

# Minnesota Stormwater Research Council Guiding Framework

January 2021

## Executive Summary: About the Minnesota Stormwater Research Council (MSRC)

The Minnesota Stormwater Research Council is an organization established in 2016 to

- Facilitate the completion of needed applied research that enables more informed decisions about the use, management and protection of our water resources in urbanized areas.
- Periodically assess the status of research, identify consensus research priorities, and communicate these to Minnesota's public and private research agencies and organizations.
- Promote coordination of research goals, objectives and funding among the research agencies and organizations.
- Facilitate technology transfer of stormwater research to practitioners, agencies, organizations and others. For the Council, technology transfer includes support for and facilitation of education, outreach and training and translation of research results into related manuals and policies.

## Statement of Need

*Minnesota is the land of nearly 12,000 lakes and 63,000 miles of rivers and streams.* Minnesota has more freshwater than any of the country's contiguous 48 states. Water is part of Minnesota's identity and a defining force in our state's history, heritage, environment, and quality of life. At the headwaters of three of the largest river basins in North America, Minnesota receives 99% of its water from rain and snow—consequently, most of our water quality problems originate right here in our own state. While this means we are not forced to clean up water problems originating elsewhere, it also means we have a responsibility to take care of our waters for our sake and for all those downstream. (Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework, 2011).

The management of these resources is closely regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Current water quality standards demand a response by local governments to meet these standards through TMDL implementation plans, MS4 permits and individual permits and local water management plans. How to best respond to meet clean water goals in urbanized areas requires information on alternative Best Management Practices (BMPs), their potential clean water benefit, cost and maintenance requirements.

The MSRC was created in 2016 to address the following issues and problems:

- Local governments, watershed organizations, and businesses spend significant funds on planning, design, and construction of stormwater BMPs to meet water quality standards and implement MS4 and TMDL requirements. Current implementation is resulting in significant expense without clear service expectations. Private construction is being required to comply with stringent permit requirements that may be inefficient and costly with unknown outcomes.
- Stormwater research funding is limited and not coordinated.
- There is a current lack of efficient information/technology transfer.
- Maintenance of BMPs is required and is often not provided efficiently by existing Public Works operations. New skills, personnel, equipment, and training are needed along with proven practices and procedures.
- Current Federal and State rules require maintenance of stormwater ponds to maintain BMP performance. However, disposal of the dredge material is cost prohibitive. The impact of nutrients, contaminants, and thermal pollution from ponds requires more study.
- Local governments, watershed districts, universities, and other US research organizations are completing research. However, these research reports, findings, and recommendations are not communicated efficiently to local implementing agencies that need the information.

## **Purpose of the Minnesota Stormwater Research Council:**

The MSRC will facilitate relevant, applied stormwater research and support education and technology transfer to connect water managers, practitioners, and other professionals to actionable research that is responsive to their needs, to benefit Minnesota and its public waters through the following efforts:

- Coordinate and build partnerships at local, regional, state, and federal levels to leverage stormwater research resources (personnel and funding).
- Provide a clear process for identifying research needs, prioritizing, soliciting, submitting, approving and implementing stormwater-related research proposals.
- Find solutions that improve the design, constructability, maintainability, cost effectiveness, hydraulic performance, and treatment efficiency of stormwater facilities, as well as stormwater management operations and maintenance practices.
- Improve the compilation, tracking, and dissemination of stormwater research findings.
- Facilitate a collaborative approach that ensures the involvement of stakeholders in identification, prioritization, and implementation of stormwater research.
- Provide a sustainable source of funding and a process that insures independent, unbiased, and objective research.

## **Council Structure, Governance, and Process**

The MSRC is an organization of stormwater professionals, practitioners, managers, engineers, researchers and others. Coordination of MSRC activities, including administration and fiscal management is provided by the University of Minnesota Water Resources Center (WRC).

### Council Membership

Participation and membership is free and open to anyone showing an interest in stormwater research and the technology transfer of stormwater related information and research results. Members may include but are not limited to stormwater practitioners, managers, consultants, builders, engineers and organizations including cities, watersheds, counties, state agencies, research institutions, NGOs, and vendors. Individuals can join by subscribing online on the MSRC home page at [www.wrc.umn.edu/msrc](http://www.wrc.umn.edu/msrc). Questions can be submitted to [msrc@umn.edu](mailto:msrc@umn.edu)

### Governance

The MSRC Advisory Board is the decision-making body setting research priorities, acquiring funds to support research, and choosing projects to award and complete. The Board will consist of a diverse set of twenty individuals from the following representation of stakeholders:

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| ○ Cities                               | ○ NGOs                   |
| ○ Watershed districts or organizations | ○ Counties/SWCDs         |
| ○ Consultants                          | ○ Builders               |
| ○ Research institutions                | ○ Vendors                |
| ○ State agencies                       | ○ Others at-large or tbd |

### Board positions 2021-2023 (except where noted)

1. Bill Bartodziej (*watershed rep*) 2019-2021
2. Bob Fossum (*watershed rep*) 2021-2023
3. John Loomis (*watershed rep*) 2021-2023
4. Mike Isensee (*watershed rep*) 2021-2023
5. Udai Singh (*watershed rep*) 2021-2023
6. Seth Ristow (*SWCD rep*) 2018-2021
7. Ross Bintner (*city rep*)-2016
8. Jack Distel (*city rep*) 2021-2023
9. Shahram Missaghi (*city rep*)-2019
10. Ryan Granlund (*city rep*) 2019-2021
11. Lisa Vollbrecht (*city rep*) 2019-2021
12. David Fairbairn (*agency rep*) 2021-2023  
Mike Trojan (*agency alternative*) 2021-2023
13. Joe Mulcahy (*agency rep*) 2021-2023
14. Brad Wozney (*agency rep*) 2021-2023
15. Dwayne Stenlund (*agency rep*) 2018-2021
16. Greg Wilson (*private consultant rep*) 2021-2023
17. Bridget Osborn (*private consultant rep*) 2018-2021
18. Rena Weis (*private consultant rep*) 2018-2021
19. Marty Long, (*city, watershed, & private rep*) 2018-2021
20. Dr. Valerie Brady (*research institution rep*) 2021-2023
21. Jeff Peterson (*research institution rep*)

### **Board terms, nominations and appointments**

- Board members serve three year terms on a calendar year basis.
- Annually, nominations will be sought for board positions maturing at the end of the current year. The nomination process will coincide with the full Council annual meeting (usually held sometime between July and September). Nominations will open no later than September 1 of each year and will be due by October 31
- Only nominees representing the same type of organization as the outgoing member(s) will be considered unless otherwise decided by the Board. Other at-large nominations will be considered.
- The goals include a diverse board with representation across the stakeholder categories with an emphasis on cities, watershed districts and organizations, and practitioners. This includes underserved or under-representative stakeholders appropriate to the purpose and mission of the Council.
- The current year board will choose and reconfirm board members before the end of every given year. (i.e. nominations July-October and board member selections in November or December).
- Choices will be based on needed representation including that of underserved or under-represented stakeholders and qualifications of the nominee.
- Board choices may be simple acceptance for nomination or vote if required due to multiple nominations for similar, but limited representative positions.

### **Responsibilities of the Board**

- Identify stormwater research needs and contribute to the revision of the Stormwater Research Roadmap (2018). Responsibilities include
  - Soliciting input from a broad-base of stakeholders
  - Identify ranking criteria
  - Confirm priorities established
  - Prepare biennial reports of needs
  - Disseminate report of needs
- Develop, request, and solicit funding from public and private organizations to support priority research needs including:
  - Increases to dedicated stormwater research funding
  - Funding for technology transfer

- Identify leveraging opportunities
- In collaboration with the WRC, develop and participate in a request for proposals (RFP) process for soliciting and choosing research projects including the
  - Review, submittal, ranking, and selection process
  - Contributing ideas to strengthen research proposals
- Serve in an advisory role for the WRC and Extension stormwater related efforts in research, education and technology transfer.
- Seek nominations for advisory board members as needed.

### **WRC Leadership and Administrative Roles and Responsibilities**

- Coordinate the MSRC Board
- Serve as the liaison between the Board and Members, the University, and other stakeholders
- Identify additional funding opportunities and support grant writing
- Lead and coordinate the (annual/biennial) plan to identify stormwater research needs
- Develop processes and documents in coordination with the Board
- Manage the RFP process
- Financial management to facilitate
  - Applying for grants (as directed by Board)
  - Managing incoming sources of funds for stormwater research
  - Overseeing financial reporting of awarded projects
  - Developing an annual budget for the program housed within the WRC.
  - Developing an annual MSRC budget
- Ensure PI's enter completed stormwater research projects into publicly accessible research databases.
- Disseminate and communicate research results
- Provide communication support
  - Updates on Board activities for Council Members, newsletters to stakeholders and others on a regular basis
  - Website

### **Financial Structure**

- An annual request for funding to a broad range of public agencies and organizations and private entities will be issued.
- Entities can support the MSRC by contributing through a process established by the WRC. The Board will oversee allocation of the funds.
- Funds acquired will be used to support applied research submitted through a request for proposal process approved by the Board and administered by the WRC.
- A portion of the core funding (10%-15%) will be used to fund the coordination, administrative and financial roles of the WRC. A level of in-kind service will be provided by the WRC.
- Additional financial support and grants will be pursued to fund priority research projects.