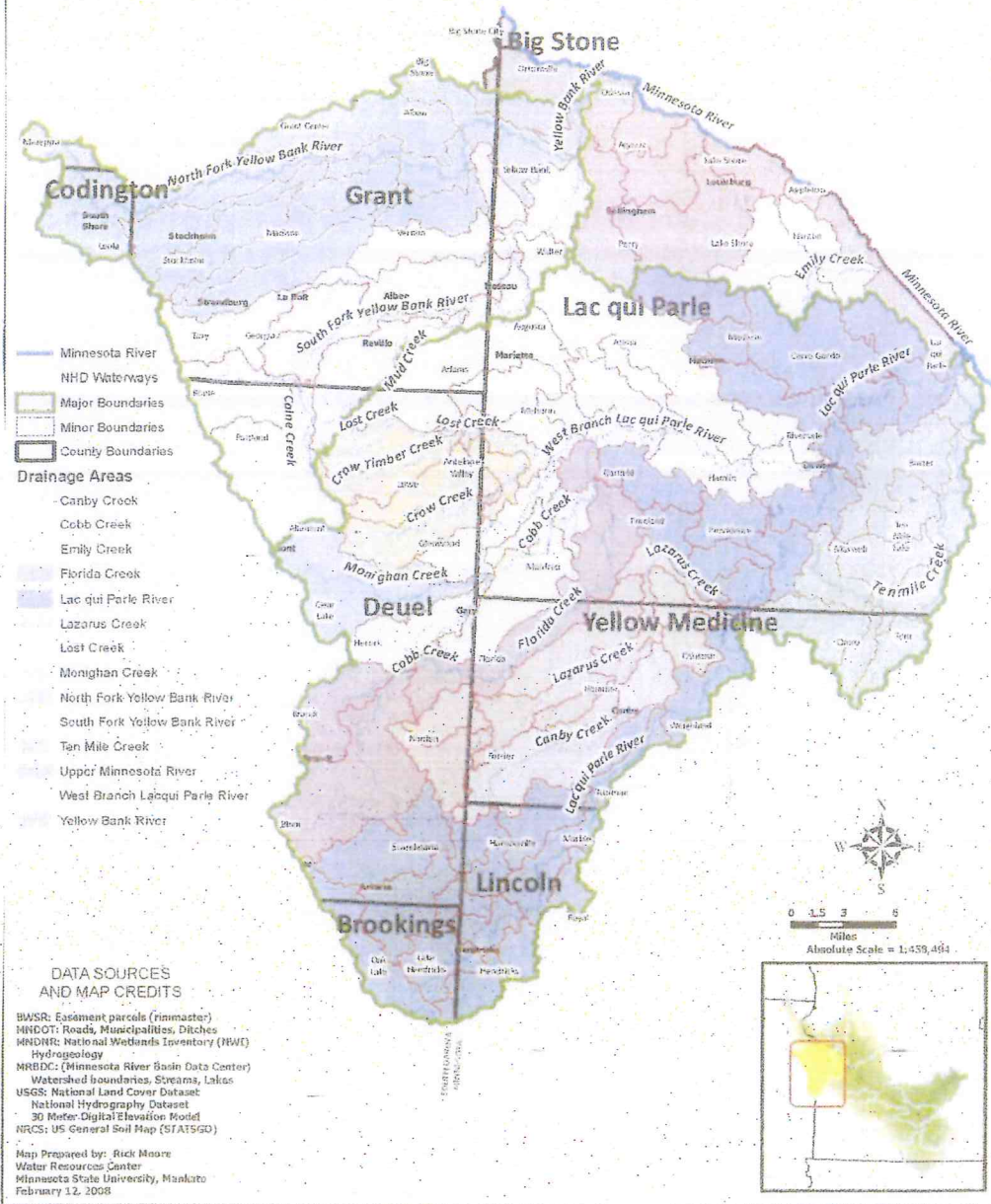
The Lac qui Parle–Yellow Bank Watershed District starts out at Lake Hendricks in Lincoln County. The Lac qui Parle River flows northeastward through Yellow Medicine and Lac qui Parle Counties before entering the Minnesota River near Watson into Lac qui Parle Lake. In the first 60 miles of drainage, the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



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:

In 2016, the Board held twelve (12) monthly meetings and three (3) special meetings.

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District holds its regular meetings the first Tuesday of the month in 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.

WEBSITE:

The District website is updated monthly and 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
2016 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.

2016 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. *In October, Mitchell Enderson was hired as Coordinator to train with Mary until her vacancy the end of December.* 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.

2016 Advisory Board:

Ron Antony	Yellow Medicine County Commissioner
Joseph Drietz	Lincoln County Commissioner
Roy Marihart	Lac qui Parle County Commissioner
Menno Fokken	Yellow Medicine County SWCD
Dennis Johnson	Lincoln County NRCS
Terry Wittnebel	Lac qui Parle County SWCD
Harvey Swenson	Lac qui Parle County Ag Producer
Nate Ludvigson	Lac qui Parle Contractor
Roger Ellefson	LQP Pheasants Forever/Local Surveyor

The Lac qui Parle–Yellow Bank Advisory Board met on Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Lac qui Parle County Commissioner's Room, Courthouse, Madison, MN. The meeting opened with nominations for Chairman & Recorder as per M.S. Chapter 103D.331. Roy Marihart was appointed Chairman with Nate Ludvigson as Recorder. The Board was updated on current projects in the Watershed and asked for comments, concerns regarding Watershed activities. The minutes from the meeting are attached.

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 1, 2015 (meeting #547) to approve the 2016 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 2016 levy of \$290,000 along with the 2016 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 May of 2016 the Watershed Managers were petitioned for an Improvement of Lac qui Parle County Ditch #54. ISG Engineers were appointed as engineer for the project and the Board is currently anxiously awaiting their report. There were three maintenance orders on the ditches that were completed.

Permits for Drainage.

In 2016, the Board approved 289 permit applications. There were 252 permits issued in Lac qui Parle County, 28 in Yellow Medicine County, and 9 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 2016, the LGU approved 252 watershed permits and staff reviewed approximately 300 applications for wetland impacts. Cropping history information was requested from fourteen landowners to verify 8 years out of last 10 years to be kept with their watershed application permits. Staff worked extensively with landowners and completed two wetland bank applications, flagged a wetland area for bridge replacements, and held three TEP meetings. The LGU Board approved two wetland bank applications, one No-Loss Decision, and one exemption application for 2016.

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 2016, the Watershed staff received 58 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 three petition for outlets. There were informational land owner meetings held on JD #4, & CD #42 to discuss the need for improvement on the systems. The County Board received a petition for repair on CD #12 in 2016. The Board ordered redetermination of benefits on JD #4 and CD #54. A company was hired to run a camera inside JD #4 to determine condition of the pipe thru the City of Dawson. The Watershed District oversaw the County contract with B & W Control to spray the ditches. The ditches are sprayed on a three-year rotation to remove brush & weeds. The Watershed worked on converting the paper drainage maps into a format for DNR and submitted to DNR for the buffer project.

Nuisance Beaver Program:

In 2016, the Watershed District paid cost-share on 124 nuisance beavers and two 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 2016, 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 2016, the Board received requests for seven (7) tree snag removals.



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 dollars 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 2016 estimated that approximately 3,500 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 hire three-four seasonal employees. The camping season begins May 1 and ends October 1 each year.

Education and Outreach Activities in 2016:

- Buffer meetings were held in two locations in January & again in August to inform landowners of the Buffer Law to be implemented in 2017 and 2018. This was done in partnership with the LQP SWCD office. An average of 68 landowners attended each session.
- TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) meetings were held to continue work on the WRAPS program. A Survey was compiled and a handout developed to get overall perceptions of water quality in the Watershed and to assist with outreach needs.
- A Weekly radio show continues to be popular from mid-April through October. Various environmental topics and concerns are discussed along with government program guidelines.
- Our 2016 Earth Day event included a scavenger hunt, park cleanup, and a radio call-in for your "Favorite Environmental Hero".
- Staff presented at the Annual Township meeting on WRAPS and Watershed permit rules & regulations regarding drainage that affects township roads/culverts.
- The annual canoe trip was cancelled due to weather, rescheduled and canceled due to illness. This is a popular event and will schedule again in 2017.
- A Tillage Transect survey was completed after the majority of spring planting was completed.
- Homan attended a two day training with DNR staff on identification of native plants.
- Held two meetings with the City of Canby, YM County, Emergency Manager, Police & Fire Department for City of Canby to work on an Emergency Action Plan for the Canby Creek Dams. This plan is required by State DNR Dam Safety and the final draft was completed in December.
- A Level II Performance Review was completed by BWSR in October.
- The Board approved and adopted an updated Personnel Policy and a Data Practices Policy.
- The Photography contest was held with very good participation. Photo's must be from the Watershed District area. Calendars were made and distributed to partnering agencies, contest participants and others.
- A fair booth was set up at the local County fairs on WRAPS using the retractable banners along with other information.
- Staff & manager's attended the MAWD Conferences – Summer Tour, & Annual meeting.
- A tile inventory is being worked on for the Upper Minnesota Watershed WRAPS.
- Staff attended three training sessions on the Terrain Analysis Data. Maps were then developed and staff completed some ground-truthing with the results on a subwatershed basis with best management practices based on a runoff risk associated with soil types, slope, and land cover.

Lac qui Parle WRAPS in 2016

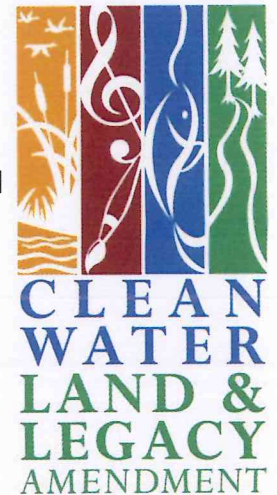
The Lac qui Parle River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) continued to collect surface water samples from sixteen sites E. coli bacteria throughout the watershed with the Surface Water Assessment Grant. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) also conducted bio monitoring in the watershed. Both water and bio-monitoring samples will be assessed in 2017 to help determine priority areas in the watershed for both restoration protection needs. Education is critical as we need citizens to share their expertise about the river and watershed. Retractable banners were used at the Lac qui Parle



County fair to explain the WRAPS process and watersheds. Local partners include SWCD's and NRCS in Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine and Lincoln counties who work closely with the watershed as the strategies are developed for the Lac qui Parle report. The Yellow Bank River is included in a WRAPS study that the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District is conducting. This has included an updating a tile inventory of the Yellow Bank watershed. Both WRAPS will be developed with the assistance and guidance of MPCA with funding through the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment.

Terrain Analysis Data

An Accelerated Implementation grant with the Board of Water and Soil Resources to complete a GIS terrain analysis. The terrain analysis has been completed and maps have been developed on subwatershed basis with best management practices (BMP) based on a runoff risk associated with soil types, slope and land cover. Once the maps were developed, staff did a driving survey to ground-truth the results. In critical areas the BMP placements have been very good but some of the non-critical areas they were not as suitable. This tool will be effective when developing strategies during the WRAPS study. It was funded through the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment.



LqP-YB Clean Water Partnership SSTS Loan Program

The entire Lac qui Parle County is now eligible for the low-interest loan program to upgrade septic systems. This change became effective in September when a new contract was approved with MPCA that provides another \$500,000.00 in loan dollars to the county. The loan program has been very popular with homeowners and contractors. The loan is assessed to the homeowners real estate taxes at 3.5% interest for ten years.

Upcoming Projects:

- ❖ Continue and expand use of Prioritized, Targeted and Measureable as criteria for Goals and Objectives in the next water management plan as appropriate.
- ❖ Continue to partner with our respective local units of government within the Watershed for WRAPS and to transition to “One Watershed, One Plan” approach.
- ❖ Use PTMapping and SAM modeling to prioritize BMP’s that enhance water quality within the Watershed District.
- ❖ Review the current permit application form & rules to promote conservation practices be in place to aid with water management within the District.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Develop an orientation and continued education plan for both board and staff and keep records of trainings in staff files.
- ❖ Provide 15% cost-share for building and repair or private retention structures to help with hydrology management.
- ❖ Pursue funding for three grade control structures on Del Clark Lake to protect the Lake from sediment and nutrients depositing into the lake.
- ❖ Work with landowners to upgrade private septic systems thru the SSTS low interest loan thru MPCA. These needed upgrades will enhance water quality within the Watershed District. 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.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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.