



Partnering for Minnesota's environment

September 2015 Snapshots

EQB Partner Agencies:

- Board of Water and Soil Resources
- Department of Administration
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Department of Health
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Transportation
- Metropolitan Council (ex officio)
- Pollution Control Agency

Work to improve Minnesota's natural resources doesn't fall on the shoulders of any one agency, be it state or local. Relationships between different levels of government and different agencies are key to making progress toward our state's conservation goals. The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) is one example of such a partnership.

The EQB mission is to lead Minnesota environmental policy by responding to key issues, providing appropriate review and coordination, serving as a public forum and developing long-range strategies to enhance Minnesota's environmental quality. The EQB provides leadership and coordination across agencies on priority environmental issues that are multi-jurisdictional, and multi-dimensional.

The Environmental Quality Board is composed of nine agency heads and five citizen members. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is one of those agencies, and our board chair, Brian Napstad, currently serves as the EQB Vice Chair. BWSR's Water Management Coordinator, Travis Germundson, serves as a technical representative to the EQB, and other staff provide additional support as needed.

"BWSR helps bring local conservation to the table in its work with the EQB," BWSR Chair (and EQB Vice Chair) Brian Napstad explains. "Because

BWSR works so closely with local governments, I'm able to bring that local perspective into environmental review. It gives those that are regulated a voice with the regulators."

BWSR is currently working closely with the EQB on the state water report. Every five years the Board is tasked with providing an updated report on the status of Minnesota's waters, and in April of this year the EQB convened a multi-agency team to undertake that process. Focused on how land uses and land management connect with improving water quality and quantity issues, the report identifies challenges to our states water and outlines a suite of proposed solutions.

The four goals of the report are:

- Create more resilient watersheds by increasing living cover
- Manage our built environment to protect rivers, streams and lakes from excess runoff and contaminants



BWSR Board Chair (and EQB Vice Chair) Brian Napstad and BWSR's technical representative Travis Germundson before a recent meeting.

- Manage water resources to meet increasing demands while protecting ecosystems
- Ensure infrastructure, agricultural systems and ecosystems are resilient to extreme rainfall

Other projects that have received support from BWSR staff include an interagency report on oil pipelines, serving on the Silica Sand Technical Advisory Team, preparing the Minnesota Climate Change Report, and assisting with revisions to the Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card.