



WinLaC Partnership — 1W1P —

Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

July 2022 Update

The Mississippi River-Winona and La Crescent watersheds define the WinLaC Planning area. The **WinLaC Partnership** is tasked with developing a ten-year Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the WinLaC Planning area. This process began in 2021 and will be completed by June 2023.

Advisory Committee:

The role of the Advisory Committee is to make recommendations on the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the WinLaC Planning area to the Policy Committee. (The Policy Committee makes final decisions about the content of the Plan and its submittal to the State.)

The Advisory Committee includes:

- Staff representatives from each of the local governments in the Partnership (Counties and Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Houston, Olmsted, Wabasha and Winona, Stockton-Rollingstone-Minnesota City Watershed District and the City of Winona)
- State agency partners
- Representatives from other entities involved with water and environment, such as non-profits, cities within planning area, citizen-based environmental groups, sporting organizations, and farm organizations/agricultural groups.

Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries:

WinLaC Advisory Committee meetings have been held as Joint meetings with either the Policy Committee or Planning Work Group. All meetings involving the Advisory Committee were conducted in a hybrid format. Members could either attend in-person (at City of Winona Council Chambers) or attend remotely. All these meetings were conducted using a facilitator.

November 8, 2021: Joint Policy-Advisory Committee meeting

Meeting Purpose: Introduce Advisory Committee members to the One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) process and work to prioritize Watershed Issues and Opportunities.



Prior to the meeting members received a Watershed Issues and Opportunities Worksheet. The worksheet is a comprehensive list of issues and opportunities impacting natural resource management in the WinLaC watershed. The list was originally developed by consultant, Houston Engineering, Inc., using reports and existing plans. The list was later reviewed by the Planning Work Group and Policy Committee and validated by the public through surveys and comments received at the September 2021 Public Kickoff meeting.

A list of 34 Issues or Opportunities were reviewed. These were grouped into four categories: Groundwater, Habitat & Recreation, Land Use, and Surface Water. Through a facilitated exercise, the Advisory Committee worked through the List and ranked into Priority levels:

- Priority A – These are the most important. These issues will be addressed first within the Plan
- Priority B – Important, but less of a priority. These issues will be addressed within the ten-year implementation of the Plan
- Priority C – Still important, but are the lowest local priority items. These issues may be addressed through implementation of higher priority items, or they are issues that are more easily addressed by State entities; local Partners are not able to address directly.

The Prioritized List was approved by the Policy Committee at its January 10, 2022 meeting.

Final Priority A Issues

Category	Issue Statement
	Need for increased field management practices to reduce excessive nutrient and sediment delivery to streams and enhance nutrient cycling
	Elevated levels of nitrates in drinking water from agricultural and wastewater sources
	Excess nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) loading to watershed streams, and impact on aquatic life
	Excess sediment loading as a primary stressor to aquatic life, habitat, and recreation
	Failing or noncompliant septic systems and their potential for groundwater and surface water contamination
	Increased annual precipitation and more intense rainfall events and their impact on hydrology, water quality, and infrastructure, and the need to plan for resiliency



Category	Issue Statement
	Increased protection of wellhead/source water areas to reduce groundwater contamination
	Need for improving soil health for carbon sequestration and agricultural productivity
	Urban stormwater runoff which can contribute to poor water clarity / quality, alter natural flow and infiltration of water, and harm aquatic life
	Excessive upland and overland sediment loading due to various land use practices

Final Priority B Issues

Category	Issue Statement
	Enhancement and long-term protection of forest, native prairie, and pollinator habitats and corridors
	Unsealed or poorly constructed wells as a conduit for groundwater contamination from the land surface
	Nutrient runoff and legacy loading in Lake Winona and its impact on water clarity, aquatic life, and habitat
	Loss of natural wetlands , in particular riparian and backwater floodplain wetlands (Mississippi River Floodplain) and its impact on water quality, flood damage reduction, and wildlife habitat
	Surface and groundwater interconnectivity due to karst geology
	Excess sediment from near-channel and in-channel sources (floodplains, terraces, and streambanks)
	Pasture runoff and need for managed grazing within riparian corridors
	Flooding and its associated impact to homes, infrastructure, and natural resources
	Continued high levels of E. coli despite numerous reduction efforts and its impact on aquatic recreation opportunities
	Increased drainage (tile networks and drainage ditches) increasing downstream speed and velocity of water and associated sediment/ nutrient delivery to channels and ditches



Category	Issue Statement
	Increased presence of terrestrial invasive species and its impact on native plant species
	Enhancement and protection of trout fisheries and habitat from adverse conditions
	Presence of aquatic invasive species threatening aquatic vegetation and aquatic life

January 25, 2022: Joint Advisory – Planning Work Group Meeting

Meeting Purpose: Prioritize Subwatersheds and Implementation Actions by Resource

Prior to the meeting, members received a Resource and Subwatershed Prioritization Packet. The “Packet” was developed by the Consultant, using input from the Planning Work Group. Geospatial data layers were used to prioritize issues by subwatershed (HUC-12) throughout the WinLaC planning boundary. The WinLaC can be divided into 26 subwatersheds (distinct priority areas).

Through a facilitated exercise, members reviewed draft maps that identify subwatersheds that need protection and those that need to be prioritized for each issue that will be included in the Plan. Input was received on whether these maps adequately capture the priority issues and correctly identify where work should be focused within the WinLaC area.

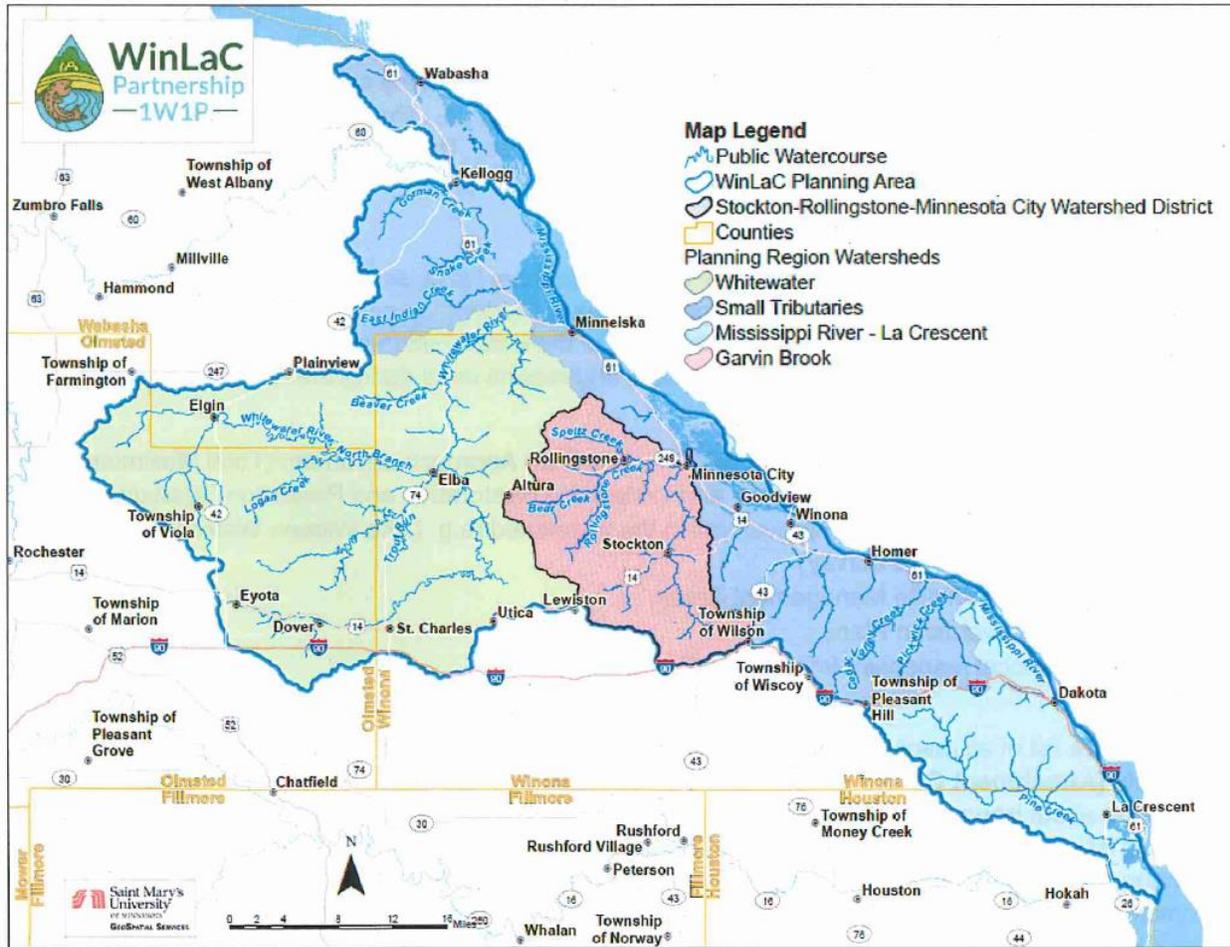
April 26, 2022: Joint Advisory – Planning Work Group Meeting

Meeting Purpose: Review Issues Section for Plan and make recommendations before Policy Committee approval; Review Measurable Goals and make recommendations for Policy Committee approval; Provide input on Implementation Activities.

Issues Section Discussion: The Issues Section (Watershed Priority Issues and Opportunities) is brief narrative description of how the Priority Issues and opportunities were developed for the WinLaC Plan. It describes that the WinLaC is divided into four planning regions and provides an overview of each. The planning regions: Whitewater River Watershed, Garvin Brook Watershed, La Crescent watershed and the Small Tributaries that drain directly into the Mississippi River.

This section was later approved by the Policy Committee on June 13, 2022.





Measurable Goals Discussion: Goals for each Priority A and B Issue are being developed and input was provided by Advisory Committee members. Proposed goals as well as associated maps showing prioritized subwatersheds were used to facilitate discussion.

Implementation Activities: Advisory Committee was introduced to the Implementation Activities Tables. Five tables are being developed for each of the four planning regions and one for the entire watershed. The tables include Goals with a description of that goal, the measurable output for that goal, funding sources, lead entities (partners) for actions to address the goal as well as overall cost to implement. The tables are currently in draft form and need further review.

July 11, 2022: Joint Policy-Advisory Committee meeting

Meeting Purpose: Review and make recommendations for Measurable Goals Section of Plan; Review and recommend Watershed Implementation Programs Section for Policy Committee Approval; Review and recommend Plan Administration and Coordination Section for Policy Committee Approval; Review Action Tables.

Measurable Goals Section: This Section provides an overview of identified goals for each Priority A and B issue. Both short-term (within ten years) and long-term goals are included with appropriate maps showing focus areas for that priority issue in the watershed. The Advisory Committee members approved for review and approval by the Policy Committee.

Policy Committee approved at its July 11, 2022 meeting (immediately following the Joint meeting).

Watershed Implementation Programs Section: This Section is a brief overview of the five major types of programs that are available to implement priorities of the Plan, along with descriptions of various programs that are currently in use. After comments received, the Advisory approved this Section as a working section for the Plan.

The Policy Committee approved this Section at their July 11, 2022 meeting.

	<p>Projects and Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field management practices • Soil health practices • Technical support and assistance
	<p>Education and Public Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events • Removing barriers to conservation action • Field days
	<p>Monitoring and Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality monitoring • Well inventory • Groundwater trend analyses
	<p>Capital Improvement Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stream restorations • Large habitat complexes • In-lake management • Flood control structures
	<p>Regulation and Local Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCA enforcement • Buffer enforcement • AIS management • Well and septic regulation



Plan Administration and Coordination Section: This Section is a brief overview of how the Plan, once completed, will be implemented and how the partners will collaboratively work together. The WinLaC Partners have yet to determine whether they will use a Joint Powers Collaborative or create a Joint Powers Entity. The Advisory Committee made comments and recommended that the Policy Committee approve this Section.

The Policy Committee made a motion to accept the Section as part of the Plan at its July 11, 2022 meeting.

Implementation Activities: This meeting was the Advisory Committee's second look at the Implementation Tables. The tables are currently in draft form and need further comment before final edits are made.

