



## Cormorant Lakes Watershed District

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### 2021 Annual Report

**Managers:**

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**Inspectors:**

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**Administrator**

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February 1, 2022

The Cormorant Lakes Watershed District (CLWD) was formed and approved by the State of Minnesota Water Resources Board (now the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources - BWSR) on August 22, 1966. The primary mission of the CLWD is to protect and enhance the quality of waters within its jurisdiction and to ensure that appropriate decisions are made concerning the management of streams, wetlands, lakes, groundwater, and related land resources, which affect these waters.

This report covers the primary activities for the year 2021.

Managers and officers were: Ellis Peterson - Chairman; Sam Blattenbauer - Secretary; Mike Foley - Treasurer; Barbs Hansen – Manager (part year); Lyle Hansen (partial year)-Manager & Jeffrey Moritz -Manager. Other associates were Liz Larson- Administrator and Sheldon Struble & Cy Abel - Inspectors. Retained District Engineer Erik Jones.

The watershed held 17 meetings, including regular monthly, mid-month (as needed), special meetings and hearings during the year.

33 permits were approved during the year addressing shoreline repair (e.g. riprap, fill, and retaining wall), culvert replacement, tree removal, channel dredging, shoreline buffer re-establishment and other. The permit from CLWD is at no charge to the requestor, and provides an opportunity for the Managers to communicate with property owners.

The 2021 Estimated Market Value for the district is \$631,570,700 as compared to \$608,601,300 in 2020. A general budget for 2021 of \$93,400 was approved at a public hearing on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020. These funds were augmented by grant and reserve funds to support an approximate -3% change from the 2020 budget.

Projects and activities completed in 2021 included the following:

- The Watershed continued its support for prevention and control of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), through watercraft inspections and education.
- The Upper Cormorant AIS management project, targeted at reducing curly leaf pondweed growth was continued. This pilot project began in 2009. A public hearing was held in 2018 in which a resolution was passed by the CLWD Board to establish a levy from 2019 through 2022. Funding is through a combination of special assessments, DNR grant support and Watershed funding support.
- The Cormorant Lakes Watershed District continued working on updating their new website. With COVID-19 pandemic issues continuing to happen throughout the 2021 year, the website was vital to convey information to the public.
- Lake inspections continued, identifying issues of zoning compliance, runoff control, silt fencing or other that needs to be addressed.
- Managers attended various Lake Association meetings held in June 2021. At some of the meetings, managers spoke on topics that the CLWD has been working on.
- Support for testing (Secchi disk, chlorophyll and phosphorus) of CLWD lakes clarity and nutrient loading continued.
- Some members of the Board & staff attended the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) virtually as the in-person event was cancelled.
- Minutes from 2021 meetings are posted on the CLWD website, [www.clwd.org](http://www.clwd.org).
- Benson, Leitheiser and Soberg, CPA's completed the 2020 annual audit.
- Watercraft inspections were conducted on Big Cormorant Lake during the boating season in an effort to monitor and educate people using the public water access points and prevent the spread of invasive species. CLWD financially supported the program.
- The CLWD has joined a preliminary process for the Ottertail One Watershed One Plan. Meetings will continue to outline the process. The CLWD Administrator will join the Technical Advisory Committee & Manager Jeff Moritz will join the Policy Committee. Preliminary meetings were held throughout the 2021 for the preplanning process.

Focus areas for 2022

- Continue the Clean Water implementation, developing erosion and sedimentation abatement actions.

- Continue the partnership with Lake Association members and Advisory committee members to share information and hear issues, successes and concerns.
- Continue education and support for efforts with respect to issues related to the Watershed.
- Explore expansion of tree program.
- Offer more engineering support to public on projects.
- Create more outreach content with the public.
- Hold meeting with attorney to discuss watershed topics.
- Review and update the watershed rules document.
- Re-convene the Advisory Board. Request more input from Board.
- Maintain the public calendar on website.

Respectfully submitted:

Sam Blattenbauer, Secretary

Prepared by:

Liz Larson, Administrator