

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group Ten-Year Plan 2017 – 2027

2026 UPDATE

Efforts to be undertaken through the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group's 10-Year Plan have been divided into five sections. Successful pursuit of this plan will move the organization toward its water quality goals.

1. COLLECT AND SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WATERSHED'S WATER QUALITY

- A. Review annually the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe water quality monitoring report.
- B. Support and communicate the MPCA 10-year surface water assessment of Mille Lacs, 2024.
- C. Advocate for further collection, review and analysis of water quality to identify trouble spots and focus future restoration and protection efforts.

2. DEFINE, GROW, AND MARKET THE MILLE LACS COMPASS PROGRAM

- A. Review scope and reach of the Mille Lacs Compass program including establishment of goals and objectives.
- B. Focus Mille Lacs Compass program on efforts that:
 - a. Reduce phosphorus/nutrient pollution;
 - b. Stabilize and re-vegetate shorelines;
 - c. Increase habitat resilience and species diversity;
 - d. Implement agricultural and woodland management best management practices (BMPs); and
 - e. Manage stormwater runoff /help to mitigate erosion from extreme weather events.
- C. Coordinate the Mille Lacs Compass program with area SWCDs' efforts and staff resources.
- D. Connect participants with technical resources and cost-saving opportunities.
- E. Engage Mille Lacs Compass project participants in the MLLWG organization and encourage them to become members.

3. BE AN INFORMATION RESOURCE FOR WATERSHED HEALTH AND RESILIENCY

- A. Distribute informational articles on stewardship topics.
- B. Compile informational resources on the website.
- C. Provide educational opportunities for landowners, recreational users, and other stakeholders of the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed. These opportunities may include workshops, seminars, tours, newsletters, mailings, and more.
- D. Connect MLLWG members with relevant news and efforts of other organizations in the area.

4. COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT SHARE MLLWG'S INTERESTS

- A. Continue to develop relationships with governmental units, agencies, and organizations that work within the watershed. Some examples of these include county commissions and SWCDs, the Mille Lacs Band DNR, Minnesota DNR and Pollution Control Agency, lake associations, the Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation, Mille Lacs Scenic Byway, and others that support sustainable development in the region.
- B. Identify, participate in, and support government, agency, and organization projects, campaigns, and educational activities consistent with MLLWG's purpose. Supporting actions may include participation in advisory panels and planning sessions; sharing communications with MLLWG members; providing information on the MLLWG website; providing visibility and space at meetings and events; and helping identify potential funding opportunities.
Examples of projects and campaigns include (but are not limited to):
 - a. The MNDNR's **Clean, Drain, Dry Campaign** and other efforts to reduce the transfer and impact of aquatic invasive species.
 - b. **The Mille Lacs Keep It Clean Campaign, Mille Lacs Trash Tracker,** and related initiatives.
 - c. The MPCA's **Get the Lead Out Campaign** for collecting lead tackle.
 - d. **The Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Plan** education and implementation efforts.
- C. Pursue and maintain relationships with area schools and youth groups.

5. IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- A. Strengthen the administrative and financial underpinnings of MLLWG, including consideration of creating a 501(c)(3) organization.
- B. Explore fundraising and grant opportunities.
- C. Expand the MLLWG membership base to provide a foundation of engaged participants and volunteers.
- D. Increase the reach and visibility of the organization through presence in news media, social media, and public events and activities.
- E. Evaluate the efficacy of the organization's current branding and make necessary updates to improve the reach and inclusiveness of the MLLWG.