

## SECTION I

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission (Commission) has prepared this Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan in accordance with Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410, "Metropolitan Area Local Water Management", as administered by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. This Plan, or portions of this Plan, can be adopted as the local surface water management plan, if a member community so chooses.

The Commission's arrangement allows for pooling and concentration of the local governments' limited means and resources to initiate conservation programs to meet the purposes set forth in the Surface Water Management Act. The Joint Powers Agreement that established the Commission is included in **Appendix A** of this plan.

#### History of the Commission

The cities of Independence, Minnetrista, Medina and the Hennepin Conservation District created the Pioneer Creek Watershed Management Commission on January 13, 1978. On June 7, 1983, the City of Greenfield offered a resolution to the Pioneer Creek Commission requesting a merger of the Sarah Creek and Pioneer Creek Watersheds. This merger combined administrative services and avoided the creation of numerous small watershed organizations. In December 1984, the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission was officially established through a Joint Powers Agreement signed by Corcoran, Greenfield, Independence, Loretto, Maple Plain, Medina, and Minnetrista, Watertown Township, and Hennepin Conservation District, under the authority conferred to the member parties through Minnesota Statutes Chapters 471.59 and 103B.211. Since that time, Watertown Township and Corcoran left the Watershed Management Commission.

The Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed lies within western Hennepin County and includes the Pioneer Creek and Sarah Creek watersheds. The Crow River demarcates most of the northern boundary. The watershed covers approximately 70.5 square miles and is located entirely within Hennepin County (**Figure I-1**). Portions of, or all of, six governmental units are within the watershed and are listed below:

Local Government Unit	Area Within Watershed (Square Miles)	Percent of Watershed
Greenfield	21.5	30%
Independence	29.7	42%
Loretto	0.3	0.4%
Maple Plain	0.8	1.1%
Medina	7.5	10%
Minnetrista	10.7	15%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>70.5</b>	

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### **Duties of the Commission**

A Board of Commissioners has been established as the governing body of the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission. The Board of Commissioners is comprised of representatives appointed by the member communities. Each community appoints a representative and alternate. A list of the Board members for 2002 is included in **Appendix B**.

The duties of the organization, as enacted by the Commission, are as follows:

- Prepare and adopt a watershed management plan meeting the requirements of Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410.
- Review and approve local water management plans as defined in Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410.
- Review development plans as outlined in this Plan.
- Exercise the authority of a Watershed Management Organization under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103B to regulate the use and development of land when:
  1. A local water management plan has not been approved and adopted, or
  2. A local permit requires an amendment to or variance from the local water management plan, or
  3. The Commission has been authorized by the local government to require permits for land use.
- Exercise authority when the local government is not enforcing the policies of the Commission.

As identified in the Joint Powers Agreement, the governing body of each member City shall appoint one representative and one alternate to serve on the Commission from its elected Council or another qualified person. The Commission will determine how specific costs, personnel requirements, contracting and bid responsibilities, and other expenses and requirements shall be shared by the Cities with preference given to a reasonable geographic division.

Under Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410 and Minnesota Statute 103B, requirements are outlined for preparing watershed management plans within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Pursuant to the requirements of the law and public input, the purpose of the plan is to:

- Protect, preserve, and manage surface water and groundwater resources;
- Minimize property damages and economic losses through water resource management;

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- Manage public expenditures needed to study, control, and/or correct flooding and water quality problems;
- Educate and inform the public on pertinent water resource management issues and increase public participation in water management activities;
- Identify and plan for means to effectively protect and improve surface and groundwater quality;
- Establish more uniform local policies and official controls for surface and groundwater management;
- Reduce erosion of soil into surface water systems;
- Identify the opportunity to promote groundwater recharge, where feasible;
- Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities;
- Prevent stream degradation through land protection measures, runoff restrictions, and pollutant restrictions.

According to the rules of the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act, the Watershed Management Plan provides for the following:

- Land and water resource inventory.
- Information on the hydrologic system and its components, including any drainage system previously constructed under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 106 (the Public Ditch Laws), and existing and potential problems related thereto.
- Goals and policies, including management principles, alternatives and modifications, water quality, and protection of natural characteristics.
- Management plan, including the hydrologic and water quality conditions that will be sought and the significant opportunities for improvement.
- Description of conflicts between the watershed plan and existing plans of local government units.
- Implementation program that is consistent with the management plan and which includes a capital improvement program, as well as standards and schedules for amending the comprehensive plans and official controls of local government units in the watershed to bring about conformance with this watershed plan.

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### **Summary of the Watershed Management Plan**

This watershed management plan is divided into the following major sections:

- I. Introduction
- II. Land and Water Resources Inventory
- III. Goals and Policies
- IV. Issues/Concerns and Corrective Actions
- V. Implementation Program/Priorities
- VI. Impact on Local Unit of Government
- VII. Amendment Procedures
- VIII. References/Supplemental Documents

The Introduction (**Section I**) states the authority and composition of the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission, the purpose of the Surface Water Management Act and the components of this watershed management plan. **Table I-1** summarizes the primary goals, issues, policies, and actions outlined within this Plan.

The Land and Water Resources Inventory (**Section II**) includes a profile of the watershed's existing environmental conditions. This profile contains descriptions of the area's physiography, topography, soils, land use, and metropolitan systems such as public utilities. Surface and ground water quality, water use and water quality guidelines are also included.

The Goals and Policies Section (**Section III**) describes the goals and policies of the Commission. The goals reflect the purposes set forth in the Surface Water Management Act. Policies developed by the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission define the goals and provide a framework in which to address water management issues.

Issues/Concerns and Corrective Actions (**Section IV**) discusses water resource management issues and identifies the strategies developed for each issue and defines the course of action the Commission will follow to address each issue. Implementation procedures explain how the strategies will be put into effect. Potential impacts associated with each identified alternative are evaluated.

The Implementation Program/Priorities (**Section V**) identifies capital improvements (i.e. construction projects), programs (i.e. regulatory or educational), and additional studies that should be undertaken to address solutions to the problems, issues, and goals identified in Section III and Section IV.

The Impact on Local Government (**Section VI**) discusses the conformance of local governmental water resource management plans to this watershed management plan and also discusses the financial impact of the Plan.

The Amendment Procedures (**Section VII**) discusses a procedure to be followed should it be necessary to amend this plan. This procedure would be invoked only for major changes that would directly affect water resource management within the member cities.

**Section VIII** contains a list of references and supplemental documents. The appendices contain additional information, including a glossary in **Appendix C**.

**Table I-1. Summary of main goals, issues/concerns, policies, and actions outlined within the Watershed Management Plan**

**PRIMARY GOALS**

1. Protect, preserve, and manage surface water resources
2. Manage public expenditures needed to study and control and/or correct flooding and water quality problems
3. Educate and inform the key audiences on pertinent water resources management issues and increase public participation in water management activities
4. Establish more uniform local policies and official controls for surface water management

<b>FLOODING / RATE CONTROL / WATER QUANTITY</b>				
<b>Areas having flooding/ rate control/ water quantity issues or concerns</b>	<b>Potential party identified to take responsibility for project implementation <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Anticipated Commission action <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Commission policies and standards that apply to issues</b>	<b>Party responsible for implementing policies and standards outlined within plan</b>
High water Lake Independence (Independence and Medina)	Independence, Medina, Commission	Defer to local government	See Section III.A and Appendix F Part A	Member communities; Commission through plan review
High water Lake Sarah (Greenfield and Independence)	Greenfield, Independence, Commission	Implement water control project (See Table V-1)		
High water Peter Lake and its outlet (Medina)	Medina	Defer to local government		
Park flooding in Loretto	Loretto	Defer to local government		
Loretto Wastewater Treatment Flows	Loretto with limited assistance from Commission	Implement results of Loretto WWTF study.		
Tamarack Swamp Flooding (Medina)	Medina	Defer to local government		
Maintenance of private ditches, drain tile	Local government <sup>1</sup>	Defer to local government		
Rate and volume concerns at County Line Road and railroad	Independence, Delano, Commission	Assist communities in completing a study		
Lake Haughey (Independence)	Independence	Defer to local government		
Trail flooding along County Road 50 near Lake Rebecca	Three Rivers Park District	Defer to local government		

1. When impacts or source of impacts transcend municipal boundaries, the Commission shall review these problems and coordinate with the local government(s) for resolution. It will be the responsibility of the member cities to implement an acceptable project. The Commission defers to local government for all activities that do not transcend municipal boundaries.

2. These issues and future issues will also be addressed through the implementation of the policies and standards outlined in the Plan. These will be implemented through development plan review and by the local government through the local surface water plan.

<b>WATER QUALITY</b>				
<b>Areas having water quality issues or concerns</b>	<b>Potential party identified to take responsibility for project implementation <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Anticipated Commission action <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Commission policies and standards that apply to issues</b>	<b>Party responsible for implementing policies and standards outlined within plan</b>
Lake Independence (Independence and Medina)	Independence, Medina, Commission, Three Rivers Park District, Lake Association	Implement water quality project based on 2002 study	See Section III.B and Appendix F Part B	Member communities; Commission through plan review
Lake Rebecca (Greenfield, Independence, Three Rivers Park District)	Greenfield, Independence, Commission, Three Rivers Park District	Complete study; implement study recommendations		
Lake Sarah (Greenfield, Independence)	Greenfield, Independence, Commission, Lake Sarah Improvement Association	Implement Lake Sarah improvement based on 1997 report		
Spurzem Lake (Medina, Three Rivers Park District)	Medina, Three Rivers Park District	Defer to local government		
Half Moon (Medina, Three Rivers Park District)	Medina, Three Rivers Park District	Defer to local government		
Whaletail Lake (Minnetrissa)	Minnetrissa	Defer to local government		
Lake Haughey (Independence)	Independence	Defer to local government		
Crow River (low oxygen and turbidity)	NA	Defer to local government		
Impact of Loretto WWTF	Loretto, Commission	Complete study; implement study recommendations		
Continued protection of Little Long Lake	Minnetrissa with limited assistance from Commission	Complete protection projects		
Impacts of feedlots, hobby farms, and development	Commission, future Task Force	Establish setback, fencing, or other standards for livestock operation near water bodies; implement education program		
Future maintenance of stormwater ponds on Loretto Creek near Lake Sarah	Landowners	Defer to landowners as there are no easements over these ponds. Additional responsibility to be addressed as maintenance needs arise.		
Impacts of residential pollution such as fertilizers	NA	Implement education plan		

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FISH, WILDLIFE, AND WETLANDS				
Areas having fish, wildlife, or wetland issues or concerns	Potential party identified to take responsibility for project implementation <sup>1</sup>	Anticipated Commission action <sup>2</sup>	Commission policies and standards that apply to issues	Party responsible for implementing policies and standards outlined within plan
Continued protection of Little Long Lake	Minnetrissa with limited assistance from Commission	Complete Little Long Lake protection projects	See Section III.C, III.G and Appendix F Part C and G	Member communities; Commission through plan review
Maintain existing regulatory controls for water bodies	No project proposed	Continue LGU role for communities who defer role and continue development plan review		
Impacts to fish and wildlife resources as a result of stormwater	No project proposed	Continue water quality monitoring program; develop Lake Management Plans and water quality goals for water bodies; consider completing wetland functions and values assessments		

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SOIL EROSION				
Areas having erosion issues or concerns	Potential party identified to take responsibility for project implementation <sup>1</sup>	Anticipated Commission action <sup>2</sup>	Commission policies and standards that apply to issues	Party responsible for implementing policies and standards outlined within plan
Impacts from construction site erosion	No project proposed	Implement Watershed Management Plan	See Section III.H and Appendix F Part H	Member communities; Commission through plan review
Erosion along Lake Independence	See Water Quantity and Quality Sections	See Water Quantity and Quality Sections		
Erosion along Pioneer Creek	Commission	Implement recommendations of "Physical and Ecological Classification of Pioneer and Sarah Creek and their Tributaries" report		
Erosion along Lake Sarah	See Water Quantity and Quality Sections	See Water Quantity and Quality Sections		
Erosion caused by commercial, hobby farm, and agricultural activities	No project proposed	Implement Watershed Management Plan		
Lack of enforcement of erosion control programs	No project proposed	Undertake enforcement when there is no local plan or community is not enforcing policies		

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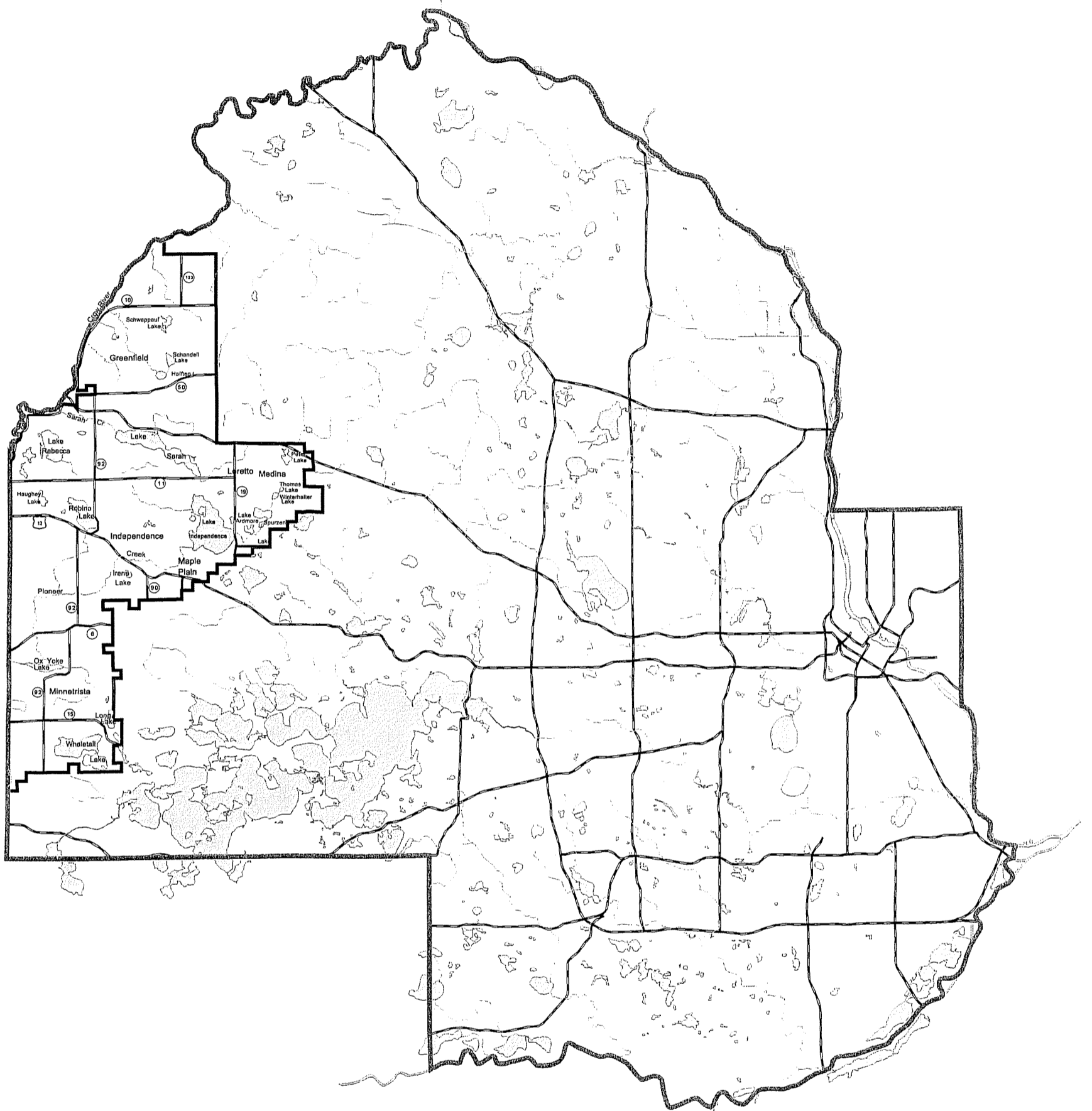


Figure I-1  
Watershed Location Map

Pioneer/Sarah Creek  
Watershed Management Commission

