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## Clean Water Council Legislative Update 21 March 2025

1 message

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### Highlights

#### Deadlines

The House and Senate have [deadlines](#) by which bills must clear most committees. Friday, April 4th at 5 p.m. is the deadline for all policy bills to clear committees in each house. Friday, April 11th at noon is the deadline for all appropriations bills to clear committees (except for tax committees, capital investment committees, and Senate Finance/House Ways and Means Committee).



As deadlines loom, there appear to be a flurry of bill introductions of bills that have been moving in one house but hadn't yet been introduced in the other. Expect committee agendas to be crammed with bill hearings to make deadline for the next two weeks.

#### Senate

The Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee will present its omnibus Legacy Finance bill on Thursday next week. That will include appropriations for the Clean Water Fund. We are waiting to see Tuesday's agenda for this committee since this is usually when last minute bills from Senators to use the Clean Water Fund get a hearing and might end up in the omnibus.

The Senate also hears a bill on Friday in committee that would use the general fund to support nitrate mitigation activities in southeastern Minnesota, which would continue initial funding from last year.

#### House

The House Ag Committee heard several bills related to nitrates on Monday.

We would expect to see an omnibus Legacy Finance bill in the House at its last meeting before deadline, which is Wednesday, April 9th. There are only two more meetings of the committee before then.

One bill that strays from the Clean Water Council's recommendation that has received a hearing is HF363, which would provide a property tax credit of \$5 per acre for farmers in southeastern Minnesota in the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program. The fiscal note indicates the cost would be more than \$1 million annually for all currently certified farms in the region. The House Session Daily covered the bill and committee debate here: [Minnesota farmers could see a clean water tax break - Session Daily - Minnesota House of Representatives](#).

Another bill, already introduced in the Senate, would reorganize the Clean Water Council.

## Budget Forecast Arrives

The [February budget forecast](#) was released Thursday, March 6th. The Clean Water Fund has \$6.826 million less available to spend than when the Council made its recommendations for \$310 million for FY26-27. [Here is a letter](#) from the Minnesota Department of Revenue to the Legislature that explains a correction that is reducing the Clean Water Fund balance by \$10.7 million. [Without the correction, the Clean Water Fund would be more than \$3 million higher than expected.]

The Clean Water Council took up revised funding recommendations on Monday, March 17th to address this new shortfall.

The proposed reductions are as follows:

- \$1,900,000 Watershed Based Implementation Funding (BWSR)
- \$2,366,000 Enhancing Landowner Adoption of Soil Health Practices for Drinking Water & Groundwater Protection (BWSR)
- \$250,000 Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (DNR)
- \$150,000 Nonpoint Source Restoration and Protection Activities (DNR)
- \$100,000 Culvert Replacement Incentive Program (DNR)
- \$100,000 Water Demand Reduction/Efficiency Grant Program (Met Council)
- \$200,000 Expand Ag Weather Station Network (MDA)
- \$1,000,000 Forever Green Initiative (MDA)
- \$100,000 Source Water Protection (MDH)
- \$200,000 Enhanced County Inspection/SSTS Corrective Actions
- \$60,000 Point Source Implementation Grant Program (MPFA)
- \$400,000 Stormwater BMP Performance Evaluation & Technology Transfer (U of M)

## Bill Introductions & Committee Hearings