

Local Watershed Organizations Host Workshops

As policymakers grapple with stretching tax dollars, the need and potential cost of protecting threatened water resources may seem overwhelming. The West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA), a group of west Hennepin watershed organizations, has come together to help local government officials accomplish both. Beginning March 23, WMWA will host a low-cost, three-part series of forums, *Protecting Our Water Resources – a Forum Series for Policymakers*. The series will provide information and tools to help shape critical decisions that affect water quality, property values and the effective use of tax dollars. The forums will also provide networking opportunities to share strategies and success stories.

“The quality of our lakes, streams and wetlands is critical to our quality of life,” said Pauline Langsdorf, Crystal’s commissioner on the Bassett Creek Watershed Commission. “A telephone survey revealed that citizens who live in our local watersheds feel strongly that protecting the quality of our water resources is of great importance. The decisions of elected and appointed officials, along with those of municipal and county staff play a key role in protecting the water resources that our citizens value,” said Langsdorf.

The series of three workshops is broken down into five sessions to address the varying needs of the urban/suburban and suburban/rural communities. Managing the volume of storm water and the nutrients that cause much of the pollution to local water resources will be the subjects of the first two workshops. The third workshop will delve deeper into understanding and working with the planning and priorities that drive federal, state and watershed rules that impact local governments.

This series is presented by WMWA (Bassett Creek, Elm Creek, Pioneer-Sarah Creek, Shingle Creek and West Mississippi watershed commissions) in partnership with Hennepin County, Three Rivers Park District and the Freshwater Society.

Learn more and sign up for one or all three workshops at www.hennepin.us/waterforums.

