

## WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

A watershed is the area of land where all the water that is under it or drains off of it goes to the same place. It is an area of land that drains to a common body of water.

The Pine River Watershed drains to the Mississippi River.

Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. They cross county, state, and national boundaries. What happens in one part of the watershed often impacts other parts of the watershed. No matter where you are, you're in a watershed!

To learn more about the Pine River Watershed, see: [www.prwa.us](http://www.prwa.us). Go to watershed video in About Us

## PINE RIVER WATERSHED FACTS

Area: 501,923 acres/ 783 square miles

Surface Water Coverage: 101.79 square miles/  
63,601 acres or 12.7%

Lakes: Cass County: 285

Crow Wing County: 273

Rivers & Streams: 586 miles

Land Ownership:

Private: 59%

Public: 41%

Land Usage:

Forest & Shrub 54.1%

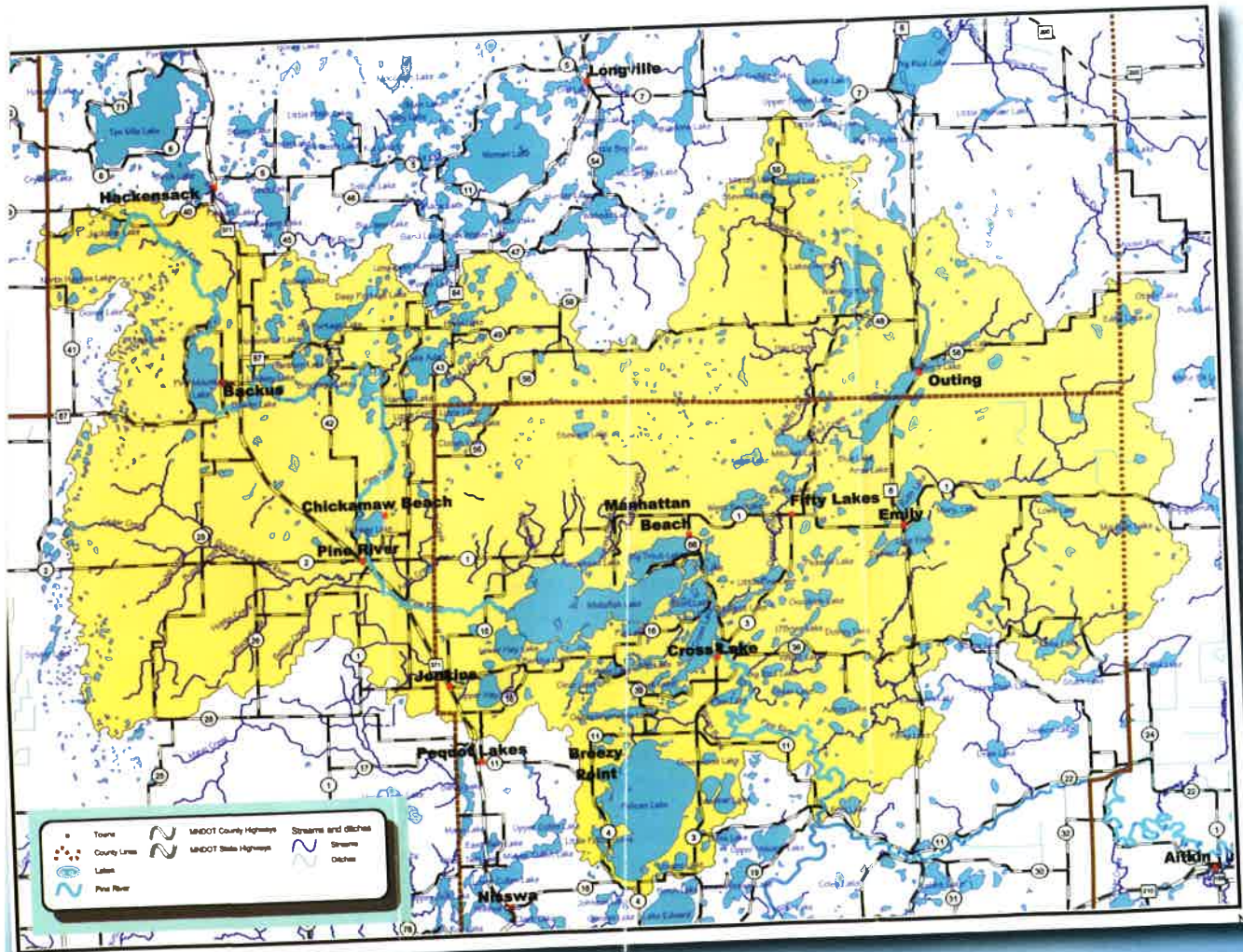
Open Water 12.7%

Wetland 21.0%

Agriculture 11.6%

Residential/Commercial 0.4%

Source: US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Rapid Watershed Assessment — Pine River (MN) HUC:07010105



## WHY BOTH LAKE ASSOCIATIONS AND A WATERSHED ORGANIZATION ARE NECESSARY TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT OUR WATERS.

Every lake is in a watershed. That means that the water in a lake drains from the land surrounding it and from tributaries feeding into it. In addition, our underground wells are fed by water flowing through the earth — again, part of a watershed.

Some watersheds are relatively small, such as the watershed immediately around Pelican Lake and some are massive, such as the Mississippi Watershed which drains most of the middle of the country. In addition, smaller watersheds feed into larger watersheds so the water from your lake or stream ultimately flows into and joins waters from other watersheds. That then means that if the water from your lake or immediate watershed is good, it will be good for the larger watershed it joins; if the water is bad, it has a negative impact on the water downstream. Finally, some lakes have streams and/or rivers both flowing into and out of them.

With this in mind, you need to support both your local lake association to deal with local issues and you need a watershed organization like PRWA, to deal with situations and problems across the entire Pine River Watershed. Your lake association is focused on the issues relating to your lake but usually not on the issues across the watershed. Watershed organizations like the Pine River Watershed Alliance deal with the broader challenges to our water across the entire watershed. Both need your support to protect our water. The quality of the water in your glass is connected to the watershed you live in. Half full or half empty? It's up to you.



HALF FULL? OR...





# IS OUR GLASS HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY?

It's a classic question and when it comes to our quality of life here in the lake country, it's a crucial question.

Water quality affects everything in our area from our daily life, to our fun and recreation, to the economy.

Half full or half empty? Some see the water glass as half full and others see it is half empty. When considering the condition of the waters in our area, the answer is it is both. We are blessed with an abundance of clean water in our lakes, rivers, and streams, in addition to our underground sources — some of the highest quality waters in the state. But misuse and development pressures are quickly threatening our waters.

What happens on the land, affects our waters.

## HOW IMPORTANT IS WATER?

Water is very important. In a recent study, people living here stated they cared a great deal about ensuring clean, clear water, maintaining a healthy environment, the natural beauty and wildlife, preserving our quality of life, having quality family time, enjoying great recreational activities, being able to find seclusion and serenity, and having good hunting and fishing. In some way, all are dependent on the quality of our waters.

Water is a way of life for many people. Our water is the basis of a great deal of our economy and the source of many of our recreational pastimes. And for daily, personal use in cooking, drinking, bathing, washing, and refreshing our water comes to most of us directly from the ground — not from a water processing facility.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OUR WATERS?

All of our water in this area comes from the Pine River Watershed. Today, the water here is some of the highest quality in Minnesota. Unfortunately, our waters are being constantly threatened. The threats come from increasing development pressure and from constant abuse and misuse of our water resources. And, it's not just what is happening on the waters but what is happening on the surrounding land. Abuse of our land ends up hurting the quality of our water.

## WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT THE PINE RIVER WATERSHED?

The Pine River Watershed (see map) is one of the few healthy watersheds in the state of Minnesota. That's the glass half full. But the half empty glass of poor quality waters isn't too far behind unless we all work to preserve this magnificent resource. The quality of our waters is being threatened daily.

If you care, now is the time to get involved and help preserve and protect our waters

## WHAT IS THE PINE RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE (PRWA)?

With a mission to protect and preserve the Pine River Watershed's land and water quality now and for future generations so people in the watershed can enjoy a healthy, vibrant way of life, the Pine River Watershed Alliance was formed in 2005. The Alliance has a vision to have the land and waters of the Pine River Watershed be healthy, beautiful and treated with respect by all people. What does PRWA do?

Over the last ten years, PRWA has conducted testing to determine the quality of and the threats to our waters. It has worked in collaboration with local, county, and state agencies and through funding grants to preserve and protect our waters.

## WHAT IS PRWA DOING NOW?

Since 2010, PRWA has worked with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to identify the threats to our waters and pinpoint the most critical areas within the Pine River Watershed. The process is called Watershed Restoration and Protection (WRAP) and is part of a statewide effort in 81 watersheds to monitor, assess, and restore and protect our waters. It is funded by the Minnesota's Clean Water Legacy Act.

The implementation plan for the Pine River Watershed was announced in 2016 (See WRAP Plan at PRWA website: [www.prwa.us](http://www.prwa.us)) and PRWA is actively working to implement this protection and restoration plan.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT OUR WATERS?

Over the next few years, there will be many initiatives that will require both manpower and additional funding to implement. Much of this will focus through volunteer organizations like the Pine River Watershed Alliance.

## HOW CAN YOU BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION?

We are blessed to have some of Minnesota's highest quality waters in the Pine River Watershed. But to ensure that quality, now and in the future, we need your support. Both financially — please join PRWA — and in time and volunteer manpower. With your help, we can make a difference. How do you want to see the glass? Half full or half empty?

## JOIN THE PINE RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE...

Protecting our waters is important for everyone. Your membership and financial support are important. Join the Pine River Watershed Alliance by using the enclosed card or go on-line to [WWW.PRWA.US](http://WWW.PRWA.US).

The Pine River Watershed Alliance is a 501c3 Nonprofit Charity (ID# 26-3666522) and is supported through the generosity of our members and our community. Your membership helps us protect area land, lakes, rivers and streams for future generations.

Contact us.

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