

Mustinka Watershed Assessment
Press Release #2
Stream Health and Channel Stability

Mustinka River Watershed residents and concerned citizens - Streams and drainage channels across our landscape are relied upon to carry runoff away from homes, roadways and lands needed for agricultural production. Changes in the watershed that affect the rate, volume and quality of runoff carried by streams and drainage ditches can compromise the functions these features provide. Watershed Districts such as the Bois de Sioux Watershed District serve as the local management authority for many drainage features throughout the State of Minnesota.

Several reaches of the Mustinka River and some of its tributaries are listed as “impaired” meaning they do not meet the water quality standards established by the State of Minnesota and the Federal Clean Water Act. Therefore, the State of Minnesota is required to conduct a study to evaluate the causes of the impairment and establish a plan for improvement.

Since the summer of 2011, scientists and hydrologists have been studying the health of the Mustinka River and its watershed. The team has collected water quality information, investigated aquatic life in the streams and assessed stability of the channels. Sediment laden runoff and pollutants have been found to be negatively affecting aquatic life and reducing the channel’s ability to convey flow. In some cases destabilized channels caused by excessive flows and lack of vegetative cover have resulted in a loss of topsoil and arable farmland as well as endangering homes, roads and buildings.

In order for the Mustinka River and its tributaries to provide the type of benefits we expect from our water resources, the Bois de Sioux Watershed District asks everyone to work closely with us and your local Soil and Water Conservation District to utilize Best Management Practices and sound land management strategies that help support a healthy stream condition and minimize flood related damages that affect the local economy.

To learn more about the activities going on at the Bois de Sioux Watershed District and how you can participate in the recovery of the Mustinka River, please visit the District website at www.bdswd.com and click on the link under “Projects”. The Health of the Valley is in your hands.

This message made possible by the Bois de Sioux Watershed District, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Red River Basin Commission.