

East Subregion Meeting Summary

Date: May 20, 2026

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location: Washington County License and Service Center, Conference Room F (1261 Woodlane Dr, Woodbury MN, 55125)

Background

Following the East Subregion's 2023–2024 collaboration with the Met Council to develop parts of the [2050 Water Policy Plan](#) (part of Met Council's [Imagine 2050](#) regional development guide), we are moving into the next phase of this work - implementation. This new phase brings together local planners, utilities, watershed leaders, and other partners to broaden the past engagement to include a more "One Water", integrated water planning approach, coordinate efforts, set shared priorities, and begin carrying out the identified actions needed to achieve shared goals for the east subregion to build a more sustainable and equitable water future.

Meeting Goal

Identify and prioritize shared challenges and goals facing the East subregion organizations over the next 10 years - to inform future exploration of actionable water project opportunities to address the identified priorities.

Participants were asked to attend the meeting prepared with a list of their work's top water, climate, and/or natural environment related priorities, and be prepared to discuss.

Workshop Agenda:

- Welcome and introductions
- Background of 2023-2024 subregional work
- Priority mapping exercise
- Next steps and wrap-up

Attendees

- State agency reps: 2
- Regional government reps: 3
- County: 2
- City/Township: 5
- Watershed Org/SWCD/Nonprofit: 2

Total attendance: 14 people

Attendees represented a diverse set of professions, from land use planners to city administrators and engineers. The common thread is everyone's work touches water resource management in some way, and everyone who attended the meeting has a stake in the East Subregion of the metro area.

Background of East Subregion Work

A brief background of the subregional work and the East subregion work was presented. This included information on the past combined Northeast/East subregion meeting (held in October 2025), the January 2026 integrated water workshop, and upcoming comprehensive planning cycle.

The group also reviewed and proposed changes to the "vision of success" statement for the East subregional engagement effort. The updated East Subregion vision of success is provided below:

The East Subregion works together toward a sustainable, resilient, and equitable water future through coordinated, proactive planning across jurisdictions. Groundwater and surface waters in the East Subregion face threats from contaminants like PFAS and chloride, land use, climate change, and limited public knowledge of water protection. Because water does not follow jurisdictional boundaries, the East Subregion builds the cross-jurisdictional relationships, shared advocacy, and adaptive management practices needed to get ahead of these challenges to ensure clean, affordable, and sustainable water for people and ecosystems, while balancing these objectives with future growth potential and innovation, such as stormwater reuse.

If you'd like to access the PowerPoint presentation shared at this meeting with the original vision statement, please access it at [this link](#) under "Past meeting agendas, meeting notes, materials, and videos."

There was discussion about proposed changes by the Plumbing Board to the Minnesota Plumbing Code that could limit and/or prevent future stormwater reuse projects. The Met

Council strongly supports stormwater reuse as a viable component of our sustainable water future if it is done in accordance with regulation and guidance. The Met Council has participated in interagency teams focused on stormwater reuse in 2018 and 2025 to help inform the state agencies' approach to stormwater implementation. We supported stormwater as an alternate water source and point to the Uniform Plumbing Code Appendix S for details as to how to do this safely. The Met Council looks forward to continued collaboration with the state agencies and local implementers to further stormwater reuse in the seven-county metro region.

There is a group of local implementors and others that are coordinating a local response in support of stormwater reuse. If you are interested in learning what they are doing, please contact Anna Eleria of Capitol Region Watershed District at aehleria@capitolregionwd.org. Anna is helping to coordinate and lead a response to the proposed changes from watersheds, landscaping and plant nursery industry, and municipalities.

Priority Mapping Exercise

Priority Brainstorm

The primary activity of this meeting was mapping water resource priorities across organizations.

Attendees sat with others who work in the same organizational realm – i.e. all the city/township representatives sat together, all the state agency representatives sat together, etc. They were asked to reflect on and document answers on sticky notes to the following questions:

- ***What do you think are the most pressing issues related to water, natural resources, and climate to tackle within the next 10 years?***
- ***What are your organization's top priorities related to water?***

Following this exercise, representatives from each table were asked to bring their sticky notes up to the wall and place them under the heading of their professional group as they read them off to the rest of the room. In addition to the ideas which the attendees contributed, Met Council added several sticky notes populated with the priorities identified within the East Subregion Water Supply Plan from the Imagine 2050 Water Policy Plan, developed and adopted in 2025, for the group to incorporate into this exercise.



Priorities Cluster

Once the wall was populated with all the priority ideas, representatives were asked to come up to the wall and cluster the priorities based on their similarities. Attendees then worked all together to create theme titles for each cluster.

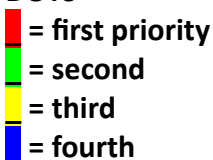
Prioritization

Finally, the last part of the activity had the participants move to new tables, so they sat with new people from varying organizations. Each table was given a set of different colored dots. Each dot color had a different meaning – a red dot signified most important, green was second most important, yellow was third, and blue was fourth.

Small groups discussed at their new tables which of the newly identified themes should be prioritized for the focus of this subregion and its future work, and each table was asked to place their dots accordingly next to the theme they considered to be the top priority, second priority, third priority, etc. with their dot voting.

Table 1, shown below, communicates the priority themes that emerged from this exercise, along with the specific priorities within each theme and which professional group contributed each idea. The themes are ordered based on the number and type of dot they received from the dot voting exercise, i.e. the themes at the top of the list received more “First priority” dots than the themes listed lower in the table. The exact dot breakdown is included in the column labeled “Dots.”

Table 1: East Subregion Priority Themes

DOTS 	THEME (or “cluster”)	PRIORITY	GROUP THAT CONTRIBUTED PRIORITY
OOO	Contaminants	Inflow and infiltration	City and township
		PFAS and emerging contaminants	Watersheds/nonprofits
		PFAS contamination	City and township
		People have access to PFAS testing	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Chlorides and their impacts	City and township
		Create partnership and shared voice to pursue limited liability and support BMPs to reduce chloride from road salt and water softeners	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Reduce and prevent groundwater contamination (PFAS, nitrates, SSTS, etc.)	County

○○	Sustainable groundwater supply	Sufficient safe groundwater to drink (groundwater quantity)	County
		Ensure water is affordable and safe (metric: indoor domestic water use continues to be affordable)	State agencies
		Reduce volume of groundwater needed, with numeric goal identified	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Address the fact that water value, complexities, and management are in silos	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Aquifer levels are stable and managed	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Water appropriations	City and township
		Clean available water	State agencies
○○○	Healthy land for healthy water	Invasive plant impacts	City and township
		Land protection along/near surface water and sensitive groundwater areas	County
		Increase implementation of BMPs that improve soil health and decrease pollution from ag practices	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Maintain surface water quality for natural resources	Watersheds/nonprofits
○	Collaboration	Water planning can be better coordinated within and across jurisdictions such as active communication and adaptive management	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Better interagency water data sharing	State agencies
		Coordinated management of DWSMAS with overlapping jurisdictions	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
○	Innovation	Address regulatory barriers to innovation	City and township
		Updating technologies (time and money)	Watersheds/nonprofits
○	Wise Use	Reduce unnecessary water use	State agencies
		Promote and implement water conservation and efficiency efforts	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Value of water	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Stormwater reuse and irrigation challenges	City and township
		Stormwater management do no harm	State agencies
		Reuse should be supported to reduce groundwater demand	East Subregion Water Supply Plan

O	Private systems	Private well testing and treatment	County
		Private well/septic owners left behind	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Consistent standards for privately owned wells are established	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Reduce contamination from SSTS through free testing, income- and non-income-based replacement assistance, and enforcement of performance rules	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Private well and SSTS owners know how to maintain systems and protect their health	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Access to affordable or free testing for contaminants of interest to owner is available through centralized system	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
(no dots)	Education	Promote and implement water conservation and efficiency efforts	County
		Groundwater education	County
		Public education and awareness	Watersheds/nonprofits
(no dots)	Funding	Cost of doing business will only increase	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Funding for changing water quality regulations	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Funding for private well issues	Watersheds/nonprofits
(no dots)	Resilience	Future flood storage is accomplished	East Subregion Water Supply Plan
		Balancing and prioritizing resources for climate resilience	City and township
		Increasing flood risk	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Flood mitigation – research and minimizing impacts	County
		Resilient systems	Watersheds/nonprofits
		Increase resiliency of water supply systems	State agencies

Next steps:

The May 20th meeting focused on reevaluating the top priorities across jurisdictions in the East subregion to help improve and protect water resources. At the next subregion meeting, which we are aiming to hold in the late summer/early fall of 2026, we will begin scoping out possible projects to pursue in the East subregion based on the top priority areas identified. We ask that between now and the next meeting, attendees think about the following question:

What are your project ideas that could be implemented over the next three years that fall under one of the priority themes/clusters identified during the May 20th meeting?

Contact information:

If you have any questions or feedback on the material presented in this summary, please feel free to reach out to us!

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