

**PRIORITY CONCERNS SCOPING
DOCUMENT**

FOR

ISANTI COUNTY

LOCAL WATER RESOURCE

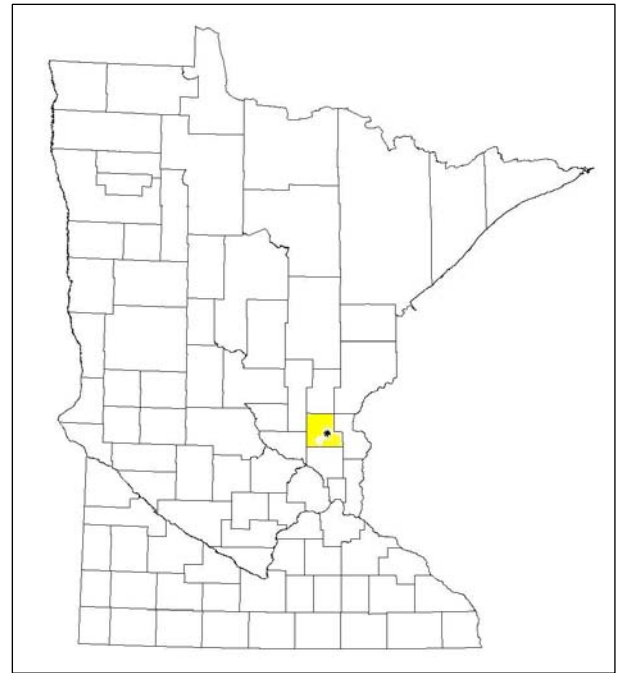
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Priority Concerns Scoping Document

INTRODUCTION:

Isanti County is located in east central Minnesota 40 miles north of St. Paul, 100 miles southwest of Duluth and 45 miles east of St. Cloud. Anoka County on the south, Kanabec on the north, Mille Lacs and Sherburne on the west, and Chisago on the east, border it. Isanti County has a total area of 442 square miles (282,880 acres). **Figure One** shows the location of Cambridge, the county seat and the geographic location of the County in Minnesota.

Figure One



Isanti County Demographics:

- **Population Trends** – Population trends in Isanti County have exceeded predicted growth since the 2000 census. **Figure Two** data was taken from the Minnesota State Census Bureau’s website at the following web address: <http://server.admin.state.mn.us/resource.html?id=7376>.

Figure Two

COUNTY	MCD	Adjusted	Extrapolated						
			2002	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Isanti	Isanti County	30817	33757	33730	35930	37930	39690	41160	42350
Isanti	Athens township	2322	2333	2330	2430	2509	2575	2623	2657
Isanti	Bradford township	3472	3569	3576	3849	4109	4346	4552	4728
Isanti	Braham city (part)	1283	1301	1299	1357	1403	1441	1470	1478
Isanti	Cambridge city	5520	5846	5838	6114	6333	6516	6656	6756
Isanti	Cambridge township	2413	2477	2473	2628	2776	2910	3027	3126
Isanti	Dalbo township	634	672	671	688	703	713	720	722
Isanti	Isanti city	2328	3793	3784	4272	4730	5143	5497	5796
Isanti	Isanti township	2360	2445	2453	2652	2840	3012	3162	3290
Isanti	Maple Ridge township	737	772	771	814	854	885	911	931
Isanti	North Branch township	1654	1685	1683	1757	1815	1864	1900	1925
Isanti	Oxford township	799	845	845	905	963	1015	1060	1099
Isanti	Spencer Brook township	1495	1541	1539	1639	1735	1822	1898	1962
Isanti	Springvale township	1384	1447	1445	1542	1634	1718	1790	1852
Isanti	Stanchfield township	1113	1150	1148	1179	1204	1222	1233	1238
Isanti	Stanford township	2075	2138	2135	2253	2364	2452	2523	2579
Isanti	Wyannett township	1698	1743	1740	1852	1958	2055	2139	2210

While this data is extrapolated based on two middle values of four extrapolation methods, the Isanti County Auditor has data based on actual land use. This data is given to the State Census Bureau and the estimated 2003 population of Isanti County is 35,321, which is already 1791 more than the predicted 2005 population. The 2005 predictions for the City of Cambridge were exceeded in 2003 by 468, the City of Isanti by 377 and the part of Braham residing in Isanti County by 96. This rapid growth has shown up as an area of concern from almost all input sources for this document.

- **Land Use** - Land use in Isanti County from 1969, as shown in the last water plan update indicated over 70% of the land in Isanti County is designated agriculture use (cultivated, pasture, and open). Information from the Farm Services Agency in 2000 is shown in **Figure Three** and indicates a shift from agriculture use to residential / commercial use. With the extensive development seen in the past five years, this number has likely changed. Current information will be available in the Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan update. The majority of this development has occurred around the Cities of Cambridge and Isanti. The southern third of Isanti County is close enough to commute to the metro area and for this reason, along with the scenic landscape; new development is in high demand.

Figure Three

Isanti County Land Use - percent	
Woodland	7
Water / Wetland	34
Cropland	38
Conservation Reserve Program	1
Pasture	3
Residential / Commercial	17
Total	100

The majority of the lakes in Isanti County are small and sensitive. These lakes have a special protection designation and have increased standards for development. The entire corridor of the Rum River is designated the Rum River Scenic District.

Local Water Resource Management Plan Information:

- **Responsibility** – The Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District has been charged with implementation of the Local Water Management Plan since its inception. The task force consists of nine members including:
 - James Jensen, Farmer
 - Val Marty Anderson, Isanti County Township Officers Association
 - LaVerne Kelling, City of Braham
 - Al Baxter, Spencer Brook Township Officer
 - Kurt Daudt, Isanti County Commissioner
 - Clifford Edblad, Isanti SWCD Board Supervisor
 - Clarence Manke, MN Pollution Control Agency
 - Dennis Haubenschild, Farmer
 - Richard Heilman, County Engineer.

This group meets twice a year to discuss budget and implementation strategies.

- **Original Water Plan** – The original water plan was adopted in August of 1993. The first update to the Plan was completed in 2000.
- **Expiration Date** – Isanti County’s current Local Water Plan expires December 31, 2005.

PRIORITY CONCERNS IDENTIFICATION:

The Isanti County Local Water Management planning process of addressing priorities has included the following actions:

Public and Internal Forums Held to Gather Input:

- **January 20, 2005:** Letter sent to surrounding counties and SWCDs; and cities and townships located within Isanti County; requesting a copy of existing plans and issues or concerns that should be addressed in the plan update (**Appendix item 1** – mailing list).
- **January 29, 2005:** Information and an invitation to participate were presented at the township annual meeting.

- **February 9, 2005:** Survey and notification of public visioning session were distributed to all households through the *Isanti News*, a local countywide newspaper. A copy of the survey can be reviewed in **Appendix item 2**.
- **February 16, 2005:** Article in local newspaper (*Star*) inviting public to visioning session.
- **February 16, 2005:** A letter was sent to state and local government agencies (**Appendix item 3** – mailing list) inviting them to hear about public input and provide agency input on March 2.
- **February 24, 2005:** A public participation meeting / visioning session was conducted.
 - The public meeting was conducted in Cambridge, MN from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
 - A facilitation process was used at this meeting to determine priorities and desired outcomes. Thirty-six people attended the session, including representation from Wyanett, Athens, Bradford, and Isanti township boards, County land use staff, SWCD board supervisor, and state agency representation from the DNR, Wildlife. Several lake association members were also present.
- **March 2, 2005:** A meeting of the Task Force with a presentation of the findings from the combined survey and the visioning session was given to interested state and local government agencies. Discussion of agency priority concerns was accepted at the meeting. Attendees included:
 - Mark DeMuth, Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Clifford Edblad, Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District, Board Supervisor
 - Tim Anderson, Isanti County Zoning
 - Dave Pauly, DNR Wildlife
 - Dennis Asmussen, DNR Central Region
 - Matt Drewitz, MDA
 - Val Anderson, Task Force Member
 - Brad Wozney, BWSR

Respondents to the survey felt overall that wetlands are the most threatened resource in Isanti County (**Figure Four**). Lakes and groundwater were second and third, with stream and rivers considered the least important.

Figure Four

Threatened Resources	
Wetlands	68
Lakes	47
Groundwater	43
Streams / Rivers	27
Natural Habitat	3
Wildlife	2
Ag land	2
Open Spaces	2

Through the survey and public meeting facilitation process, the respondents were asked what they considered the top four problems faced in Isanti County. Based on 190 responses to the survey, concerns are documented in **Figure Five**. The largest number of respondents lived in the Rum River Watershed (82%). This watershed covers the largest area of Isanti County, and we would expect this representation. Snake River Watershed comprised 14% of the survey respondents, with the rest unknown. All townships with the exception of Dalbo and Oxford were represented, with Cambridge, Bradford, and Isanti showing the largest numbers. Twenty three percent live on a lake.

Participants in the public meeting process mirrored the top four problems in Isanti County.

Written comments received via survey and public visioning session:

Other issues the survey respondents felt should be addressed included:

- Potential pollution from meth labs.
- Tell people what they do to the animals – kill with pollutants.
- It's already too late!
- Lot sizes on rural building (too small).
- Poor enforcement of existing rules.
- Traffic and dusty roads
- Chemical dumping like mercury and atrazine.
- Stop cluster development in ag land.
- Animal waste in creeks / wetlands.
- Prohibit Atrazine use.
- Too many houses on land.
- Too much development on wetlands.
- Overdose of chemicals and salt on roads in winter.
- Septic tanks need to be regulated
- Over development on lakes.
- Check septic systems.
- Stop overuse of lakes.
- Growing to the east – no real overall plan.
- Not to use nitrate fertilizer.
- Alternatives to mound systems.
- Rum River polluted.
- Dumping of septic waste on farmland.
- Well testing should be made easy to obtain and process.
- I think if the growth and development of Isanti County is strongly limited this will eliminate a number of problems.
- There should be a moratorium on building on and near lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and where there is any question about possible groundwater contamination – until the water management plan has been completed. Progress can come afterwards.
- Lake Francis has high algae and erosion problems.
- Farmland being taken out and developed with houses.
- Frogs and wild animals are threatened from farm pesticides.
- Our biggest problem pertaining to local water management is development and OVER development of our county.
- I would like to see sewer and water installed around Paul's Lake.
- The MN DNR can't be believed and has no credibility.
- Lack of infrastructure to support the development – moving in too many people with lack of schools and roads.
- Over regulation, excess government involvement.
- DNR not enforcing waterfowl regulations on Lake Marget.
- Our well water has higher and higher levels of contaminates every time I have it checked.
- Man-made fertilizer contamination and meth lab refuse.
- In 30 years we will be wall-to-wall houses.
- Do not give in to builders and Cambridge City Council, which is only interested in tax dollars, not the aesthetics of Cambridge and the close by lakes.
- Enforcing regulations on destruction of lakeshore would help.

Figure Five

Four top Problems in Isanti County	
Development Pressures	121
Groundwater Contamination	66
Failing Septic Systems	41
Lack of Environmental Education	48
Natural Habitat Destruction	110
Contaminated Runoff	65
Declining Water Clarity	48
Erosion	29
Over Application of Fertilizers	53
Stormwater/Drainage Management	49
Lack of Regulations	39
Other: Septage Dumping	2
Other: Lack of Planning	2
Other: Destroying Wetlands	1
Other: Lack of Enforcement	1
Other: Too Much Government	11
Other: Miscellaneous	11

- Our shallow lakes should not be drainage ponds for new developments. Make developers responsible for maintaining holding ponds by establishing funds.
- People from the city moving into housing developments should stay in city and we would not have developments.
- Watershed issues and increased development.
- Wetlands have been removed for homes on lakeshore.
- We need information about what kind of fertilizer to use.
- Reclaiming Francis and Long Lake is important to this county.
- We need better lakeshore management and return to more natural state.
- Four-wheeler / ATV problems seem to be unregulated.
- Stop filling wetlands, stop allowing people to build close to wetlands, stop 4-wheelers from destroying wetlands. PROTECT – PROTECT – PROTECT
- Residential housing in our ag districts is ruining wildlife habitat and concentrating them in smaller and smaller areas where they are threatened by disease and predation, pollution, and breeding habitat.
- Overall development is impacting wildlife populations. Where is the ducks?
- There should be tax credits for leaving natural habitat, swamps, ponds, upland areas untouched. Also for shoreline erosion stopping systems such as rock, retaining wall, etc.
- Need restrictions on building on areas that are or could contaminate aquifer – Anoka Sandplain area?
- Septic systems are a huge issue.
- Personal watercraft coming too close to docks.
- Increased weed growth with development.
- Additional development restrictions should be placed on lakeshores.
- Mud bottom lake stirred up by too many big boats and bigger, faster jet skis.
- Lack of trails in new home developments for walking / jogging, but keeping as much of the natural habitat as possible.
- Too much government interfeareness (sic.) in ones life.
- Farmland being taken out and developed with houses.
- Limit development within so many miles of lake (over development on lakes).
- Check septic systems.
- Stop overuse of lakes.
- Less houses – less regulation – no tree huggers! Just common sense.
- I think some education of the importance of natural vegetation is warranted.
- Development of land with improper plans to save Green spaces.
- Cities, townships and counties have to have planning sessions together to make sure of good communications – plan, vision and set goals for future.
- Water treatments and stormwater drainage is important to keep our groundwater and our waterways clean.
- Air and smog from over-development.
- Developers and local officials are ignoring the high water tables and natural water draining patterns.
- Need to put a cap on development!! There isn't going to be any NATURAL wetlands left in a few years. County needs to have stiffer regulations and stand their ground.
- Too many motorized vehicles (ATV, snowmobiles, trucks) etc on public lands.
- Lack of planning. Public apathy.
- Disrupting the filtering system.
- Need to develop green or wildlife corridor in the county.
- Present zoning density (2/40 acre) in ag district must be preserved.

- Wetland preservation and buffer strips should protect rivers, swamps and lakes where possible. Housing should not encroach on rivers and wetlands.
- We are changing our natural watersheds with development.
- Building residential – in city – “ponds” to catch run off makes mosquito breed sanctuaries. West Nile and attractive nuisance to young kids – is this a liability to Cambridge City? Litigation problems may occur.
- DNR regulations too strict regarding lake shore improvement.
- Isanti County does not need another bridge crossing the Rum River. It will only cause excess development and natural habitat destruction.
- Stop housing development – leave land for farming.
- Erosion of soil on the bank of the Rum River.
- Lack of landowner rights.
- Unproper septic dumping on fields.
- Roads over congestion, land education – sandy.
- Too much government interference on private land use.
- Need more officials to clean up meth houses in our county, along with tougher sentences.
- Rights of landowners / DNR too invasive.
- I would hope the County would take a more pro-active approach to the correction of failing septics by requiring regular inspections of every system in the county and the replacement when necessary – not just at the time of property sale.
- We need better lakeshore management and return to more natural state...etc.
- Very important to protect our water, lakes, fish, etc.
- Septic laws change from year-to-year thereby making “low interest” loans and upgrades too much of an economic hardship.
- Have concern of meth labs contaminating groundwater, lakes and streams.
- Need cities to cooperate with townships, county and lake associations.

Issues identified in the public input meeting of February 24, 2005 include:

Development Pressures:

- Slow down developers through impact fees for new houses and forced set-aside of open areas.
- Milfoil management on lakes and streams.
- Flooding due to improper water flow in regional creeks due to beavers, fallen trees, etc
- ISTS failing with no enforcement or knowledge of contamination.
- Rapid growth and development within cities and in outlying areas – rapid lakeshore development.
- Dumping of septic waste on farm fields.
- Green space areas assigned to specific land in the county – protect underdeveloped areas.
- Limit development to open land (farms).
- ID the areas we protect – wetlands, wooded land.
- Protect Sensitive areas.
- Less parcelization – PUD.
- Clean ditches and creeks of overgrown brush and foliage.
- Clean lowland of brush and foliage.
- Would like to see a long range plan with development starting with the cities and moving out.
- Slow down development until a better plan put in place.
- Develop around urban areas (you can allow outer rural areas to sell development rights to inner areas).

- Open spaces that can be used as recreational areas by the public.
- Open spaces that preserve wildlife areas.
- Preserve wetlands, more green areas, natural habitat.
- Check into cost of community (group septic system)/
- Safeguard lakes / rivers (water clarity issue).
- Check erosion / be sensitive to lakes / rivers.
- Surface water runoff from development projects – controlled within development.

Natural Habitat Destruction:

- Wildlife programs, reclaiming pond's to give more open water for ducks, geese, etc.
- The last 30 years most of our potholes are growing shut, with cattails leaving no nesting areas with water, forcing our migratory birds to nest elsewhere.
- Set aside more areas.
- Make it harder to fill in wetlands.
- More regulations.
- Save green spaces.
- Require developers and individuals to leave green corridors (buffers) around lakes / streams / wetlands. No mowing down to water.
- Fine people (snowmobilers, 4-wheelers, etc.) for polluting the landscape and put up signs warning them. \$750
- Lower the amount of wetland filling allowed.
- Grants available for buffers.
- Return lands back to wetland.
- Be more restrictive on filling wetlands.
- Monitor lakeshore clearing of vegetation.

Groundwater Contamination:

- Failing septic tanks.
- Little information (public decoration on Cambridge City wells high in radium) but no report on it.
- No control of well water.
- Program to seal abandoned wells with colloidal clay rather than cement.
- Systematic well testing program, based on benchmark studies.
- Education of adult public on groundwater concerns via: 1) media 2) public forums.
- Grouting (cap) abandoned wells, preferably with colloidal bentonite, after removal of metal pipe.
- Promote cluster septic systems and cluster wells in new developments.
- Bring leaky septic systems up to state standard (70-80).
- Inspect non-compliant septic systems.
- Inspect all septic systems periodically.
- Enforcement of existing regulations of controlled / illegal substances that can contaminate groundwater.

Stakeholder Issues:

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

- Consult MN PCA to consider how to plan for developments contemplated in or near impaired waters. (*Environmental Quality Board*)
- High quality natural areas need to be better recognized as a factor that shapes development. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Standardized ordinances that strictly regulate erosion control standards and stormwater management in developing areas. (*Isanti County Environmental Coalition*)

- Inventory and assessment of the lakeshed to identify key areas that are essential for management of nutrient and sediment loading to the Quad Lakes. (*Isanti County Environmental Coalition*)
- Insufficient controls will result in increased runoff volume and degraded water quality of runoff to Isanti County priority lakes and rivers. (*MN BWSR*)
- The cumulative effects of development on the Skogman-Fannie-Elms-Florence Chain of Lakes. (*MN BWSR*)
- Too much red tape when townships want to upgrade their roads in wetland areas. (*Bradford Township*)
- Establish a system to work with developers to ensure that natural resources considerations are addressed. (*Anoka Conservation District*)
- Urbanization of lakes in proximity to city. (*Isanti County Zoning*)
- Utilize “Greenways” language for development ordinances. (*Isanti County Zoning*)
- Stormwater management in urban or developing areas for transportation facilities. (*MN PCA – Assistant Commissioner*)

NATURAL HABITAT DESTRUCTION

- Add setback or buffer requirements for development near wetlands. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Protect Rum River Scenic District through Ordinance. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Inventory natural communities and sensitive lands. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Purchase or acquire easements on the most sensitive lands. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Acquire easements or other conservation measures during the development process on or near sensitive lands and waterways. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Require developers to shape the development around valuable natural features, and give them the freedoms to do this creatively in a way that will have minimal financial impacts. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Ensure that local technical and financial assistance is available to help lakeshore and stream bank owners correct erosion and create buffers for water quality. (*Jamie Schurbon*)
- Develop a coordinated approach with the cities and count comp plan to identify and designate conservation corridors. (*Isanti County Environmental Coalition*)
- Work with interest groups in obtaining conservation easements or other methods that protect the lands. (*Isanti County Environmental Coalition*)
- Protection of the Rum River floodplain. (*MN BWSR*)
- More cooperation from the DNR in blowing out beaver dams. (*Bradford Township*)
- Require conservation easements, buffers, or other protective measures for sensitive areas during the development process. (*Anoka Conservation District*)
- Create a comprehensive map of high quality and sensitive natural areas. (*Anoka Conservation District*)
- Include endangered species and native plant communities in water management plan. (*MN DNR – Natural Heritage and Nongame Research*)
- Minimize storm water discharges from developed and developing areas. (*MN DNR – Regional Director*)
- Protect scenic and ecological values of basin lakes and streams. (*MN DNR – Regional Director*)
- Promote local learning about watershed values and issues. (*MN DNR – Regional Director*)
- Survey restorable wetlands. (*March 2, 2005 Agency Meeting Comment*)
- Eliminate 400 square feet wetland filling exemption in shoreland areas. (*March 2, 2005 Agency Meeting Comment*)
- Work with Isanti Parks and Trails on development of a wildlife corridor. (*March 2, 2005 Agency Meeting Comment*)

GROUNDWATER

- Reduce risk of ground water contamination associated with developments in sensitive areas. *(Environmental Quality Board)*
- Consult MN DNR to consider how to plan for significant water using developments. *(Environmental Quality Board)*
- Continue requirement for point of sale septic system inspections. *(Jamie Schurbon)*
- Implement educational efforts to ensure proper maintenance. *(Jamie Schurbon)*
- More nitrate testing and more monitoring of ground water quality. Septic system compliance checks and / or a countywide policy to address septic system compliance. *(Isanti County Environmental Coalition)(MDA)*
- Implementation of agricultural BMPs. *(Isanti County Environmental Coalition)*
- Arsenic screening. *(Isanti County Environmental Coalition)*
- Update of the ASP hydrogeologic atlas (1993) through countywide preparation of a geologic atlas. *(Isanti County Environmental Coalition)*
- Failing / inadequate septic systems. *(Bradford Township)*
- Protect groundwater resources. *(MN DNR – Regional Director)*
- Work to minimize wells in areas known to be in a high radium aquifer. *(MDH – Sourcewater Protection Unit)*
- Recognize who are the public water suppliers in the County and support their needs when they are developing or implementing Wellhead Protection or Inner Well Management Zone. *(MDH – Sourcewater Protection Unit)*

IMPAIRED WATERS

- Monitoring, coordination with MN PCA and Chisago County, identify sources of pollution and development of remediation plans. *(Isanti County Environmental Coalition)(MN PCA – Assistant Commissioner)*
- Implement practices and projects resulting from the Total Maximum Daily Load study on the North Branch of the Sunrise River. *(Chisago SWCD)*
- Work with Chisago County in closer coordination of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) project on the North Branch of the Sunrise River. *(Chisago County Water Resources Manager)*
- Isanti County Water Plan should position the county to leverage funds and avoid economic sanctions associated with the North Branch of the Sunrise River. *(MN BWSR)*
- Schedule TMDL studies into the implementation plan of your new Water Resources Management Plan. *(Anoka Conservation District)(MN PCA – Assistant Commissioner)*
- Allocate resources to implement corrective actions on streams and rivers where TMDL studies are ongoing or already completed. *(Anoka Conservation District)*
- Establish a water quality-monitoring program. *(Anoka Conservation District)*
- Basin monitoring for Water Quality and Quantity *(MN DNR – Regional Director)*
- Improve nutrient management and other water quality parameters (phosphorus, nitrogen, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and bacteria levels). *(MN DNR – Regional Director)*
- Twenty percent reduction in the total annual phosphorus loading from the tributaries of the St. Croix River Basin to Lake St. Croix. *(MN PCA – Assistant Commissioner)*

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- A water plan coordinator position in Isanti County is necessary to track and implement county actions. *(Isanti County Environmental Coalition)*
- Revive the five county PICKM Water Quality Team to renew good coordination efforts and projects that the counties have accomplished together over the years. *(Chisago County Water Resources Manager)*

- Link water plan with comprehensive plan. (*Environmental Quality Board*)(*Isanti County Zoning*)
- Implementation of water management plan goals – historically water management plan funds have been used for good projects in Isanti County but not for implementing the water plan goals. (*MN BWSR*)

PRIORITY CONCERN SELECTION:

The following priority concerns were chosen after careful scrutiny of the input from the 190 surveys, 36 community members that attended the visioning session, the agency officials that attended the follow-up meeting, and the written comments submitted by stakeholders. They are in no particular order of importance. While most submitted comments have true merit, the Isanti County Local Water Management Plan Task Force realizes only a number of them can be effectively implemented in the next five years. A strong focus on education will be incorporated into all aspects of this plan. Isanti County intends to work closely with adjoining counties on projects-in-common.

I. DEVELOPMENT OF TMDLS FOR IMPAIRED WATERS IN ISANTI COUNTY IS A PRIORITY.

- Address **all** impaired waters in Isanti County and establish a system of working with MN PCA to develop remediation plans. Establish funding source for implementation of plan.
- Prioritize impaired waters in need of TMDL studies for action as time and funding become available.
- Partner with Chisago County in the development of TMDL studies and implementation on the North Branch of the Sunrise River.
- Work cooperatively with Anoka County on the Typo Lake TMDL study.

II. THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE WATERS (SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER) IN ISANTI COUNTY IS A PRIORITY CONCERN.

- A water plan coordinator position in Isanti County is necessary to track and implement county actions.
- Participate with Isanti County Zoning in promoting current protective ordinances and creating new ordinances regulating erosion control standards and stormwater management in developing areas.
- Develop a coordinated approach with the cities and county comprehensive plan to identify and designate conservation corridors.
- Review all land use ordinances in Isanti County (cities, township, county) for resource protection capabilities. Include enforcement issues.
- Bring project NEMO (non point education for municipal officers) to Isanti County. Become active in MECA (Minnesota Erosion Control Association) to learn of new opportunities and available assistance to the community.
- Develop education program regarding the Anoka Sand Plain in the JOBZones area for commercial / industrial development. Focus on potential impacts to groundwater from land use. Explore feasibility of common well requirements.
- Assist communities in Wellhead Protection and Inner Wellhead Management Zone Planning.
- Map areas of potential high radium concentration and work to minimize new wells in the aquifer containing radon.

III. PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF NATURAL HABITAT IS A PRIORITY IN THE COUNTY.

- Establish a system to work with developers to ensure that natural resources considerations are addressed at sketch phase of planning. Work with Isanti County to require conservation easements or other protective measures for sensitive areas during the development process.
- Rum River Scenic District: support stricter standards for mitigation within the entire floodplain.
- Inventory wetlands, both drained and existing, and prioritize for restoration/protection. Pursue conservation easements in shoreland and riparian areas, ground water recharge areas, and wetland complexes.
- Provide education and incentive to lakeshore / river owners to retain or restore existing native vegetation and plan emergent vegetation as techniques for reducing shoreline erosion.
- Promote BMPs and provide incentives for buffers in agriculture areas to decrease phosphorus load to the Rum River and area lakes.

IV. QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF THE WATERS IN ISANTI COUNTY IS A PRIORITY.

- Support long-term basin monitoring program for lakes, river, streams and groundwater.
- Revive the PICKM Water Quality Team.
- Empower lakeshore property owners with information on formation of lake associations, lake improvement districts, and lake management planning. Provide liaison and technical assistance and help facilitate grant resources for water quality improvement projects.
- Work with existing lake associations on the formation of a countywide coalition of lakes associations.

PRIORITY CONCERNS NOT ADDRESSED BY THE PLAN:

Issues of beaver dams and roads through wetlands have their own regulatory process, as do traffic, dusty roads, snowmobiles and four-wheelers. The potential for animal waste in creeks and wetlands exists, however MN PCA regulates feedlot and pasture use. Methamphetamine labs are a growing problem. Education to property owners on what to look for and who to report to should be made available by the county sheriff's department. Most development issues are of a regulatory nature and Isanti County Zoning has authority over it. Isanti County Local Water Management Plan is a supportive document to their efforts and should be included in the county comprehensive plan when it is updated.

ISANTI COUNTY LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN ONGOING ACTION ITEMS

While this document addresses the Priority Concerns to be implemented from 2006 to 2011, the task force has ongoing implementation strategies that are continued on an annual basis. Some of these activities include:

- o Sixth grade field day has been partially funded by the water plan and hosted by University of Minnesota Extension Services. With budget cuts, this program is in question. The LWMP Task Force would like to continue this worthy program,
- o Hazardous waste pick-up day will continue to be partially funded by LWMP dollars.
- o Bi-annual newsletters will continue with education regarding priority issues, cost-share programs available, and DNR information.

- o The SWCD will continue the “no-till drill” program – assisting farmers in conservation minded planting practices.
- o Funding will be contributed to the household water-testing program for nitrates in groundwater.
- o Assist lake associations in educational mailings.

Implementation of the Priority Concerns in the Isanti County Local Water Management Plan is dependent on several variables. The county needs to make water planning a priority and appoint a water management coordinator, the state must fund LWMP at its previous level, and the water management coordinator must pursue other grants and work with adjoining counties on Total Maximum Daily Load allocation grants that are available through the state funding for impaired waters.