

Section 2

Guiding Principles & Mission Statement



A. Overview

To provide guidance for the development and implementation of this Plan, the SRCL Planning Committee developed a set of guiding principles and a mission statement. The guiding principles and mission statement, as presented in this section, provide broad yet meaningful concepts for the SRCL to use when communicating with citizens and public officials about the actions that it would like to take. An overall implementation strategy for the Sauk River watershed is also discussed in this section.

B. Guiding Principles

The SRCL Planning Committee established a list of principles to be used to guide the development of this Plan. The Planning Committee also established a set of principles to guide the Plan's implementation. The following is a list of the principles that the Committee adopted:

Planning Process Principles

- Public Involvement. Encourage the involvement of a broad and diverse range of people, interest groups and elected officials from the SRCL Sublakeshed.
- Technical Support. Convene a technical group (SRCL Technical Committee) of staff from the resource agencies working in the watershed to identify critical natural resources and habitat areas and ways to minimize the impacts of human activity.
- Planning Committee. Create a citizens advisory committee to set policy and planning objectives after considering input from the public and the assessments and recommendations provided by the Technical Committee.
- Comprehensive View. The Planning Committee will consider a wide range of topics as it develops the policies in the Plan.
- Clarify Roles. Identify the groups, organizations and agencies that should be working on specific objectives and actions.
- Evaluate Progress. Create a method to measure and evaluate progress made on the Plan's goals and objectives.
- Celebrate Success. After completing the Plan, the SRCL and its partners will celebrate their success in laying out a roadmap for the future.
- Update the Plan. In 5 years, the SRCL Board will initiate the process to update the Plan.

Implementation Process Principles

- Public Involvement. Encourage the involvement of a broad and diverse range of people and interest groups from the SRCL Sublakeshed in implementing the Plan. Appoint liaisons from each lake to serve as coordinators of the Plan's implementation.
- Organize. Internally organize the SRCL through subcommittees and working groups to spread the Plan's workload throughout the SRCL membership.
- Collaboration. Actively encourage and leverage other groups, organizations and agencies working in the Lakeshed to help implement the Plan.
- Flexibility. Consider a wide range of new and evolving opportunities to advance the implementation the goals of this Plan. Encourage the development and evaluation of alternative methods. This Plan is intended to be a guide for implementation efforts. The specific actions are not cast in stone.
- Politically Active. Develop political connections to help implement the Plan.
- Accountability. Periodically report to the SRCL membership and the general public on progress achieved as well as areas needing more work.



C. SRCL Mission Statement

A mission statement should be a general overarching statement that describes the purpose of an organization and what it intends to do. Mission statements should be short and, concise, yet encompassing so they can quickly convey the primary emphasis or direction for an organization. Lastly, mission statements should be reflective of the ecologic, economic and social context that the community works within.

The Context for the SRCL, its Mission and Overall Approach

The people living, working and recreating in the Sauk River Chain of Lakes area face a number of major challenges to maintaining and enhancing their quality of life. From an ecological perspective, the amount of land area that drains into the Sauk River Chain of Lakes is enormous relative to the size to the surface area of the fourteen lakes. In addition, the lakes are a reservoir system of flowage and non-flowage lakes, considered by some leading water resource experts to be one of the most complex aquatic ecosystems in the state.



A second major consideration is the rapid economic growth and corresponding development pressures occurring in the greater St. Cloud region. Land development and infrastructure expansions are increasing impacts to the lakes, which already have experienced intensive shoreland development over the last fifty years. Plus, this regional growth pattern is coming at a time when significant reductions in state and local government budgets for resource management have been occurring for the past four years.

From a social perspective, the method of governing human activities in the Chain of Lakes region is splintered and complicated. The Planning Committee considered the fact that the watershed draining into the Sauk River Chain of Lakes (the SRCL Lakeshed) overlaps into five counties (Pope, Douglas, Todd, Meeker, and Stearns), forty-three townships, fifteen cities and one watershed district. Each of these local units of government plays varying roles in managing land and water resources that ultimately affect the Sauk River Chain of Lakes. In addition, there is a host of regional, state and federal agencies and organizations that play unique roles in managing land and water resources.



The SRCL Mission Statement

Given 1) the complex nature of water and land resource base, 2) increasing growth and development pressures on the natural resources, and 3) a confusing array of governmental structures coupled with limited time and funding, the SRCL has adopted the following mission statement:

Mission Statement

The mission of the Sauk River Chain of Lakes Inc. is:

*To **encourage** and **support**
the responsible use and management
of water and land resources
in the Sauk River Chain of Lakes watershed.*

The SRCL sees a need to increase the awareness and understanding of the nature and value of the water resources in the SRCL Lakeshed both by people within the SRCL membership and by the general public. It wants to continue to learn about the relationship between land and water resources and the impacts that human activities place on the SRCL Lakeshed. The SRCL believes that by better understanding these relationships, it will be able to more effectively participate in the management of the overall environment.

The SRCL is committed to improving water quality and encouraging the mitigation of existing problems while at the same time supporting the social and economic needs of the SRCL Lakeshed. The SRCL believes that it needs to both broaden involvement of citizens and landowners and focus its limited resources. It will encourage partnering organizations and agencies to do likewise.

To do all this and more, the SRCL is convinced that it needs to closely partner with resource agencies to maximize the coordination of efforts to more efficiently and economically pursue the wise management of water and land resources in the SRCL Lakeshed.

This Plan has been prepared in a comprehensive manner to communicate the areas or portion of the resource management workload that SRCL intends to work on. This Plan also includes recommendations to resource agencies on actions the SRCL requests be addressed.

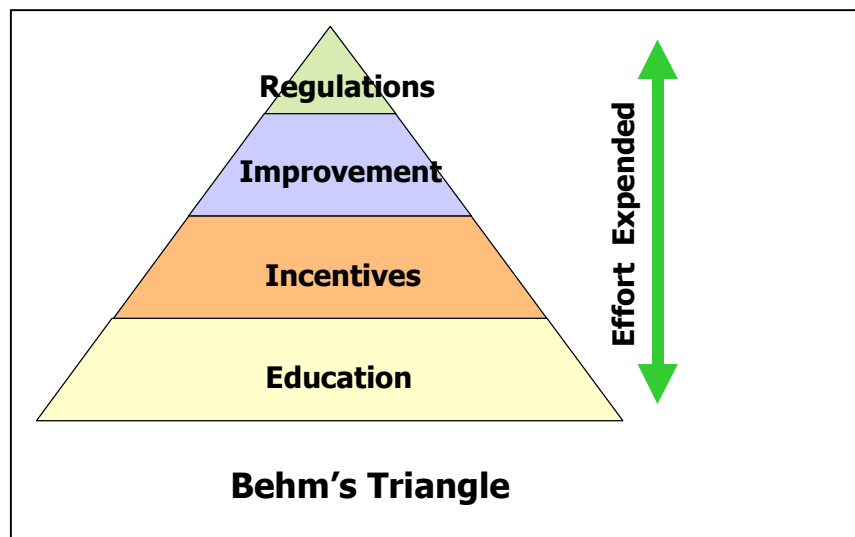
D. Overall Implementation Strategy for the Sauk River Watershed

Description of the Overall Implementation Strategy

The 2003 – 2012 Overall Plan adopted by the SRWD Board of Managers included an overall implementation strategy. The strategy was based on four implementation concepts including the following:

- The District encourages the wise use of water and land resources throughout the entire watershed through **education**.
- The District encourages the use and application of sound scientific resource management approaches, technologies, and methods to address water resource issues through **incentive** programs.
- The District itself uses and applies sound resource management approaches, technologies, and methods to address water resource issues through **improvement** programs within the District.
- The District supports the implementation of a **regulatory** controls and enforcement mechanisms to address specific water management issues.

Figure 4
Behm's Triangle – The Overall Implementation Strategy



Why an Overall Implementation Strategy for the Watershed?

The District's intent in adopting an overall implementation strategy was to communicate the major ways in which the Board of Managers and staff would implement their Overall Plan.

As illustrated in the diagram above, the District places emphasis on implementing strategies located at the bottom of the triangle – education and incentives. These strategies tend to cost less and can generate positive results in more politically acceptable ways. In contrast, regulatory approaches and improvement projects tend to cost more both in actual dollars as well as in terms of political capital.

In adopting this philosophical approach, the District wants to be more effective and strategic in managing land and water resources and the people that use them. With increased emphasis on education and incentives, the District anticipates that over the long term, less will need to be done in terms of regulations and large-scale public improvement projects.

This overall strategy does not mean that the District will rescind its regulations or stop constructing water improvement projects. The Board of Managers determined that regulation and improvement projects should be reserved as a means to accomplish results where education and incentives have had limited success and/or were not adequate to address public safety and welfare concerns.

In summary, the Behm Triangle concept simply illustrates how organizations can work together more effectively with their constituents. This concept is based on promoting a cooperative working relationship with landowners and citizens by encouraging good behavior in relation to land and water resource management. The Board of Managers believes that the majority of citizens and landowners in the Sauk River Watershed District recognize the need for respecting others in their community and their property and that all individuals and stakeholder groups need to do their part in protecting public resources such as water.

SRCL Endorsement of the Overall Implementation Strategy

In a sense, the overall implementation strategy as adopted by the SRWD and characterized in Behm's Triangle, is a watershed wide strategy for all stakeholder groups to share and endorse.

By including the overall implementation strategy in their Plan, the SRCL supports this philosophy and will help the SRWD and other resource agencies in promoting it. Further, the SRCL encourages other resource agencies and organizations working in the watershed to endorse this strategy and commit to help build sustainable working relationships with local constituencies – landowners, business owners, taxpayers – in the implementation of their plans based on this philosophy.

Foundations for the SRCL Goals, Objectives, and Action Items

The next four sections of this Plan describe the goals, objectives, and action items that the SRCL proposes to accomplish over the next ten to twenty years to improve water quality in the SRCL Lakeshed. The guiding principles, mission statement, and overall implementation strategy served as foundations for the Planning Committee as they prepared the goals, objectives, and action items that follow.