



# PUBLIC WATERS INVENTORY



## THE PROBLEM:

- Currently, the PWI erroneously leaves off waters that meet the definition of public waters. According to its framework, DNR will systematically review these errors for each county and restore waters to the PWI.
- This review began in Renville and Polk counties with the county's position being that a water that is not on the PWI does not need a public waters work permit.

## BACKGROUND:

What is the Public Waters Inventory? The Public Waters Inventory ("PWI") is a list of the streams and rivers of Minnesota that meet the definition of a public water. The legislature tasked the Department of Natural Resources ("DNR") with creating and maintaining the PWI.

- Public waters include all natural and altered watercourses with a total drainage area greater than two square miles.
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- In 2020, the DNR started the process of returning public waters to the PWI.
- In 2021, The Limbo Creek case determined that waters that meet the definition of a public water will require environmental review regardless of their status or listing on the PWI.

## MINNESOTA'S PUBLIC WATERS DESERVE PROTECTION

An updated and accurate PWI is essential to protecting Minnesota's water resources. The Limbo Creek case example showcases the significant impact the accuracy of the PWI has for Minnesota.

### Contact information:

MCEA Legislative Associate, Andrea Lovoll | [alovoll@mncenter.org](mailto:alovoll@mncenter.org)

MCEA Water Policy Associate, Nadia Alsadi | [nalsadi@mncenter.org](mailto:nalsadi@mncenter.org)



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Contact: Andrea Lovoll, MCEA Legislative Associate | [alovoll@mncenter.org](mailto:alovoll@mncenter.org)