103B.801 COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** The definitions under section 103B.3363, subdivisions 2 to 4, apply to this section.

Subd. 2. **Program purposes.** The purposes of the comprehensive watershed management plan program under section 103B.101, subdivision 14, paragraph (a), are to:

(1) align local water planning purposes and procedures under this chapter and chapters 103C and 103D on watershed boundaries to create a systematic, watershed-wide, science-based approach to watershed management;

(2) acknowledge and build off existing local government structure, water plan services, and local capacity;

(3) incorporate and make use of data and information, including watershed restoration and protection strategies under section 114D.26, which may serve to fulfill all or some of the requirements under chapter 114D;

(4) solicit input and engage experts from agencies, citizens, and stakeholder groups;

(5) focus on implementation of prioritized and targeted actions capable of achieving measurable progress; and

(6) serve as a substitute for a comprehensive plan, local water management plan, or watershed management plan developed or amended, approved, and adopted, according to this chapter or chapter 103C or 103D.

Subd. 3. **Coordination.** The board shall develop policies for coordination and development of comprehensive watershed management plans. To ensure effectiveness and accountability in meeting the purposes of subdivision 2, these policies must address, at a minimum:

(1) a boundary framework consistent with section 103B.101, subdivision 14, paragraph (a), and procedures, requirements, and criteria for establishing or modifying the framework consistent with the goals of section 103A.212. The metropolitan area, as defined under section 473.121, subdivision 2, may be considered for inclusion in the boundary framework. If included, the metropolitan area is not excluded from the water management programs under sections 103B.201 to 103B.255;

(2) requirements for coordination, participation, and commitment between local government units in the development, approval, adoption, and implementation of comprehensive watershed management plans within planning boundaries identified according to this subdivision;

(3) requirements for consistency with state agency-adopted water and natural resources-related plans and documents required by this chapter and chapters 103A, 103C, 103D, 103E, 103F, 103G, and 114D; and

(4) procedures for plan development, review, and approval consistent with the intent of sections 103B.201, 103B.255, 103B.311, 103B.321, 103D.401, and 103D.405. If the procedures in these sections are contradictory as applied to a specific proceeding, the board must establish a forum where the public interest conflicts involved can be presented and, by consideration of the whole body of water law, the controlling policy can be determined and apparent inconsistencies resolved.

Subd. 4. **Plan content.** The board shall develop policies for required comprehensive watershed management plan content consistent with comprehensive local water management planning. To ensure

effectiveness and accountability in meeting the purposes of subdivision 2, plan content must include, at a minimum:

(1) an analysis and prioritization of issues and resource concerns;

(2) measurable goals to address the issues and concerns, including but not limited to:

(i) restoration, protection, and preservation of drinking water sources and natural surface water and groundwater storage and retention systems;

(ii) minimization of public capital expenditures needed to correct flooding and water quality problems;

(iii) restoration, protection, and improvement of surface water and groundwater quality;

(iv) establishment of more uniform local policies and official controls for surface water and groundwater management;

(v) identification of priority areas for wetland enhancement, restoration, and establishment;

(vi) identification of priority areas for riparian zone management and buffers;

(vii) prevention of erosion and soil transport into surface water systems;

(viii) promotion of groundwater recharge;

(ix) protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and water recreational facilities; and

(x) securing other benefits associated with the proper management of surface water and groundwater;

(3) a targeted implementation schedule describing at a minimum the actions, locations, timeline, estimated costs, method of measurement, and identification of roles and responsible government units;

(4) a description of implementation programs, including how the implementation schedule will be achieved and how the plan will be administered and coordinated between local water management responsibilities; and

(5) a land and water resource inventory.

Subd. 5. **Timelines; administration.** (a) The board shall develop and adopt, by June 30, 2016, a transition plan for development, approval, adoption, and coordination of plans consistent with section 103A.212. The transition plan must include a goal of completing statewide transition to comprehensive watershed management plans by 2025. The metropolitan area may be considered for inclusion in the transition plan. The board may amend the transition plan no more than once every two years.

(b) The board may use the authority under section 103B.3369, subdivision 9, to support development or implementation of a comprehensive watershed management plan under this section.

Subd. 6. **Authority.** Notwithstanding any laws to the contrary, the authorities granted to local government through this chapter and chapters 103C and 103D are retained when a comprehensive watershed management plan is adopted as a substitute for a watershed management plan required under section 103B.231, a county groundwater plan authorized under section 103B.255, a county water plan authorized under section 103B.311, a comprehensive plan authorized under section 103C.331, or a watershed management plan required under section 103D.401 or 103D.405.

History: *1Sp2015 c 2 art 2 s 12; 1Sp2019 c 4 art 5 s 3-5*