

Twin Cities Water Supply Planning



The Facts of Ground Water Pumping

Since the 1940s, the percentage of water used in the metropolitan area that comes from ground water (wells) has increased, while the percentage used from surface water (the Mississippi River) has declined.

Suburban communities have chosen to maintain their own water supply systems versus using either of the two dominant regional water systems (Saint Paul and Minneapolis).

Both Saint Paul and Minneapolis have existing MN DNR permits that would allow them to provide almost all finished water necessary for the entire Twin Cities. Between the two systems they consume approximately 2% of the available flow of the Mississippi. 98% is untouched!

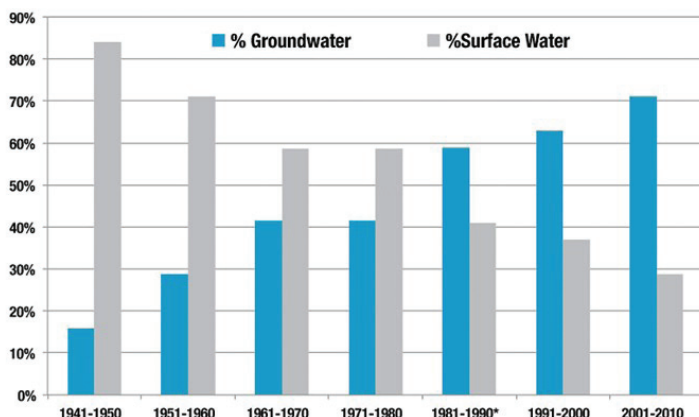
Each day, the Twin Cities consumes 450 million gallons (mg) of finished water, 120 mg which comes from the Mississippi and 330 mg from ground water. Each day the Metropolitan Council returns 250 mg of treated water from the various treatment facilities to the Mississippi River. For every gallon of untreated water removed from the river, two gallons of treated water are returned!

The Metropolitan Council Master Water Supply Plan predicts that by 2030 communities that rely on ground water will have to make significant investments in drilling deeper wells or otherwise find new sources for their finished water.

In 1969 the Legislature mandated a regional wastewater treatment framework, a solution that has resulted in strong environmental compliance and one of the nation's lowest sewage access fees.

50 years later . . . isn't it time to mandate the same for finished water?

Municipal Water Use in Seven-County Twin Cities Metro Area



Lake Water Augmentation

Groundwater analysis by the United States Geological Services has conclusively demonstrated that lake water found in White Bear Lake has been pumped from groundwater wells in surrounding communities. White Bear Lake surface water is feeding the area's groundwater wells.

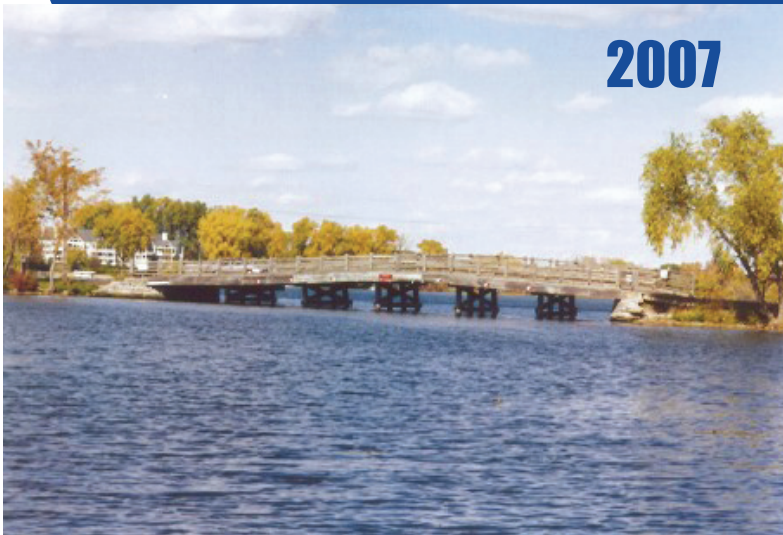
White Bear Lake is five feet lower than the DNR calculated Ordinary High Water Level. This has reduced property values, lowered the economic contribution of the surrounding region, and diminished the lake as a natural resource.

Increased pumping from a growing population has significantly increased pressure on White Bear Lake.

Today, the Saint Paul Regional Water Services uses their holding lakes in Vadnais Heights to augment the water level in two other lakes in the Northeast Metro: Snail Lake in Shoreview and Gilfillan Lake in North Oaks.

Engineering analysis has determined that an investment of \$23.8 Million would allow construction of a pipeline capable of providing over 10 million gallons a day in augmentation for White Bear Lake. The resulting water level increase would restore the lake and help replenish the local aquifer.

Augmentation plus a regional approach would reduce groundwater depletion, increase the level of White Bear Lake to the DNR calculated Ordinary Level, and restore the economic impact that the lake provides to the region and indeed the State.



2007



2013



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Produced by the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce.

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