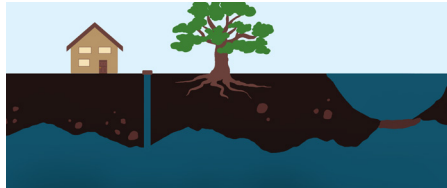


# Spotlight projects

2020 projects included a pilot groundwater conservation program, water quality improvements, and exciting new research.

## GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM



In 2020, The District launched a new Groundwater Conservation Program. Groundwater is the primary source for drinking water within RPBCWD, so it is very important that we ensure it is plentiful for generations to come. The program offers support to our city partners to distribute water efficient technologies throughout communities. The District is coordinating education efforts to make sure residents and businesses alike know how easy it can be to save money and water!

## STORMWATER PONDS STUDY



Over the last few years, the District has been spearheading research efforts to understand how stormwater ponds are functioning. Stormwater ponds are everywhere in our landscape and were designed to settle pollutants before the water is released into our creeks, lakes, and wetlands. In 2020, with the Cities of Chanhassen and Minnetonka, we applied iron filings to two stormwater ponds to determine if they can trap phosphorus (photo above). Stay tuned for results!

## MN GREENCORPS

Beginning in September 2019, the District acted as a host site for a MN GreenCorps member. An off-shoot of AmeriCorps, GreenCorps members focus on building community resiliency through environmental action. The District's member, Amy Bakkum, focused on Green Infrastructure Improvements as they related to stormwater. As part of her workplan, she focused mainly on chloride reduction within the private sector and developing ways for residents to reduce stormwater runoff on their properties. She designed and built a gravel bed tree nursery at the District office which housed 125 trees in 2020 which were given to District residents to showcase the benefits of trees and improve water quality.



## 2020 ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

Greetings,

2020 is a year to be remembered- not only for the great projects and programs that were implemented but also for how the District adapted to the pandemic. The District started the new year as it normally would: focusing on summarizing 2019 activities, analyzing 2019 water quality data, preparing for the new field season, and developing education programming for 2020. As we approached March, it was clear the typical plan needed to be modified. Prior to the governor's order, staff had already prepared to be working remotely. Our regular team meetings became virtual and our sidebars became chats on the computer.

The transition from in-person to virtual is not an easy one but I am so impressed with the flexibility and adaptability of my co-workers, board members, partners, and residents. As we approached our typical field season, the District developed outdoor and indoor protocols to maximize the safety not only of our staff but also of the residents and workers with whom we partner. The District moved its board meetings online and projects continued to be implemented.

Some of the projects that were implemented include two creek stabilizations, Lake Riley Alum Treatment, Scenic Height School of Forest Restoration, Aquatic Invasive Species Management (plants and carp), 400 wetlands surveyed, Duck Lake Partnership, building a gravel tree nursery bed at our office, and the development of the Smart Salting for Property Manager Manual with the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative.

This was another busy year but the biggest accomplishment was the resiliency of District staff and the flexibility of our residents and partners under these challenging times. We look forward to 2021 when the District will continue to build on the programs and projects identified in our 2018 Ten Year management Plan.

Sincerely,  
Claire Bleser  
District Administrator



# Board of managers

## GOING STRONG AT THE DISTRICT

RPBCWD is fortunate to have five passionate citizens sitting on its board of managers. In 2020, all five managers continued in their terms and worked to support the District's work through monthly board meetings, subcommittee meetings, and special meetings. Want to sit in on a meeting? Open to the public, the board of managers meet the first Wednesday of every month to discuss projects, vote on actions, and review permits. Check out the District's website to view the calendar, read past meeting minutes, and more.



### 2020 BOARD (left to right)

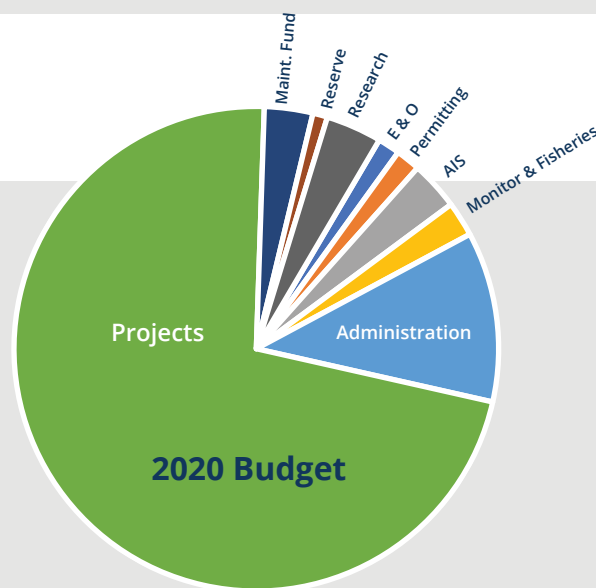
Larry Koch	(Term ends 2021)	612-210-5001	Member
David Ziegler	(Term ends 2022)	952-905-1889	Secretary
Dorothy Pedersen	(Term ends 2023)	952-933-2141	Vice Pres.
Dick Ward	(Term ends 2023)	612-759-9150	President
Jill Crafton	(Term ends 2021)	612-816-9971	Treasurer

# Your tax dollars at work for clean water

The watershed district is funded through property tax levies. That means, if you live within RPBCWD you are helping make the work of protecting clean water possible.

The 2020 levy was \$3,703,000. The budget for 2020, which includes funds from previous levies, is \$8,461,514. Where will those dollars go? To projects like those highlighted above, administration, research & planning, monitoring & fisheries, a maintenance fund, aquatic invasive species, permitting, education & outreach (E&O), and a reserve fund in case of an emergency.

Looking ahead, the 2021 levy is \$3,575,000 and the 2021 budget is \$7,045,000.



## What have we done in 2020?

21 Active projects

50 Thousand dollars in grants received

50 Permits issued

41 Partner organizations

27 Cost share grants awarded

58 Monitoring sites

2382 Members of public engaged

6,600 Linear feet of streambank restored



## Who are we?

The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD) is a local unit of government tasked with protecting, managing, and restoring the water resources within its boundaries. It is funded through property tax levies.

RPBCWD is led by a five-member board of managers. The managers meet the first Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m. at the District office or, beginning April 2020, virtually. Changes to the schedule and links to virtual meetings are posted to the RPBCWD website: [rpbcd.org](http://rpbcd.org).

## Contact us

[rpbcd.org](http://rpbcd.org)  
[info@rpbcd.org](mailto:info@rpbcd.org)  
 952-607-6026

## Project Highlight

### The Duck Lake Partnership

Beginning in 2019, the District embarked on a project in partnership with the City of Eden Prairie and the community of the Duck Lake sub-watershed. Without the help of our residents this project would not have come to fruition. The District invited each household in the sub-watershed, searching for interested partners who would be willing to take action for clean water. Of the over 300 letters sent out, 102 replied- roughly 1/3 of the sub-watershed!

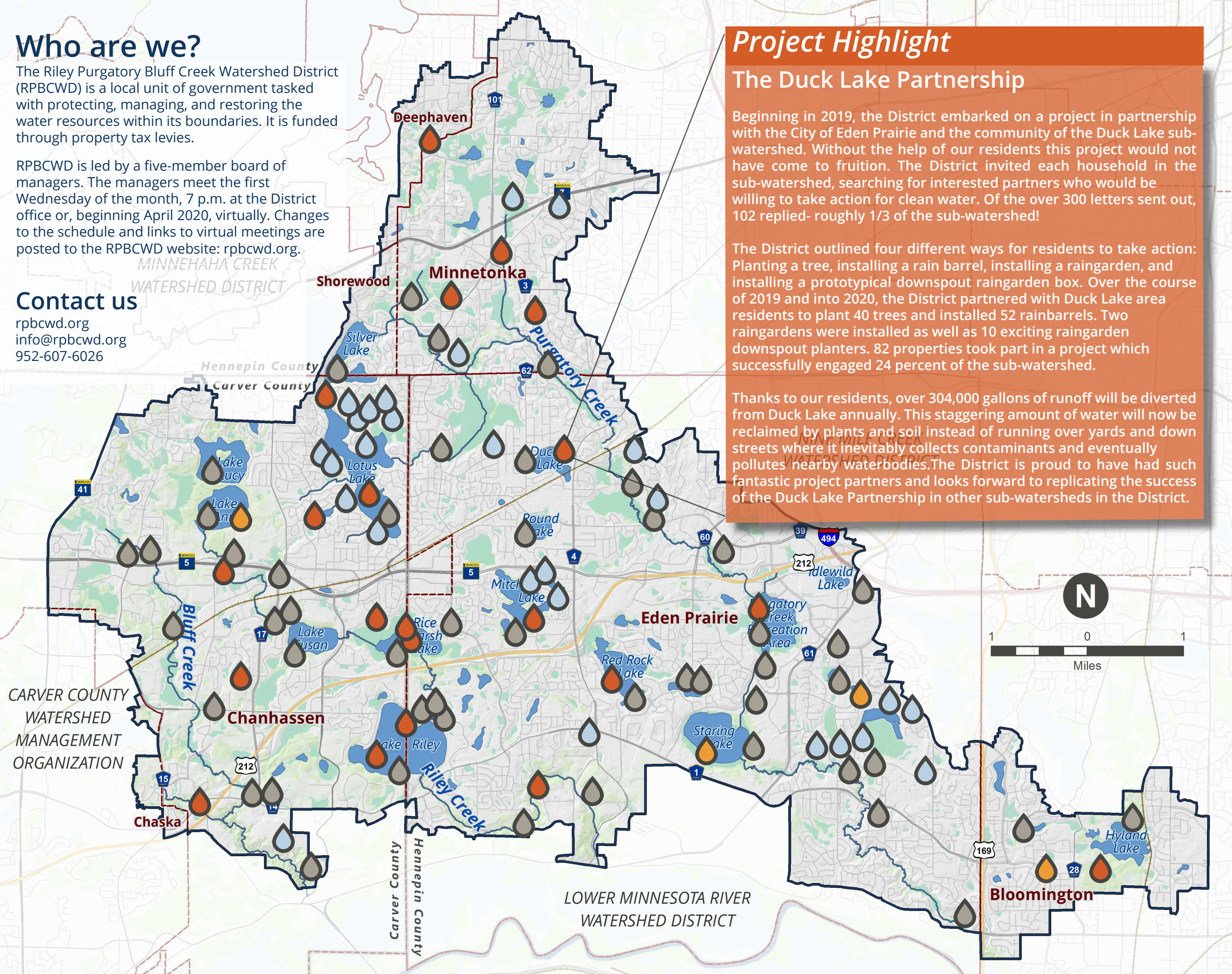
The District outlined four different ways for residents to take action: Planting a tree, installing a rain barrel, installing a raingarden, and installing a prototypical downspout raingarden box. Over the course of 2019 and into 2020, the District partnered with Duck Lake area residents to plant 40 trees and installed 52 rainbarrels. Two raingardens were installed as well as 10 exciting raingarden downspout planters. 82 properties took part in a project which successfully engaged 24 percent of the sub-watershed.

Thanks to our residents, over 304,000 gallons of runoff will be diverted from Duck Lake annually. This staggering amount of water will now be reclaimed by plants and soil instead of running over yards and down streets where it inevitably collects contaminants and eventually pollutes nearby waterbodies. The District is proud to have had such fantastic project partners and looks forward to replicating the success of the Duck Lake Partnership in other sub-watersheds in the District.

## Where have we been?

In each of its three watersheds, RPBCWD uses a One-Water management strategy. Rather than focus on a single water body at a time, the strategy looks at the watershed as a whole. It begins with collecting data on the health of the waters, followed by identifying solutions, and finally prioritizing & implementing projects, working together in partnerships whenever possible. We host and collaborate on educational events to engage the public, and award cost share grants to support water quality projects in the community. RPBCWD's permit program also plays an important role by reviewing projects from other entities to make sure they do not degrade our waters.

With three creeks, over a dozen lakes, and seven cities, there are many things to do and places to be in the watershed. Explore the map to discover where we've been this year.



-  Projects
-  Cost Share
-  Water Quality Monitoring
-  Workshops, Events, Outreach