

Sacred Water Shared Future

2026 Mississippi River Campaign



January 27, 2026 | Environment Committee Information Item | Saint Paul, MN



SACRed WATER SHARed FUTURE

embracing our commitment to a healthy river



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embracing our commitment
to a healthy river

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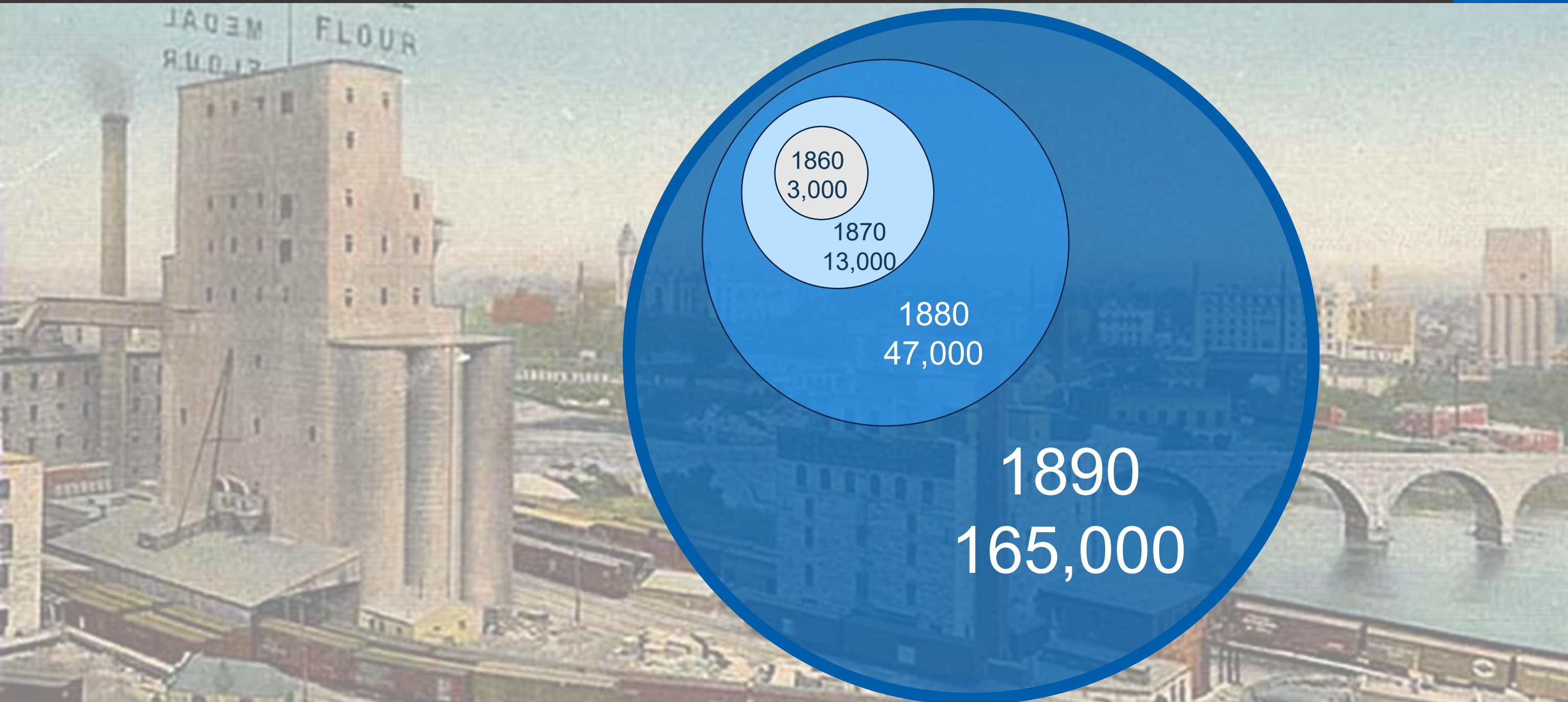
1926



2026



Minneapolis Population Growth



Sewers



The ~~ST. PAUL~~ Tribune

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 1877.

THE INVITATION TO DEATH.

We desire to call the attention of the proper authorities to a concern of the most vital importance to the health and future well being of the citizens of Minneapolis. It is a lamentable fact that there are so few sewers in the city that we can almost say with truth that Minneapolis is an undrained and unsewered metropolis. It is a well settled fact among scientists that all other provisions for the health and comfort of a city are subordinate to the one vital desideratum of adequate sewerage. It should be as much a matter of concern to afford the body politic the means of cleanliness and sweetness, as the individual body. The city should no more squat down in the midst of its accumulating filth and squalor, than an individual, imitating the habits and nature of a pig, should do so. There should be conduits threading every thoroughfare, to serve as cleansing and renewing purifiers, and insuring the atmosphere against the fetid and poisonous miasmas arising from ten thousand separate and individual stenches.



Commerce



Lock & Dam No. 1.
April 5, 1917.
Upper gauge 745.95.



...exceedingly foul...

*...excessive gas ebullition
from sludge deposits...*

*...very offensive
hydrogen sulfide
odors...*

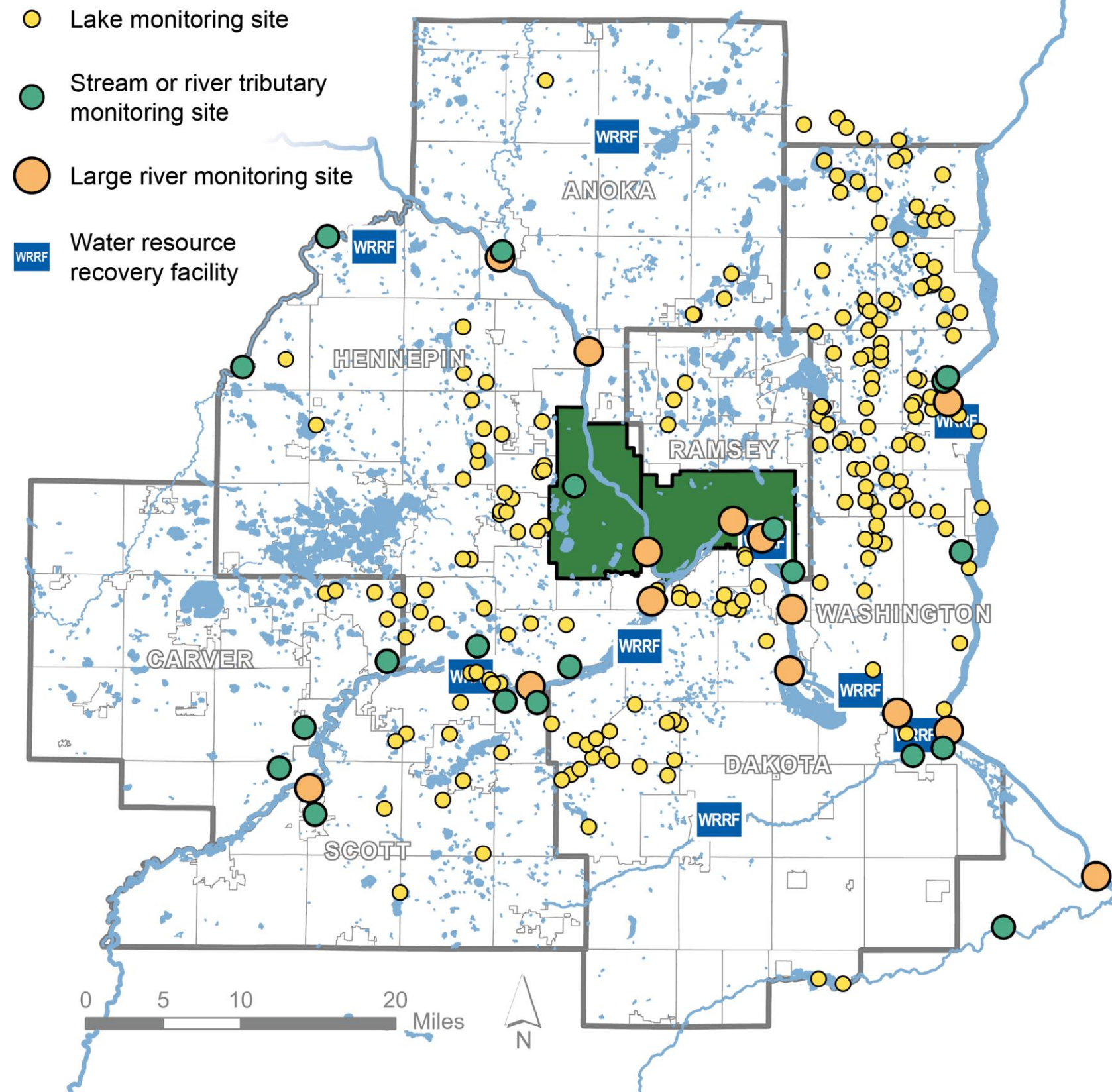
*...very
objectionable...*

*...during the latter portion of August, numerous sludge
masses were seen in the river at and below Saint
Paul...Some of these masses were over a foot in size...*

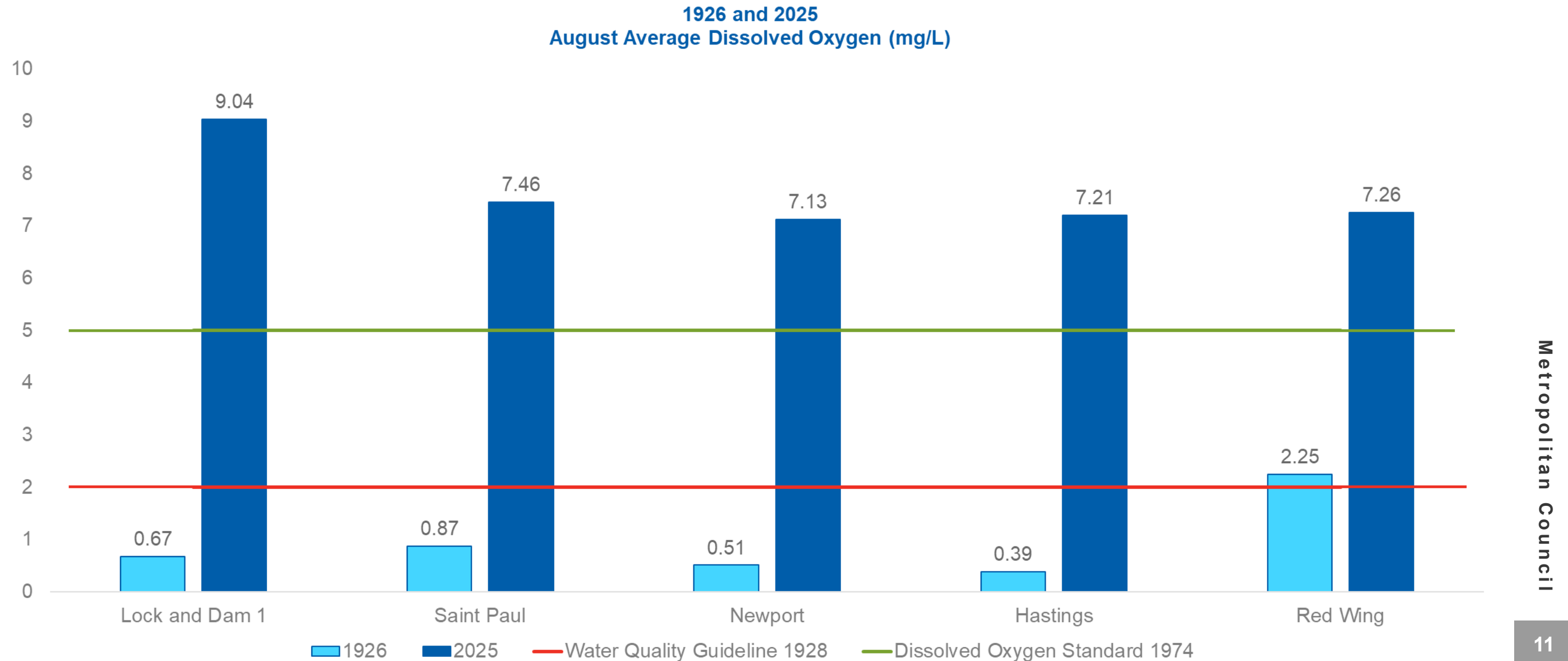
Sewage Collection and Treatment



ES Water Resources Monitoring

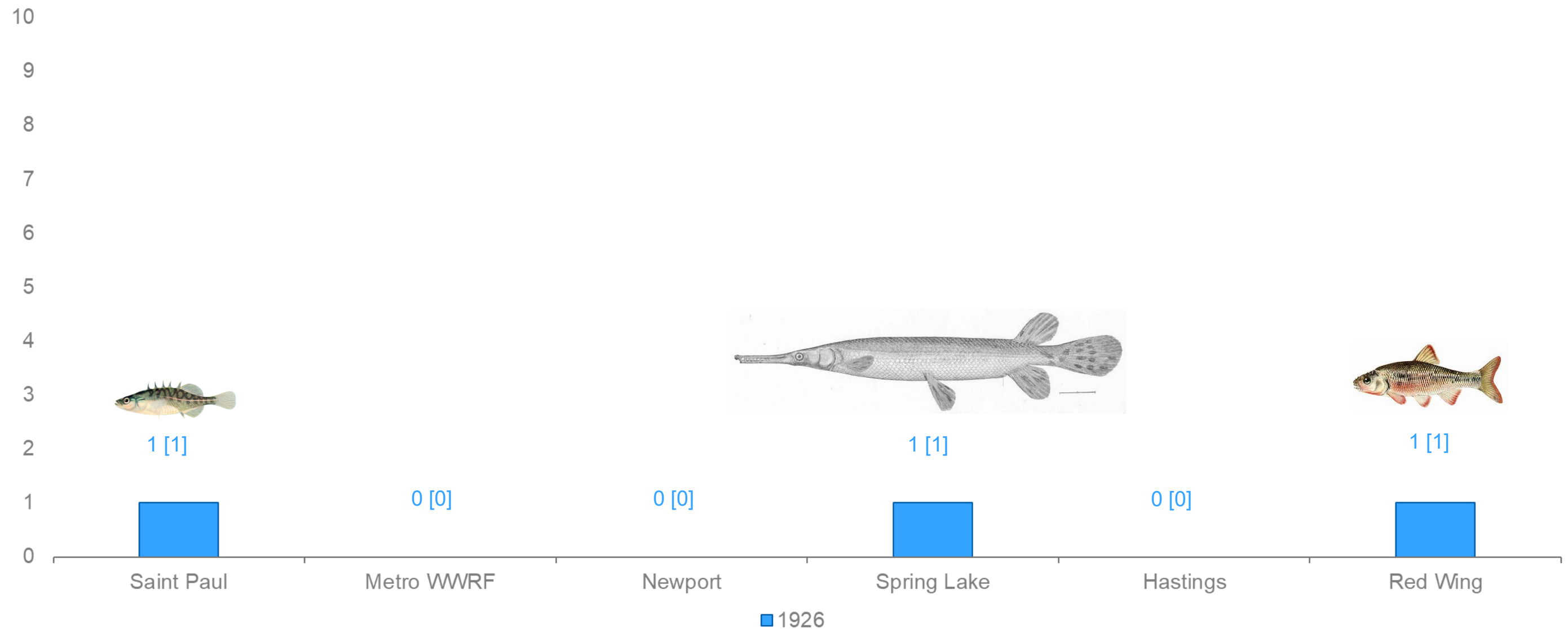


Dissolved Oxygen



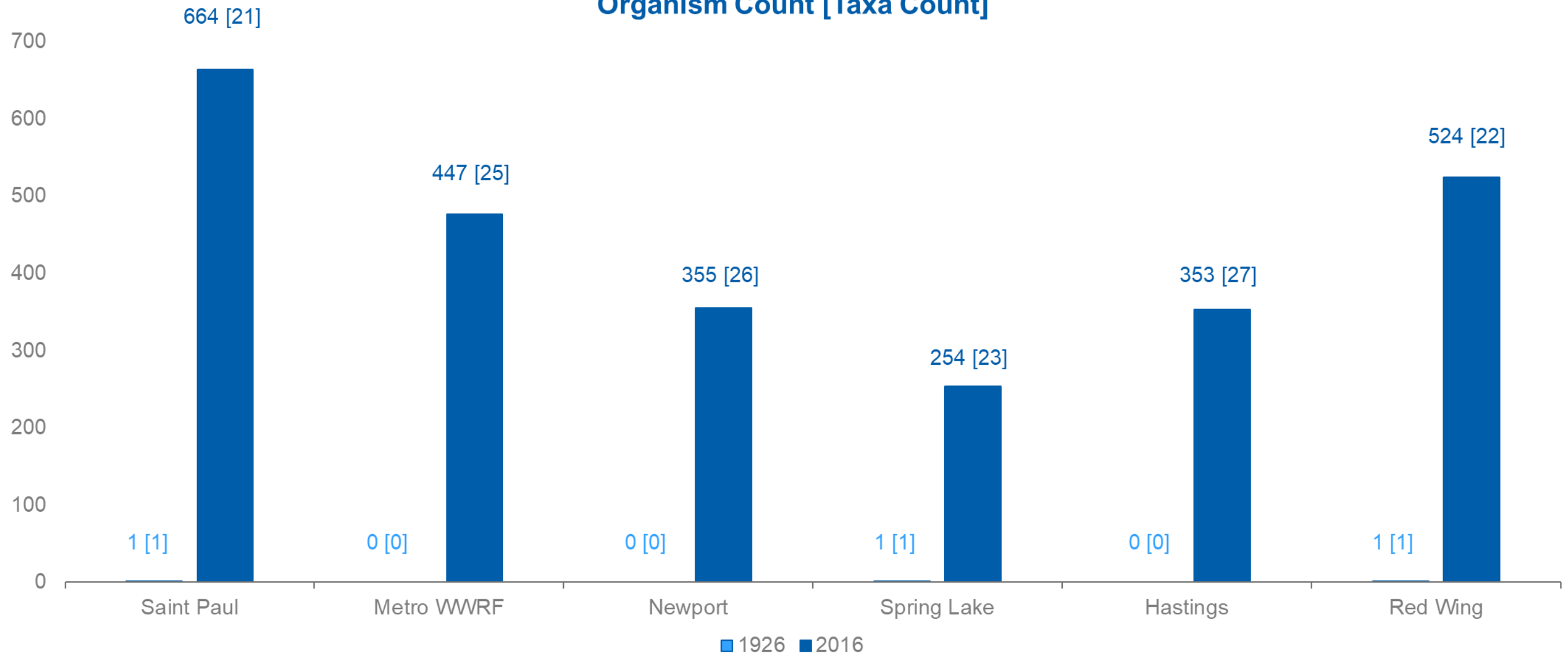
1926 Fish

1926 Fish Survey
Organism Count [Taxa Count]



1926 and 2016 Fish

1926 and 2016 Fish Survey
Organism Count [Taxa Count]



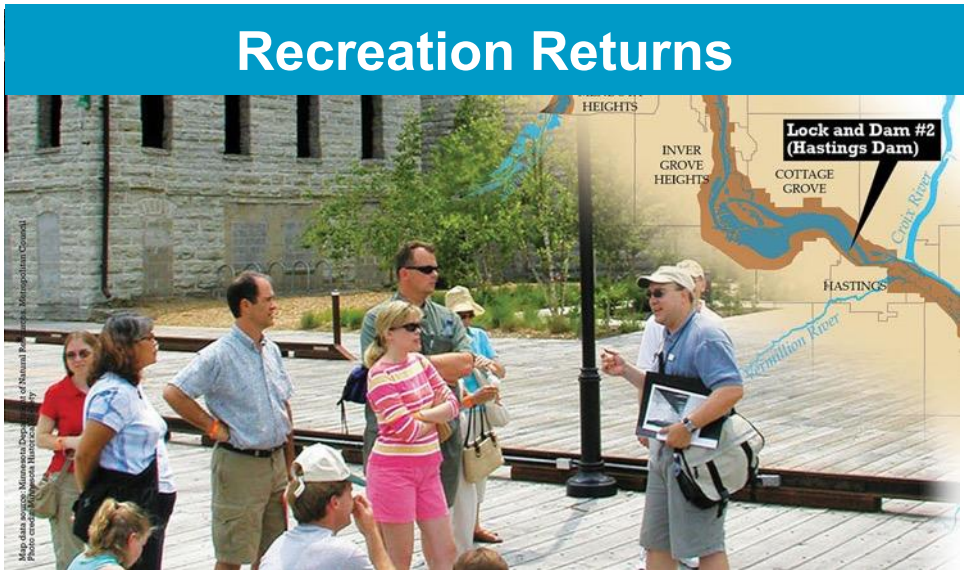
Mississippi River



Fish Species Return



Wildlife Returns



Recreation Returns



Development Returns



1926



2026

Campaign Planning Collaboration

Leadership Team

Capitol Region Watershed District
Freshwater
Metropolitan Council
Mississippi Park Connection
Mississippi Watershed
Management Organization
National Park Service
One Mississippi

City of Minneapolis
Dakota County/Dakota SWCD
Friends of the Mississippi River
Great River Passage/City of Saint Paul
Hamline Center for Global Environmental Education
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Minnesota Humanities Center
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Three Rivers Park District
University of Minnesota
Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee
Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi

Steering Committee



SACRED WATER SHARED FUTURE

embracing our commitment to a healthy river



MILESTONES AND TIMELINE

Contributions



1,100
Leadership Team
Steering Committee
Hours

\$33,000
\$20,000 Mississippi WMO
\$10,000 Met Council ES
\$2,000 Semisonic
\$1,000 MPCA

Special Roles
Convening and Facilitation
Met Council ES
2024 Brand identity RFP process
Mississippi WMO
Fiscal Agent
Mississippi Park Connection

Mississippi Park Connection



Mississippi Park Connection is the official nonprofit organization for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA), a unit of the National Park Service. A 72-mile-long protected corridor of the Mississippi River from Dayton and Ramsey to Hastings, MNRRA is a partnership park working in collaboration with a variety of local, regional, state, and private partners to serve visitors and protect the natural resources, history, and cultures of the Mississippi River.

As its nonprofit partner, Mississippi Park Connection welcomes all people to the Mississippi River and strengthens the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area through partnership, stewardship, and community support that helps both thrive.

parkconnection.org



**MISSISSIPPI PARK
CONNECTION**
Discover your river

Mississippi Park Connection Events



Twin Cities Plastic-Free Challenge in February

Earth Day and National Park Week – April 22, 2026

Float Fest – July 25, 2026

National Public Lands Day – September 26, 2026

Third Space Thursdays

Bigger River Journey

Tours of Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change sites

Hike with a Ranger

Paddle with a Ranger

River Cruises

Habitat restoration events

parkconnection.org



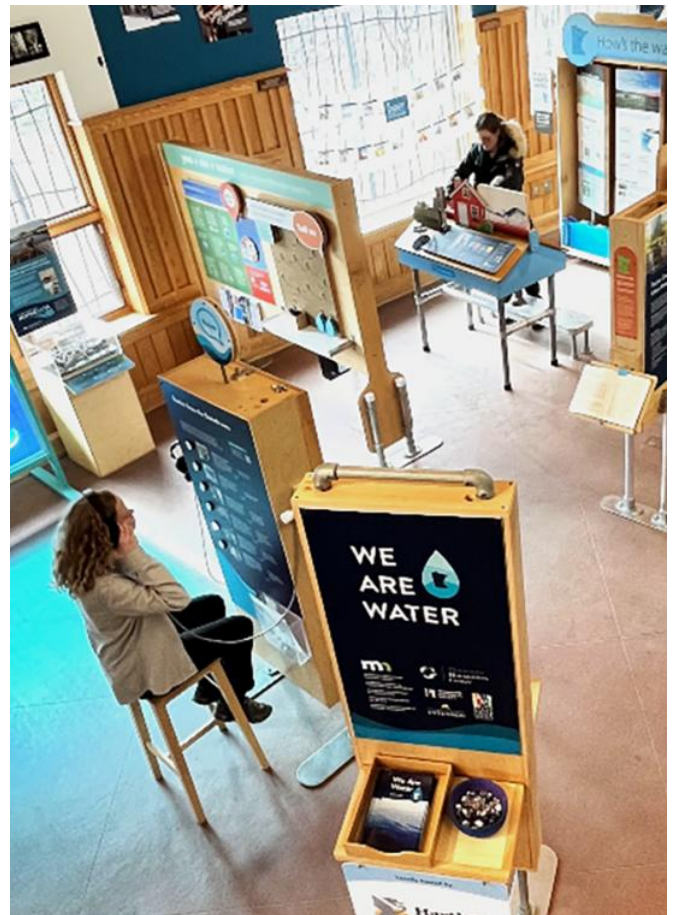
**MISSISSIPPI PARK
CONNECTION**

Discover your river

Events



FRESHWATER



Sacred Water Shared Future



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Honoring 100 Years of Mississippi River Restoration

In 1926, the Mississippi River was declared effectively dead in Minnesota. A century of collective action brought it back to life. In 2026, we celebrate that progress and inspire the next 100 years of stewardship. Join us.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Sacred Water Shared Future Art Shanty



Met Council Art Shanty 2020/2025



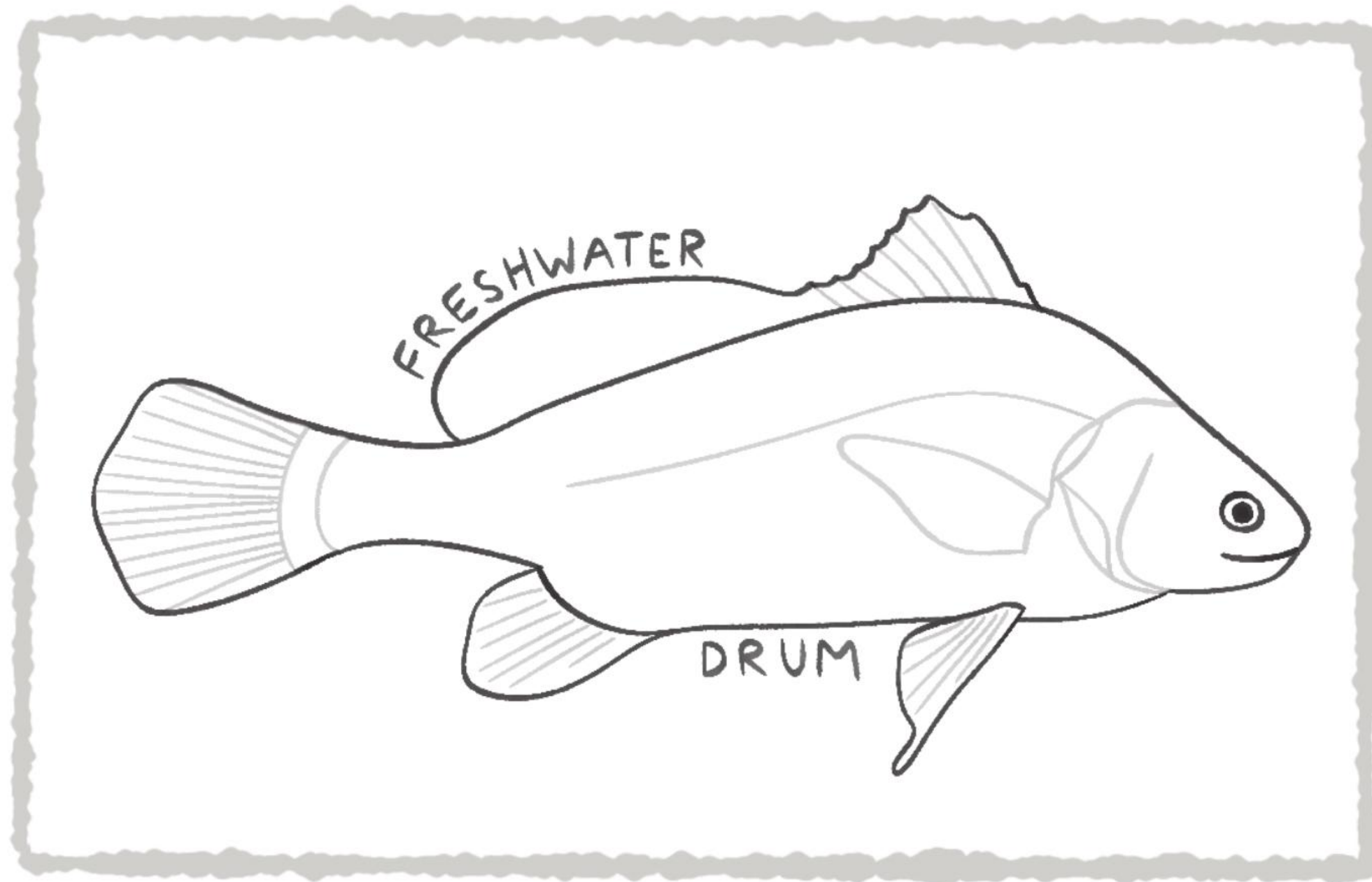
2026 Shanty – Sacred Water Shared Future

Is the Mississippi cleaner than it was 100 years ago?

In 1926 the river was effectively dead—a water study found only 3 living fish in the region’s 50 miles of river. 100 years later, we stand on Bdé Umánj to celebrate the impact of the Mississippi and the collective action and continued commitment to protect and restore. Enter our immersive river world to share what the Mississippi means to you. Repopulate the water with your own fish and learn more about the history of this vital waterway.



What does the Mississippi River mean to you?



Art Shanty Projects 2026




Lake Harriet
January 17–February 8
Saturdays and Sundays
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.



ES + Sacred Water Shared Future



1926



2026

ES + Sacred Water Shared Future Continued



1926



1938



2026

Met Council's Role in the Health of the Mississippi River

Regional thinking

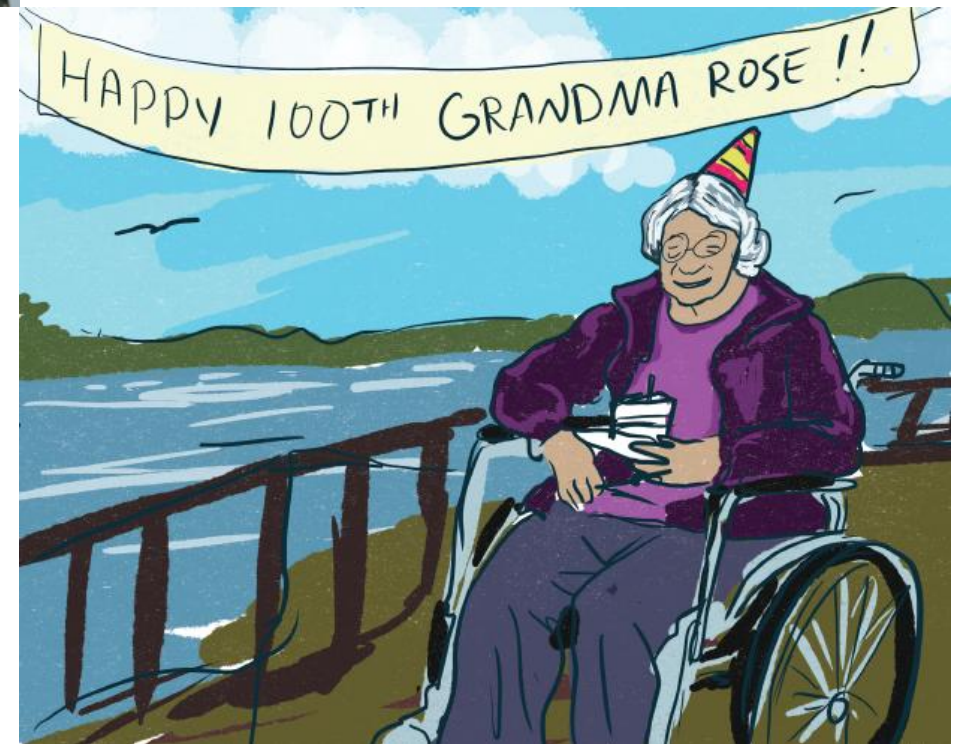
- High-quality water is essential for a healthy environment, thriving economy, and public health
- Regional collaboration works
- Infrastructure is long-lasting community service
- Building on a century of success to create sustainable communities

ES + Sacred Water Shared Future

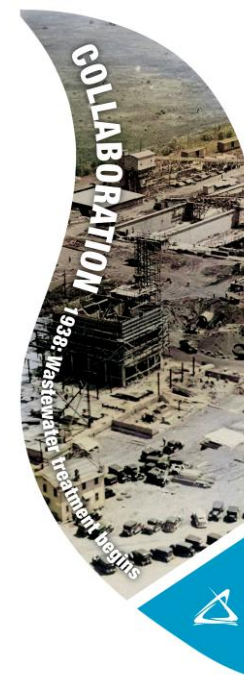
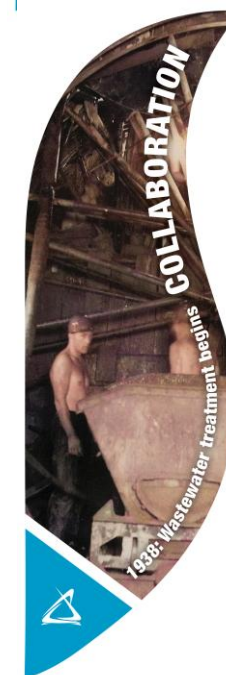
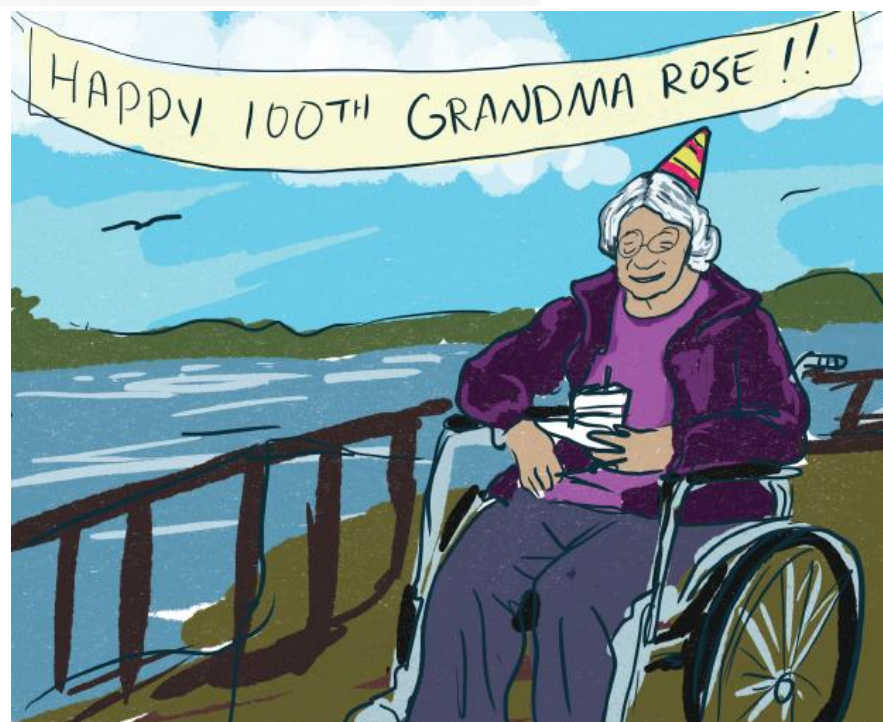


Plans for 2026

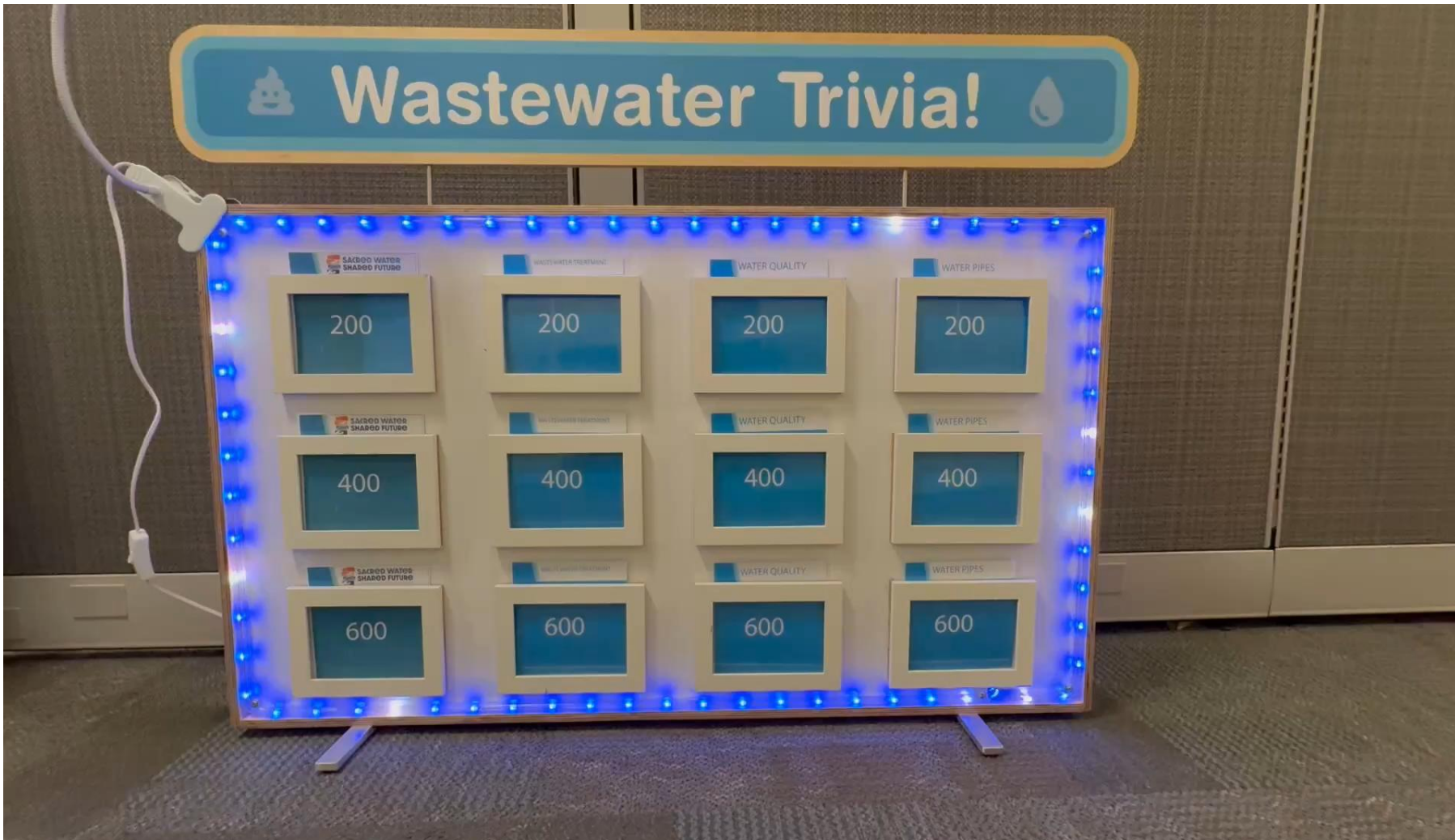
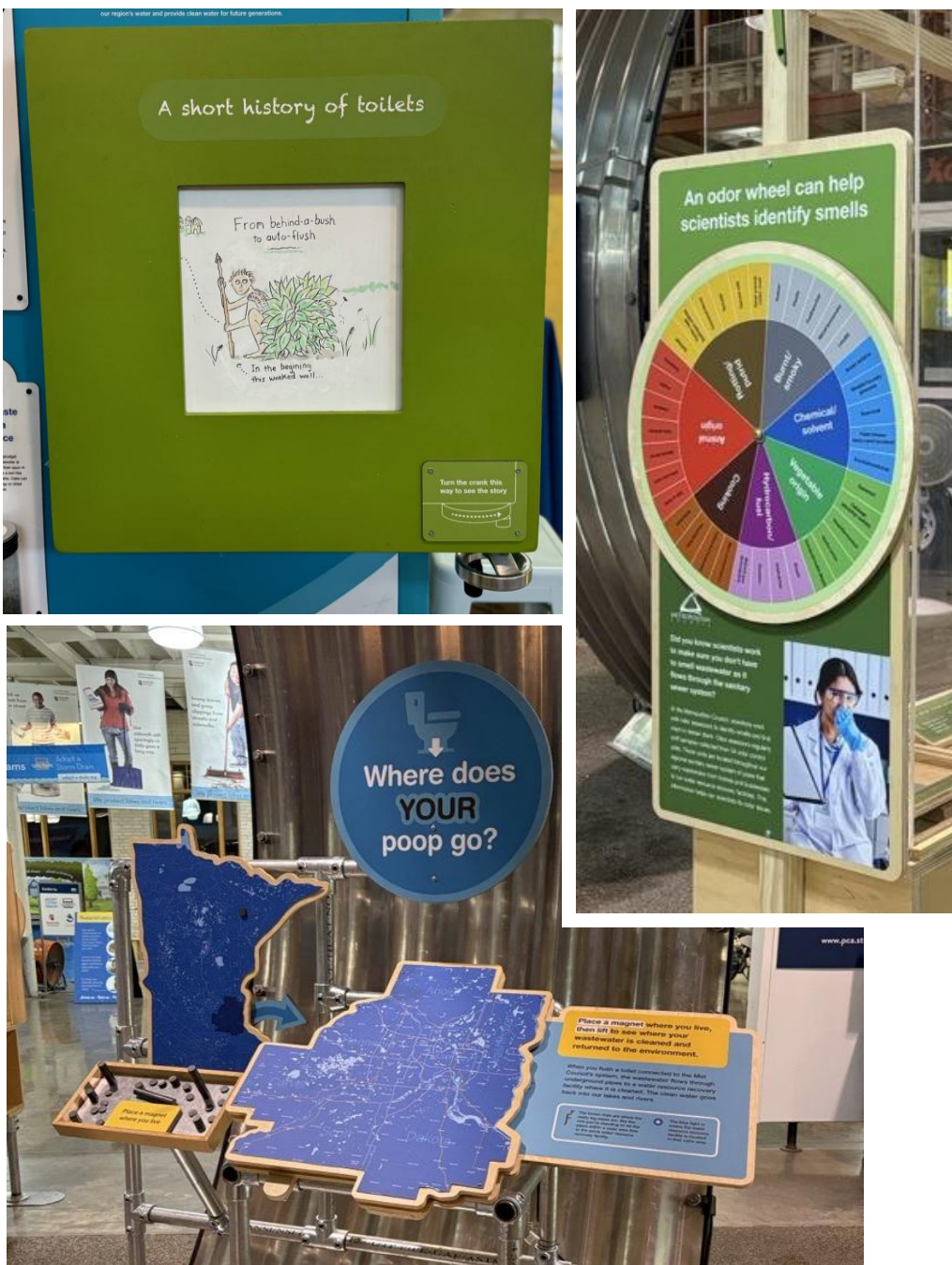
- New and tailored outreach tools
- Staff engagement and pride
- Collaboration with partners and other divisions



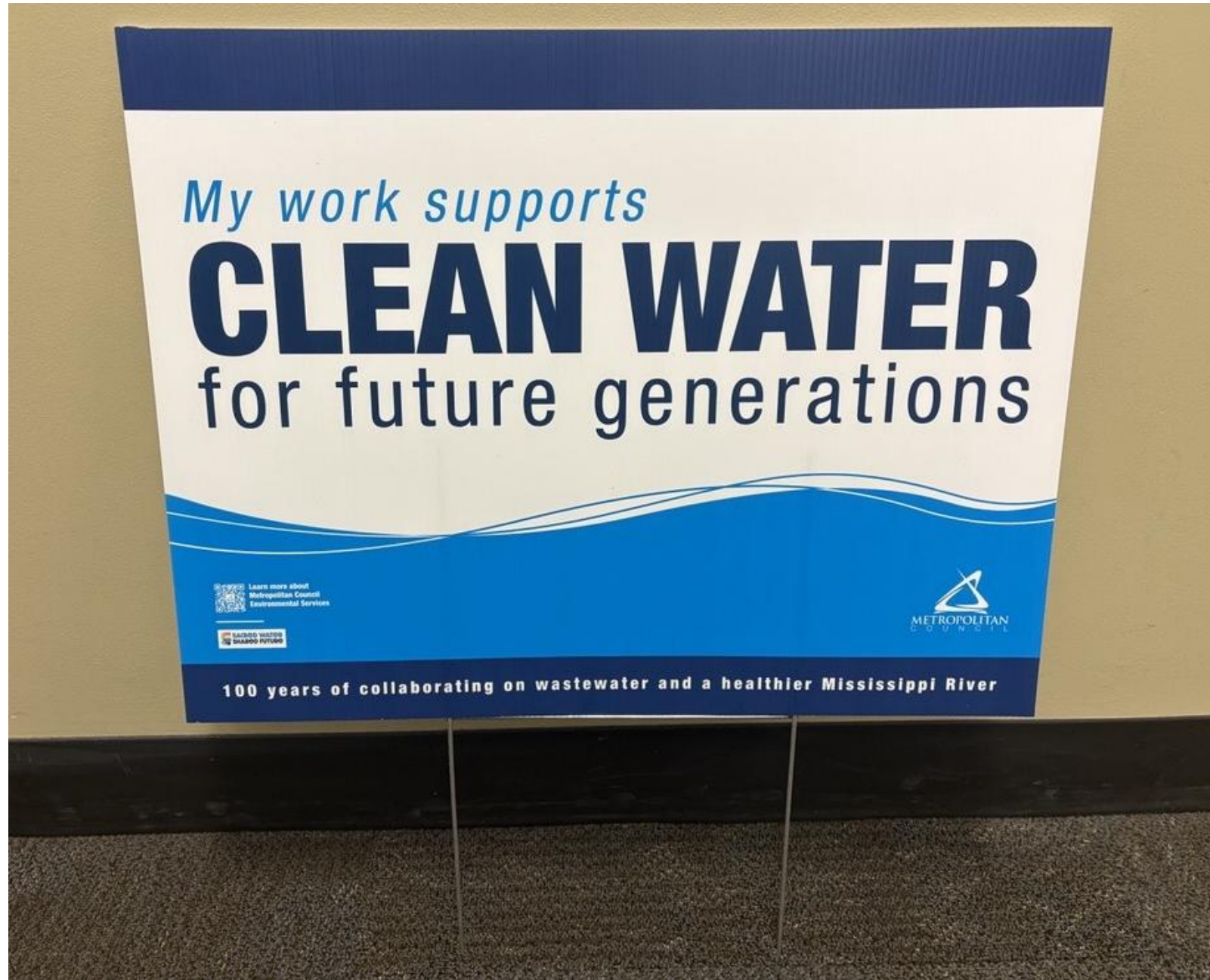
ES New Outreach Tools



ES Tailored Outreach Tools



ES Staff Engagement and Pride



ES Collaboration

New Partnerships and Events



Collaboration Across Divisions





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