

Farmer-led Council



Prior Lake – Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) is partnering with Scott County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) to form and support a Farmer-led Council. PLSLWD and SWCD have for years worked together on many projects in the watershed district, with the common goal of helping people who live and work in the watershed to improve the quality of water resources through sound planning, education, and technical and financial assistance. The FLC will be a critical partner to improving and advancing these efforts in the watershed's agricultural community.

In 2002, Spring and Upper Prior Lakes were identified on Minnesota's list of impaired waters due to an overabundance of nutrients, particularly phosphorus. Elevated nutrients cause excessive algal growth which negatively affects water quality, aquatic habitat and recreational enjoyment of these and other valued water resources.

Studies completed by Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) show that nutrients enter the lake with rain and snow-melt runoff from both urban and rural lands. The goal of the PLSLWD is to reduce nutrient loading from all sources, to levels that meet or exceed state water quality standards.

To help us achieve this goal, PLSLWD has engaged with local farmers to build a Farmer-led Council, or FLC. Agricultural lands make up the majority of the landscape in the Spring Lake & Upper Prior Lake watersheds. As such, farmers are the most important stewards of the land and their active input and participation is critical to achieving water quality goals.

The role of the FLC is to develop and guide the implementation of strategies that PLSLWD will use to accomplish agriculture's share of the nutrient reduction goal. Specifically, the FLC will:

- Inform decision makers and the general public about practical issues and opportunities related to soil and water conservation on agricultural lands
- Identify base-level and site-tailored practices that are available and needed
- Define the approach for engaging with and assisting farmers to implement practices
- Establish a schedule with reasonable milestones and timelines for progress
- Identify potential barriers to implementation, along with tools and resources are needed to overcome them



PRIOR LAKE - SPRING LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT

