

2. What challenges do you anticipate these changes will create for your organization?

Summary:

As watershed management changes over the next 5-10 years, administrators will continue to face the challenge of trying to meet the expectations of watershed residents and Boards with little or no additional funding. Additional funds will be needed to attract and maintain staff needed to meet demands related to education/communication programs, drainage, regulation/enforcement activities, monitoring needs, maintenance needs, grant writing, and to stay on top of paperwork and red tape. Funding challenges may lead to more collaborations and partnerships with counties and SWCDs. However, for this to succeed, stronger mutual respect needs to be cultivated among local and state agencies.

Program challenges that are most likely to be affected by changes in water management include:

- education and public communications related to AIS and water quality,
- development of outcome measurement tools,
- education and incentive programs for the ag-community,
- rulemaking and enforcement powers,
- water quality and quantity monitoring tools,
- push for standardization of watershed programs.

The "one watershed, one plan" approach may result in turf conflicts among watershed districts and other local units of government. This can lead to a more politicized manager appointment process and possibly legislation to elected boards. Related to this will be a greater need for Board managers to understand the respective roles of Board and staff and the level of commitment that board service requires. More training will also be needed for Board members to stay current on watershed programs and issues.

Comments:	Descriptor:
Nothing stays the same. Change is inevitable... Change is hard...	Change management
As a District straddling the boundary between metro and non-metro, the District must prepare for the possibility of change	Change management
Need for a tool/process to measure outcomes for projects and programs	Create outcome measurement tools
becoming more political	External politics
push for elected Boards	External politics
Maintaining an adequate and meaningful monitoring system for both water quantity and quality	Monitoring programs
more scrutiny from the public	More accountability

It already is a challenge to spend money more efficiently and cost effectively. Watersheds are looking to work together with other watersheds, cities, counties and others to effect changes to address water quality issues and to protect natural resource.	More coordination
Partnering with County and SWCDs for broader natural resource management.	More coordination
Push toward more coordination and collaboration.	More coordination
Losing support from the local governmental organization (based on a political boundary) because of their distaste for watershed based management.	More external politics
More politics involved in manager appointment	More external politics
Given the June 2014 flood and future storm events, I anticipate there will be significant pressure for us to change our primary priority from water quality to water quantity issues.	More of a water quantity focus
More time spent tracking staff time to meet manager demands for accountability	More paperwork for staff
We will be required to regulate/enforce these rules (who backs this up, what agency has authority), this also creates burden with small staff and needless paperwork.	More paperwork for staff
More consistency between watersheds.	More standardization
I have seen more and more that it seems state agencies do not involve or give credence to what local governments are doing. The message needs to be delivered that watershed districts and swcd's actually employ technical experts – scientists and engineers – that are credible and know what they are doing. These local agencies in many cases have as much or better expertise than the state agencies. However, the state agencies are caught up in their own programs and do not consult with the local experts. This causes problems.	Need better coordination with state/fed agencies
Greater necessity for managers to understand their roles and responsibilities	Need for Board training

<p>The challenges might be in getting our watershed boards to become more able to represent our organization, and pay attention to the programs. The Board should know more about water management. They are not well informed, as much as we as the staff try to keep them informed. Sometimes during the course of a three hour monthly meeting, we cant address all of the issues. and they don't want to stay on any longer that they "have" to, especially if they are in the ag industry and need to get out in the field. Some of them really do need to be more committed to their position as a board manager and water management decision maker. And then those managers listen to the disparaging remarks of the leaders of those other organizations, especially if they are also on the board of those agencies as well. (SWCD) for instance.</p>	<p>Need for Board training</p>
<p>Better articulate what is the role of watershed districts in water management</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>Challenges will be in how we educate the residents. Not understanding that our past methods for development need to be fixed now in order to protect our water resources.</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>Lack of understanding of water governance in the state - need a stronger emphasis on explaining what we do and why watershed based management is important</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>MAWD should better promote watershed districts</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>Need a clear definition of what the is the role of watershed Districts</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>Need to better communication the science behind the watershed management rules</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>Need to better tell out story... this is why watershed management is important</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>
<p>Ongoing issues with the public, elected officials, and other organizations understanding what is the role of watershed districts</p>	<p>Need for improved education/outreach programs</p>

We spent the time on messaging in 2008 (?) but didn't do anything with it	Need for improved education/outreach programs
We will likely need more timely information and communication to our watershed community for ongoing education in areas of invasive species control & management, water quality and public awareness, possibly through a newsletter.	Need for improved education/outreach programs
Without some sort of mandate from the state or federal government, regulation of non-point pollution sources on private land will continue to be a challenge for the watershed districts and other LGUs.	Need for state leadership
The district will need to develop education and voluntary incentive programs to convince private agricultural landowners to implement BMP's like conservation drainage, precision application of nutrients and pesticides, no-till and cover crop management. It will be difficult to get farmers to adopt these practices, since they require fundamental changes in cropland management.	Need improved incentive programs
As a small organization, the need to add resources may require added funding.	Need more funding
Financial participation by LGU partners will become increasingly difficult	Need more funding
Increase costs of managing drainage due to restrictions or demands of permitting agencies. Most permitting agencies need or require a plan be completed and submitted prior to permit being applied for. Then in most cases changes to the plan are recommended which will cost additional money. Costs of engineering increase dramatically when change in plan design is required due to permitting restrictions. The permitting folks are very reluctant to give opinions of design until a permit is applied for. They should be involved early on to avoid changes in design which could change the entire model or rational that is being used in designing the project.	Need more funding
Increased need for outside funding or greater general operating levy funds	Need more funding
Increasing call for AIS \$ while still providing water quality improvements	Need more funding
Less projects or higher budgets	Need more funding
Maintaining sufficient corrective maintenance funds	Need more funding
More leadership in the MAWD boards/staff regarding the need for funding - need to include a budget for MAWD activities into watershed management	Need more funding
Our organization has not done a good job of taking advantage of those funding opportunities, and we still desperately need them.	Need more funding
Rule and permit enforcement powers are needed	Regulatory/enforcement powers
Attracting and retaining qualified staff	Staffing needs
Expectations may not be met in an acceptable timeline	Staffing needs
More staff time devoted to finding local funding partnerships	Staffing needs

People are frustrated with the length of time it takes to get a project in the ground	Staffing needs
Watershed Managers will continue to expect staff to run administrative staffs with as few people as possible.	Staffing needs
Lack of statewide coverage of watershed districts may create problems	Watershed scale management
Managers must decide relative importance of local control within current structure vs. perceived and/or demonstrated advantages to One Watershed scale	Watershed scale management

3. What do you feel that can MAWD do to help you address these challenges?

Comments:	Descriptor:
Board member training	Board Assistance & Training
Education regarding managers roles and responsibilities	Board Assistance & Training
help us administrators show the board managers that they have big responsibilities and are not on the board for their own gain or that of their close friends, but to represent the watershed.	Board Assistance & Training
Train board members.	Board Assistance & Training
Work with the Board of Water and Soil Resources and Association of Minnesota Counties to provide training on the importance of watershed manager appointments for county commissioners	Board Assistance & Training
I believe MAWD needs to promote more coordination with watershed rather than us working as one unit. Granted each District is different. However, I believe that MAWD could help train and educate staff (education, technical, regulations etc.).	Coordination
Identify opportunities for sharing legal and engineering services.	Coordination
Need to build trust from agencies that locals can do the job	Coordination
New 8410 rules - WD should serve as the lead on MS4s, TMDLs, etc.	Coordination
Promote and facilitate coordination between WDs.	Coordination
WD need to better define what we want from state agencies	Coordination
Agencies need to better understand the role of watershed districts and accept why they are doing things	Education & Communication
Be keen to the diversity of each watershed district, since we vary so much across the state.	Education & Communication
Continue fostering & sharing information among members.	Education & Communication
Continue to help by sharing information among watersheds, what works, what does not, & how to's.	Education & Communication
County Board need to better understand what watersheds do	Education & Communication
Educate and work with legislators and state agencies to make sure local agencies are recognized and included in the policy, management, and science of managing the resources.	Education & Communication
Messaging about the importance of watershed districts and how they differ from other local, state, and federal agencies	Education & Communication

Support a meaningful PR and Awareness building function	Education & Communication
Help us to stay informed of current legislation and interpretation of legislation that is passed.	Legislation & lobbying
Assist in streamlining permitting process when dealing with watershed projects. In most cases we are on the same page on what we are trying to protect but differ on how to get there. Districts are not opposed to permitting just want keep costs of permitting down to reduce duplication of efforts. In many cases I see permitting as a turf war and really does not have to be the case. You can have four biologists involved in the permitting process and depending what side of the fence you are on, the science changes.	Legislation & lobbying
Encourage policies, which are flexible and adaptive enough to be effective under a wide range of future socioeconomic and ecological conditions	Legislation & lobbying
Focus on the legislation and developing issues.	Legislation & lobbying
Help to make the decision makers aware that there is still a need for information gathering in out-state organizations. It would be great to implement projects, but without the starting info, it's really difficult to compete with other grant applications.	Legislation & lobbying
Lobbying for a general operating levy increase for all watershed districts	Legislation & lobbying
MAWD should continue to be involved in developing rules and policies that help districts, local governments and the state work together to address aquatic invasive species, non-point source pollution and flooding. MAWD working with the state agencies to develop a framework for the Governor's initiative for 50 foot buffers is an example.	Legislation & lobbying
More unified and wider based policy statements to help formulate local policy (ie: groundwater)	Legislation & lobbying
Provide model standards (eg MIDS) and help WDs implement more consistent rules.	Legislation & lobbying
Try to make things simpler	Legislation & lobbying
Funding assistance for continued training for Administrators	Staff Assistance & Training
Help develop expectations for performance and guidelines for effective WD management.	Staff Assistance & Training
Need help in defining outcomes and a ways to measure them	Staff Assistance & Training

<p>Provide a full-time employee of MAWD to move watershed challenges along that do not include lobbying. Lobbying is only one aspect of the pie and without proper background or expertise; it is hard to piece together watershed District needs and concerns.</p>	<p>Staff Assistance & Training</p>
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4. What do you feel that MAWD does very well today?

Comments:

MAWD is generally doing a very good job, particularly in the large urban areas.
Lobbying for endeavors identified by the MAWD board
Funding for Administrator training
Help with lobbying, training sessions.
Lobbying...? I guess...?
I haven't been involved with MAWD at this level long enough to give a credible answer to this one.
MAWD does a pretty good job of putting together a legislative agenda and lobbying for policy, legislation and funding for programs and projects important to its members.
Assists in gaining funding for projects through legislative actions. I believe this is a real strong point of MAWD.
Very effective at the legislature.
MAWD does a great job of sharing the accomplishments of the various watersheds and their projects at the annual meeting. and they help us become aware of programs available. They assist us with following the legislative considerations.
Lobbying, keeping MAWD board informed
Liaison function to State government
Keeping the membership informed on legislative issues
Facilitating legislative priorities
The MAWD handbook has been very useful. I have only been involved with Watershed Districts for a little over one year, so I am not really able to say how useful other activities of MAWD are to WDs. I have not been able to attend Metro MAWD meetings in the past year, as I have had a conflict with almost every meeting. The Board of Managers of the Watershed District I work for has asked me to attend.
Good legislative representation
Has strong credibility at Capitol
Starting to offer better training opportunities
Starting to identify collaborative efforts for all WDs (salary survey)
As you know, I am back into the fold just 9 months, so based upon that experience, organizing and implementing the MAWD conference and legislative support.
Annual meeting
Metro MAWD quarterly meetings
ADA
Being innovative!
Annual Conference. Lobbying
MAWD does a great job in keeping WDs in the forefront of water management

5. What additional or improved services do you feel that MAWD should provide today?	
Comments:	Descriptor:
Business Management Training for administrators	Administrator & staff training
Here what our staff needs. Their are a lot of opportunities for managers but staff also need opportunities and I believe MAWD should highlight the importance of both good staff and good board members which equals good managing and functioning bodies. We represent the water not the people.	Administrator & staff training
MAWD should develop programs around organizational and staff needs	Administrator & staff training
Need Technical Assistance from BWSR like they provide to SWCDs	Administrator & staff training
Continue to last year's strong summer tour theme	Annual tour
Identify opportunities for sharing legal and engineering services.	Collective purchasing
Consider investigating a collective health care/insurance package for all WDs	Collective purchasing
Promote and facilitate coordination between WDs.	Facilitate Coordination
Provide model standards (eg MIDS) and help WDs implement more consistent rules.	Facilitate Coordination
Help develop expectations for performance and guidelines for effective WD management.	Governance support & training
High quality, professional Board development available locally not just at MAWD conference	Governance support & training
I feel that they could perhaps assist with quarterly meetings for the board in which they get training in depth on the rules, regulations, laws, protocol and employee relations. Some board managers are so distant and do appear to attend monthly meetings only for the per diem. While we administrators can appreciate this at times, because we don't need them breathing down our neck daily, we really want them to pay attention and ask questions during our board meetings, or call in during the month to ask questions. Its embarrassing that they don't know how to respond to questions they are asked when out and about, and it's a bad reflection on my attempts to teach them what they should know.	Governance support & training
Information about the roles and responsibilities of managers for the counties making appointments	Governance support & training
More assistance for watershed districts in distress	Governance support & training

Train board members.	Governance support & training
It would be nice to receive legislative updates on a regular basis so that we can bring it up to our Boards, prepare correspondence to our reps, etc. I feel like I have to search for that information on top of everything else going on in a small office, and it would be nice if we could get highlights of what is going on so that we could then pursue it how we need to. And sometimes language is buried and the bill titles don't like anything important, but they are.	Improved internal communications
Keeping MAWD membership informed, providing MAWD membership information on each other/collaborate, more information on the MAWD website	Improved internal communications
Monthly updates	Improved internal communications
Need to do a better job educating all of MAWD members - not just those on the MAWD Board	Improved internal communications
Regular information on legislative activities, bills of interest to WD's, committee deadlines, etc. would be helpful for MAWD members.	Improved internal communications
Stronger communication from MAWD/MAWD Board to individual WDs	Improved internal communications
Legislative agenda/priorities need to be bought off by the entire MAWD membership - not just the MAWD Board	Legislative agenda
Would like legislative priorities voted on by the entire MAWD membership	Legislative agenda
I don't know that MAWD can be expected to provide more in the way of services to Watershed Districts without increasing membership fees. I have had a lot of experience with the MN League of Cities and Metro Cities and I view MAWD as an organization comparable to those, however they both have a much larger funding base. I would hesitate to ask MAWD to offer more without also suggesting a way to increase the funding of the organization. I doubt there would be wide spread support for increasing the dues.	Nothing
How can MAWD work with BWSR to better represent WDs	Outreach/Marketing
Improved messaging about watershed districts	Outreach/Marketing
Increase our role as an informed advocate (vs. local land owner interest) for Comprehensive Water and related resource management with the Legislature and the State Agencies	Outreach/Marketing
More marketing and communication focus on watershed management to selected customers groups.	Outreach/Marketing
Need to better use social marketing	Outreach/Marketing
Target a few subsets in the watershed (small ones, those like ours that are focused on recreational development, shoreline preservation & restoration and ecological awareness.	Outreach/Marketing

Would like more interaction with other agencies (e.g. MDA, MPCA, etc.)	Outreach/Marketing
MAWD needs to create a yearly work plan of who they are and what they plan to accomplish. The mission states, "The Minnesota Association of Watershed District provide educational opportunities, information and training for watershed district managers and staff through yearly tours, meetings and quarterly newsletters." If this is what MAWD is, who is MAWD, and who should be completing these tasks, the board? Ray? The ADA?	Planning
Strong planning efforts (short and long term)	Planning
Transition planning for MAWD needs to start early, identify strategic areas and continue to build a positive recognition of what WDs do	Planning
Additional research	Research
A website that can be better used as a forum for Administrators and/or managers	Website improvements
Create a nicer, more user friendly website. Website updates...The board of Director meeting minutes have not be updated on the website since 2008. Legislative program hasn't been updated since 2012. Under Waterlinks, there is nothing about outstate other than the RRV. You get my point.	Website improvements
It would be nice to have a MAWD website that is kept up to date and has more information available.	Website improvements
We need to have a higher level of technology and information available on our website. Both the format and information is outdated. It would be great to have a contract website manager who would update the website at least quarterly and more during the legislative session. Maybe a website/outreach committee could be formed that would be responsible to direct the website manager (with Ray's approval) to: review requests for postings; reach out to members for descriptions on cutting-edge programs and issues, etc. I think the organization needs to be more visible to the water resources community as-a-whole and the website is a good place to start	Website improvements