

OKABENA-OCHEDA WATERSHED DISTRICT

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



Native prairie maintenance at Bella Park

OKABENA-OCHEDA WATERSHED DISTRICT
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OKABENA-UCHEDA WATERSHED DISTRICT

BOARD OF MANAGERS

President	Rolf Mahlberg 29403 Paul Avenue Worthington, MN 56187
Vice-President	Casey Ingenthron 26962 Plotts Avenue Worthington, MN 56187
Secretary	Jeff Rogers 1627 Fairway Lane Worthington, MN 56187
Treasurer	Jay Milbrandt 27494 Read Avenue Worthington, MN 56187
Manager	Steve Bousema 1040 Maplewood Drive Worthington, MN 56187

STAFF

Administrator	Dan Livdahl 960 Diagonal Road, P.O. Box 114 Worthington, MN 56187
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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

John Ahlers 31431 330th Street Bigelow, MN 56117	Doug Anton 2335 West Ridge Road Worthington, MN 56187
Robert Demuth, Jr. 1404 Indian Hill Road Worthington, MN 56187	Caleb Fellows 29856 Plotts Avenue Worthington, MN 56187
Galen Gordon 23797 Oliver Ave. Worthington, MN 56187	Dwayne Haffield P.O. Box 279 Worthington, MN 56187
Ben Krohn 31161 Quine Avenue Worthington, MN 56187	Paul Langseth 35505 280 th St. Worthington, MN 56187
Jim Mc Gowan 670 West Shore Dr. Worthington, MN 56187	Scott Rall P.O. Box 635 Worthington, MN 56187
Keith Schroeder 30320 230th St. Worthington, MN 56187	Eric Roos Worthington Public Utilities P.O. Box 458 Worthington, MN 56187

OKABENA-OCHEDA WATERSHED DISTRICT

2018 Annual Report

Wet Year Creates Challenges

The watershed district received near record rainfall during 2018. While precipitation varied from place to place in the district, the weather station in Worthington measured 43.49 inches of precipitation – more than 14 inches above the annual average. One rain event on June 20-21 produced 5.5 to 7.0 inches of rain within 24 hours. The rain fell on an already wet landscape, so much of it off quickly ran off into lakes and streams. Multi-inch rain events followed during the next two weeks. An area wide federal disaster was declared for damages caused by the late June and early July storms.

Saturated soils and high rates of runoff caused multiple problems during the year. Fields were flooded, agricultural operations were delayed and crop yields reduced. Lake pollution loading was high and streambanks and lakeshores damaged. Construction was delayed and work sites difficult to manage.

Lake levels were persistently high. After the June storm, Lake Ocheda exceeded its ordinary high water level for approximately 30 days. The lake's outlet dam was submerged for a week. During the same period the Lake Bella dam spillway ran at its full capacity.

Watershed district structures operated as expected and survived high flow with minor damages. The district applied for FEMA assistance to repair the new spillway at the Prairie View project site and riprap below the Lake Bella spillway.

Not all the effects of the wet weather were detrimental. The native grasses and flowers thrived on the district's property due to the summer's wet and warm conditions.

2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Clean Water Partnership

Worthington and the Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District formed the Okabena-Ocheda-Bella Clean Water Partnership Joint Powers Organization (JPO) in 1998 to accomplish the goals established by the 1993 Clean Water Partnership Implementation Plan. The governing board consists of two members from the city council, two managers from the watershed district and a city resident appointed at-large.

Since its formation, the JPO has paid annual incentives to install and maintain grass buffer strips, restored a wetland, installed water quality improvement basins, monitored surface water quality, measured lake water levels, and conducted studies on the sediment deposition in Sunset Bay and causes of Lake Okabena's impairments.

Large rain events and persistent wet conditions during the growing season damaged the spillway at the Prairie View site and delayed repairs to it and the pond filter benches.

The district completed the following JPO activities in 2018:

1. Provided administrative and technical assistance to manage board affairs and structures.
2. Conducted water quality monitoring of Lake Okabena and Sunset Bay monthly from June through September.
3. Conducted water quality monitoring in Lake Ocheda monthly from June through September.
4. Completed repairs to the Prairie View pond filter benches and spillway.
5. Installed an additional pipe and valve in the Prairie View basin to allow better control of pond water levels.
6. Issued incentive payments for 149 acres of grass filter strips covering 90 percent of the

streams in the Lake Okabena sub-watershed.

The district will continue to work with Worthington in 2019 to monitor lake water quality, provide filter strip incentives and complete the seeding and stabilization of the Prairie View project site.

Conservation Practices

The district budgets money annually to install Best Management Practices to prevent flooding, and improve and protect surface water and groundwater resources. Below is a summary of how the money was spent in 2018.

1. Issued 52 CRP filter strip incentive payments totaling \$38,960.05 and covering 291.3 acres throughout the District. The filter strips protect about 13 miles of stream courses and 14 miles of lake and wetland shorelines.
2. Issued six cost-share payments to seal six wells.

The district will continue to pay filter strip incentives and provide cost-share payments for eligible best management practices in 2019.

Survey and Data Acquisition

The district levied \$50,000 in 2017 to establish a survey and data acquisition fund. Money can be levied for this fund every five years. Below are practices supported by this fund in 2018.

1. Completed a feasibility study of Best Management Practices treating runoff from ISD #518 property and urban watersheds draining to Lake Okabena.
2. Completed second carp population study of Lake Okabena during July. The district was reimbursed for most of the studies costs by the Olson Trust.

The July survey confirmed that carp populations are high enough to be harmful to water quality in Lake Okabena. The district, Worthington and other partners will engage in a multi-year program to control carp populations. Radio telemetry trackers will be implanted to identify potential spawning sites and aid in carp removals during 2019.

Lake Ocheda Enhancement

The Lake Ocheda management plan was approved by the DNR in December 2017. The plan allows for periodic lake level drawdowns to reduce carp populations, improve water quality and promote submerged vegetation. Construction needs to occur before a lake level drawdown. The outlet dam must be modified and a new fish barrier needs be installed to exclude rough fish. Below are tasks completed in 2018.

1. Completed the dam modification and fish barrier designs in June.
2. Submitted DNR and Corp of Engineers permit applications during the fall.
3. Entered a joint powers agreement in November with the DNR for dam construction and management.

The district will advertise for the dam project construction bids during February or March 2019. Weather permitting, dam and fish barrier construction will occur during late summer and the first water level drawdown will be completed before winter.

One Watershed - One Plan

The district and Nobles County received a One Watershed, One plan grant from the Board of Water and Soil Resources in early 2017 for the counties, SWCDs and watershed districts in the Missouri River watershed of Minnesota. Nobles County is the fiscal agent and the district is the grant administrator.

During 2018, the Planning Work Group, Policy Committee and Advisory Committee worked with Houston Engineering to complete draft of the plan. Notices for the 60 day public comment period were emailed and mailed on December 21, 2018. It is expected that the plan will be completed,

approved and adopted by summer 2019.

Public Information and Education

The district works with partners to provide watershed related educational opportunities for Worthington's residents, area civic groups and schools. Below are the 2018 accomplishments.

1. Sponsored and led educational tours for 5th grade students using the Prairie Ecology Bus at the Worthington Prairie Wetland Learning Area.
2. Conducted healthy soils sessions for the Elementary Field Day at the Southwest Research and Outreach Center in Lambertton.
3. Gave one classroom presentation to Minnesota West students on soils and watershed management.
4. Helped lead area tour of Missouri River watershed sites for the Board of Soil Resources.
5. Gave a presentation to the Early Risers Kiwanis Club on improving water quality in Okabena and Ocheda lakes.
6. Updated the district website monthly.
7. Worked with Worthington to accomplish educational components of the city's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan including:
 - Distributing three pollution prevention factsheets to Worthington Public Utilities customers.
 - Installing 138 catch basin markers in Worthington.

Construction Site Inspections

The district works with Worthington to require erosion and sediment control permits for construction sites and complete inspections monitoring compliance with watershed district and state required plans. During 2018, the district completed approximately 56 inspections of 13 different construction sites with NPDES stormwater permits in Worthington. District staff communicated regularly with Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan responsible parties about installation and maintenance of required Best Management Practices.

District Property Management

The district owns 414 acres of land in four locations. Approximately 15 acres is managed as cropland, with the balance managed for water quality protection, recreational activities and wildlife habitat. At Lake Bella Park, the district operates and maintains the Stateline Dam structure, a boat landing, park shelters, roads and a restroom. Below are the land management activities completed in 2018.

1. Replanted native plants buffer on the edges of the St. John property cropland.
2. Signed rental agreement the University of Minnesota to conduct multi-year pollinator study on 14 acres of cropland at the St. John property.
3. Worked with volunteers from the Okabena Bees 4-H club to pick up litter weekly during spring and summer at Bella Park.
4. Picked up litter and mowed around the picnic shelters and restroom as needed at Bella Park.
5. Sprayed to control unwanted trees at Bella Park. Completed controlled burn on approximately 40 acres to promote the health of the native prairie vegetation.
6. Painted Bella Park restroom and repaired road gate.
7. Cleaned up litter multiple times at the St. John Property.
8. Operated and maintained the fish barrier at the Lake Ocheda dam.
9. Provided easement to Osceola County to replace the Iowa line road bridge at Bella Park with precast culverts.
10. Cancelled Walk-In-Access agreement for the Lake Bella property. Installed signage on the property stating it is open to public hunting and restricting firearms outside of the hunting season.

Permits and Drainage Project Notifications

The district reviewed applications and issued permits for twenty-one projects in 2018 including:

1. Seven projects requiring state Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans,
2. Eight smaller projects requiring erosion and sediment control plans,
3. Two storm sewer, sanitary sewer and/or watermain projects,
4. Three lakeshore stabilization projects, and
5. One Flood Water Control Project.

In addition, agricultural drainage project notifications were received and reviewed for compliance with district rules.

**Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District
2018 Income and Expenses**

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

CWP Reimbursements	19,143.33
District Levy	251,167.43
Insurance Premium Refund	836.00
Local Government Aid	4,343.14
Miscellaneous Income	6,352.66
Money Market Account Interest	1,085.22
Permit Inspection Fees	425.00
Prairie View Project Income	8.38
Property Rent	1,110.00
Storm Water Education	<u>6,370.57</u>

Total Income 290,841.73

Expense

Audits	3,000.00
Bank Fees	40.00
BMP Cost-Share	1,800.00
Education Expenses	1,557.43
Filter Strip Incentives	38,690.05
Insurance and Bonds	2,342.00
Lake Ocheda Enhancement Project	52,891.77
MAWD Dues	2,061.00
MAWD Meeting Expenses	1,436.26
MAWD Tour Expenses	1,105.01
Miscellaneous	69.70
Office Expenses	3,052.83
Payroll Expenses	84,806.42
Property Maintenance	1,278.10
Property Taxes	7.94
Public Notices	584.25
Staff and Managers Training	115.00
Storm Water Education Expenses	367.07
Survey and Data Acquisition	20,748.94
SWCD Services	5,000.00
Vehicle Maintenance	465.42
Water Sampling	<u>1,748.59</u>

Total Expense 223,167.78

Net Ordinary Income 67,673.95

Other Income/Expense

Other Income

Wells Fargo Checking Interest	<u>4.23</u>
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Total Other Income 4.23

Other Expense

Prairie View Project	<u>4,012.27</u>
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Total Other Expense 4,012.27

Net Other Income -4,008.04

Net Income 63,665.91

Balance Sheet December 31, 2018

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

District Checking 212,285.87

Wells Fargo Checking 4,842.41

Wgtn Federal Money Market Acct. 248,538.21

Total Checking/Savings 465,666.49

Total Current Assets 465,666.49

TOTAL ASSETS **465,666.49**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities

Payroll Liabilities 0.00

Total Other Current Liabilities 0.00

Total Current Liabilities 0.00

Total Liabilities 0.00

Equity

Opening Bal Equity 193,655.50

Retained Earnings 208,344.97

Net Income 63,665.91

Total Equity 465,666.38

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **465,666.38**