

CHAPTER THREE: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICY GUIDELINES

This chapter of the NFCRWD Overall Plan establishes the District’s goals, objectives and policy guidelines. Collectively, they will be used to guide future management activities and decisions. *More importantly; however, the objectives and policy guidelines provide a framework that the District’s Board of Managers can use to base land use decisions.*

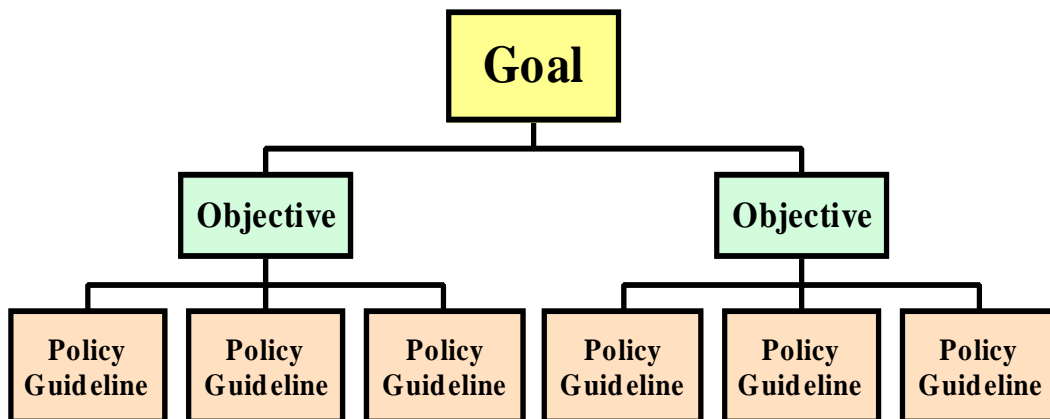
Throughout the Overall Plan, goals, objectives and policy guidelines are defined in the following way (also see Figure 4A).

Goal: This is an idealistic statement intended to be attained at some undetermined future date. Goals are purposely general in nature.

Objective: Objectives are action-oriented and can be measurable if a date, dollar amount, etc. is included. Objective statements always begin with an action verb. There may be more than one objective for each goal.

Policy Guideline: These statements support the action of the objective. The statements are recommendations often qualified by the word “should”. Policy guidelines can be used to create action work plans.

**Figure 4A
Goal, Objective & Policy Guideline Hierarchy**



The overall priority of each policy guideline is communicated by identified it as *Urgent* (needing immediate attention), *Important* (needing attention as soon as possible), and *Noteworthy* (needing attention when the opportunity arises). In addition, a timeframe is identified for some of the policy guidelines, indicating when the policy guideline should ideally be implemented.

**GOAL 1: TO ENSURE THAT DRAINAGE AND SURFACE WATER
IS PROPERLY MANAGED THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT**

Objective A: Maintain the public drainage system to District and State specifications.

- Guideline 1: The District should continue to enforce the provisions of the Minnesota Drainage Code 103E (**Important**).
- Guideline 2: The District should refer to the drainage coefficients outlined in the *Minnesota Drainage Guide* (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 3: A vegetative cover should be maintained on all ditch banks and slopes (**Important**).
- Guideline 4: The District should acquire and maintain a minimum 16.5 foot ditch buffer where needed or required (**Important**).
- Guideline 5: Overland flow of water into ditches should be managed to provide infiltration and to reduce high flows, erosion and sedimentation (**Important**).
- Guideline 6: Evaluation of possible environmental concerns related to a proposed drainage system project should be conducted prior to the public hearings (**Important**).
- Guideline 7: Alternative drainage practices should be promoted to willing landowners as a viable option to replace existing open surface tile intakes (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 8: The benefits of a drainage system should be redetermined when feasible (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 9: The District should apply for funding to develop a Drainage Management Plan aimed at identifying problem areas and finding innovative solutions to improve drainage throughout the District (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 10: The District should continue to inspect ditches every 5 years or when necessary to address landowner requests (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 11: The use of ditches for anything other than drainage needs to be approved (**Important**).
- Guideline 12: When feasible, ditches should be properly re-sloped where needed. The District should also assist with identifying these areas (**Important**).

- Guideline 13: The District's ditch files and records should be updated into a multi-purpose database (**Important**).
- Guideline 14: Continue to provide reports to the State on drainage activities as required (**Important**).
- Guideline 15: Culvert attributes (size, location, type, elevation, etc.) should be collected and mapped (**Important**).
- Guideline 16: Consider proper culvert sizing (to minimize downstream impact) when culverts are installed or replaced (**Important**).

Objective B: Utilize both structural and nonstructural measures to stabilize appropriate water levels and reduce downstream flooding.

- Guideline 1: The District should strictly regulate the construction, alteration, repair and removal of water control structures (**Important**).
- Guideline 2: The construction/installation of bridges, cables, culverts and pipelines should be regulated to maintain the integrity the District's waterways (**Important**).
- Guideline 3: Upland storage areas should be preserved and, when possible, restored to slow surface runoff, stabilize stream water levels and reduce downstream flooding (**Important**).
- Guideline 4: Stream and ditch impediments should be removed when needed (**Important**).
- Guideline 5: Utilize areas for additional water storage where feasible (**Important**).

Objective C: Preserve existing wetlands through education and regulation and provide technical assistance to landowners desiring to restore wetlands.

- Guideline 1: Degradation of wetlands should be prevented by managing or buffering the direct and indirect activities that impact their quality (**Important**).
- Guideline 2: Existing and future wetland inventories should be utilized to identify priority areas for wetland preservation and restoration (**Important**).
- Guideline 3: Wetlands should be preserved through regulatory controls and conservation programs (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 4: Opportunities should be sought to create new wetlands and restore previously impacted wetlands (**Important**).

- Guideline 5: Wetland restoration programs should be promoted to willing landowners **(Noteworthy)**.
- Guideline 6: The establishment of exotic and invasive species in wetlands should be prevented **(Noteworthy)**.
- Guideline 7: Support the use of the wetland banking program in the District **(Noteworthy)**.
- Guideline 8: Permanent and temporary water retention and settling basins should be designed to enhance surface water quality and to provide areas for upland water storage **(Noteworthy)**.
- Guideline 9: When feasible, stormwater management should be integrated with the functions and values of wetlands **(Important)**.
- Guideline 10: Wetland management activities need to comply with State and Federal statutes and regulatory rules **(Noteworthy)**.

**GOAL 2: TO MINIMIZE OR REDUCE PRIORITY
POLLUTANTS TO SUSTAINABLE LEVELS**

Objective A: Utilize programs and regulations to protect water resources from potential pollution sources.

- Guideline 1: Support efforts by local units of government in the District to develop, adopt and administer performance standards that protect water resources **(Noteworthy)**.
- Guideline 2: Work to minimize pollution from key areas, such as from wastewater plants, industrial sites, and similar easily recognizable sources commonly referred to as 'point source pollution' **(Important)**.
- Guideline 3: The District should assist livestock producers with implementing BMPs designed to prevent livestock from entering waterways **(Important)**.

Erosion and Sediment Control

- Guideline 4: Adequate erosion control measures should be incorporated into the designs of all proposed projects **(Important)**.
- Guideline 5: All contractors and landowners should be held accountable for minimizing water runoff and soil erosion **(Important)**.

Guideline 6: Work with SWCDs, NRCS, farmers, and landowners to promote conservation tillage practices and to repair erosion sites (**Important**).

Guideline 7: Work cooperatively to repair erosion problems along CD-32 in North Fork Township (**Important**).

Stormwater

Guideline 8: Work to establish consistent and sound stormwater management policies throughout the District (**Noteworthy**).

Guideline 9: Landowners should mitigate stormwater pollution in land use activities, when feasible (**Important**).

Guideline 10: Support developing demonstration projects to show how stormwater management can be properly achieved (**Important**).

Feedlots

Guideline 11: Feedlots should be held accountable to County and State regulations (**Important**).

Guideline 12: Assist livestock producers with establishing BMPs where needed, including ones designed to prevent livestock from entering water (**Important**).

Guideline 13: The District should assist with implementing manure management plans, when feasible, in cooperation with SWCDs, Environmental Service departments, and landowners (**Important**).

Sewage Treatment

Guideline 14: Owners of Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) should be held accountable to County and State regulations (**Important**).

Guideline 15: The District should continue to partner with providing SSTS inspections and low-interests loans for needed upgrades (**Important**).

Guideline 16: The District should notify the respective County when a SSTS failing to properly treat sewage is discovered (**Urgent**).

Guideline 17: Municipal sewer systems should be held accountable to State and Federal discharge requirements (**Urgent**).

Guideline 18: New commercial and industrial development should be encouraged to locate within areas served by municipal sewer and water (**Noteworthy**).

Objective B: Work to get all of the Districts waters off the Environmental Protection Agency's 303D List of Impaired Waters.

Guideline 1: Cooperatively work with partners to coordinate the preparation and implementation of TMDL studies for impaired waters (**Important**).

Guideline 2: Partner with the MPCA and other stakeholders on developing the various TMDL implementation plans as needed (**Important**).

Guideline 3: Assist with identifying priority areas for implementation activities (**Important**).

Guideline 4: Implement key TMDL initiatives, including BMP cost-share, public educational activities, and water quality monitoring when funds are available (**Important**).

Objective C: Continue surface water quality monitoring efforts within the District.

Guideline 1: Agency, organization, and volunteer efforts to monitor lakes and streams should be promoted and supported (**Important**).

Guideline 2: Water quality monitoring programs within the District should be annually reviewed to assess achievement of water quality standards and effectiveness of Best Management Practices (BMPs) (**Important**).

Guideline 3: The District should assist with interpreting water quality results and disseminating vital information to the public (**Important**).

GOAL 3: TO IMPROVE STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION, COOPERATION, AND COORDINATION IN IMPLEMENTING THE DISTRICT'S INITIATIVES

Objective A: Meet and cooperate with agencies and local units of government as needed.

Guideline 1: A list of contacts should be identified for each relevant agency and local unit of government (**Important; updated annually**).

Guideline 2: Meetings should be held as needed to discuss important planning issues and to determine what opportunities exist to cooperate and/or share resources (**Important**).

- Guideline 3: Technical assistance and guidance should be exchanged in the development of planning documents and regulatory programs **(Important)**.
- Guideline 4: Comments and recommendations should be provided on projects and permits that have the potential to impact the water resources of the District **(Urgent)**.
- Guideline 5: The District should periodically review the effectiveness of conservation efforts and discuss anticipated future program needs **(Important)**.
- Guideline 6: Work with the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) in pursuing statewide watershed district initiatives **(Important)**.
- Guideline 7: Continue to cooperate with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) on implementing various Best Management Practices (BMPs) **(Important)**.

Objective B: Assist in the coordination of administrative activities between the District and local units of government.

- Guideline 1: Local controls, including ordinances and rules, should be periodically assessed for effectiveness, consistency and coordination, as they relate to water resource management **(Important)**.
- Guideline 2: When appropriate, authority and responsibility should be transferred to other local units of government for watershed management activities **(Important)**.
- Guideline 3: To alleviate inconsistency, the District should consider adopting land use controls on key issues to help implement consistent provisions throughout the District **(Noteworthy)**.
- Guideline 4: As requested, the District should review and provide comments on permit applications **(Urgent)**.
- Guideline 5: Cooperate with local and neighboring counties, SWCDs, Watershed Districts, and other regional organizations on implementing mutual water plan initiatives **(Important)**.
- Guideline 6: The District should develop a comprehensive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database, including an interactive mapping website to manage and display information **(Important; within 5-10 Years)**.

Objective C: Keep the public advised of important planning issues and events.

- Guideline 1: Public meetings (including stakeholder meetings) should be held or attended as needed to identify issues and to discuss the nature of important planning issues (**Important**).
 - Guideline 2: The media should be notified of meetings and important planning issues (**Noteworthy**).
 - Guideline 3: The Internet and other multi-media should be used, when feasible, to keep the public informed on District activities and issues. A website should be developed and maintained (**Important**).
 - Guideline 4: Residents should have ample time to provide input into important District decisions (**Noteworthy**).
 - Guideline 5: Data and other public information developed by the District should be made available to all those who request it (**Noteworthy**).
 - Guideline 6: Work to maintain a Citizens Advisory Committee (**Important**).
- Objective D: Utilize long-term planning and partnerships to cost-effectively fulfill District goals and address water resource management issues.
- Guideline 1: Appropriate financing mechanisms should be utilized to finance all District activities, including but not limited to mechanisms and procedures outlined in MN Statutes 103B “Water Planning” and 103D “Watershed Districts” and others when available (**Important**).
 - Guideline 2: Non-tax levy funding should be actively pursued in order to reduce the tax levy financing burden on the residents of the District (**Important**).
 - Guideline 3: Seek partnerships and cooperative agreements to finance projects (**Important**).
 - Guideline 4: When needed, examine the development of Utility Districts, Lake Management Areas, or similar funding mechanisms to properly and equitably address key water planning issues (**Noteworthy**).
 - Guideline 5: Proactively partner on implementing the Rice-Koronis Lakeshed Management Plan, and other plans as developed (**Important**).
 - Guideline 6: The District should continue to apply for grants and other aid to support water resource management projects (**Important**).

**GOAL 4: TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ON A NUMBER OF
KEY ISSUES AND DISTRICT ACTIVITIES**

Objective A: Inform residents, agencies, and local governmental units on the District's key issues, rules, and activities.

- Guideline 1: The District's management rules and regulations should be clearly identified and communicated (**Important**).
- Guideline 2: Efforts to inform the public on the need for stormwater management should focus upon the importance of minimizing impervious areas (**Important**).
- Guideline 3: Infiltration methods and techniques should be incorporated into District stormwater management projects, where appropriate, and should be periodically inspected to ensure they are functioning properly (**Important**).
- Guideline 4: District residents should be informed on the relationship between fish, wildlife habitat, and water quality, as well as opportunities to enhance and/or protect habitat through voluntary conservation programs (**Important**).
- Guideline 5: Provide educational and financial assistance, as available, to homeowners on the importance of properly maintaining and updating SSTS (**Important**).
- Guideline 6: Help assist with publicizing TMDL issues, concerns, activities, and implementation steps (**Important**).
- Guideline 7: The District should participate in and/or sponsor workshops on key water planning issues (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 8: Partner with key stakeholders, cities, and school districts on providing youth water resource education (**Important**).
- Guideline 9: The District should help citizens understand the key water resource information pertaining to the District, including water quality data, studies, reports, and regulatory plans (**Noteworthy**).
- Guideline 10: A brochure should be developed outlining the District's initiatives, programs, and other important information (**Important**).

Guideline 11: Wellhead Protection Areas should be promoted and protected **(Important)**.

Objective B: Through education, encourage landowners to implement BMPs to protect the water resources of the District.

Guideline 1: The District should partner on providing funding and education on proper BMP installation and maintenance **(Important)**.

Guideline 2: The District should assist landowners with implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) that follow current water quality and quantity statutes and rules **(Important)**.

Guideline 3: Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be encouraged along all waterways and watercourses, with special emphasis on private and public ditches **(Important)**.

Guideline 4: The District should support and provide assistance, as available, to lake associations and other watershed related organizations on promoting and demonstrating lakescaping and other BMPs **(Important)**.

Guideline 5: District residents should be informed on issues related to nutrient and sediment reduction, as well as other sources of nonpoint source pollution **(Important)**.

Guideline 6: The District should help promote the need for water conservation and assist with developing a Water Conservation Plan to be implemented during drought conditions **(Noteworthy)**.