

## Section 5

### Resource Initiative C:

### Land Use

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#### A. Key Issues

- **Growth and Development.** The Sauk River Chain of Lakes area is rapidly growing. The population in Stearns County is projected to increase by over 33 percent by the year 2030. The new four-lane Highway 23 will increase access to and from the St. Cloud urban area and beyond.
- **Land Use Planning and Implementation.** While Stearns County and several townships and cities in the SRCL Lakeshed have recently begun to address land use planning and implementation, more work is needed.
- **Public Awareness.** There is a lack of understanding by landowners and the public about the impacts of land use on water quality.

#### B. Key Findings

- **Historic Land Cover Change.** The landscapes of the SRCL Lakeshed have changed dramatically over the last 100 years. Forest cover has decreased by 40 percent. Over 75 percent of the wetlands have been drained and over 80 percent of the shoreline has been developed.
- **Phosphorus and Land Use.** The amount of phosphorus transported today by stormwater runoff in the SRCL Sublakeshed is estimated at more than three times greater than in Presettlement conditions.
- **Minor Watersheds.** The twenty minor watersheds that make up the SRCL Sublakeshed vary greatly in size, slope, land use, soils and other natural and cultural factors. All of these factors affect the amounts of phosphorus, sediments and other non-point pollutants that make their way into the lakes and the Sauk River.

#### C. Primary Roles of the SRCL

- **Get Involved.** Monitor and lobby local governmental officials to help encourage wise land use decisions.
- **Support Good Planning.** Support the development of comprehensive plans and infrastructure studies to properly plan for the future development of the area.
- **Encourage Watershed Thinking.** Encourage and promote wise land use decisions by landowners in relation to water quality.

## D. Goals, Objectives and Action Items

**Goal 1: Septic Systems.** Promote and encourage the safe treatment of sanitary sewage in the SRCL Sublakeshed while considering the economic feasibility of methods proposed.

**Rationale:**

- There are \_\_\_ private septic systems on parcels located in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Over \_\_\_ percent of the septic systems are located in the shoreland areas. Septic systems have the potential to pollute lakes and groundwater.
- Most of the areas around the lakes and along the Sauk River have been classified as having “very high” sensitivity to groundwater pollution in a recent MPCA study.
- The Individual Sewage Treatment System (ISTS) Assessment Study prepared by the Stearns ESD identified several large areas around the lakes as high risks zones for pollution. Consideration should be given to cluster sewage treatment systems in these areas.

**Potential Monitoring Indicators:**

- \_\_\_ people receiving information from the ISTS Information Library.
- Completion of the septic system inventory.
- \_\_\_ percent of the septic systems in compliance.

**Objective A: ISTS Education Program.** Support efforts by the Stearns County Environmental Services Department, Meeker County, cities and townships, and resource agencies to inform the landowners on ways to properly maintain septic systems. Work with the appropriate agencies to develop a coordinated program to educate property owners on compliance and operation of septic systems.

**Actions:**

1. ISTS Information Library. Collect, organize and maintain information regarding ISTS for the SRCL Sublakeshed. Distribute this information to landowners in the SRCL Sublakeshed. The Library should include at least the following items:
  - Current Requirements and Proper Maintenance. A list of the current ISTS requirements (Stearns and Meeker counties) and methods for the proper maintenance of septic systems.
  - U of M Extension Documents. Obtain copies of the “Septic System Owner’s Guide”, and other documents regarding septic systems from the U of M Extension Service.
  - Septic System Designers, Installers and Tank Pumpers List. Create and maintain a list of the certified ISTS businesses working in the area.
  - SRCL Septic System Upgrade Program. A description of the program, qualifying criteria, and application form.
  - Existing Financial Assistance Programs. Description of other existing programs that assist landowners in upgrading their septic systems.

2. ISTS Lead Person. Assign one person the responsibility of collecting and maintaining copies of the ISTS Information Library.
3. Subcommittee/Lake Leader Sets. Each member of the Land Use Subcommittee and all Lake Leaders should have a complete set of the ISTS Information Library for their regular referral.
4. SRCL Events. Distribute appropriate documents on septic systems at the Boat Show, annual meeting, and other SRCL events.
5. Door-to-Door Distribution. Distribute appropriate documents on septic systems by going door to door throughout the SRCL Sublakeshed. Start with high priority areas as identified in the ISTS Study completed by the Stearns ESD.
6. New Shoreland Property Owners. Distribute appropriate documents to new shoreland property owners.
7. SRCL Newsletter and Website. Highlight information from the ISTS Information Library in the SRCL newsletter and on the website on a regular basis.
8. Workshops. Support attendance by SRCL members and interested citizens at workshops on septic system topics, including new design technologies, inspection and enforcement maintenance, benefits of common systems, etc.

**Objective B: Inspections/Maintenance Program.** Support existing inspection programs and encourage septic system maintenance by all landowners.

**Actions:**

1. Maintenance. Encourage and support efforts by all landowners in the SRCL Sublakeshed with septic systems to periodically maintain their septic systems.
2. Neighborhood Pumping Coordination. Support the coordination of septic tank pumping by neighborhood groups throughout the SRCL Sublakeshed.
3. Research Other Inspections Programs. Review and research existing ISTS inspection programs developed in other counties such as the one in Washington County that go beyond the current county requirements (inspections required with a change of ownership, request for permits, or complaints).
4. Countywide Inspections Program. Consider advocating a countywide inspections program based on the research.
5. Potential Future Funding for Inspections. Work with the local units of government to explore alternatives such as a fee or tax dedication for ISTS review of pumping and inspection every 3 years.

**Objective C: ISTS Inventory and Analysis.** Create a useful inventory of all septic systems in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Support the development and maintenance of the ISTS inventory. Start with the high risk zones identified in the Stearns ESD study.

**Actions:**

1. Parcel Mapping. Work with Stearns and Meeker counties to develop a parcel map to be used in the inventorying of existing septic systems.
2. Property Owner List. Work with the county auditor's office to develop and periodically update a list of property owners for all parcels in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

3. Create ISTS Inventory. Work with the counties to inventory (parcel identification number, landowner name and address) and map the existing septic systems.
4. Maintain the Inventory. Work with the counties to periodically collect data regarding the permitting, inspection, and maintenance of new and upgraded septic systems within the SRCL Sublakeshed.
5. Analysis. Analyze data and develop a list with the number of failing systems and percentages for each zone established in the ISTS Study (Stearns County ESD). Work with the SRWD and Stearns ESD to review with SRCL members from each zone to gather information identifying causes of pollution.
6. ISTS Risk Zone Assessments. Meet with landowners, developers, local and county officials, and resource agencies to review the ISTS inventory and ISTS risk assessment study prepared by the Stearns ESD.
7. Priorities and Discussion. Evaluate and prioritize all the ISTS risk assessment zones defined in the ISTS Study. Discuss possible septic system alternatives for the high priority areas. Consider developing a pilot project(s) for a specific test area or lake to evaluate alternative solutions (i.e. community systems, big pipe, ISTS).
8. Potential Public System Expansions. Work with the cities and the townships to identify areas where public sanitary services may be extended over the next ten to twenty years. Support hook ups when and where possible.
9. Potential Cluster Systems. Use the ISTS Risk Zone Assessment to evaluate where cluster systems should be located and installed. Work with the SRWD, MPCA, and the counties to develop alternative financing mechanisms to encourage the installation of these systems.

**Objective D: Incentives Program.** Continue to provide and support incentive programs that help landowners upgrade their septic systems.

**Actions:**

1. SRCL Septic System Upgrade Program. Review and refine the existing SRCL Septic System Upgrade Program. Research how the program has been used and its effectiveness. Continue to fund and administer the program. Consider door-to-door campaigns to inform landowners of the program.
2. SRWD ISTS Program/Other ISTS Incentive Programs. Continue to work with and support existing and new low interest loan and septic upgrade programs administered by the SRWD and by other agencies.

**Objective E: Compliance.** Increase compliance to 100 percent for all septic systems within shoreland designated areas in the SRCL Sublakeshed by December 1, 2009. Support the point of sale and permit issuance compliance programs administered by the counties.

**Actions:**

1. Septic System Audit. Develop a program (structure, staffing, responsibilities, budget, funding sources) to inspect all septic systems for all properties within shoreland designated areas in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

2. Point of Sales. Support the continued practice of requiring an inspection of septic systems on individual properties prior to its sale and work with other counties to require inspections and enforce compliance if not already a requirement.
3. Time of Permit Issuance. Support efforts by the counties to enforce the existing septic regulations at the time land development permits are issued.
4. Cluster Systems. Where systems are in close proximity to other failing systems, explore and support the installation of cluster septic systems.
5. Public Systems. Where systems are in close proximity to public sanitary facilities, encourage and support the connection to the public systems.

**Objective F: Regulation/Enforcement.** Support efforts by the appropriate responsible governing units to administer and enforce septic system regulations.

**Actions:**

1. Enforcement Liaison. Appoint one person from the SRCL to serve as a liaison between landowners and local units of government regarding ISTS matters. Request that all local units of government notify the enforcement liaison of pending enforcement matters to keep the SRCL informed.
2. Lobby Consistency. Work with the local units of government in the SRCL Sublakeshed to enforce septic system regulations consistently. Encourage all local units of government in the SRCL Sublakeshed develop a common method for the permitting, inspection, and enforcement of septic systems.
3. Update Regulations. As viable new technologies become available to properly treat sewage, work with the counties to update and revise the regulations to allow for the new methods or designs.
4. Septage Regulations. Research septage regulations and programs developed by other counties. Encourage the adoption of the appropriate septage regulations by local units of government in the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Goal 2 – Livestock.** Promote and encourage the raising of livestock in the SRCL Lakeshed balanced with the protection of water and land resources.

**Rationale:**

- Stearns County is one of the nation’s leading agricultural producers. It ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in total production nationally. A healthy agricultural economy is vital to the region.
- Cropland covers over 50,000 acres of the SRCL Sublakeshed or almost 65 percent. There are over 31,000 animal units in the 20 minor watersheds that make up the SRCL Sublakeshed.
- The percent of cropland and number of animal units in each of the 20 minor watersheds varies greatly. Efforts to reduce the impacts of livestock on the SRCL Lakeshed will require a targeted approach to identify, assess, and correct any problems.

**Potential Monitoring Indicators:**

For each of the 20 minor watersheds

- \_\_\_ number of feedlot evaluations (FLEVALs) completed for shoreland and non-shoreland feedlots.
- \_\_\_ percent of cropland under tillage management practices
- \_\_\_ feet of riparian livestock fencing installed.

**Objective A: Education.** Support efforts to improve the awareness within the SRCL of the importance of agriculture and livestock are to the local economy, how the livestock operations can be properly operated, ways to minimize impacts on water resources, and ways in which degradation to the environment can occur.

**Actions:**

1. Ag BMPs. Support education efforts by resources agencies to inform landowners about the benefits and impacts of livestock and best management practices (BMP). Create a media library of agricultural BMP’s for farming and related activities. Develop a CD-ROM or other type of presentation for agricultural BMP’s, targeted towards farmers and non-farmers.
2. SRCL Newsletter. Periodically include articles on the economic importance of farming in the region in the SRCL newsletter.
3. Website. Develop links on SRCL website to resources for conservation farming and livestock management.
4. Conservation Tours. Coordinate attendance of conservation tours that bring farmers and shoreland owners together to see feedlots and tillage practices in operation.
5. Workshops. Encourage the use of existing programs (BMP’s, CRP, EQIP, others) by hosting workshops, directing landowners to contacts, etc.

**Objective B: Minor Watershed Assessment.** Utilize the minor watershed assessment tool to inventory and evaluate the critical livestock operations in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Feedlot Inventory. Review the inventory of all shoreland and non-shoreland feedlots in the SRCL Sublakeshed on a minor watershed basis. Meet with Stearns County and Meeker County SWCDs and the Stearns County ESD and the Meeker County Planning and Zoning staff to become more knowledgeable about feedlot management.
2. Feedlot Evaluation and Prioritizing. Support efforts by the SWCDs and the SRWD to evaluate and prioritize all feedlots in the SRCL Sublakeshed on a minor watershed basis by their potential to impact water resources. Encourage resource agencies including the Stearns SWCD and SRWD to use these priorities to guide efforts on implementing incentive and regulatory programs.
3. Livestock Pastures. Work with the Stearns SWCD to identify pastures and other outdoor holding areas for livestock that have the potential for generating nutrient and sediment runoff problems in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Support efforts to provide alternative water sites or facilities rather than surface water features. Inventory the sites on a minor watershed basis.

**Objective C: Incentives Program.** Support incentives program to encourage farmers to implement BMPs in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. FLEVALs. Support efforts by agencies to develop feedlot evaluation (FLEVAL) studies that help feedlot operators assess the impacts that their facilities have on water resources and ways that they can reduce the impacts.
2. Farm Programs. Encourage and support the use of existing farm programs (EQIP, CRP, etc.) in the SRCL Sublakeshed to help reduce non-point pollution. Consider providing matching funding to help promote the program.
3. Inventory and Evaluate Livestock Pastures. Work with the Stearns SWCD to identify pastures and other outdoor holding areas for livestock that have the potential for generating nutrient and sediment runoff problems in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Inventory and evaluate the sites on a minor watershed basis.
4. Livestock Fencing Program. Work with the SRWD, the Stearns SWCD and other agencies to provide technical and financial resources to assist landowners construct fencing to keep livestock out of surface waters. Consider providing matching funding to help promote the program.

**Objective D: Regulation/Enforcement.** Support efforts by appropriate responsible governing units to administer and enforce feedlot and other agricultural regulations.

**Actions:**

1. Enforcement Liaison. Appoint one person from the SRCL to serve as a liaison between landowners and the responsible governing units regarding feedlot regulatory matters. Request that all local units of government notify the

enforcement liaison of pending enforcement matters to help keep the SRCL informed.

2. Lobby Consistency. Work with the responsible governing units in the SRCL Sublakeshed to enforce feedlot regulations consistently.

**Goal 3 – Erosion.** Promote and encourage efforts to reduce soil erosion, first in the SRCL Sublakeshed and then the rest of the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Rationale:**

- By volume, soil erosion and sedimentation are the largest pollutants of Minnesota’s lakes and streams.
- Both land development and agriculture contribute significantly to the soil erosion problems by increasing the amount of land area with exposed soils.
- Each of the 20 minor watersheds in the SRCL Sublakeshed has different soils, slope, land use, and vegetative cover conditions that affect the rate of erosion and sediment transport.

**Potential Monitoring Indicators:**

- \_\_\_ feet perennial vegetative cover installed along critical riparian corridors.
- \_\_\_ feet of shoreland restored to native landscape.
- \_\_\_ estimated pounds of sediment reduced for each of the 20 minor watersheds.

**Objective A: Education.** Support efforts to improve the awareness of the impacts of erosion on water quality and ways in which it can be prevented or reduced.

**Actions:**

1. BMPs. Support education efforts by resources agencies to inform landowners about agricultural, shoreland, and urban best management practices (BMP). Gather and organize a collection of documents relating to these BMPs.
2. SRCL Newsletter. Highlight one or two BMPs in each newsletter.
3. SRCL Website. Develop links on SRCL website on agricultural, shoreland, and urban BMPs and when and how they should be used.
4. Workshops. Host workshops for landowners and local officials on agricultural, shoreland, and urban BMPs.
5. Birch Lake Association. Invite leaders from the Birch Lake Association to give a presentation on their riparian buffer project to the SRCL and landowners in the SRCL Sublakeshed.
6. Shoreland Education Programs. Invite experts in shoreland management to give presentations to the SRCL Board, subcommittees and members. Include programs such as the “Restore Your Shore” (MN DNR) and the “Minnesota Shoreland Management Resource Guide” (Minnesota Sea Grant). Consider covering part or all of the costs to purchase documents (handbooks, CD’s, etc.) offered through these programs.

**Objective B: Minor Watershed Assessment.** Identify and assess soil erosion areas using the minor watershed assessment (MWA) tool. Prioritize areas or sites for their impacts of erosion and runoff within each of the 20 minor watersheds in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Review Available Information. Review the maps and data regarding soil erosion in each of the 20 minor watersheds prepared for this Plan and other relevant documents. Invite the Stearns County SWCD soils scientist to attend a Land Use Subcommittee to give a presentation of soils in the SRCL Sublakeshed and some practical tips on how to use the soil survey.
2. Buffer Inventory. Work with the two SWCD's to develop an inventory of the riparian corridors and the amount of vegetated buffers along the corridors in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Inventory the information by minor watershed.
3. Tillage Transect Surveys. Review results from tillage transect surveys and prioritize areas within the SRCL Sublakeshed where corrective measures are needed.
4. Priority Erosion Areas. Work with the SWCD to conduct an inventory of existing erosion areas within the SRCL Sublakeshed to determine the highest priority areas where erosion is occurring. Utilize data and the assessments from the minor watershed assessment tool to help identify and prioritize minor watersheds for erosion control projects (slope and highly erodible soils).

**Objective C: Incentives and Improvements.** Work with resource agencies to implement incentive programs and projects on private and public lands that improve water quality in the SRCL Sublakeshed through erosion control projects.

**Actions:**

1. Riparian Corridors Buffer Project. Support the establishing of a targeted riparian corridor buffer project with the Stearns and Meeker SWCDs and the SRWD. Consider providing matching funds to finance projects in high priority areas.
2. Shoreland Cropland. Inventory, assess and buffer shoreland cropland areas in a process similar to the corridors project. Investigate possible buffer landscape options with the landowners to prevent runoff.
3. Tillage Practices. Support efforts by the Stearns and Meeker SWCDs to promote the implementation of tillage management practices in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Review the results from the minor watershed assessment with the SWCD staff as well as with farmers and landowners.
4. Tillage Programs. Support and encourage the use of existing farm programs that promote good tillage management practices.

**Objective D: Shoreland Restoration Projects.** Work with landowners and resource agencies to implement natural shoreland restoration projects on lands located in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Property Maintenance. Encourage lakeshore property owners throughout the SRCL Sublakeshed to maintain existing vegetation on developed and undeveloped parcels.
2. MN DNR Shoreland Restoration Program. Meet with MN DNR staff to review maps and data developed in this Plan. Discuss potential sites or areas in the SRCL Sublakeshed that would be high priority.
3. Project Sites. Identify 3 to 5 shoreline restorations per year on lakes and in the SRCL Sublakeshed.
4. Technical Assistance. Work with cooperating agencies on planning and designing shoreline restoration projects.
5. Signage. Create signs to publicize each shoreline restoration that is done to inform the public.

**Goal 4 – Development.** Promote the wise and sustainable use and development of land, through good planning and implementation by local units of government starting first in the SRCL Sublakeshed, and then in the rest of the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Rationale:**

- A lake is a reflection of its watershed. Land use is key to good water quality.
- While comprehensive planning is growing in stature and importance for cities, townships and counties in greater Minnesota, it still is in its infancy. The theoretical build out scenario developed in this Plan is one tool to help local officials and landowners more thoroughly think through some of the basic assumptions on how to manage land use.
- Greater coordination is needed between land use planning and the planning of infrastructure systems – stormwater, sanitary sewer, water supply, transportation, parks and open space (green infrastructure), and economic development.

**Potential Monitoring Indicators:**

- \_\_\_ population density of areas outside the cities and away from shoreland areas.
- \_\_\_ acres of sensitive lands protected from development.
- \_\_\_ feet of undeveloped shoreline permanently protected from development.

**Objective A: SRCL Training.** Increase the awareness and understanding by SRCL leaders and members on land use management administered by local units of government in the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Process Information. Provide information to the SRCL Board, Land Use Subcommittee, Lake Leaders and interested SRCL members on how the community planning processes work as well as the administration and enforcement of ordinances and regulations.
2. Boards and Councils. Provide information on how councils and boards in the area operate and the statutory roles and responsibilities they have.

**Objective B: Comprehensive Planning.** Encourage and support efforts by the cities, townships and counties to develop and update their comprehensive plans. Support efforts to develop more detailed land use plans with a water quality focus.

**Actions:**

1. Land Use Analysis. Encourage land use officials to review potential development or “theoretical build-out” scenarios that their current policies and ordinances allow. Review the theoretical build out scenario developed for this Plan with local officials and community leaders in the SRCL Sublakeshed.
2. Agriculture/Open Space. Create a list of important natural areas and open spaces in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Develop a list of ways that local governments can protect important natural areas, open space and agricultural lands in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Informally discuss these lists and ideas with local officials and community leaders on an ongoing basis.
3. SRCL Review Process. Develop an internal process for SRCL members to review and comment on proposed land use policies, draft comprehensive plans, infrastructure studies, and other long-range policy documents.
4. Land Use Recommendations. Provide recommendations to the local units of government in the SRCL Sublakeshed that support the adoption of land use policies that encourage sustainable land development patterns and the protection of water resources.
5. Water Quality Recommendations. Provide recommendations that help local units of government better protect water and land related resources within their jurisdictions.

**Objective C: Improve the SRCL’s Influence on Implementation.** Develop efficient and effective ways for the SRCL to participate in the land development review and approval processes.

**Actions:**

1. Land Development Liaison. Appoint one person from the SRCL to serve as a liaison with all local units of government in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Request that all local units of government notify the STCL Land Development Liaison of all pending land development applications and enforcement matters so that the SRCL can review and comment on them.

2. SRCL Review Process. Develop an internal process for SRCL members to review and comment on proposed rezonings, variances, conditional use permits (CUPs), shoreland alterations permits, wetland projects, enforcement matters and violations, etc. The land development liaison will be responsible for compiling and submitting comments to the local units of government after concurrence by the SRCL Board.
3. Informal Meetings with Landowners. Meet with landowners and suggest options for land protection. Use the mapping from this Plan to help illustrate the importance of critical areas in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Work with landowners and developers to achieve conservation development concepts.
4. Enforcement. Develop a system to help assist local units of government and agencies identifying ordinance violations
5. BMPs. Recommend that local units of government adopt the appropriate best management practices as a reference to help guide land development proposals and to help minimize impacts on water quality.
6. Ordinance Updates. Review how ordinances are working in the SRCL Lakeshed and work with appropriate agencies to make changes if necessary. Support the updating of municipal and county land use controls to properly address water resource concerns.
7. Roads. Support activities that minimize the impacts on water quality from road construction and maintenance.
8. New Construction. Support activities that minimize the impacts on water quality from new land and building development. Work with landscape contractors to construct landscaping improvements that minimize erosion and stormwater runoff impacts on the water resources.

**Objective D: Representation on Local Planning Matters.** Strive for more SRCL representation on town boards, city councils, planning commissions, boards of adjustment, county committees, etc.

**Actions:**

1. Commission Representation. Establish and identify a person or persons from the SRCL to provide representation on planning commissions and zoning boards of adjustment.

**Objective E: Protection of Sensitive Areas.** Work with the appropriate land use authorities from the townships, cities and counties to protect sensitive resources in the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Kinzer Creek. Review the adopted land use plans and land use regulations for properties adjacent to or drain into Kinzer Creek. Meet with officials from Stearns ESD and Luxemburg and Wakefield Townships to determine if additional development guidelines and standards are needed to protect the trout fisheries resource. Encourage development that minimizes impacts on Kinzer Creek. Review stormwater runoff proposed for new land development in areas tributary to Kinzer Creek. (Trout streams are sensitive to large influxes of stormwater runoff and resulting water temperature changes.)

**Goal 5 – Stormwater, Wetlands, and Miscellaneous Issues.** Protect and restore critical wetlands and encourage better stormwater management practices to improve water quality in the SRCL Lakeshed. Support efforts by resource agencies and local units of government work with landowners and visitors to minimize the effects of their daily activities on water quality (yard waste, solid waste, household hazardous waste, etc.).

**Rationale:**

- Over three-fourths of the original or pre-settlement wetlands in the SRCL Sublakeshed have been drained. Wetlands play a crucial role in protecting lake water quality, provide habitat for fish and wildlife, and support groundwater recharge.
- The runoff coefficient for wetlands is 0.04 pounds per acre per year. The runoff coefficient for urban developed land is 1.12 pounds of phosphorus per acre per year.
- Managing and treating stormwater runoff in a rapidly growing area will only continue to grow in importance.

**Potential Monitoring Indicators:**

- Completion of stormwater and wetland management plans by local units of government in the SRCL Sublakeshed.
- Acres of wetlands restored in five key minor watersheds.
- \_\_\_ percent of reduction in phosphorus transport from each minor watershed on a pounds per acre per year basis (year 2009).

**Objective A: SRCL Training.** Increase the awareness and understanding by SRCL leaders and members on wetlands, stormwater management and waste management.

**Actions:**

1. NEMO Program. Coordinate presentations on the NEMO program (Non Point Education for Municipal Officials) with the MN DNR Division of Waters with local officials in the SRCL Lakeshed.
2. Regulatory Process. Provide information to SRCL Board, Committees, Lake Leaders, and interested SRCL members on how the wetland regulations and relating boards operate.
3. Wetland Inventory and Assessments Results. Review maps and data from the minor watershed assessment as it relates to drained and restorable wetlands. Look for differences and similarities in the 20 minor watersheds.

**Objective B: Wetland Assessment and Priorities.** Identify and prioritize wetland areas in the SRCL Sublakeshed that can improve surface water quality, promote groundwater recharge, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

**Actions:**

1. Prioritize Wetland Restoration Areas. Identify and map areas in each of the 20 minor watersheds where wetlands could be restored. Rank sites into three categories of benefit to water quality (high, medium, and low).

2. Prioritize Wetland Protection Areas. Identify and map areas in each of the 20 minor watersheds where wetlands need to be protected. Rank sites into three categories of benefit to water quality (high, medium, and low).

**Objective C: Wetland Restoration Projects.** Support the restoration of wetlands in the SRCL Sublakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Current Wetland Restoration Programs. Support efforts by property owners and resource agencies and sportsmen organizations (Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, etc.) to restore wetlands through existing conservation programs.
2. SRCL Support. Consider providing financial incentives program to encourage more landowners to use conservation programs to restore critical wetlands in high priority areas.

**Objective D: Wetland Protection.** Identify critical wetland areas that should be protected from development or drainage.

**Actions:**

1. Wetland Protection. Support efforts by the appropriate local governing unit to protect wetlands in the SRCL Lakeshed. Periodically review the decisions made by local officials.
2. Regulatory Review. Review how wetland regulations are working in the SRCL Lakeshed and work with appropriate agencies to make changes if necessary.
3. Enforcement. Provide a system to assist agencies in identifying violation and problem sites.

**Objective E: Stormwater Management.** Support the development of stormwater management practices at the local level to improve lake water quality.

**Actions:**

1. BMPs. Review and discuss the benefits of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) with municipal and county officials. Support efforts by local officials to develop stormwater management plans for their jurisdictions. Address snow removal and dumping and the impacts on water quality.
2. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans. Advocate the requirement of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans for all major land development proposals and public construction projects in the SRCL Lakeshed.
3. Stormwater Design Standards. Encourage the counties and the cities in the Lakeshed to develop, administer and enforce stormwater design standards.
4. Culvert Inventory. Support efforts to inventory all culverts and box channels in the SRCL Lakeshed. Coordinate with the Stearns and Meeker county highway departments and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Inventory the items such as culvert size, elevation, flow direction, maximum capacity, flow conditions, etc.

5. Coordinate Stormwater with Land Development Requests. Support efforts to require stormwater management plans for new subdivisions and planned unit developments (PUDs) in the SRCL Sublakeshed. In general, post development runoff should not exceed predevelopment runoff conditions.

**Objective F: Residential BMPs.** Advocate and support the use of best management practices (BMPs) by residential landowners in the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Shoreland BMPs. Distribute copies of the document, "Protecting our Waters: BMPS for Protecting Your Shore", prepared by the University of Minnesota Extension Service to all SRCL Board and committee members and lake Leaders for their ongoing use and referral.
2. Urban and Rural Development BMPs. Support efforts by the local units of government in the SRCL Lakeshed to apply BMPs to land development and road construction projects.
3. Web Site. Develop and maintain a list of web site links for the SRCL web site that provides information on BMPs for residential landowners.
4. Lake Owners Guide. Include in the Lake Owners Guide, a handbook for SRCL landowners, information about BMPs for residential landowners that help minimize impacts on water quality (Coordinate with Section 6, Goal 1, Objective E).

**Objective G: Solid and Hazardous Waste Management.** Support programs and services provided by waste management companies, local units of government, and resource agencies to ensure the safe and proper disposal of solid and household hazardous wastes to minimize impacts on water resources in the SRCL Lakeshed.

**Actions:**

1. Awareness. Support efforts that increase awareness by the public about recycling and the proper disposal of solid and hazardous wastes.
2. List of Common Hazardous Wastes. Periodically distribute lists of common household hazardous wastes with instructions for their proper disposal (SRCL newsletter, web site, flyers, etc.).
3. County Newsletters. Reprint articles from county newsletters and other sources in the SRCL Newsletter that inform residents and businesses in the SRCL Sublakeshed on the programs and services they provide.
4. Solid Waste/Recycling Pickup. Support efforts by waste management companies to ensure the ongoing operation of solid waste/recycling collection throughout the SRCL Sublakeshed. Maintain a list of the waste management companies that serve landowners in the SRCL Sublakeshed. Distribute the list to the SRCL Board and the Lake Leaders for their referral.
5. Household Hazardous Waste. Support efforts by local units of government and resource agencies to ensure periodic collection of household hazardous wastes from residents throughout the SRCL Sublakeshed.

**Objective H: Yard Waste Management.** Encourage composting of the appropriate household and domestic vegetative matter by landowners.

**Actions:**

1. Awareness. Support educational programs that help residents understand the benefits of composting. Distribute information on how and why to use composting sites. Distribute information on current options with refuse haulers for compost disposal.
2. Partnerships. Partner with local units of government in the SRCL Sublakeshed on development of compost sites.
3. Site Development. Work with regulatory agencies and local units of government to develop local composting sites.
4. Alternatives. Support the development of worm farms and other economic development opportunities that benefit from composting.