An integrated strategy to improve Water Quality Management in MN

Major watersheds framework for: monitoring and assessment, watershed planning/TMDL's, and implementation

# Affects growth and health of communities, economy

- CWA prohibition on new or expanded discharges to impaired waters
- 546 of 1,405 MPCA-permitted wastewater treatment plants discharge to impaired waters
- Lakeshore properties values rise or fall based on water clarity

# Stakeholder process

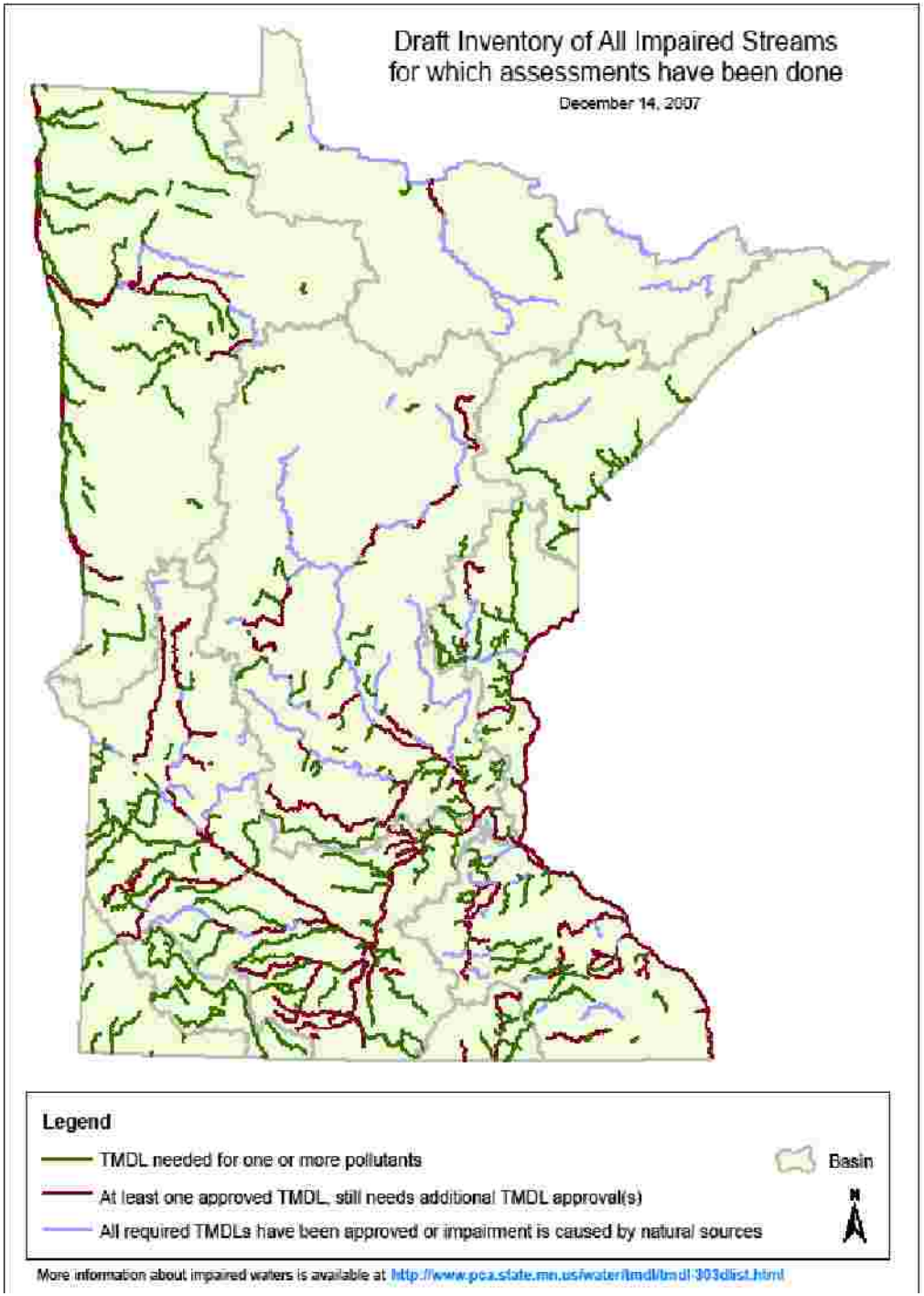
- Policy Work Group (“Group of 16”)
- Partners Group (“Group of 40”)
- Public Stakeholder sessions (2)

# Interests on G16

- Industry
- Municipalities
- Counties
- Watershed districts
- SWCDs
- Agricultural interests
- Environmental advocates
- State agencies
- U of M
- River/Lake groups

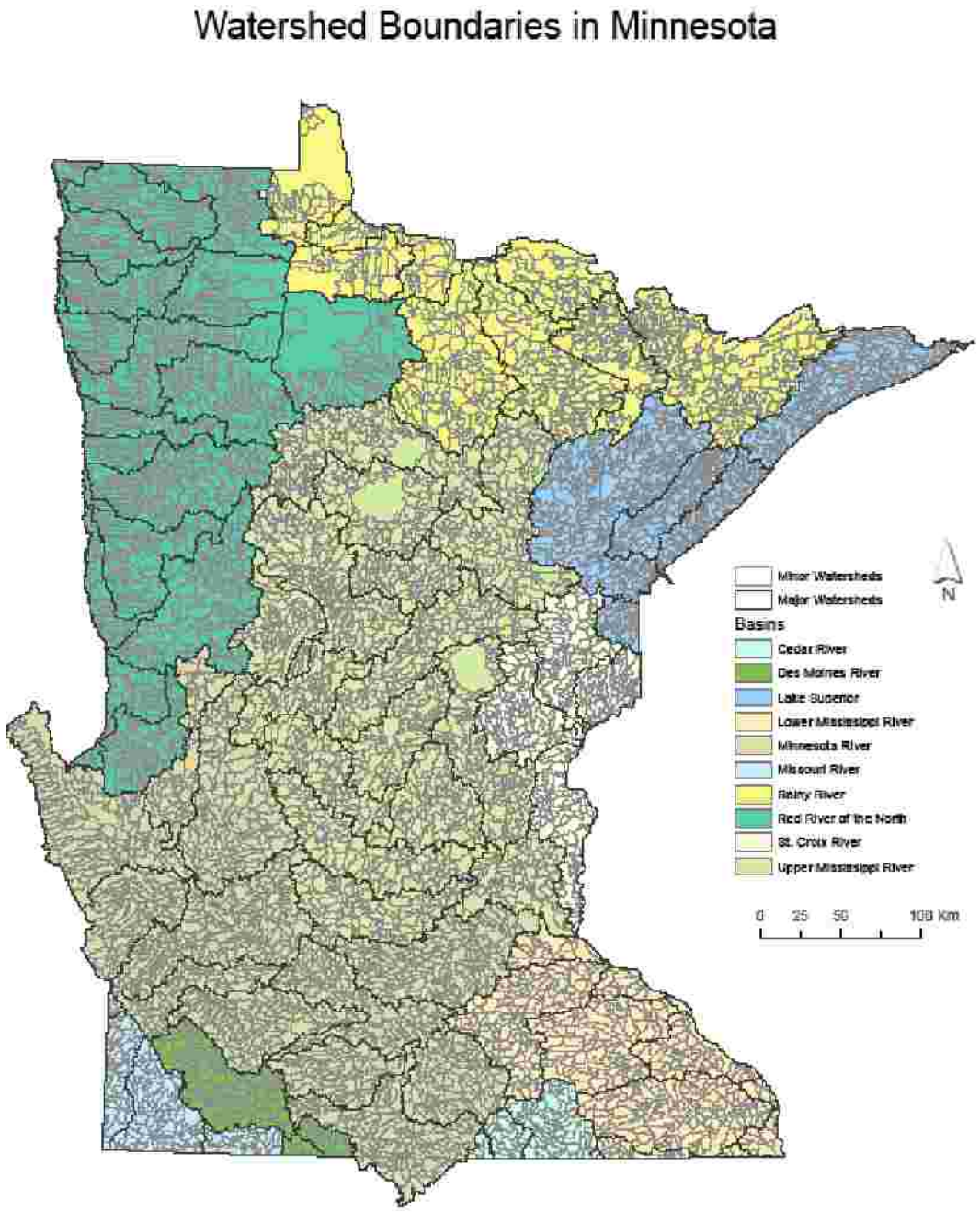
# Policy recommendations

- Voluntary options for restoration, not new regulations
- Funding should be for both point and nonpoint sources
- Annual funding need ~ $75 to $100 million
- Coordinating council to advise on funding, policy, program




# Growing pains

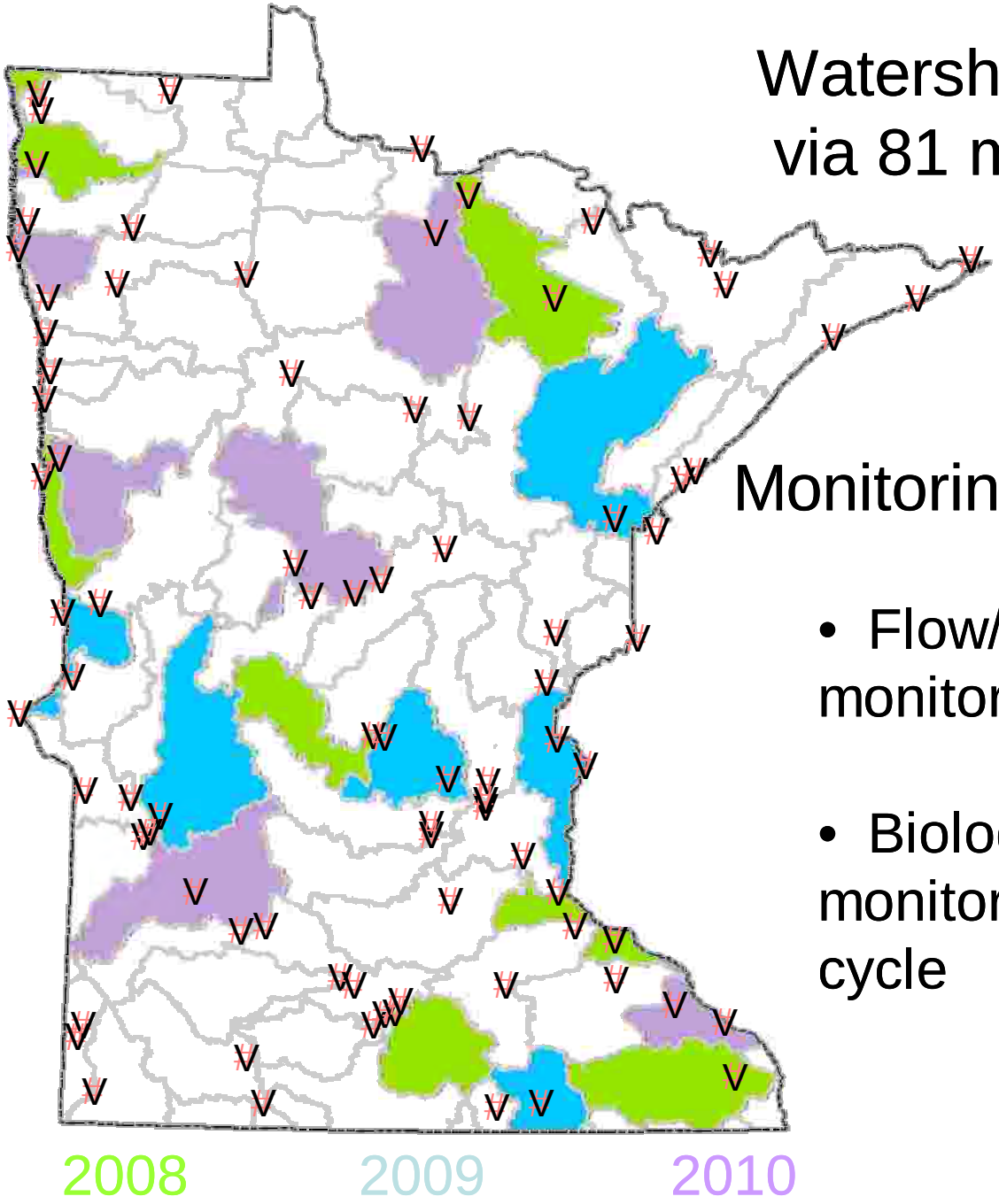
- More monitoring will result in more listings
- Complete a TMDL only to return to locality for another
- Current approach has been driven by the Listing process
- Lacks predictability
- Current schedule is out well over ten years




Right scale?

- Pepin too large
- Some segments are too small

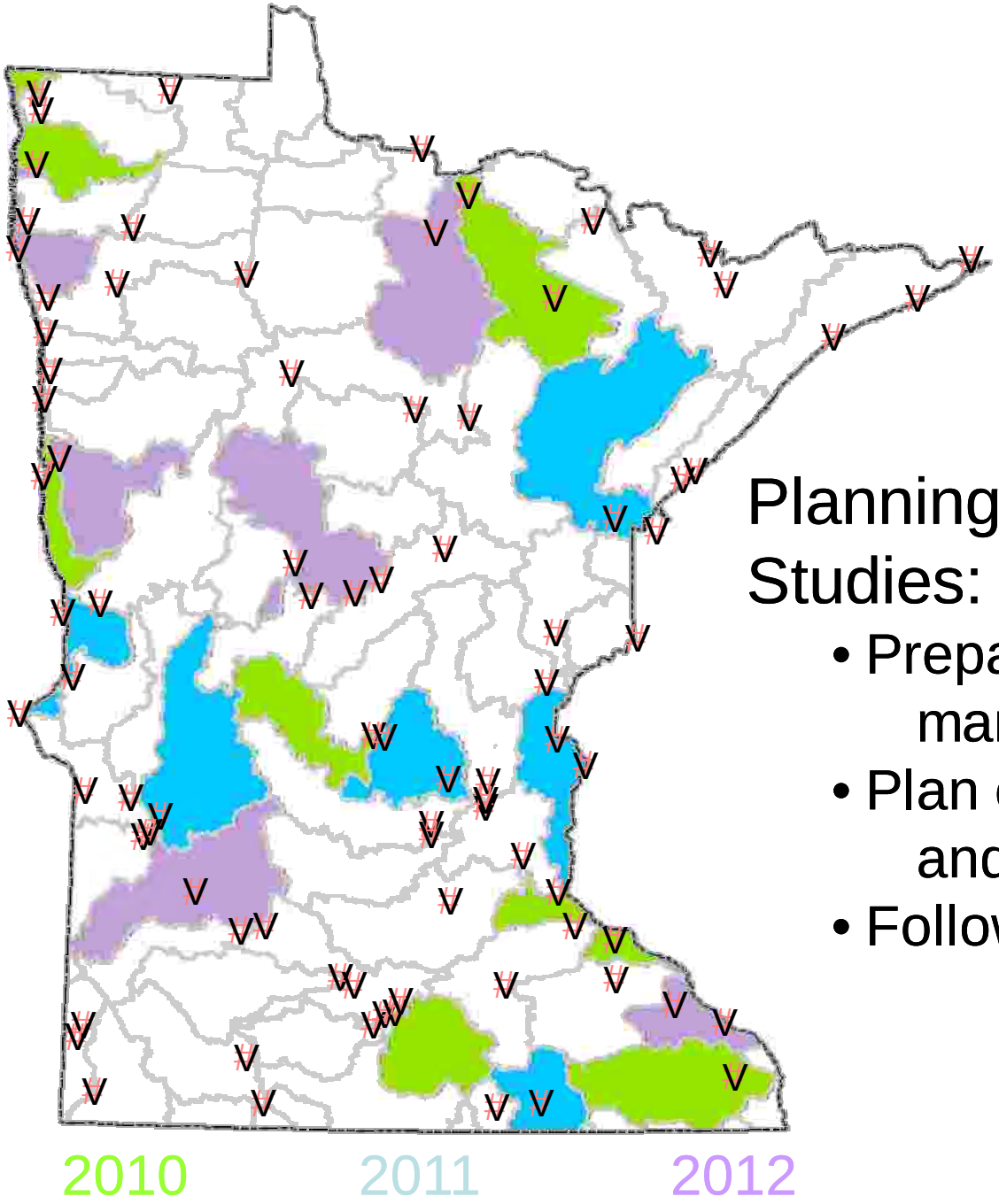
Right pace? Ten year cycle via the 81 major watersheds




# Watershed Management via 81 major watersheds

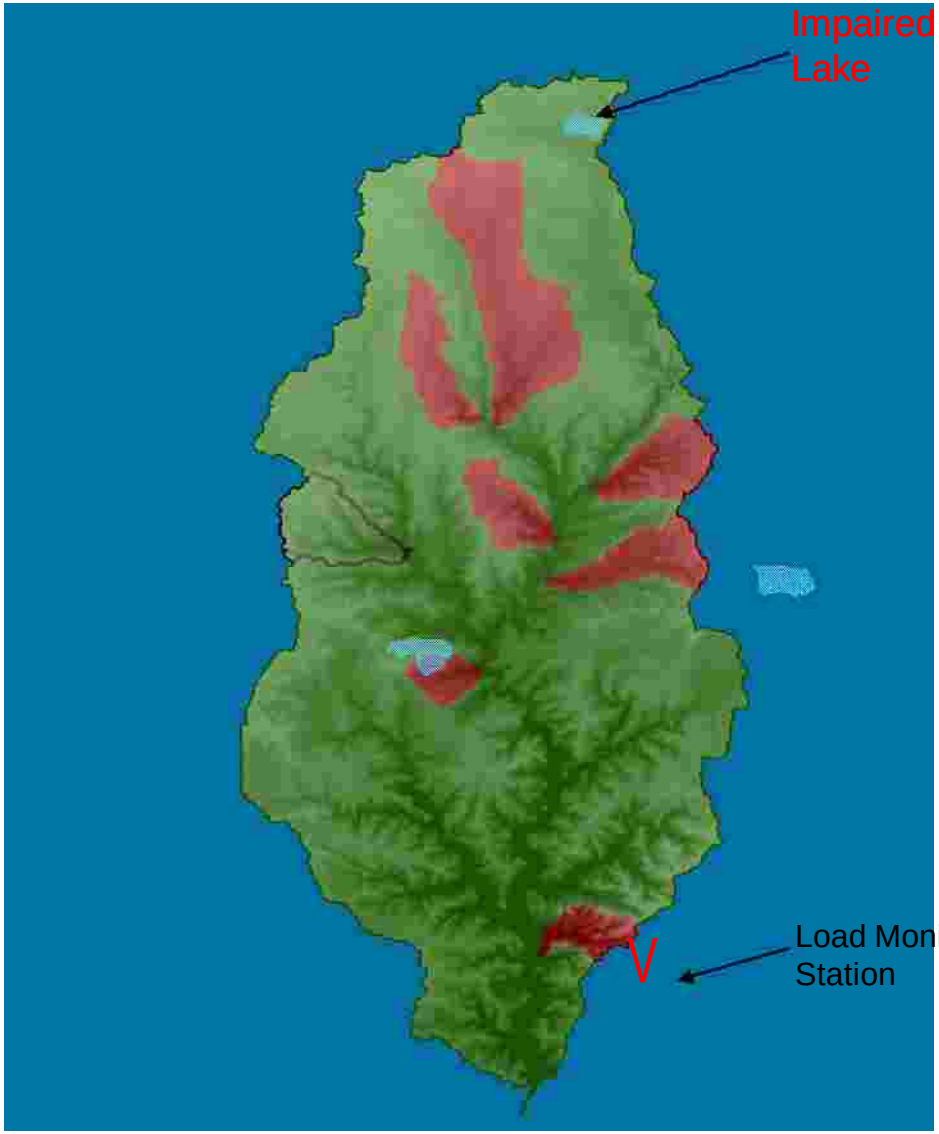
## Monitoring and Assessment

- Flow/chemical/load monitoring at 81 outlets
- Biological & physical monitoring rotated on 10 year cycle




# Planning and TMDL Studies:

- Prepare watershed management plan
- Plan covers both TMDL and protection strategies
- Follow same 10-yr cycle

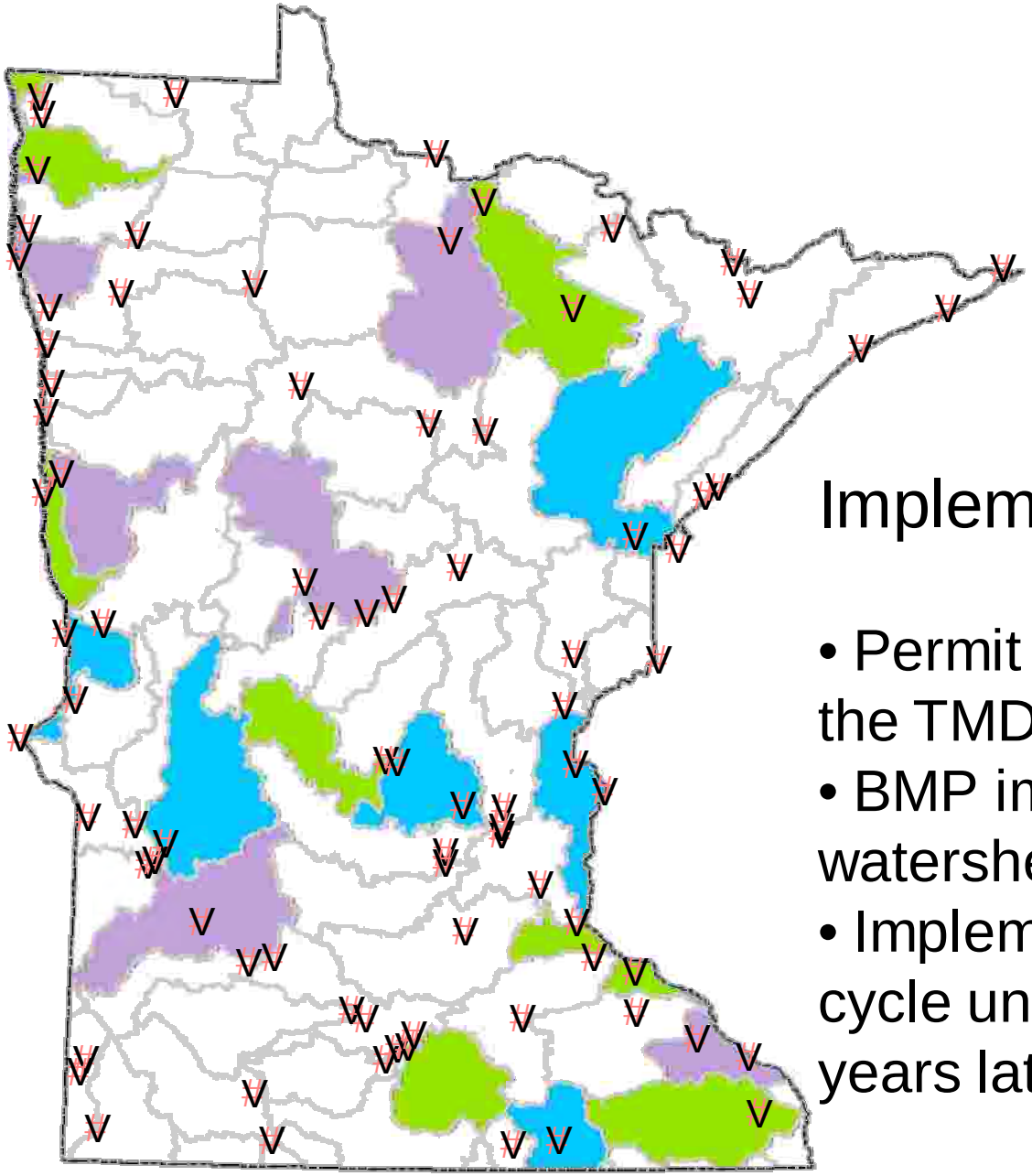



**Watershed Management Plan**

**a TMDL for impaired subwatersheds**

**protection strategy for unimpaired subwatersheds**

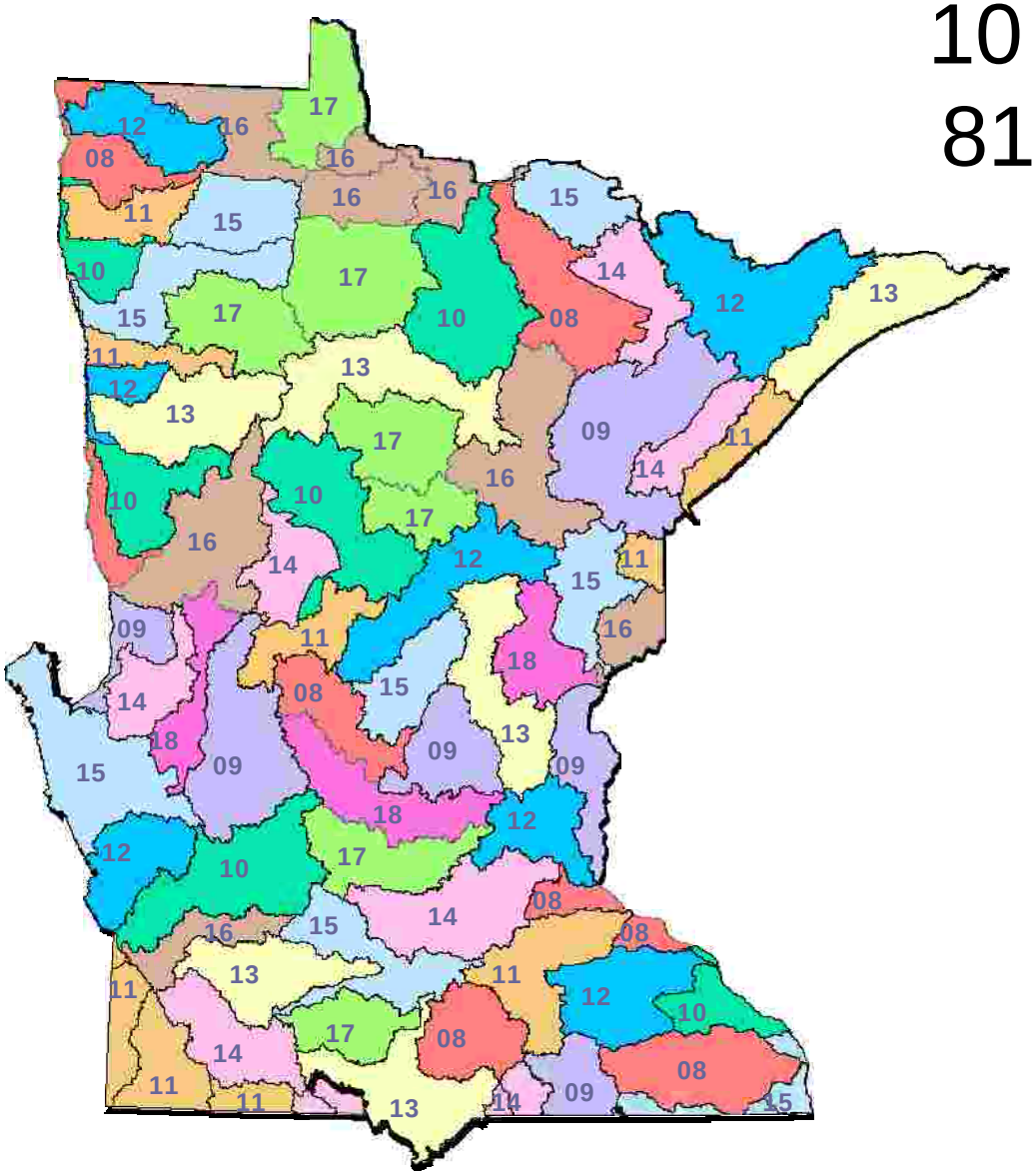
**(integrates both)**




# Implementation

- Permit requirements follow the TMDL
- BMP implementation follows watershed management plan
- Implementation continues cycle until plan updated 10 years later

# 10 year cycle through 81 major watersheds




2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018

# Watershed Management via 81 major watersheds

## Pros

- Get through all watersheds in 10 years
- Integrates impaired/unimpaired into a single management plan.
- Preventative approach
- Watershed focus
- Impaired waters list isn't the driver
- Predictable cycle
- Engage everyone in the watershed
- It's a plan people can understand
- Predictable path
- Starts an ongoing cycle of management and evaluation
- Can integrate source water protection

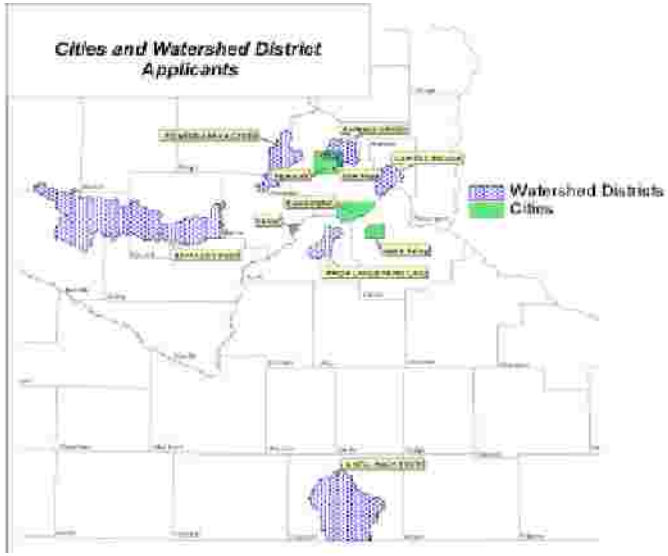
## Cons

- Some watersheds wait 10 years
- Will take a couple years to transition to this approach
- Depends on long term stable funding
- Unusual events could disrupt cycle

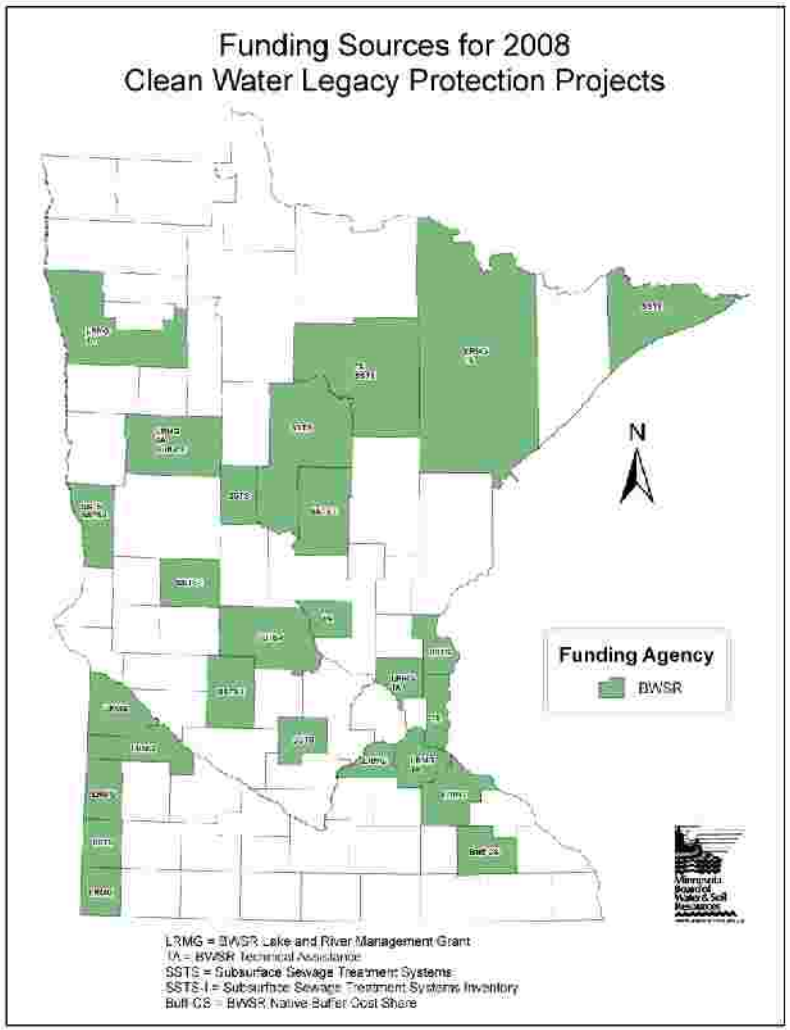
# FY07 CWL Applications

## *Successful Applicants*

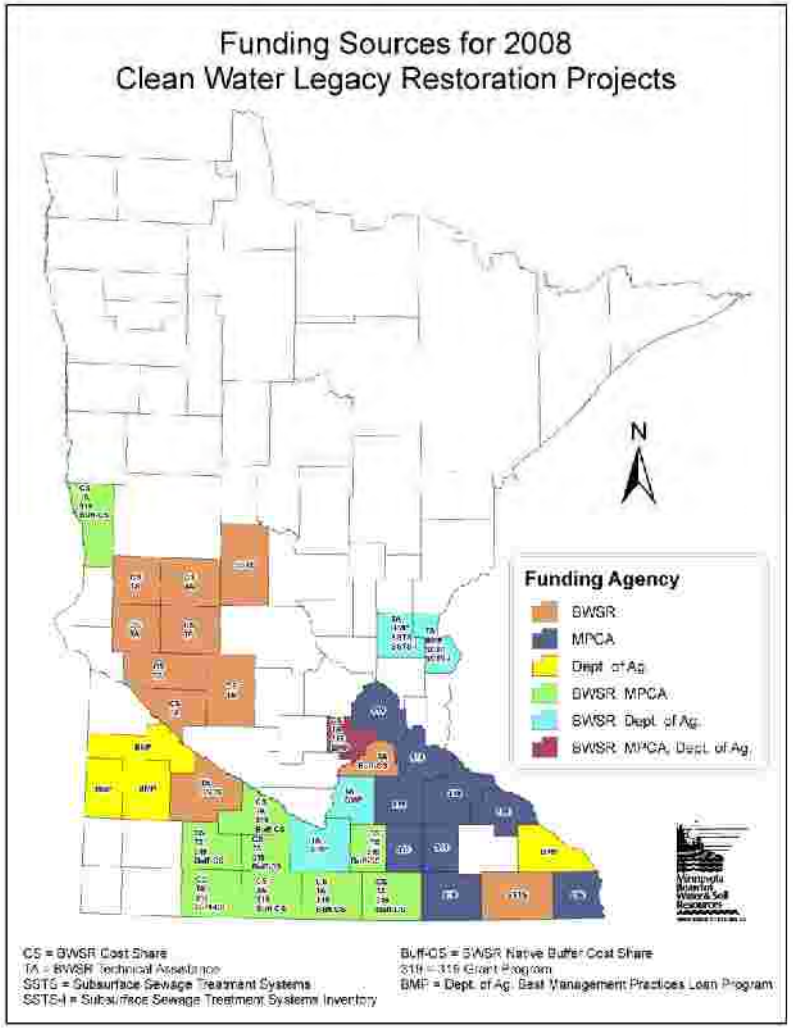
- 53 Awards (180 applicants)
- $8 million ($44M requests)



# Protection Project Distribution-FY 08



# Restoration Project Distribution FY 08



# CWL Accomplishments to Date

- 11 streambank and gully stabilizations
- 32 lakeshore stabilization and restorations
- 19 sediment basins, ponds
- 37 bio-retention features
- 17 manure management practices
- 4,000 acres of native buffers and filter strips
- 95 alternative drainage tile intakes
- 90 side inlets installed
- 15 miles of ditch buffer & runoff control