



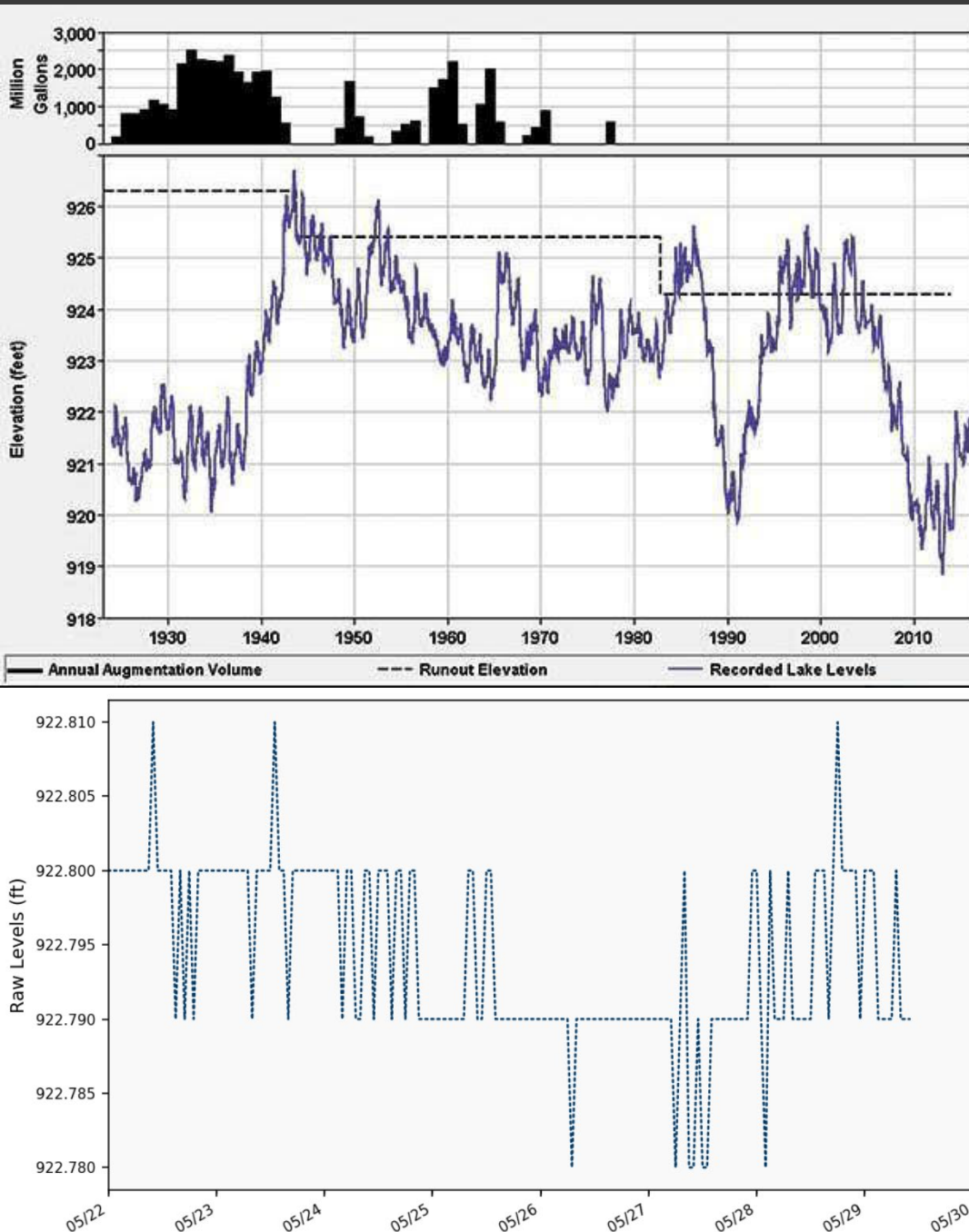
Information Item: White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan Project Update & Connections to Regional Policy and Local Planning



Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committees

Greg Johnson, Judy Sventek | June 18, 2025

White Bear Lake fluctuating water levels



- White Bear Lake has occasionally been augmented with groundwater from 1920's-1970's
- Multiple 'recent' and complex drivers:
 - Regulatory and legal action
 - Surface water-groundwater interactions
 - Population growth and water demand
 - Water quality concerns (PFAS and others)

Building shared understanding is the first step.

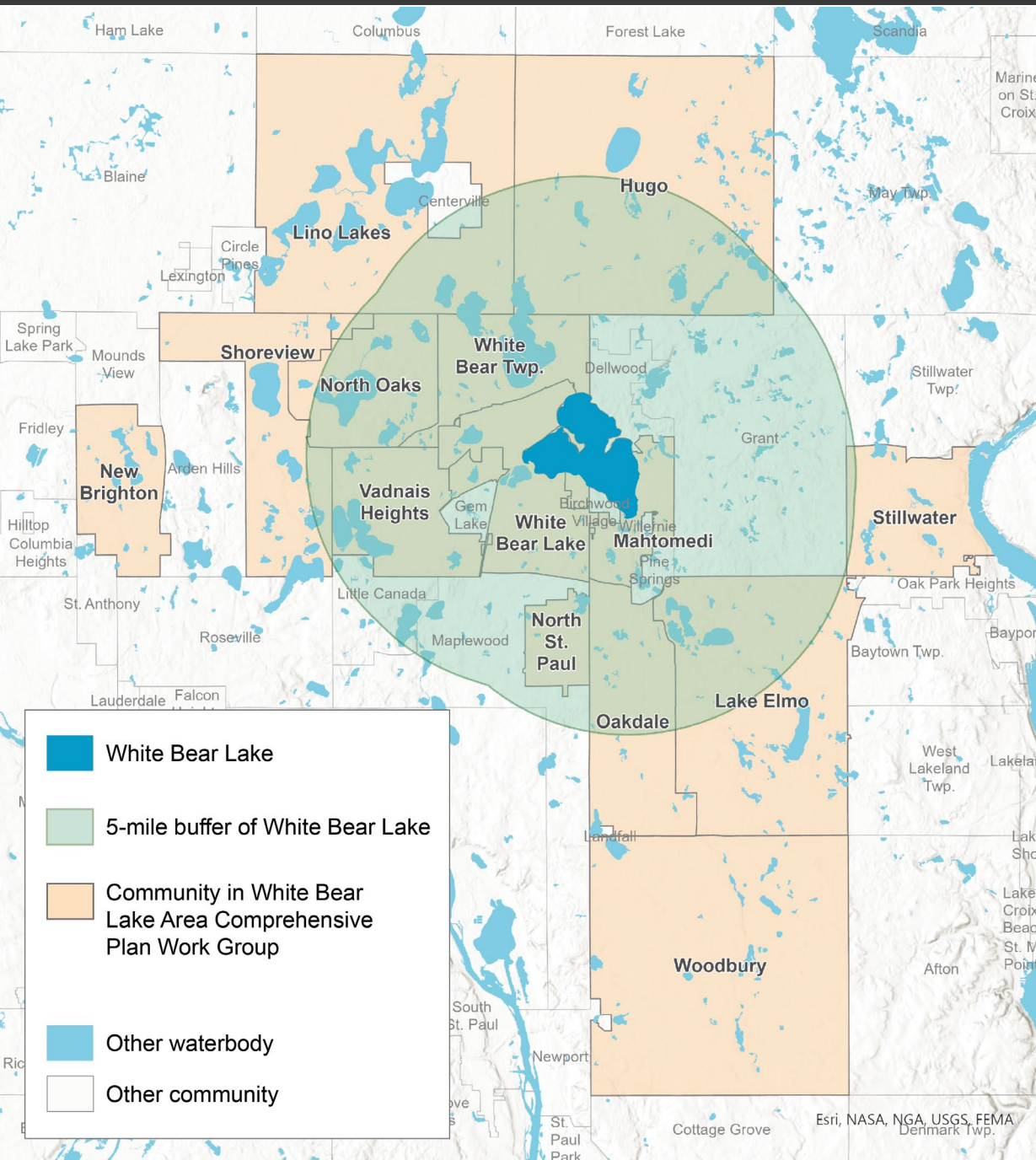
White Bear Lake Comprehensive Plan legislation

Minnesota Laws 2023, Chapter 60, Article 1, Section 5(f)



- The Minnesota legislature provided \$2 million in funding for the Metropolitan Council to form a work group to develop a comprehensive plan.
- The plan will ensure communities in the White Bear Lake area will have access to sufficient drinking water to allow for municipal growth while ensuring the sustainability of surface and groundwater resources to supply the needs of future generations.
- The completed plan must be submitted to the Minnesota Legislature by June 30, 2027

White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan Work Group

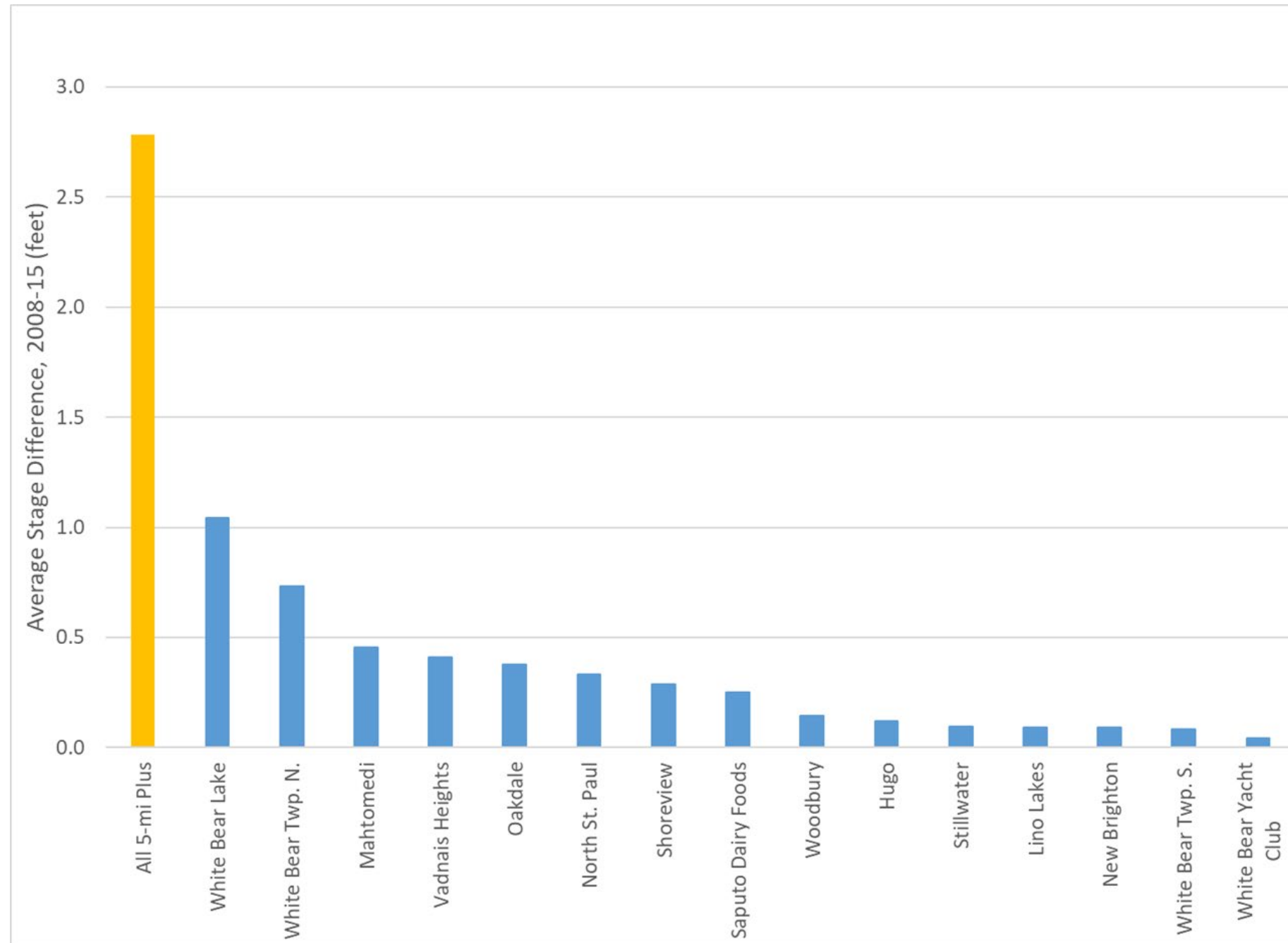


Membership:

- Convened by the Met Council
- Commissioners or designees from the DNR, MDH, and MPCA
- Representatives from Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) and St. Paul Regional Water Services
- The communities of Stillwater, Mahtomedi, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Lino Lakes, North St. Paul, Oakdale, Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, Woodbury, New Brighton, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township, and North Oaks

These communities combined have a water service population slightly over 300,000 people or approximately 10% of the metro region's total population.

Relative influence of individual permits on lake levels under existing use, 5-mile plus scenario: Top 15 influencers




Legislative directives (1 of 3)

1. Evaluate methods to conserve and recharge groundwater include four main areas to address:

- Converting water supplies that are groundwater dependent to total or partial supplies from surface water
- Reuse water, including water discharged from contaminated wells
- Projects designed to increase groundwater recharge
- Other methods for reducing groundwater use

Legislative directives (2 of 3)

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2. Determine which existing groundwater supply wells, if converted to surface water sources, would be the most effective and efficient in ensuring future water sustainability in the area
 3. Identify a long-term plan for converting groundwater supply wells identified in clause 2 to surface water sources
 4. Include any policy and funding recommendations for converting groundwater supply wells to surface water sources, treating and reusing wastewater, and any other recommendations for additional measures that reduce groundwater use, promote water reuse, and increase groundwater recharge

Legislative directives (3 of 3)

5. Include any policy and funding recommendations for local wastewater treatment and recharge
6. Submit plan to the chairs and ranking minority members of the House of Representatives and Senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources finance and policy by June 30, 2027.



This work is aligned with and supports implementation of regional water supply policies



- Integrated water
- Water-centered growth and development
- Conservation and sustainability
- Water reuse
- Pollution prevention and contaminant management
- Water monitoring, data, and assessment

This work supports local water supply planning



- Water demand projections supported this work
- Several technical projects are underway to understand the costs, benefits, and challenges of different projects.
- The information will be available to communities as they update their comprehensive plans.

Work progress

- A problem statement has been finalized
- Stakeholders have identified additional issues and approaches beyond those in legislation
- Projects have been prioritized for up to 15 individual studies and potentially 18 studies depending on project funding being available. Several of these studies have been completed or initiated.

For more detailed project information:

<https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Work-Groups/White-Bear-Lake-Work-Group.aspx>

Completed studies



- **Study 1** - Redirect Stormwater to Augment White Bear Lake
- **Study 8** - Stormwater Collection and Infiltration to Raise Groundwater Elevations

Current studies (1/2)



- **Study 3** - Reuse of treated wastewater from local Met Council interceptors for industrial and agricultural users
- **Study 5** - Reuse water discharged from contaminated wells – MPCA Project 1007
- **Study 6** - Treat wastewater from local Met Council interceptors and inject the treated wastewater into the aquifer to raise groundwater elevations

Current studies (2/2)



- **Study 7A** – Water quality study as it relates to lake augmentation study (Study No. 7B)
- **Study No. 9A** – Raise outlet elevation of White Bear Lake – initial evaluation of potential flood impacts

Upcoming studies



- **Study No. 2** - Convey treated surface water from St. Paul Regional Water Services, a regional surface water treatment, or both to north and east communities
- **Study 11** – Implement/require/encourage non- or less-potable water reuse for irrigation and process water
- **Study No. 14A** – Future community impacts from PFAS groundwater contamination with groundwater modeling
- **Financial Analyses Study** – Initial data gathering

Milestones and status

Milestone	Date
Schedule and hold one-on-one meetings with each of the group members	Completed
Work Group kickoff meeting and finalize problem statement	Completed
Work group meetings to agree on and advise on studies needed for the project	Completed
Technical studies	2025-2026
Financial studies	2025-2026
Agree to final recommendations and begin preparing final report	Late 2026
Submit final Metropolitan Council adopted plan to the House of Representatives, Senate committees, and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources finance and policy	June 30, 2027

Next steps



- **Next work group meeting date:** 12:30-3:30 pm on Thursday, July 24, 2025, at St. Paul Regional Water Services (1900 Rice St., St. Paul, MN)
- **Work group website for additional information:**
Google search “White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan Work Group”
or go to:
<https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Work-Groups/White-Bear-Lake-Work-Group.aspx>

Questions



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