



For Immediate Release

Capitol Region Watershed District to Honor Individuals and Organizations at 2018 CRWD Recognition and Awards Ceremony Tonight - January 24

Program Recognizes Watershed Stewardship that Protects, Manages and Improves the Water Resources of CRWD; Cy Kosel to Receive “2018 Lifetime Steward Award”

Saint Paul, MINN. (January 24, 2019) – Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) will host its **2018 CRWD Recognition and Awards Ceremony** tonight, Thursday, January 24. The annual event recognizes individuals and organizations that exemplify watershed stewardship through activities, projects or policies that demonstrate a commitment to CRWD’s mission to protect, manage and improve its water resources. **Cy Kosel**, recently retired from his position as **Parks and Recreation Natural Resources Manager for the City of Saint Paul**, will receive the **“2018 Lifetime Steward Award.”**

The Lifetime Stewardship Award is given to an individual who has, during his or her lifetime, played a significant leadership role in the stewardship of CRWD’s water resources. Cy Kosel worked for the City of Saint Paul for over 40 years before retiring in 2018. Throughout those years, he was a tireless advocate for integrated natural resource, forestry and water quality management. He has supported local initiatives such as the Como Active Citizen Network’s community clean-up events and has worked with CRWD to coordinate countless workshops for his staff on topics such as preventing illicit discharges and managing turfgrass for water quality.

“Cy Kosel has long been an advocate for clean water and a strong proponent of the early and sustained partnership between CRWD and Saint Paul to improve water quality and parks within the City.” **Mark Doneux, CRWD Administrator**

Other Watershed Awards include the following:

Watershed Citizen Award: This award is bestowed upon an individual who has demonstrated a personal commitment to citizen engagement, project initiation or exceptional leadership that supports CRWD’s mission. The winner of the award is **Michael Stoick, Teacher at Saint Paul Public Schools and Owner of Alley Farms and Gardens**. Stoick’s work with CRWD began when he was leading a team of Lego League students at Hamline Elementary who designed and built water-related projects. The projects included a compost tea booster system to encourage composting food waste and improve soil health while reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers, an electric rain garden that uses microbes living in rain garden environments as a source of renewable energy, and

a combined speed bump and rain garden design that directs runoff into rain gardens. Michael is also involved in clean water projects in his community.

The other nominees in this category are **Valentine Cadieux**, Professor and Director of Environmental Studies and Sustainability at Hamline University, and **Annie Hejny**, a noted painter who creates art using honorably-harvested, local river and lake water and sediment.

Watershed Partner Award: This award is given to an individual or organization that has demonstrated through its policies, practices or projects a commitment to CRWD's mission by consistently implementing innovative stormwater management solutions. The 2018 winner of the award is **Wes Saunders-Pearce, Water Resource Coordinator of the City of Saint Paul's Department of Safety and Inspections**. It was Saunders-Pearce's leadership on some of the region's most complex and innovative stormwater management projects, including CHS Field, Allianz Field and redevelopment plans for the Ford Site, that led to this recognition of his work. He has consistently displayed a vision and keen understanding of the technical, financial and political realities of implementing innovative stormwater projects.

Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) was also a nominee in this category. The school completed stormwater management improvements as part of an expansion in 2013-2016, which included building four rain gardens, an underground treatment system and a pervious play surface to help absorb excess runoff on campus. TCGIS has also supported community efforts by providing space for a recent rain barrel workshop for Como residents.

Watershed Project Award: This award recognizes an organization, group or individual for a project that demonstrates an innovative and effective solution for protecting, managing and improving water resources of the CRWD. The recipient of this award is the **Hamline Midway Coalition for Pierce Butler Meadows**, a project that was a culmination of more than a decade of community interest for ecological and aesthetic improvements at the intersection of Pierce Butler Route and Snelling Avenue. The Hamline Midway Coalition's Environment Committee developed partnerships with numerous community, educational and environmental groups who came together for a week-long series of planting events. The project concluded with a Planton Movil event for people to "lend mobility" to plants, and for plants to "borrow their slowness" to people lead by artist **Lucia Monge**.

The **Rondo Commemorative Plaza** was also a nominee in this category. It's a place designed for healing and reconciliation for a community devastated by the construction of I-94 in the 1960s. The creation of the space transformed a vacant plot of land into a focal point of history, with rain gardens included in the design to illustrate a deep commitment to the healing process for the community and for the ecological facets of land and water to which the neighborhood belongs.

Watershed Outreach Program Award: This award is given to an organization that has demonstrated through its policies, practices or projects a commitment to CRWD's mission by connecting residents to clean water practices through education, art or other means. The winner of this award is the **Summit Hill Association's Water Wise** program. The Association's Environment and Beautification Committee is organized around the values of recycling, reuse and beautification. Using a Partner Grant they received from CRWD in 2017, they committed to a multi-layered outreach project involving the rehabilitation of the rain garden at the Linwood Community Center

by volunteers, teaching about the impacts of this neighborhood on the greater watershed, organizing a park and storm drain clean-up day, and initiating outreach to 90 second grade students at Linwood Monroe Arts Elementary School. As part of the Water Wise program, the students planted a rain garden, learned about the Adopt-A-Drain program and painted with artist Annie Hejny, using her signature technique of working with river water and sediment to create paintings.

The other nominees were the **Minnesota Dragonfly Society's Bug Bonanza** and **Spire Credit Union's Lowertown Cleanup Crew**. CRWD has partnered with the Minnesota Dragonfly Society annually since 2014, along with the City of Saint Paul's Natural Resources department, to host the Bug Bonanza event at Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary. The events include hands-on activities with youth to collect and identify dragonflies in Trout Brook while teaching them about the importance of dragonflies to the environment and how they relate to water quality. The Lowertown Cleanup Crew is Spire Credit Union's community outreach program that organizes staff, neighbors, businesses and community leaders to volunteer their time to pick up trash throughout Lowertown as a way of preventing litter from reaching the Mississippi River. At the May 2018 clean-up, crews removed 182 pounds of trash with 23 volunteers.

The program will also recognize state, regional and national initiatives and CRWD board members, Citizen Advisory Committee and staff for their service.

About Capitol Regional Watershed District

[CRWD](#), established in 1998, covers 40 square miles and includes portions of Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood, Roseville and Saint Paul, protecting water sources such as Como Lake, Crosby Lake, Loeb Bale, Lake McCarrons and the Mississippi River. CRWD is governed by a five-member Board of Managers that work to protect, manage and improve the water resources of the District.

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