



One Watershed One Plan

Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting Report July 26, 2022

Attendees

In Person: Tim and Lorie Strock (Randall, Morrison County), Camille Warzech (Little Falls, Morrison County), Paige Van Pelt (Aitkin County), Lance Chisholm (Morrison SWCD), Deja Anton (Todd SWCD), Bethany Chaplin (Crow Wing SWCD), Chris Pence (BWSR), Jeff Hrubes (BWSR), Tad Erickson (Region 5), Moriya Rufer (Houston Engineering)

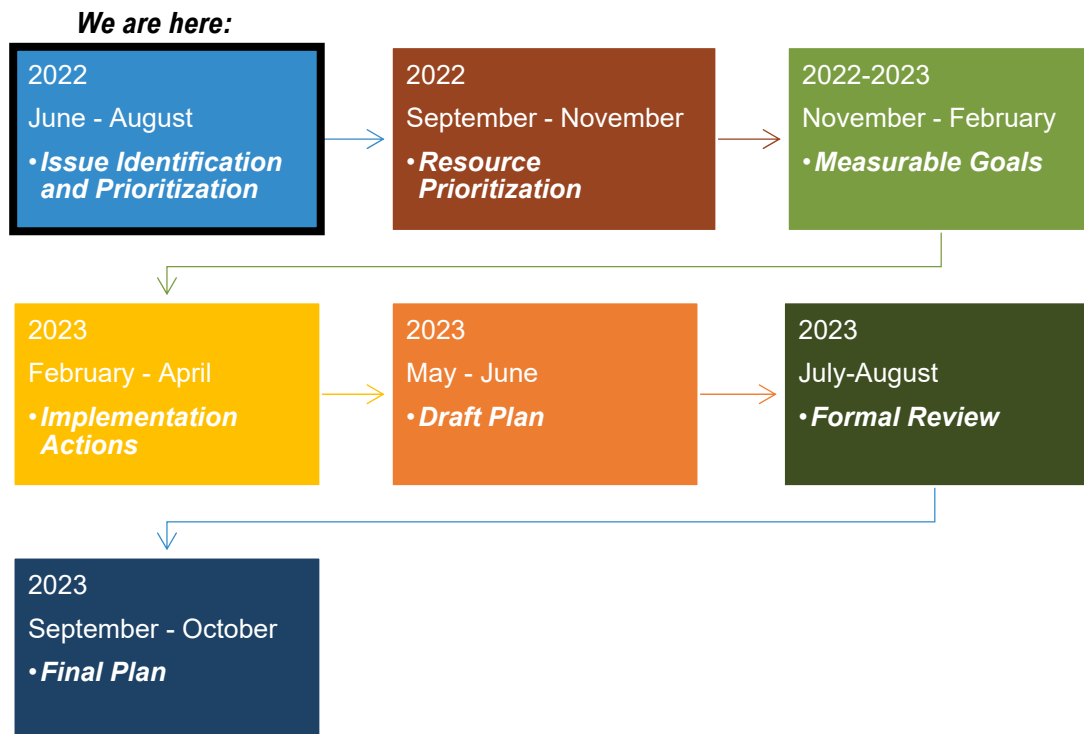
Online: Pat Murphy (Aitkin County Lakes and Rivers Association), Kathy Boeckmann (Lake Beauty), Lee Daily (Big Swan Lake), Rick Jones (Lake Beauty), Bob Karls (Northern Waters Land Trust), Steve Brown (Long Lake, Todd Co)

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting was to brainstorm and prioritize issues for the watershed. An issue is a problem, risk, or opportunity with a natural resource in the watershed.

Timeline

This graphic is a simplified version of the overall timeline. This timeline is a general guide, and the process can be adapted to fit as we go.



Introduction

First, a brief introduction to the watershed was presented. The Mississippi River – Brainerd Watershed stretches from north of Aitkin to Little Falls. The other watersheds in the Upper Mississippi River Basin, such as the Pine River, Crow Wing River, and Long Prairie River, drain into the Mississippi River in the Mississippi River – Brainerd Watershed (Figure 1).

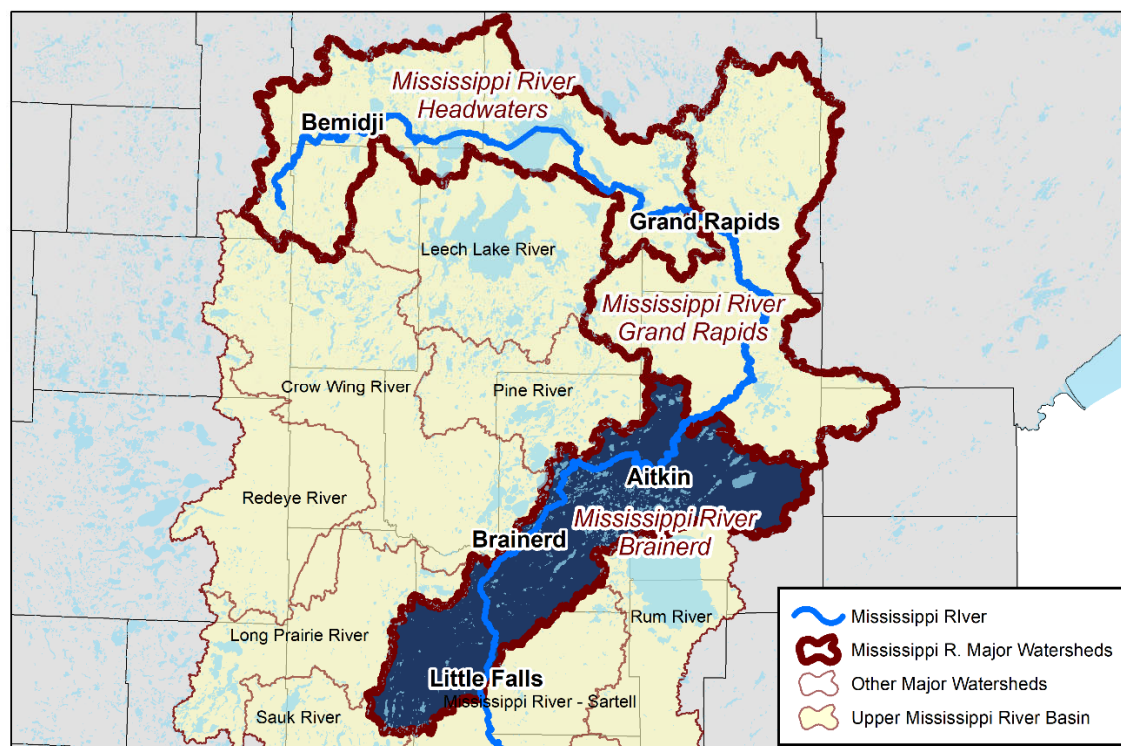


Figure 1. Upper Mississippi River Basin with the Mississippi River - Brainerd Watershed highlighted.

Over half the land in the watershed is forests, wetlands, and water, especially in the northern third of the watershed (Figure 2). Though they have been somewhat altered by past logging and human development, keeping these forests and wetlands intact is paramount to the outstanding water quality in the watershed.

The forests transition into pasture and cropland as the crow flies south along the Mississippi River (Figure 3). Areas that were cleared by logging were opened for farming in the mid-1900s. Animal agriculture includes dairy, beef, poultry, and pork. The most common crops grown are cultivated perennials, corn, and soybeans

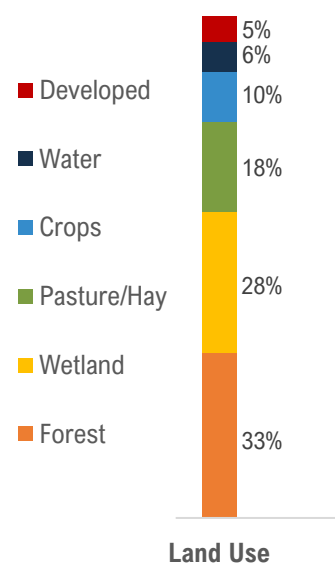


Figure 2. Land use in the Mississippi River - Brainerd Watershed.

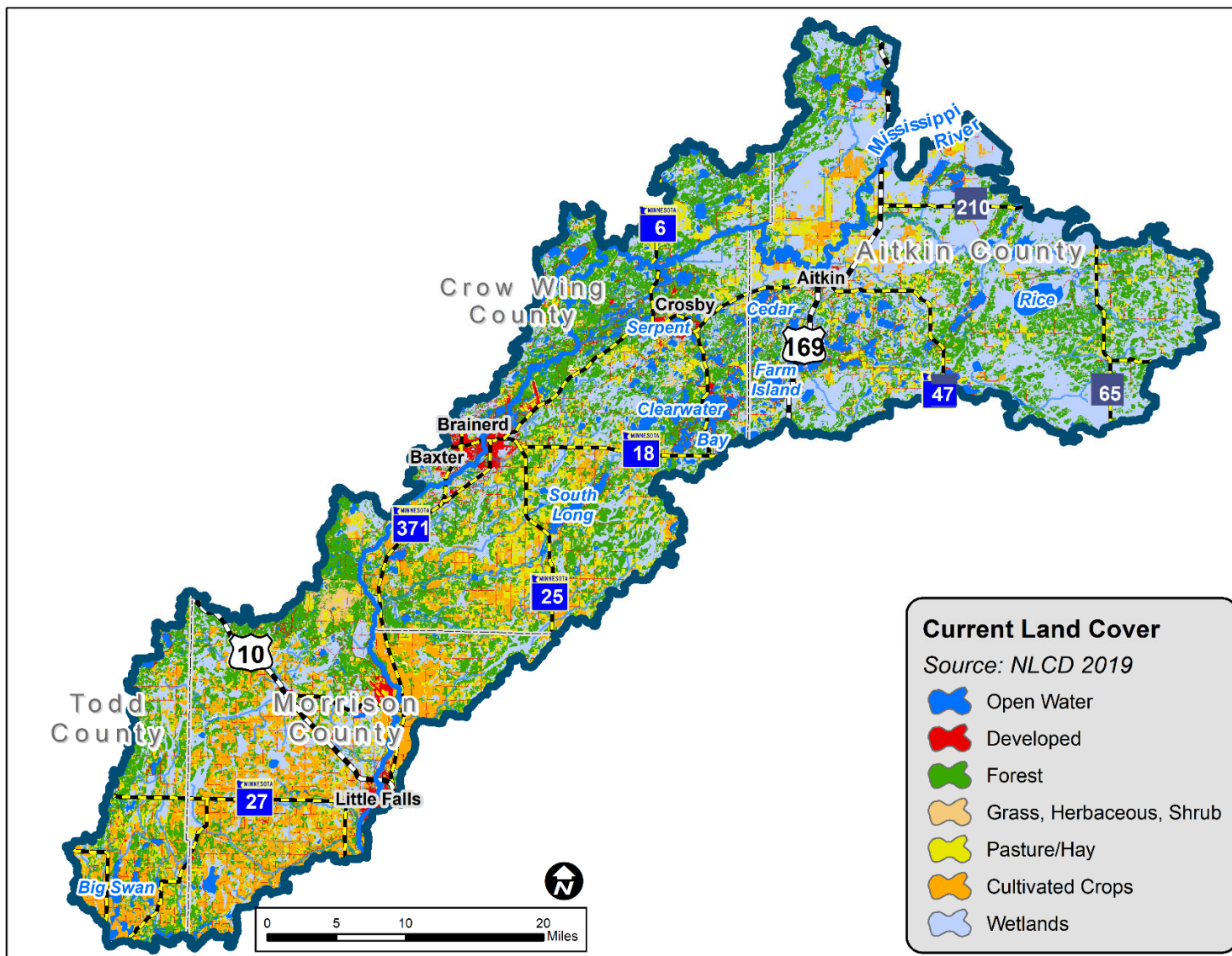


Figure 3. Land cover in the Mississippi River - Brainerd Watershed.

Issues

The main workshop portion of the meeting was centered on watershed issues. An issue is a problem, risk, or opportunity with a natural resource in the watershed. The process included the three steps outlined in Figure 4.

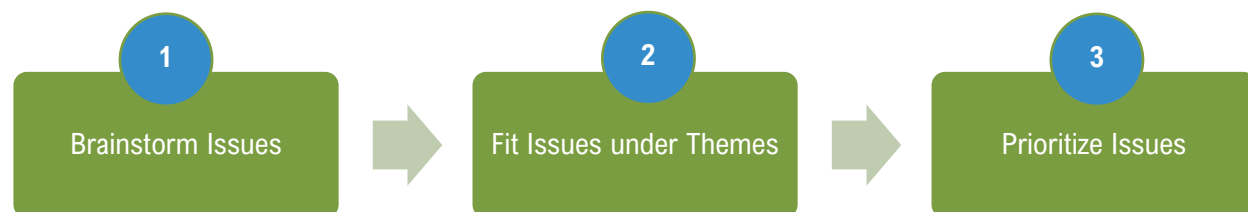


Figure 4. Process for developing issues at this meeting.

1 Brainstorm Issues

The CAC brainstormed issues for the watershed. The in-person participants wrote issues on post-it notes. The online participants typed issues into the chat and those were added to post it notes in the room.

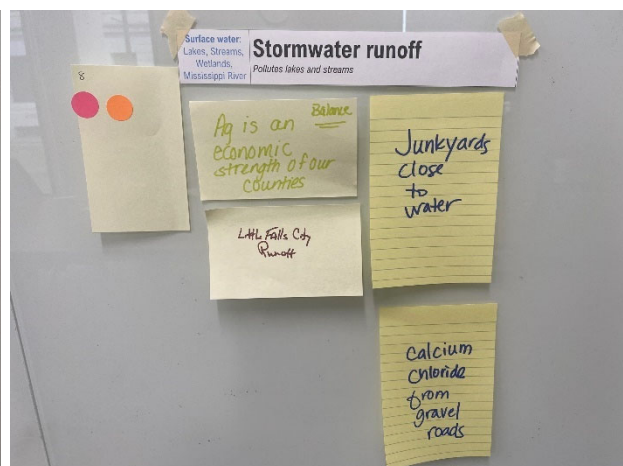
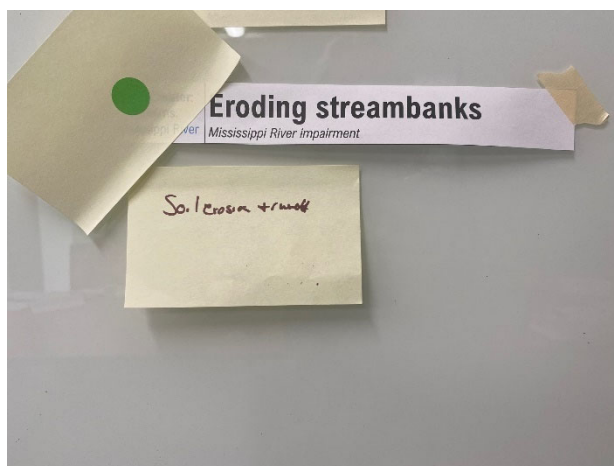
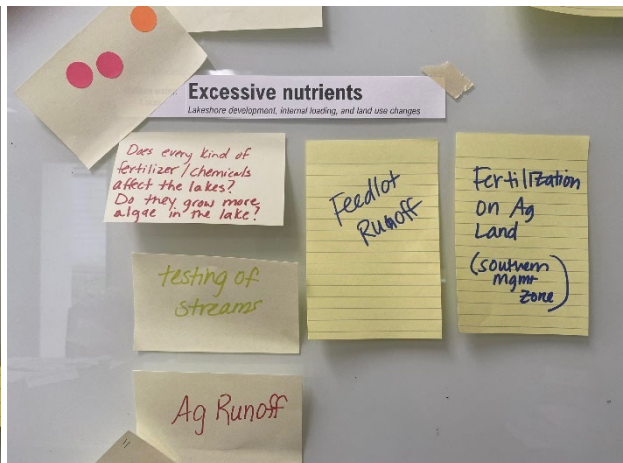
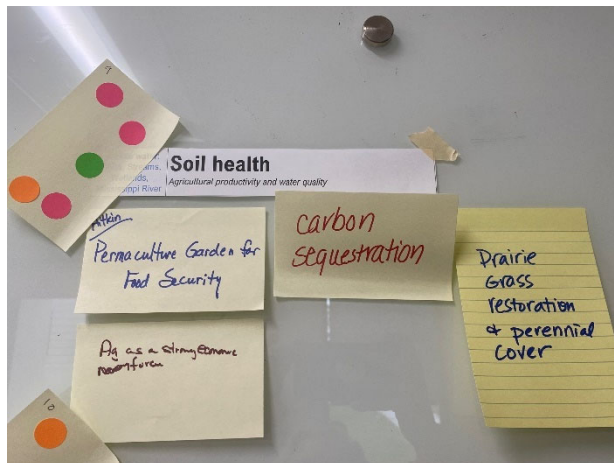
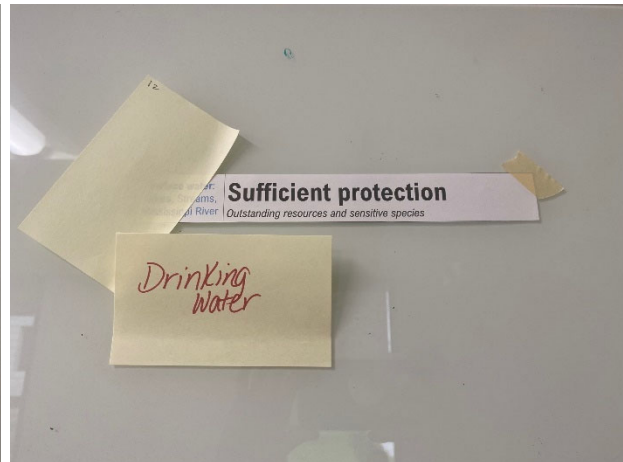
2 Fit Issues under Themes

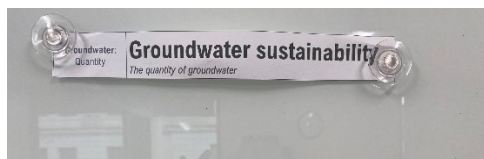
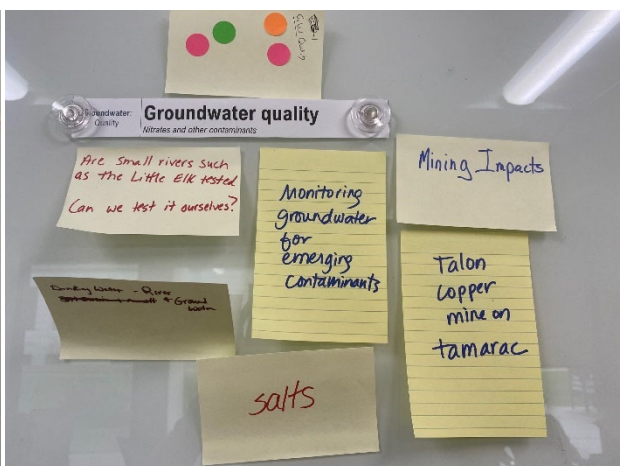
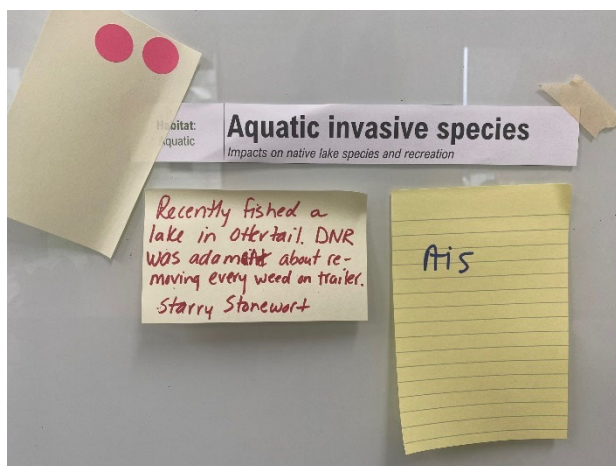
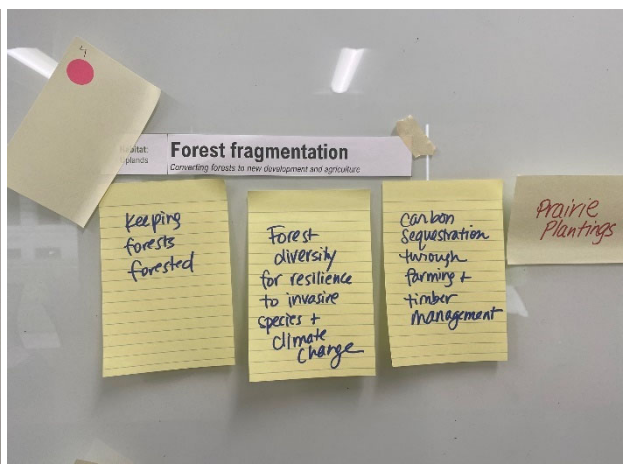
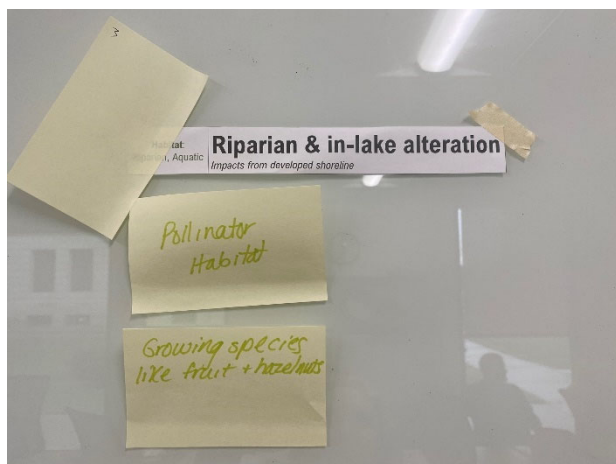
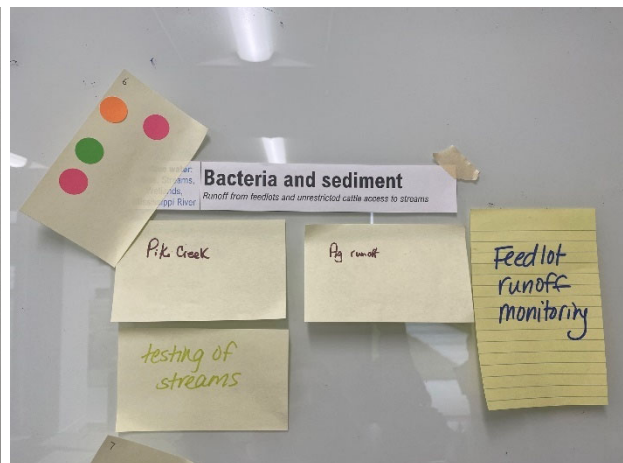
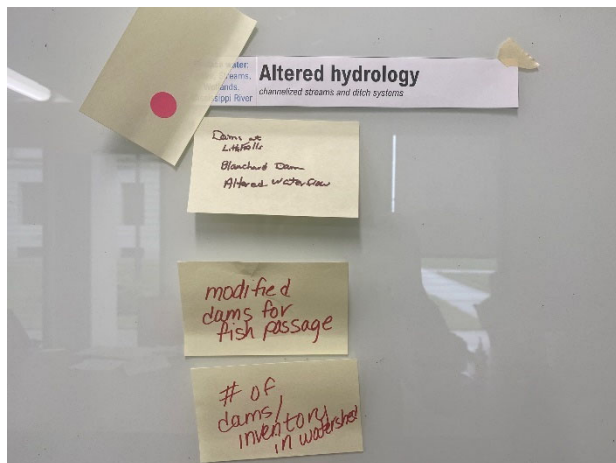
Next, the Issue Themes developed by the Technical Advisory Committee were introduced. The CAC participants moved their post it notes under the corresponding Issue Theme (Figure 5). The majority of the issues matched with what the Technical Advisory Committee developed.



Figure 5. Brainstormed issues fit under Issue Themes.

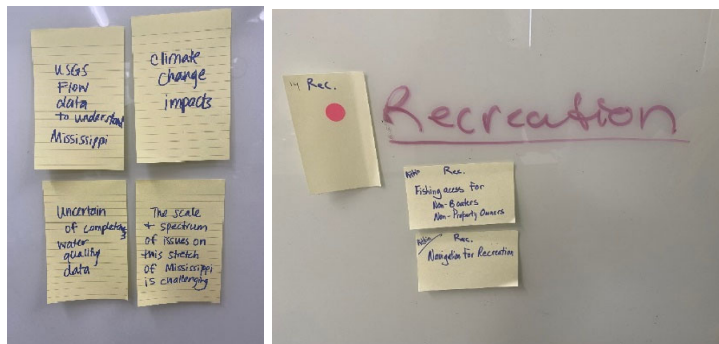
Issue categorization results:





Other Issues:

Some of the brainstormed issues didn't fit under the existing categories. Issues such as climate change affect everything else in the watershed and will be integrated throughout the plan. The issue of recreation isn't the focus of this plan but is managed and funded by other agencies.



3

Prioritize Issues

Once all the issues were categorized, participants were given three sticker dots each and told to put them on their top three issues that the plan should address. Results are shown in Table 1. The issues highlighted in green received the most votes and therefore, were the highest priority of the CAC.

Table 1. Issue prioritization results.

| Issue Theme | Votes |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Bacteria | 7 |
| Groundwater Quality | 6 |
| Soil Health | 5 |
| Nutrients | 5 |
| Aquatic Invasive Species | 5 |
| Stormwater Runoff | 4 |
| Eroding Streambanks | 3 |
| Recreational Opportunity | 3 |
| Wetland Protection & Restoration | 2 |
| Forest Fragmentation | 2 |
| Riparian & in-lake Alteration | 2 |
| Altered Hydrology | 1 |
| Groundwater Sustainability | 0 |
| Sufficient Protection | 0 |

Vision Statement

A vision statement is an inspirational statement of an idealistic emotional future of a company, group, or place. It can be used in the front of a plan to set the tone for the rest of the plan.

Meeting participants brainstormed words and phrases to address the two questions below. These words and phrases can be used to craft a vision statement.

What is unique
about this
watershed?

What is our ideal
future?

Brainstorm Results:

- The next generations will inherit an improved and sustainable watershed
- Protection of water and land resources for future generations
- The Mississippi Watershed is for generations to come
- Healthy lakes, healthy drinking water, healthy forests
- The beginning of the Big Easy; Stewardship for America's water
- Minnesota's contribution to better water to the heartland

Closing

Attendees were thanked for their participation. The next CAC meeting will be January 24, 4:00-6:00pm at the Crow Wing County Land Resources Building. The agenda will be focused on developing actions for the watershed plan.