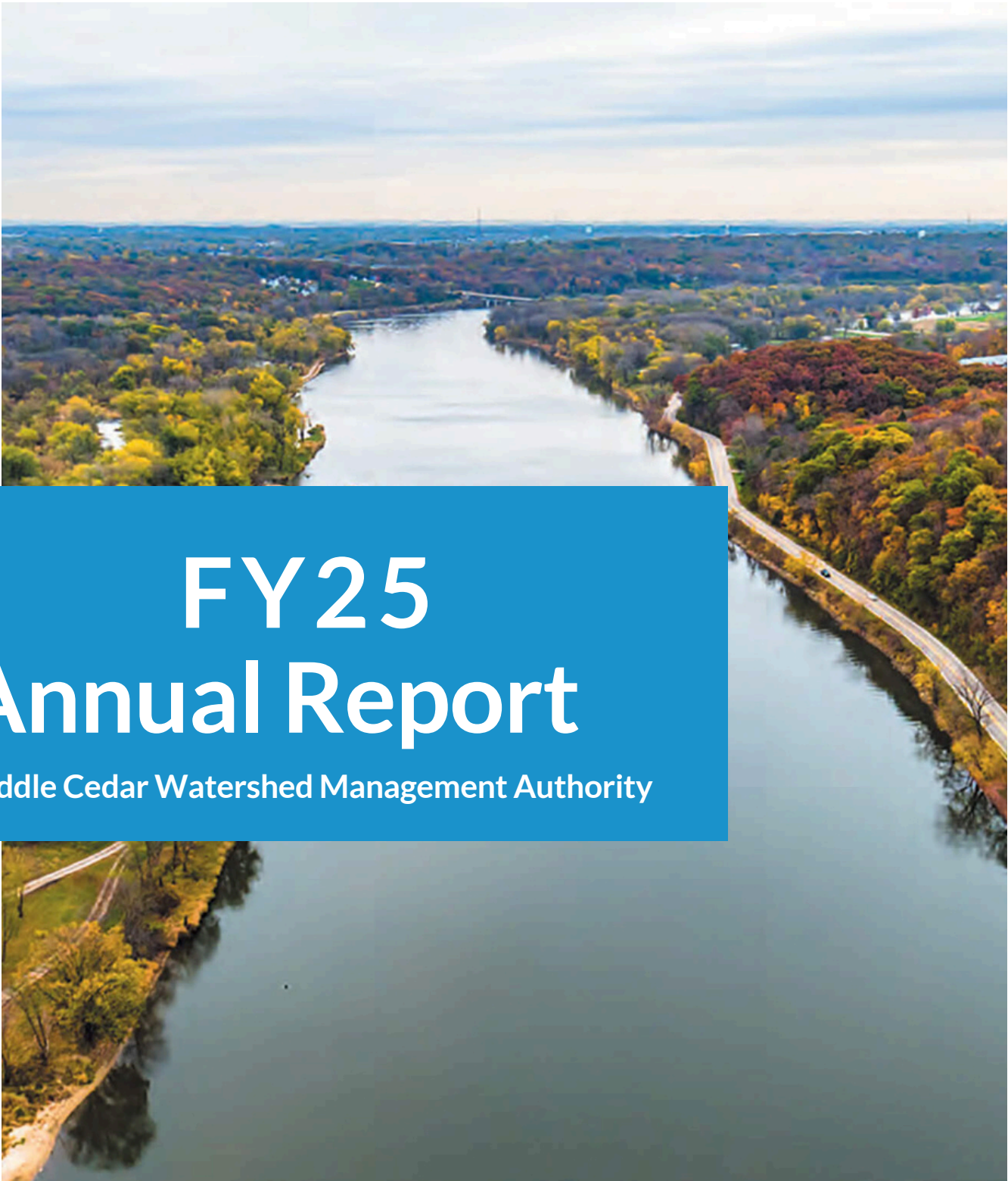




FY25 Annual Report

Middle Cedar Watershed Management Authority



**Middle Cedar Watershed
Management Authority**

www.middlecedarwma.com

A MESSAGE FROM THE MIDDLE CEDAR WMA BOARD CHAIR

Greetings, Board Members, and Happy Fall!

Thank you for reading this first installment of the Middle Cedar WMA Annual Report. This report was the idea of our WMA administrator, Alyssa Comer of ECICOG, who compiled all the information and developed the layout. I am very happy with how it turned out, and also proud to look back on what has been accomplished in the Middle Cedar over the past year.

As enter the final of quarter of 2025, please be on the look-out for an email about setting up a time for the WMA to present at an upcoming meeting of your elected officials. In 2025, we visited the Benton, Grundy, and Linn Boards of Supervisors. This year, we are planning to set up meetings with our member communities' City Councils. This will be a great way for us to share the Annual Report and gather feedback from our member communities about how we can better support all of you.

In 2026, we will launch our next big project, the Middle Cedar "Growing Resilience" initiative. This effort is funded through the United States EPA's Farmer to Farmer grant program. Your continued support and attendance at meetings will be very important, as we roll out the program and will look forward to guidance and input from the WMA. Key activities of the project will include:

Hiring a Middle Cedar WMA Watershed Coordinator

Developing a hydrologic model to identify opportunities for natural infrastructure projects

Working with farmers to demonstrate new conservation practices in the research phase

Working with partners on oxbow restorations in cooperation with WMA members

Thank you all for your continued support of our watershed collaboration.

-Mary Beth Stevenson, Middle Cedar WMA Board Chair

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

2026 Quarterly Board Meeting Schedule

January 15th - Virtual Zoom Meeting

April 16th - In-Person, Location TBD

July 16th - Virtual Zoom Meeting

October 15th - In-Person, Cedar Rapids



MISSION STATEMENT

The Middle Cedar Watershed Management Authority will enable collaborative management of watershed challenges by serving as a platform for planning, education, research, strategic initiatives, funding, projects, and policy formation.

VISION STATEMENT

Water will be valued as a shared resource to be nurtured and managed for the long-term benefit of the people living in the Middle Cedar Watershed and the ecosystem upon which they rely.

MEMBERS

CEDAR FALLS
CEDAR RAPIDS
EVANSDALE
GLADBROOK
GILBERTVILLE
GRUNDY CENTER
HUDSON
JESUP
LAPORTE CITY
RAYMOND
VINTON
WATERLOO
BENTON COUNTY
BLACK HAWK COUNTY
BUCHANAN COUNTY
GRUNDY COUNTY
LINN COUNTY
TAMA COUNTY
BLACK HAWK COUNTY SWCD
LINN COUNTY SWCD



The subwatersheds outlined in blue represent priority areas identified in the watershed management plan for MCWMA.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO!

In the Middle Cedar Watershed

Partner Appreciation Event

Cedar River Source Water Partnership

In December 2024, the City of Cedar Rapids hosted an event to recognize partners in the Cedar River watershed. The event was held at Usher's Ferry and hosted various speakers and organizations to discuss water quality initiatives throughout the Cedar River Watershed.

The goal of the Cedar River Source Water Partnership is to work with stakeholders in the Cedar River Watershed to improve soil and water quality by installing edge-of-field practices and utilizing conservation farming practices.



Growing Resilience in the Middle Cedar Watershed

EPA Farmer to Farmer Grant -BIL 2024

This past year, the Middle Cedar WMA applied for an EPA Farmer to Farmer Grant, funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The WMA was awarded the grant, and funding will be available starting January 2026, and run through December 2028.

The goal of the Growing Resilience project is to hire a watershed coordinator, that will work directly with farmers to identify and implement natural infrastructure projects that will achieve multiple objectives of improving water quality by reducing agricultural nonpoint source pollution, enhancing habitat, and improving the resilience of farming operations. The project will advance key goals of the Middle Cedar Watershed Management Plan by focusing on four high priority watersheds identified in the plan and implementing critical practices that revitalize ecosystem services of intensively farmed areas. The Growing Resilience project builds from existing partnerships that have been cultivated for nearly two decades and will continue to have longevity beyond the 3-year EPA grant timeframe.

Casey Lake Restoration Tour

Hickory Hills Park

In April 2025, the Middle Cedar WMA held their quarterly board meeting at Hickory Hills Park, in La Porte City, IA.

The board started the meeting with a tour and presentation of the Casey Lake restoration project, led by park staff. It was a beautiful day, with great company and discussion about the importance of these restoration projects.



Dry Run Creek Watershed Improvement Project 20th Anniversary

2025 marks the 20th anniversary of the Dry Run Creek Watershed Improvement Project in Black Hawk County. In the last 20 years, roughly \$3.1 million in grant funds have been used to assist landowners in implementing conservation practices on their land through cost share. This has resulted in preventing 3,700 tons of sediment from eroding and impacting the stream each year as well as over 124,000,000 gallons of rainwater annually being natural infiltrated into the ground and reducing stormwater pollution. *This information comes from <https://www.blackhawkswcd.org/dry-run-creek>. Please visit their website or Facebook page for more information.*



**Urban Outreach Coordinator
Paola Trujillo-Lopez**

In June 2025, Black Hawk County SWCD welcomed Paola Trujillo-Lopez to their staff. Paola is the new Urban Agriculture Outreach Coordinator. She will be doing outreach throughout the watershed to connect small-scale and urban farmers with resources that will help them succeed.

"My name is Paola Trujillo, and I currently serve as the Urban Agriculture Outreach Coordinator for Black Hawk SWCD, supporting the Farmer to Farmer Enhancing Conservation Technical Assistance Delivery for Urban Agriculture and Small-Scale Growers project, funded by the DNR.

Prior to this role, I spent nearly three years as a Nutrition Educator with Iowa State University Extension, where I focused on empowering low-income families through community-based education and outreach.

While my background isn't rooted in farming, I bring a strong foundation in nutrition and a deep commitment to food equity—skills I'm excited to apply in this new context.

During my first three months in this position, I've been actively participating in trainings, field days, and coalition meetings, while beginning to build a network of potential partners. These experiences have already equipped me with valuable insights that will help me carry out my responsibilities effectively and with purpose.

What excites me most about working with MCWMA is the scale and collaborative nature of the initiative—it spans 10 counties where there is a diverse range of agencies dedicated to supporting communities in growing their own food, whether for personal use or for sale. To optimize time and resources, the region will be split into three zones. With the guidance and support of NRCS, I hope to help growers across the Middle Cedar Watershed adopt or expand conservation practices that promote healthy soils and improve water quality."

We are so grateful to have Paola on board and can't wait to see the expertise she will continue to bring to the watershed!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE MIDDLE CEDAR WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY.



THIS REPORT COVERS THE PERIOD
JULY 1, 2024- JUNE 30, 2025

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