

# Zumbro Watershed Partnership

## Interim Zumbro Watershed Management Plan

The Zumbro Water Partnership's (ZWP) Interim Zumbro Watershed Management Plan (Plan) is centered around seven key focus points. Each focus point lists multiple objectives pertaining to that area and each objective lists several action items to be taken to achieve the objective. These focus points, objectives, and action items were selected because they can be implemented by ZWP members and staff. ZWP may seek and will welcome the assistance of partner organizations to help complete these actions. However, ZWP is not relying on its partner organizations to approve of or complete these actions independently in order to make this plan a success.

***ZWP Mission Statement: To Promote the Protection and Improvement of The Zumbro River Watershed.***

### **Focus Point #1: Community Involvement**

#### **Objective #1: Continually develop and strengthen the Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) organization**

Action item #1: Annually review and update the ZWP Watershed Management Plan and organization mission statement

Action item #2: Annually approve a budget for operational expenses and project funding

Action item #3: Maintain and implement the Board of Directors Manual of Information, Policy and Procedures that includes roles and responsibilities of the Board and staff position descriptions

Action item #4: Actively host fundraising activities to support ZWP operations

Action item #5: Secure long-term sponsors and private funding for protection and restoration efforts and policy changes

#### **Objective #2: Increase membership in the ZWP**

Action item #1: Conduct annual membership drive activities, recruiting citizens, businesses, government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations as members

Action item #2: Recruit local businesses and nongovernment organizations as members

**Objective #3: Expand outreach efforts to increase general public awareness of watershed topics**

Action item #1: Develop traveling information displays and attend public events

Action item #2: Develop and present hydrological, biological, geological, socio-economical, and historical programs to increase community awareness of watershed issues concerning water quality and flooding

Action Item #3: Improve citizens understanding of the impacts of pollutants of emerging concern

Action item #4: Use social and traditional media to convey messages

Action item #5: Conduct citizen surveys to evaluate understanding of watershed issues and adoption of Best Management Practices

**Focus Point #2: Professional Partnerships of the ZWP**

**Objective #1: ZWP serves as a catalyst for partner interaction in the watershed**

Action item #1: Facilitate regular meetings with professional/technical partners

Action item #2: Provide a means of information and data transfer between partner activities and the watershed communities

**Objective #2: Actively seek funds to implement action items of the management plan**

Action item #1: Seek and distribute grant funding for project specific action items

Action item #2: Publicize all grant awards to the ZWP or its partners that are related to the goals of the management plan

Action Item #3: Develop a partner recognition plan and annually update partner status

**Objective #3: Participate in State led efforts to transition to Comprehensive Watershed Management Planning (CWMP)**

Action Item#1: Work with state and county agencies to develop a mutually acceptable CWMP document for the Zumbro Watershed that replaces or integrates County Water Management Plans and Soil and Water Conservation District Plans

Action Item #2: Review the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Watershed Report, due in 2016, for the Zumbro Watershed and help develop Watershed Restoration and Protections Strategies (WRAPs) to incorporate in a CWMP based on that data

### **Focus Point #3: Erosion and Storm water Runoff from the Agricultural Landscape**

#### **Objective #1: Reduce storm water runoff from and erosion of cropland and deposition of eroded sediment into surface waters as a result of agricultural activities**

Action #1: Partner with others to facilitate workshops/training/outreach that encourage the adoption of agricultural Best Management Practices that improve water quality, such as, but not limited to:

- Using perennial cover and native vegetation on working agricultural lands
- Complying with state and county buffer regulations
- Utilizing cover crop practices, particularly where existing incentive programs can be offered
- Implementing reduced tillage practices, particularly where existing incentive programs can be offered

### **Focus Point #4: Residential Development and Urban Storm Water Runoff**

#### **Objective #1: Raise awareness of how the adverse effects of urban storm water runoff can be mitigated**

Action item #1: In cities/towns without MS4 permits, promote the use of urban storm water Best Management Practices supported in the Minnesota Storm Water Manual

Action item #2: Promote the incorporation of Low Impact Development (LID) practices into the municipal planning process

**Objective #2: Promote the responsible development of land and its associated resources**

Action item #1: Educate municipalities and developers about environmentally sustainable and financially beneficial planning processes

Action item #2: Promote water use practices and programs that conserve water

**Objective #3: Reduce the sources of excessive fecal coliform bacteria**

Action item#1: Promote implementation of the action items listed in the SE MN Fecal Coliform TMDL Implementation Plan

**Focus Point #5: Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat**

**Objective #1: Reduce native habitat degradation and restore the integrity of existing habitat**

Action item #1: Promote shoreline buffers near lakes and streams

Action item #2: Promote the protection of groundwater recharge areas using existing land protection programs, particularly where existing incentive programs can be offered

Action item #3: Reduce the deposition of eroded sediment to surface waters by promoting the implementation of rural and urban Best Management Practices

**Focus Point #6: Watershed Studies**

**Objective #1: Participate in scientific watershed studies as opportunities occur in the Zumbro Watershed**

Action Item #1: Manage monitoring agreements

Action item #2: Encourage scientific studies to fill data gaps in the watershed

**Objective #2: Promote and support citizen volunteer roles in monitoring**

Action item #1: Annually review adopted citizen monitoring locations as provided by the MPCA

Action item #2: Continue to expand the MPCA Citizen Stream and Citizen Lake Monitoring Programs within the Zumbro Watershed

## **Focus Point #7: Sediment Reduction TMDL Implementation Strategies and Actions**

Unlike Focus Points 1 through 6, which are actions to be undertaken by the ZWP, Focus Point #7 lists strategies and actions to be undertaken by the responsible parties for the point sources and non-point sources of sediment identified in the *Zumbro Watershed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for Turbidity Impairments* report prepared by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). This turbidity TMDL report identifies point and non-point sources of sediment that must be reduced in order to achieve the State's turbidity standards and reduce and eliminate the existing water quality impairments. ZWP was hired by the MPCA to write the implementation plan for the turbidity TMDL, entitled: *Zumbro Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan Sediment Reduction Component (SRC)*. The following list of strategies and action items are categorized by three geographic areas: watershed-wide, head waters and major tributaries. The actions items in each category are for specific behaviors that need to be taken by rural and urban land owners and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit holders to reduce and eliminate turbidity impairments and improve water quality for everyone who lives, works, and recreates in the Zumbro Watershed. For more detail on specific action items, the reader should reference the original document which can be viewed and downloaded at: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=18614>

### Summary of Zumbro Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan

#### Sediment Reduction Component--Strategies and Actions Items

##### Adopted by the ZWP Board August, 2012

Watershed Wide (WW), Headwaters Region (HR), and Major Tributaries and Sub-Watershed Lobes, (MT) Actions Items to control sediment into the Zumbro River Watershed

#### **1. Watershed Wide actions**

- a. WW Strategy 1: Decrease soil erosion and runoff in rural areas
  - i. WW Action 1: Identify and correct major erosion sites
  - ii. WW Action 2: Increase the adoption of conservation tillage
  - iii. WW Action 3: Increase awareness and knowledge of Soil Loss Limits Ordinances under Minn. Stat. 103F.21
  - iv. WW Action 4: Increase awareness and knowledge of Conservation Compliance Checks through the Federal Farm Bill
- b. WW Strategy 2: Increase soil infiltration and water-holding capacity
  - i. WW Action 5: Increase the adoption of cover crops
  - ii. WW Action 6: Track increased soil organic matter and water-holding capacity
- c. WW Strategy 3: Maintain appropriate vegetation in riparian corridors
  - i. WW action 7: Support compliance with county shoreland ordinances
- d. WW Strategy 4: Increase water storage on the land

- i. WW Action 8: Restore drained wetlands and surrounding uplands
    - ii. WW Action 9: Demonstrate conservation drainage methods
    - iii. WW Action 10: Construct new and repair old grade stabilization structures
    - iv. WW Action 11: Evaluate reducing culvert size to store water and reduce flows
    - v. WW Action 12: Evaluate use of reservoirs to reduce flows and control floods
  - e. WW Strategy 5: Stabilize eroding stream banks and bluffs
    - i. WW Action 13: Develop policy and guidance for re-sloping stream banks on private property
    - ii. WW Action 14: Develop guidance for bluff top stabilization
  - f. WW Strategy 6: Improve woodland and pastureland management
    - i. WW Action 15: Forest and pastureland improvement
  - g. WW Strategy 7: Control runoff from urban areas
    - i. WW Action 16: Promote runoff controls for non-regulated urban areas
    - ii. WW Action 17: Promote regulated MS4 programs in the nine entities in the Rochester area.
  - h. WW Strategy 8: Wastewater permitted point sources
    - i. WW Action 18: Examine MPCA's wastewater treatment reports for exceedences of TSS effluent standards and means to improve compliance
- 2. Headwaters Region (HR) Actions**
- i. HR Action 1: Maintain filter strips along streams and drainage ditches
  - ii. HR Action 2: Prevent channelized flow on row crop land
  - iii. HR Action 3: Restore wetlands
- 3. Major Tributaries (MT) & Watersheds Actions**
- i. MT Action 1: chose priority sub-watershed
  - ii. MT Action 2: Establish citizen engagement process in priority sub-watershed
  - iii. MT Action 3: Work with sub-watershed councils to develop action plans
  - iv. MT action 4: Work with sub-watershed councils to implement action plans