



District Update

December 2023

As we wrap up another active year at the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD), we reflect on what we've accomplished. Our monitoring program continues to collect a wealth of data used to track the health of our lakes, streams, and wetlands. This data informs prioritization of projects selected to improve the health of the watershed. Projects such as the Upper Riley Ecological Enhancement Project, planned to begin construction in 2024, will improve watershed health by stabilizing erosion, reestablishing native vegetation, and restoring floodplains.

District staff continue to regulate activities that impact the watershed through our permitting program. In addition to reviewing permit applications, staff inspect construction sites to ensure appropriate measures are taken to protect our waterbodies. Staff also mailed postcards to nearly 600 lakeshore owners to provide information about shoreline permit requirements and who to contact with questions.

October brought the District's first ever Creek Week with activities for all. A Build Your Own Rain Barrel workshop hosted at the RPBCWD office had participants convert retired wine barrels into rain barrels to capture roof runoff. Residents could also pick up a tree sapling reserved earlier in the year; the trees spent the summer growing strong roots in gravel beds at our office, giving them a strong start when planted in fall. Creek Week wrapped up with the annual Cycle the Creek – a staff-guided bicycle tour along Riley Creek. Beginning with Creek Week, and lasting all month long, the Passport Adventure encouraged people to get out to explore the watershed district by offering a prize pack to determined explorers.

In 2023, our Stewardship Grant program awarded almost \$170,000 to residents, homeowner associations, cities and others committed to implementing natural shoreline restorations, habitat restorations, waterbody native vegetation buffers, and stormwater management projects. Some projects were also awarded funds to help pay for professional maintenance during the first three years, which is a critical time to establish native vegetation.

RPBCWD welcomed three new staff to our team this year: Dylan Monahan as Administrative Assistant, Alaina Portoghese as Communications Specialist and Andrew Hartmann as Water Resources Technician. We were also excited to welcome a new GreenCorps member, Rachel Whittington, this fall.

We at the district look forward to 2024, where we will continue our work to develop our Ecosystem Health Action Plan (EHAP for short). This collaborative effort includes contributions from many partners to inform, through an ecosystem lens, development of the 10-year management plan update. Learn more about this effort at rpbcwd.org/EHAP.

Sincerely,

Terry Jeffery
District Administrator



Monday, December 11, 2023 at 09:49:57 Central Standard Time

Subject: Wrapping up 2023 at RPBCWD

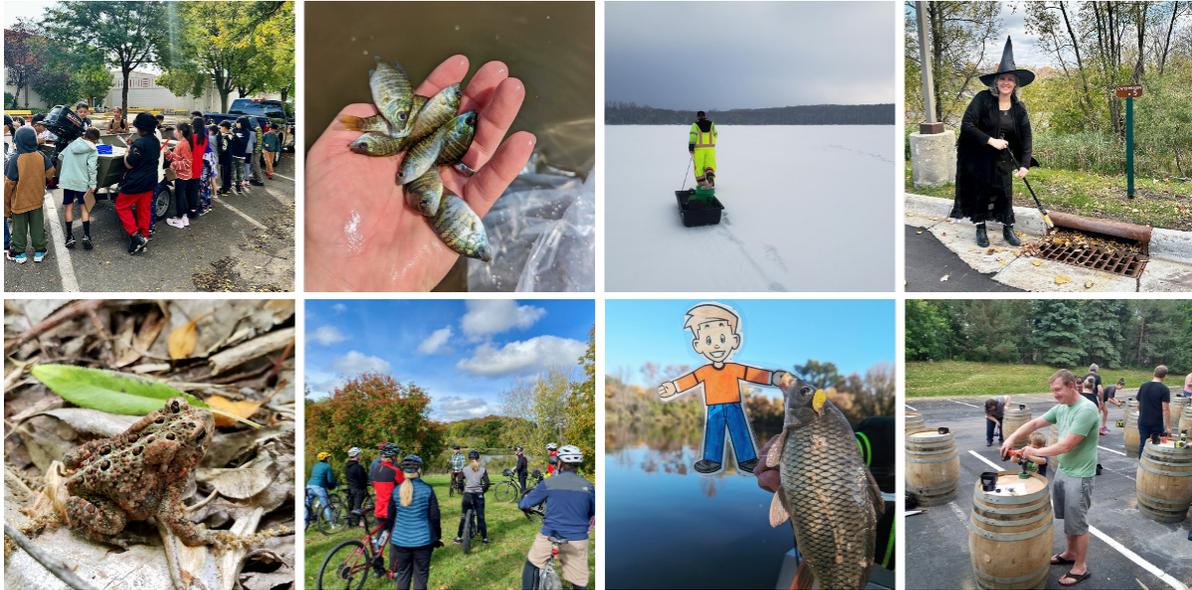
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 at 9:23:41 AM Central Standard Time

From: RPBCWD <info@rpbcwd.org>

To: Liz Forbes <LForbes@rpbcwd.org>

2023 Wrap-up from the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District

[View this email in your browser](#)



Letter from the District

As we wrap up another active year at the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD), we reflect on what we've accomplished. Our monitoring program continues to collect a wealth of data used to track the health of our lakes, streams, and wetlands. This data informs prioritization of projects selected to improve the health of the watershed. Projects such as the [Upper Riley Ecological Enhancement Project](#), planned to begin construction in 2024, will improve watershed health by stabilizing erosion, reestablishing native vegetation, and restoring floodplains.

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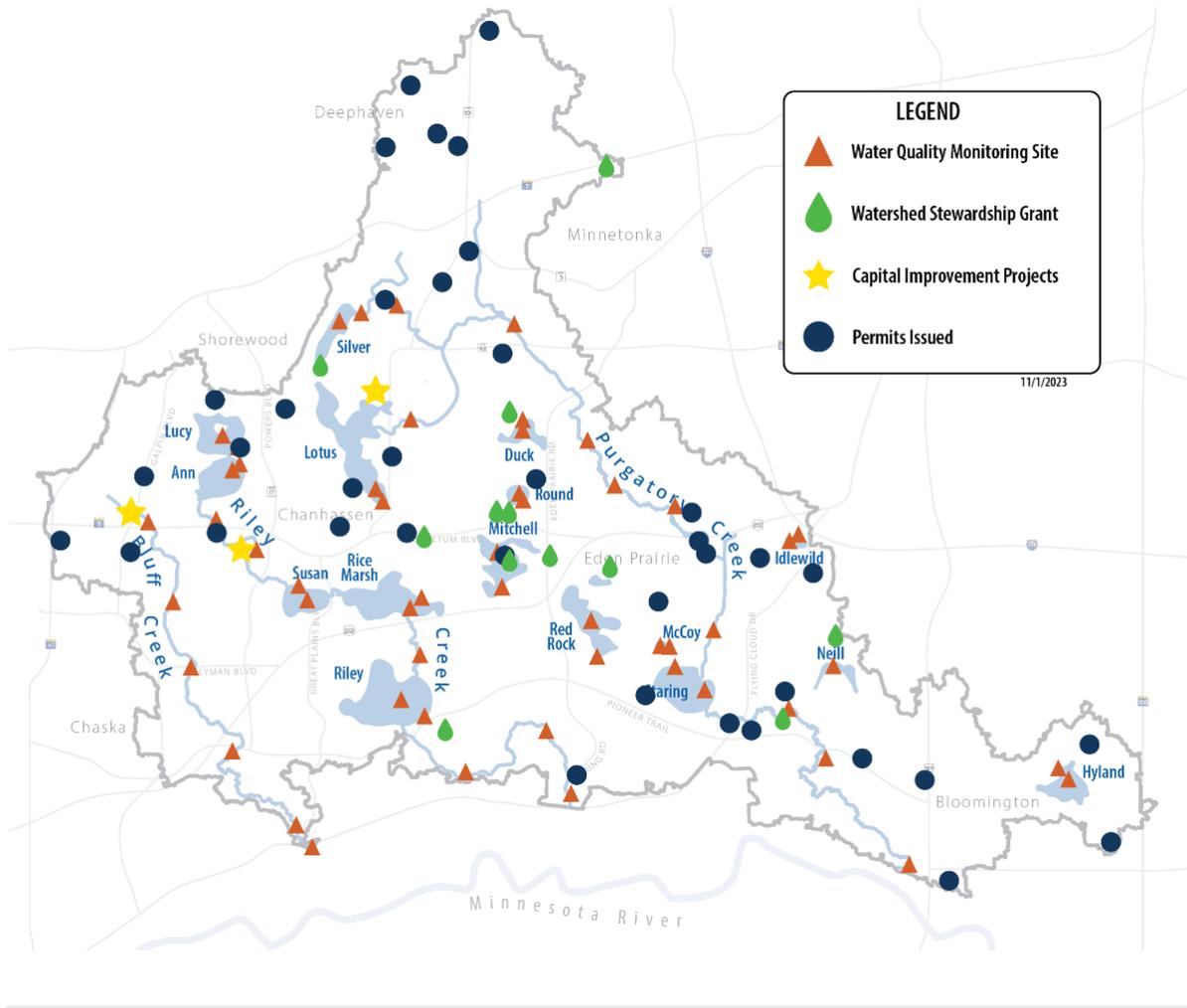
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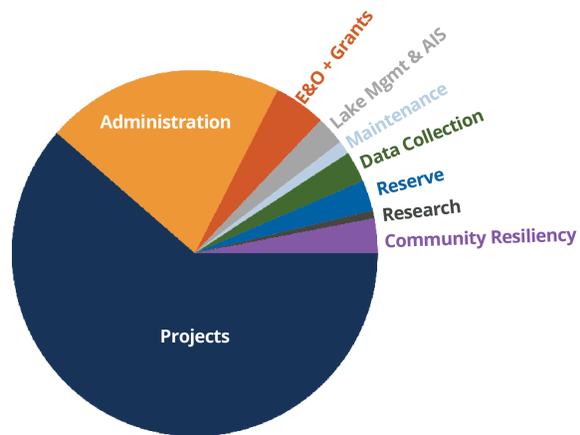
2023 At a Glance



District Tax Dollars at Work

Projects and programs of the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District are funded through property tax levies. We thank our community for their part in financing our mission of protecting, managing, and restoring our water resources!

The 2023 levy was \$3.8 million, and the [board-approved 2023 budget](#), including funds from previous levies, was \$7.3 million. The funds were used for projects, as well as administration, maintenance, lake and creek monitoring, aquatic invasive species management (AIS), education and outreach (E&O) and grant funding, community resiliency, and a reserve fund for emergencies.



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Make Waves in 2024

The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District has 2 opportunities to get your feet wet in the new year. If you're looking for opportunities to get more involved in clean water protection, now's your chance!



Join the Citizen Advisory Committee

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) is a volunteer advisory board comprised of community members whose role is to advise the RPBCWD Board of Managers as a representative of community interest. During monthly meetings, you will learn about water resource issues and

management strategies within the district as well as review and comment on new programs and projects. As a community representative, you will be a voice for community interests and concerns. You will play an active role in making decisions that impact clean water in the district.

Youth Representative: Are you or someone you know a high school student looking to get more involved in our community? We are seeking to add young voices to our committee through a designated Youth Seat on the CAC.

If you want to be a part of this welcoming, active committee of engaged volunteers, consider submitting an application today! [Apply by December 17th.](#)

Become a Minnesota Water Steward

The Minnesota Water Stewards certification program offers a great opportunity for you to join a local network of energized leaders and tackle environmental problems in your community. You don't have to be an expert. We'll show you the way!



Minnesota Water Stewards work within their communities as knowledgeable resources around local water health:

- **Educating Communities:** Help neighbors understand the most pressing environmental problems in their area.
- **Reducing Pollutants & Conserving Water:** Raise awareness of pollution sources such as pet waste, fertilizer, or pesticides and work to reduce their impact.
- **Coordinating Action:** Organize and help coordinate projects within communities to protect and conserve water.

The Minnesota Water Stewards (MWS) certification was developed by Freshwater to provide those interested in protecting and improving water health in their communities with the knowledge, skills, and relationship with local governments they need. Stewards work through in-depth coursework that includes water science, land/water/climate interaction, behavior change, and best practices in water efficiency and protection. A culminating capstone project unites the curriculum with action that benefits the health of local waters. Stewards gain experience and confidence to serve as a source of knowledge and influence in their communities.

[Learn more and apply](#)

2024 Calendars Now Available

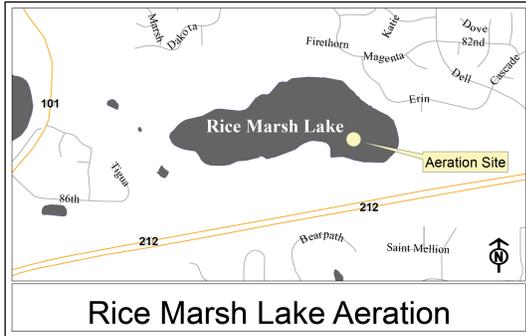


Our 2024 Calendars are ready to go home with you! The photos in this calendar were submitted by community members to our 2023 Photo Contest. [Click here to view all winning photographs.](#)

Want to see your photographs featured in our 2025 calendar? [Submit them to our 2024 photo contest!](#)

Pick up a free copy at a location near you

Notice of Open Water on Rice Marsh Lake



The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District will be operating an aeration system on Rice Marsh Lake from December 1, 2023, until May 1st, 2024, that will result in open water. Anyone on the lake should be aware of the danger of open water and thin ice around the aeration system. This

aeration system is necessary to prevent winter fish kill in the lake. The aeration system will be marked and located in the southeast quadrant of the lake; a map of the aeration system location is shown. This notice is being provided with residents' safety in mind and in accordance with MN Statute 103G.611 Subd. 4.

Board of Managers



Tom Duevel
Vice President
Minnetonka

Jill Crafton
Treasurer
Bloomington

Dorothy Pedersen
Secretary
Shorewood

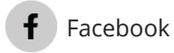
David Ziegler
President
Eden Prairie

Larry Koch
Member
Chanhassen

The District is governed by a five-person board of managers. Four managers are appointed by the Hennepin County Commissioners and one by the Carver

County Commissioners. They serve three-year terms.

[Learn more about RPBCWD](#)



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Hi! Thanks for signing up to receive email updates from RPBCWD.

Our mailing address is:
18681 Lake Drive East | Chanhassen, MN 55317

Our phone number is: 952-607-6512

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