

**INFORMATION  
FOR CITY  
COUNCILS  
ABOUT THE UPPER  
RUM RIVER  
WATERSHED  
MANAGEMENT**

# Upper Rum River WMO Annual Mini-Report to Cities

**APRIL 2020**

## URRWMO BOARD

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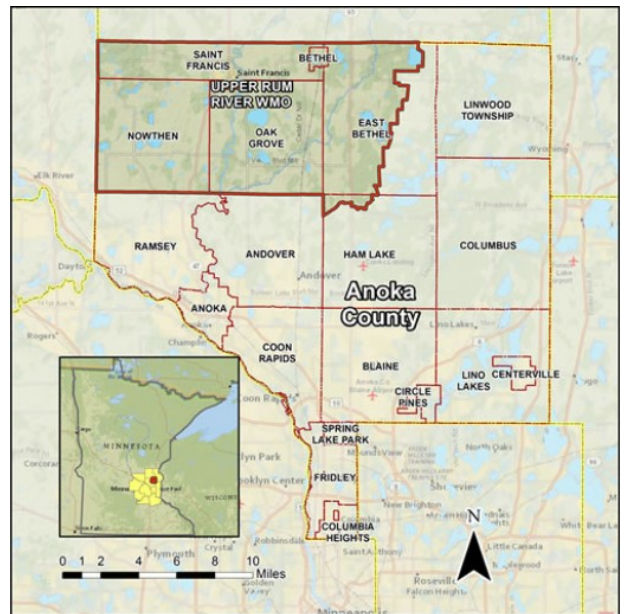
John West (Chair)  
Dan Denno

### City of St. Francis

Lan Tornes  
Vacant

## New URRMWO Watershed Mgmt Plan Approved!

The URRWMO's new 10-year watershed management plan was approved by the MN Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) and adopted by the URRWMO in summer 2019. The plan will guide the URRWMO's work and expenditures, including community contributions. Congrats to all who worked to get this plan approved.



Map of the URRWMO

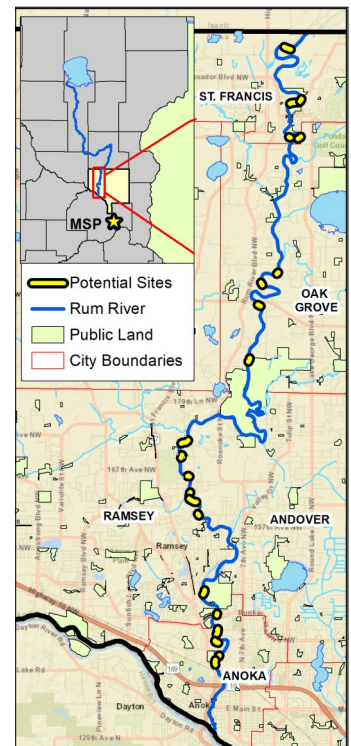
## \$1.4M in Grants for Eroding Rum Riverbanks

Partners in the Anoka County portion of the Rum River watershed have secured over \$1.4 million dollars in state grant funds for stabilizing Rum Riverbanks and improving near-shore habitat. The effort was led by the Anoka Conservation District, with grant matching funds from the URRWMO, Lower Rum River WMO, and Anoka County. This project is one of three high priority projects in the URRWMO plan.

The Anoka Conservation District (ACD) has created an inventory of Rum Riverbanks from St. Francis to Anoka.

That inventory identifies 80 stretches of moderate to severe erosion. Owners of those properties will be invited to work with ACD on riverbank erosion control. Work will only be done where there are willing landowners.

The grant term is three years. Work begins in 2020. Funds are from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the MN DNR Conservation Partners Legacy Program. Both use funds from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.



Riverbank erosion sites

## 2019 Accomplishments

- ◆ **Watershed plan approved**— Adopted our URRWMO 10-year plan draft.
- ◆ **Lake George Connections**—The URRWMO took a pontoon tour of Lake George with the two lake groups, building relationships and collaboration.
- ◆ **High school biomonitoring**—We restarted the Rum River biomonitoring program with St. Francis High School, with funding assistance from the American Legion. 40 students participated.
- ◆ **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**—Assembled a TAC, primarily of city staff, to prioritize projects, develop a culvert inventory methods, and update URRWMO wetland and stormwater standards.
- ◆ **Participated in One Watershed One Plan (1W1P)**—Joined with other watershed organizations, counties, and soil and water conservation districts to create a plan that coordinates our local activities to achieve regional goals. URRWMO board member Matt Downing is the vice-chair of the Policy Committee that oversees the planning.

## 2020 Plans

- ◆ **Water condition monitoring**—Continue routine monitoring at East Twin, George, Rogers and Minard Lakes.
- ◆ **TAC**—Reconvene our TAC to guide development of a standardized stormwater treatment practice inspection process, ensure city ordinances are consistent with URRWMO standards, and other tasks.
- ◆ **Watershed Based Implementation Funding**—Participate in a new non-competitive grant program from the State (see article below). \$366,000 in funding is available and will recur every two years. It is a major opportunity to accomplish URRWMO priorities that are otherwise financially difficult.
- ◆ **High school biomonitoring**—Continue the Rum River biomonitoring program with St. Francis High Schools. The American Legion, has renewed its financial support for students to catch macroinvertebrates (bugs) and use them as a gauge of river health.
- ◆ **Riverbank stabilizations**—The Anoka Conservation District will begin design and construction planning for riverbank stabilizations (article on page 1 of this report).

## Watershed Based Funding

The URRWMO and its cities are participating in a major new funding collaboration called Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF). This state grant is not competitive. \$366,000 is available for the metro Rum River Watershed (i.e. the Anoka County portions of the Rum River watershed).

Eligible projects must be in WMO plans, 1W1P or the Anoka Conservation District's annual plan. Projects must improve water quality. It is more important than ever that cities incorporate their priority water quality projects into the URRWMO plan. Cities are eligible to directly receive grant funds.

The grant is not competitive, but is collaborative. How the funds are used is decided by representatives from cities, the Lower and Upper Rum River WMO's, and the Anoka Conservation District. Chuck Schwartz is the representative for URRWMO cities. Matt Downing is the representative for the URRWMO.

The meetings to decide how funding is allocated begin in April 2020. Two to three meetings are anticipated.

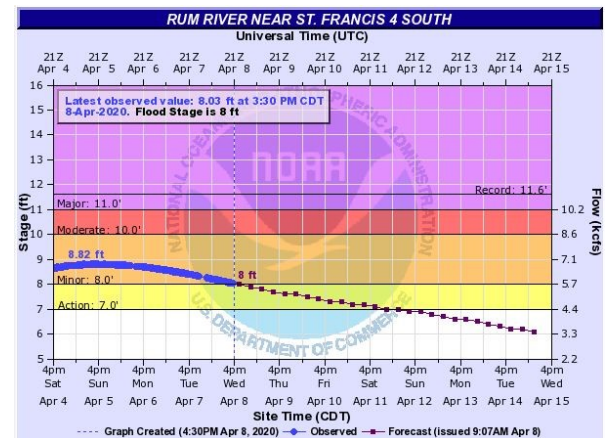
The MN Board of Water and Soil Resources is administering the funds and overseeing the funding allocation process.



## New Flood Forecasting

The National Weather Service has begun flood forecasting for the Rum River at Viking Boulevard. This new service was prompted by a request from communities throughout the Rum River watershed. Forecasts were already put into action during high water of spring 2020.

Forecasts are available at <https://water.weather.gov>



Example Rum River flood forecast