



Business Item: 2022-182

Priority Waters List Approval



Environment Committee: June 28, 2022

Emily Resseger, Water Resources

Background

Water is a defining feature of our region

- 3 major rivers
- >950 lakes
- 100s of miles of tributary rivers and streams

Priority Waters List History

- First created in 1982
- Priority Lakes List last updated in 2015



The Updated Priority Waters List



Waters the Met Council has determined to be regionally significant based on their uses and benefits.

The Met Council will prioritize dedicating resources to these waters to help maintain and improve their valued qualities for present and future generations.

Rationale

The Priority Waters List will be used to meet future needs:

- Guide how the Met Council allocates resources
- Provide a key lens for developing policies and activities to include in the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan.
- Offer guidance to partners

Priority Waters List Development

Project approach

1. Determine uses and benefits of waterbodies
2. Score waterbodies on their uses and benefits using regional datasets
3. Determine thresholds by which waterbodies qualify for the list
4. Produce a draft Priority Waters List and seek feedback from stakeholders
5. Revise and finalize the list based on stakeholder feedback



Use/Benefit Categories



Drinking Water Protection



Equity



Recreation and Tourism



Industry and Utility



Healthy Habitat



Science and Education

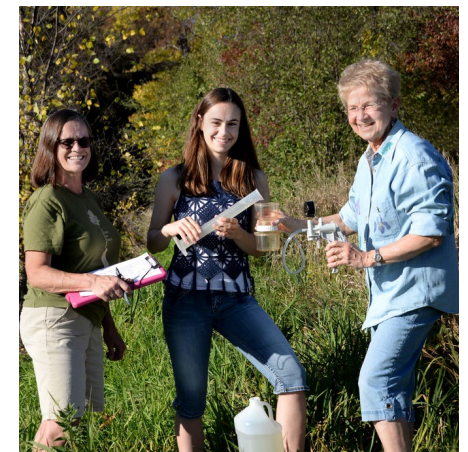


Tranquil Connection

Qualifying for the Priority Waters List

Waters qualify for the following reasons:

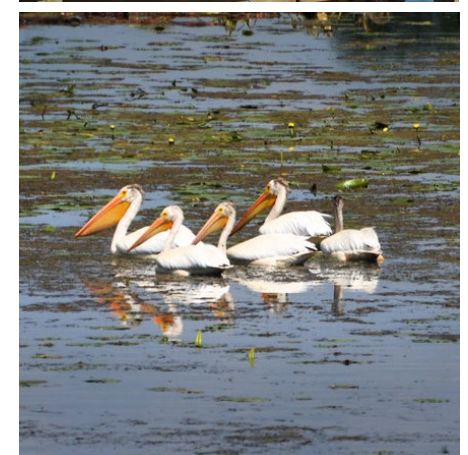
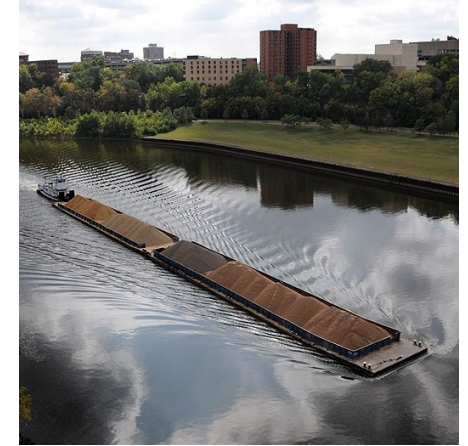
1. A drinking water source
2. High Recreation and Tourism score
3. High Healthy Habitat score
4. High well-rounded score



Outreach/Collaboration

Public Comment period was March 23-April 22

- Sent out via email and shared on project website
- 23 people attended open houses on April 5 and 6
- 53 people provided feedback



Final Priority Waters List



Two separate lists

- 47 rivers and streams
- 142 lakes

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the Priority Waters List for resource decision use by Council staff.

Questions

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