



# BWSR Strategic Plan 2017 Refresh

Adopted by BWSR Board June 28, 2017

## Mission

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Our mission is to improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.

## Value Proposition

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BWSR provides statewide leadership to improve and protect the state's water and soil resources to enhance the health, safety, economic well-being and overall quality of life for all Minnesotans.

BWSR works with local government partners through planning, technical and regulatory oversight, and performance review. We are uniquely positioned through state law to develop and implement programs resulting in healthy soil, clean water and abundant aquatic and terrestrial habitat. As the state's water and soil conservation agency we direct, coordinate, and provide funding to local governments to help private landowners and communities meet their conservation goals and responsibilities.

Our activities are governed by an appointed board whose members represent citizens, local governments, state natural resource agencies and the University of Minnesota. BWSR directives and initiatives are shaped by the partners they impact, which assures the relevancy and value of our programs and projects.

## Core Values

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Our staff work together guided by the following five core values:

1. **EMPOWERMENT:** We trust each other to make good decisions.
2. **INNOVATION:** Creative solutions are our specialty.
3. **COOPERATION:** We're all in this together.
4. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Say what you mean, mean what you say, and follow through.
5. **PERSPECTIVE:** We take our jobs seriously. Ourselves, not so much.

## Strategic Areas of Impact & Direction Statements

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The eight Strategic Areas of Impact listed below were identified by BWSR Staff and Board members as the most important things BWSR has to 'get right' to more fully achieve our mission and unique value proposition over the next 2 to 3 years.

**Note:** The supporting work and initiatives examples are included to help jump start detailed implementation planning and work assignments once the Strategic Refresh components are approved.

### PURSUE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will strive to embody our core values and fulfill our mission.

**Examples of supporting work and initiatives:**

- *Recruit, develop and retain knowledgeable and skilled staff and teams*
- *Enhance transition/succession planning*
- *Review/refresh staff core values*

### ENHANCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT (LGU) CAPACITY

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will support the development of trained and knowledgeable local government staff, provide financial and technical assistance to LGUs, and collaborate on legislative initiatives to enhance the reach of their work.

**Examples of supporting work and initiatives:**

- *Develop and support training and credentialing of local staff to enhance the reach of their work*
- *Sustain and grow state support for local government operations*
- *Include associations such as the Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees, the Association of District Administrators and the Minnesota County Planning and Zoning Administrators in capacity enhancement planning*

### STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will encourage and support the utilization of local governance authorities and mechanisms to improve and protect the state's water and soil resources.

**Examples of supporting work and initiatives:**

- *Collaborate on and encourage LGU Board and governance training through associations such as the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Association of Minnesota Counties*
- *Provide specialized field and program support to local authorities implementing wetland, buffer, and soil protection laws and rules*
- *Advance BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP)*

## TRANSITION TO WATERSHED BASED PLANNING, MANAGEMENT, & FUNDING

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will guide local water management authorities towards collaborative watershed based priorities and implementation with measurable outcomes.

**Examples of supporting work and initiatives:**

- *Implement the Prioritize, Target and Measure approach*
- *Implement One Watershed One Plan (1W1P)*
- *Develop flexible performance based funding options based on comprehensive watershed plans*

## ESTABLISH AND REPORT CLEAR, TANGIBLE MEASURES & OUTCOMES

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will identify measures and outcomes to demonstrate the impact of BWSR programs on improving land and water resources.

**Examples of supporting work and initiatives:**

- *Invest in and make broadly available models and tools for estimation and measurement of environmental benefits*
- *Collaborate with partner agencies to measure and report on the cumulative impacts of our work on water and soil resources*

## BROADEN & ENHANCE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will engage and foster opportunities with other organizations to meet conservation goals representative of all Minnesotans.

**Examples of supporting work and initiatives:**

- *Collaborate on the Private Forest Management Program (PFM) with the Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry*
- *Develop the Technical Training and Certification Program (TTCP) in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees*
- *Sustain the Farm Bill Assistance Partnership with Pheasants Forever, the Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service*
- *Coordinate the implementation of the MN CREP with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Farm Service Agency and stakeholders*

## INTEGRATE HUMAN DIMENSIONS INTO BWSR PLANNING & PROGRAMS

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will recognize and consider the motivations, values and cultures of those impacted by our programs and decisions.

***Examples of supporting work and initiatives:***

- *Seek understanding of social and cultural barriers*
- *Consider social science research and techniques in design, outreach and implementation of programs*
- *Consider equity factors in decision making*

## COMMUNICATE STRATEGICALLY

**Direction Statement:** BWSR will seek to be accessible, direct, proactive and responsive in how we listen to, and communicate with, our staff, our partners and the public.

***Examples of supporting work and initiatives:***

- *Hold Listening Sessions with Agency Leadership around the state*
- *Use plain language in reporting, outreach and messaging*
- *Actively promote success stories and share examples*
- *Report/Communicate the results of Clean Water Fund investments*