

Date: May 3, 2019
To: Darrick Wotachek – Isanti County Water Planner
555 18th Ave SW
Cambridge, MN 55008
Attn: Rum River Watershed One Watershed One Plan Work Group
RE: Invitation to submit priority issues and plan expectations for the Rum River One Watershed One Plan

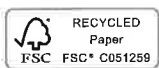
Mr. Darrick Wotachek,

Thank you for the work that you and all the other members of the Rum River Watershed One Watershed One Plan (RRW 1W1P) Planning Work Group have and continue to put into this watershed-based planning in Minnesota. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) appreciates the opportunity to outline the water management issues that we feel the RRW 1W1P process and resulting plan should address.

The Rum River Watershed is one of TNC's top priority watersheds in Minnesota. We value the Rum River Watershed due to its importance for drinking water, for the critical habitat it provides, and for the recreational opportunities it allows. Additionally, because the Rum River is currently in relatively good health but is at a high risk of becoming impaired, we know that it is critical to act now while it's less expensive and the feasibility of improvement is still likely. We want to have an emphasis placed on sub-watersheds that are unimpaired, but at risk of degradation and those that are impaired but closest to the unimpaired threshold.

Using a targeted systems approach, TNC would like the RRW 1W1P process and resulting plan to address:

1. Protection of existing natural features that provide multiple benefits (e.g. habitat, flooding/erosion control, groundwater quantity and quality, and surface water quantity and quality). Protection should be prioritized along the Rum River mainstem and in areas which will maintain healthy waters.
2. Restoration and protection of wetlands to increase storage, infiltration, provide critical habitat, and improve water quality in downstream waterbodies.
3. Restoration and protection of key groundwater recharge areas.
4. Improved water quality in ditch systems, which could involve abandonments of



unnecessary ditches, improved buffers, off channel storage and alternative ditch designs that improve aquatic habitat and nutrient attenuation.

Again, thank you for the time and effort that you are putting into developing the RRW 1W1P. We hope it will provide strong direction for protecting, enhancing, and restoring the Rum River Watershed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leah Hall". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Leah Hall

Headwaters Project Coordinator

The Nature Conservancy: Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota