

# Minnesota State Bar Association: Environmental, Natural Resources and Energy Law

## MPCA Regulatory Update

**John Linc Stine**  
Commissioner

*Our Mission:  
Protect and improve the environment and enhance human health*



**GOAL:**  
Environment and  
Public Health  
Protection

*Assess, Evaluate  
Adjust*

*Science  
Research  
Public Input*

**Life Cycle of MPCA  
Environment &  
Health Protection  
Activities**

**Permits, Guidance  
Voluntary Action,  
Education**

**Set Standards to  
Achieve Outcomes**

*Implement*



# MPCA's Organization

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- ❑ We are 900+ employees
- ❑ Average age = 47 years
- ❑ 53% are males; 47% are females
- ❑ We are 70% scientists: Biologists, Chemists, Engineers, Hydrologists, Pollution Control Specialists, Soil Scientists
- ❑ We have offices in Detroit Lakes, Duluth, Mankato, Marshall, Rochester, St. Paul & Willmar



# Our strategic plan

The **vision** and **goals** that underlie the work of our agency | **2013–2017 five-year plan**



**Mission** — Our mission is to protect and improve the environment and enhance human health.

## Water

Vision: Minnesota's clean water supports aquatic ecosystems, healthy communities and a strong economy



### Goal

Lake, stream, wetland, and groundwater conditions are evaluated and communicated.

- Monitor conditions of surface and groundwater and analyze data in a timely manner.
- Develop monitoring reports and provide information for decision-making.
- Communicate monitoring and assessment results.

### Goal

Pollution from all Minnesota sources is reduced or prevented.

- Regulate point source discharges to protect uses and maintain consistency with major watershed strategies.
- Manage non-point source discharges to protect uses and maintain consistency with major watershed strategies.

### Goal

Surface and groundwater management system is streamlined and effective.

- Continue to build a synchronized approach to water management across state agencies.
- Support local government capacity and capability to implement their role in the water management system.

## Air

Vision: Minnesota's clean and clear air supports healthy communities and a strong economy



### Goal

Minnesota's outdoor air is healthy for all to breathe.

- Ensure ambient air is better than air quality standards and health benchmarks, particularly for pollutants that represent key air quality indicators.
- Ensure emissions from non-point and non-permitted point sources do not create unacceptable exposures.

### Goal

Minnesota reduces its contribution to regional, national and global air pollution.

- Reduce Minnesota's contribution to global mercury levels by meeting the TMDL air emission target.
- Reduce Minnesota's contribution to global GHG concentrations by meeting the GHG reduction goals in the Next Generation Energy Act of 2007.
- Reduce Minnesota's contribution to regional haze.

## Land/waste

Vision: Minnesota's land supports healthy ecosystems and sustainable land uses



### Goal

Solid waste is managed to conserve materials, resources and energy.

- Ensure waste is reduced, recycling and organic recovery is increased, resource recovery capacity is maintained, and landfilling is reduced.

### Goal

Land is managed to prevent, minimize, or reduce the release of contaminants.

- Regulate aboveground and underground storage tank systems and solid and hazardous waste management facilities to ensure all federal program commitments are met.

### Goal

Contaminated sites are managed to reduce risks to human health and the environment and allow continued use or reuse.

- Manage risks at remediation sites.
- Prepare sites for continued use or re-use.
- Address sites in a timely and efficient manner.
- Maintain agency preparedness procedures to ensure that environmental and health risks are mitigated in major incidents and disasters; acute risks are managed within hours or days.



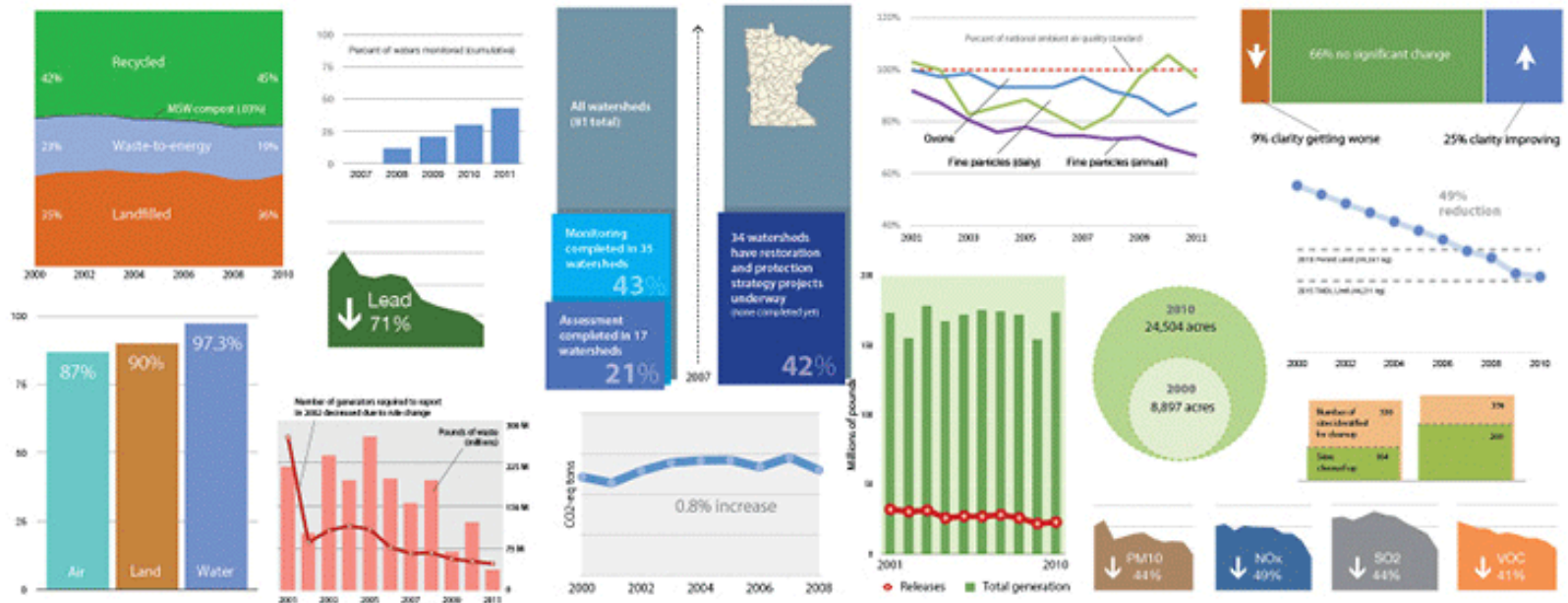
# Metrics

## Air quality

## Water quality

## Land and waste

## Operations



# 111(d) Delegation

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## □ EPA seeking comments from states

- Define the best system of emission reduction

## □ Interstate electricity market

- Flexibility, partnerships

## □ Challenge

- Workable/protective standard for carbon from coal and natural gas



# Environmental Justice

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## □ 2013 Legislature

- \$210K/year for “roving” monitors (in areas not well represented by MPCA’s current long-term monitoring network)
- PM2.5 and air toxics

## □ Builds upon recent environmental justice work

- Engage citizens on monitoring locations
- Share what and why we are monitoring
- Provide follow-up on monitoring results



# Executive Order: Tribal Governments

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## □ Wild rice sulfate standard

- Standard adopted 1973
- Further study underway
- Potential for change to standard based on updated science





# Nutrient Reduction Strategy

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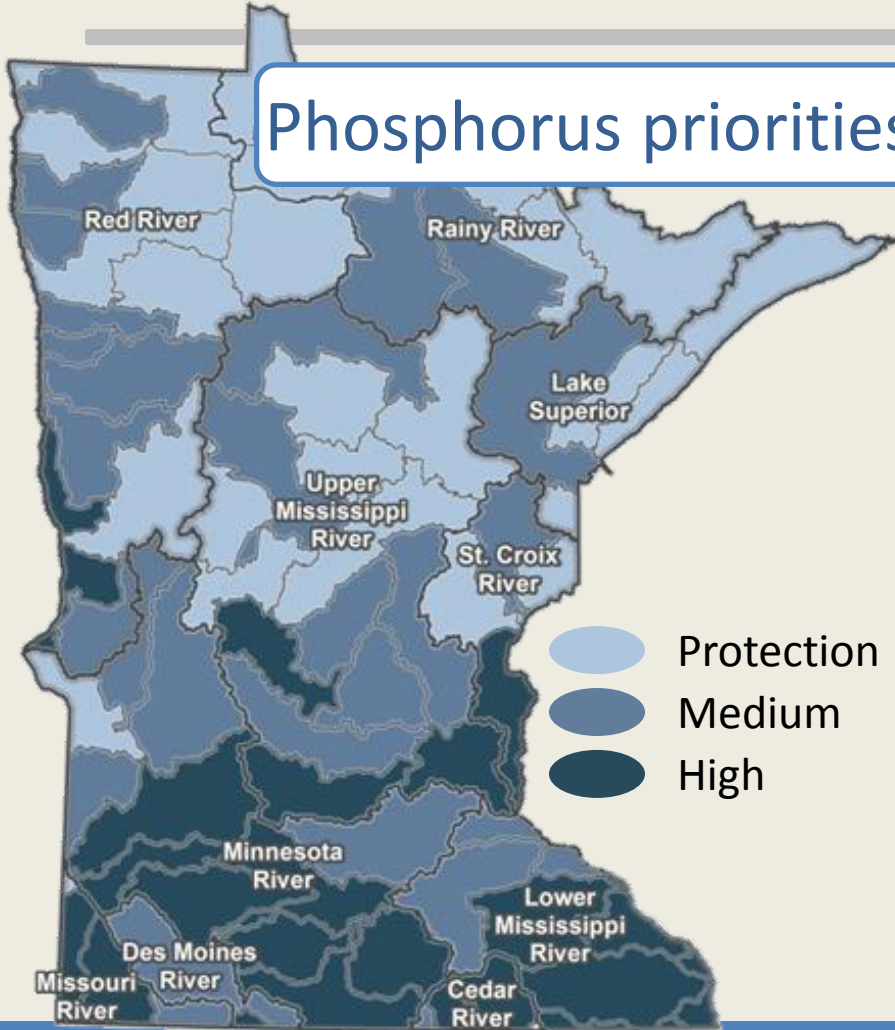


# Reduce nutrients to ensure healthy waters



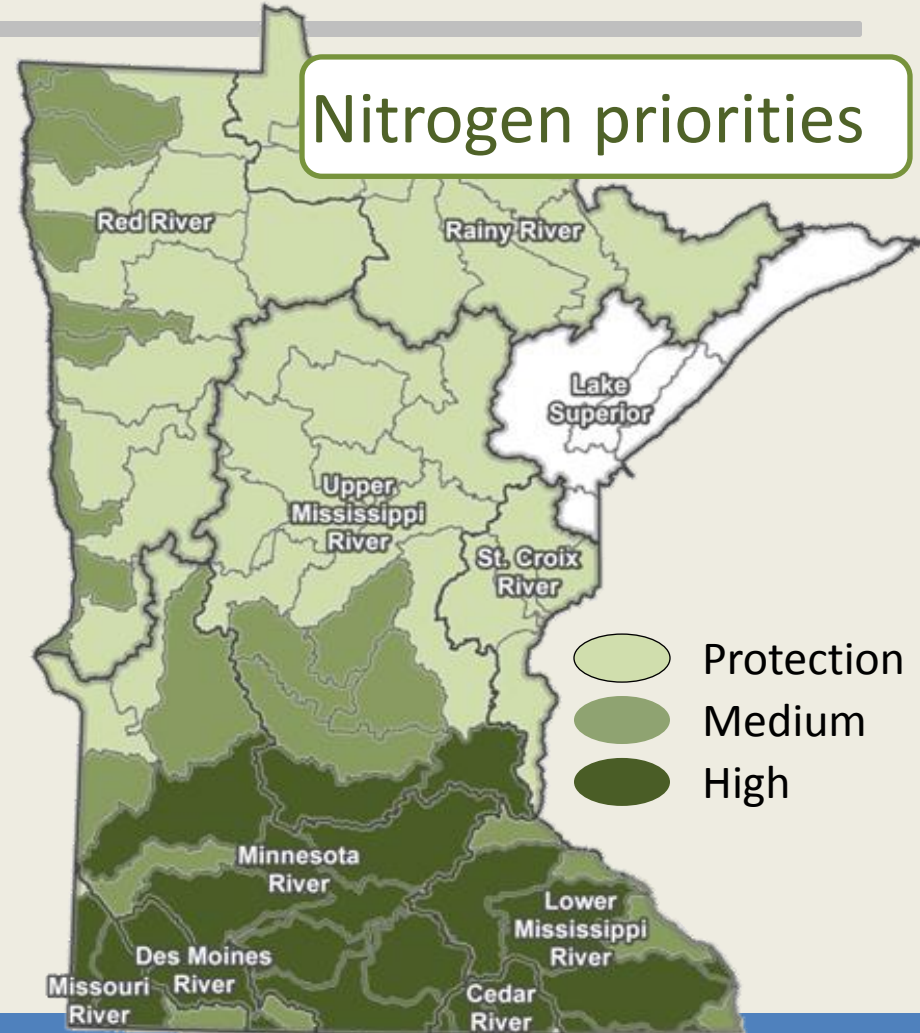
# Setting Water Quality Priorities

## Phosphorus priorities



- Protection
- Medium
- High

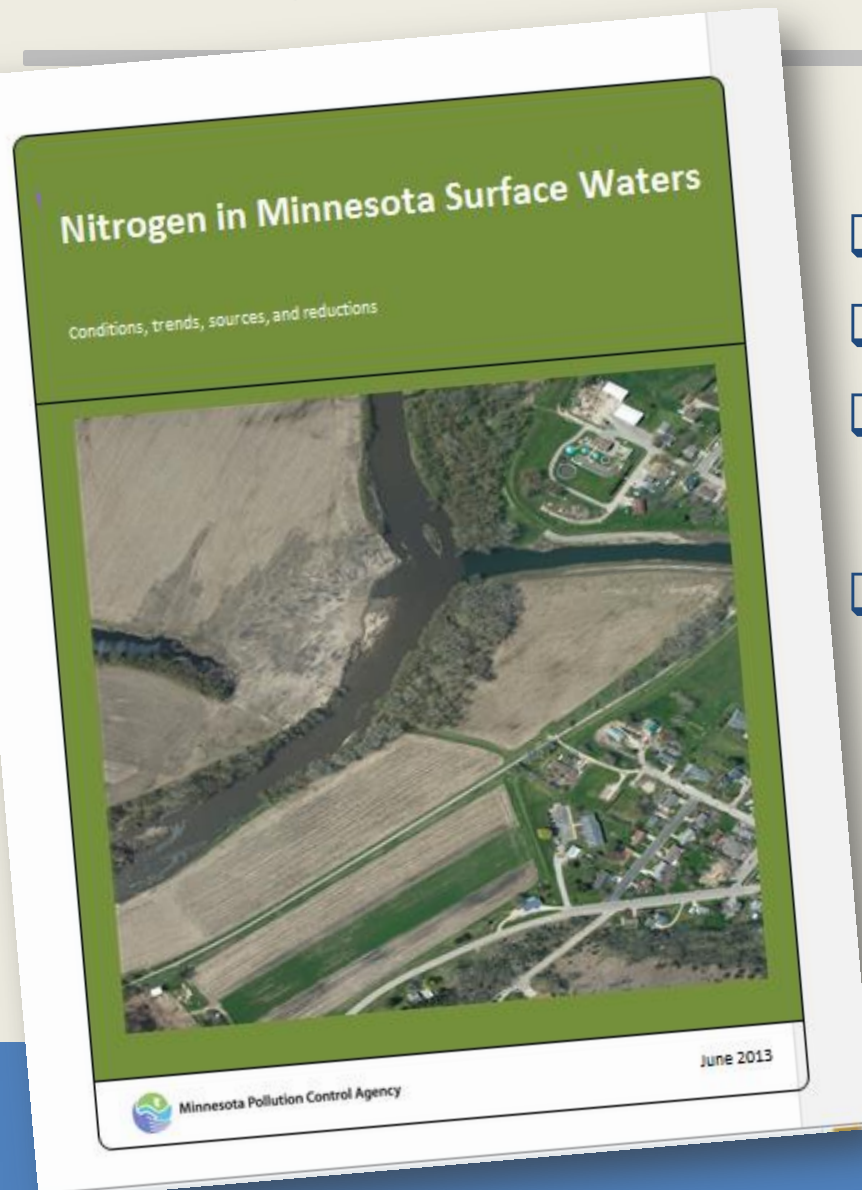
## Nitrogen priorities



- Protection
- Medium
- High



# Nitrogen Study (July 2013)



- ❑ 15 authors and coauthors
- ❑ 70+ others acknowledged
- ❑ 250+ maps, graphs, diagrams
- ❑ 20-pg Executive Summary



# Nitrogen Study drivers

## Minnesota waters



- ❑ Aquatic life toxicity
  - MPCA developing standards (2015)
- ❑ Drinking water in streams
  - 15 streams exceed cold water standard

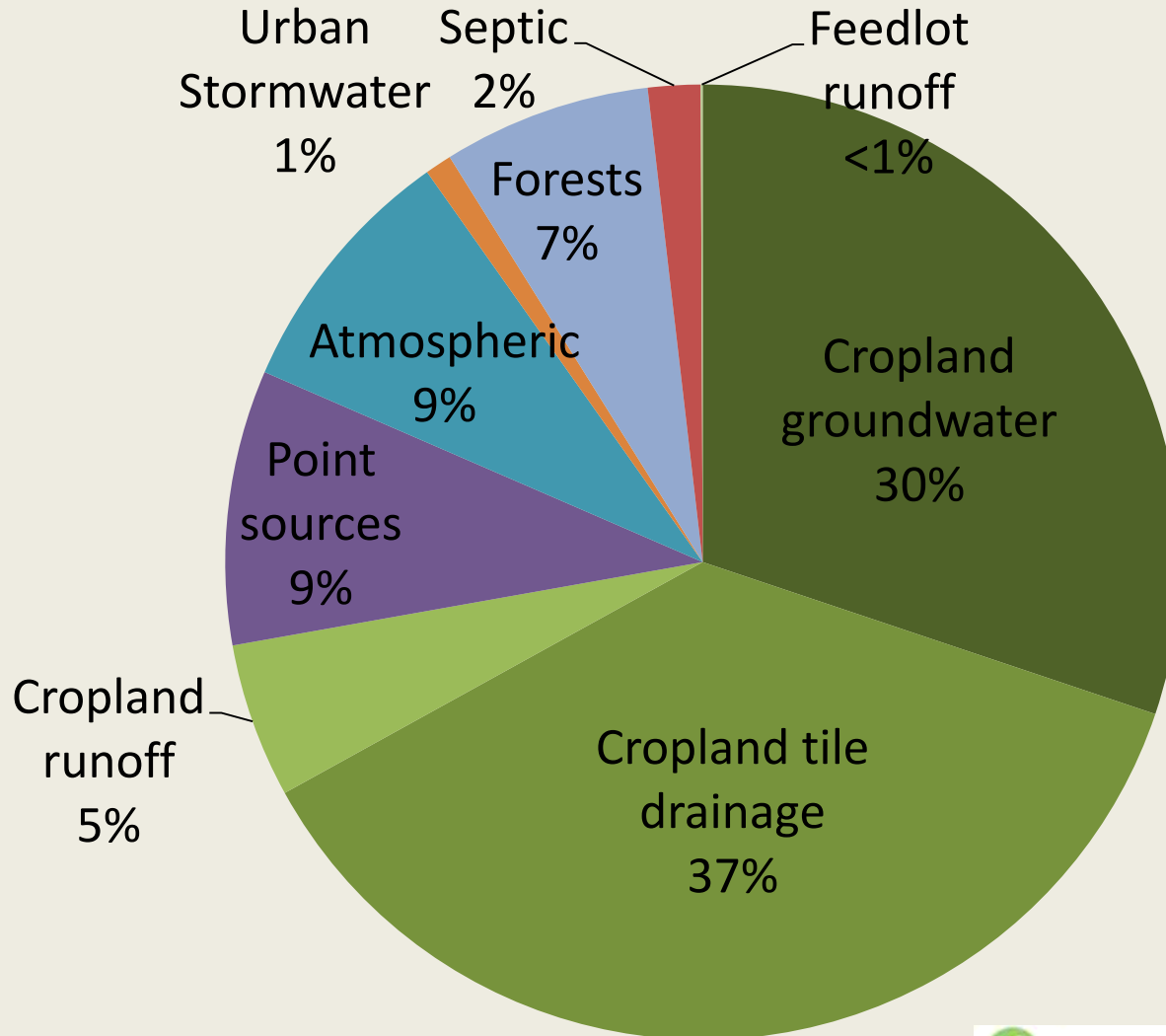
## Downstream waters



- ❑ Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia and Lake Winnipeg
  - Nutrient Reduction Strategy (2013)
- ❑ Iowa Rivers



# Nitrogen Sources in MN Surface Waters



# Implementing the Strategy: Milestones

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Use BMPs to address priority sources in key watersheds

Identify load reductions and scale of actions needed

Task programs to step up to support reductions

Create new programs, initiatives, and incentives

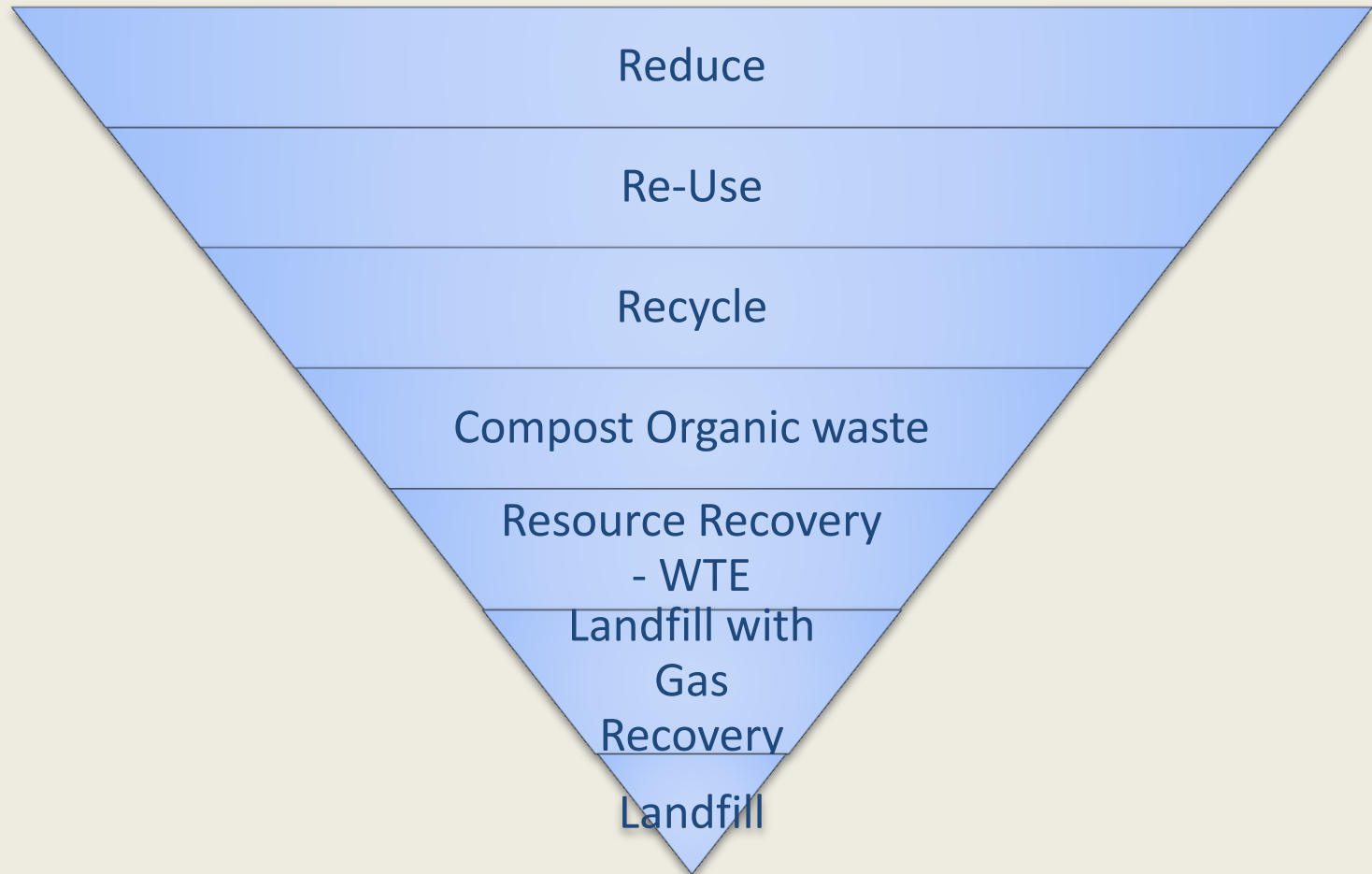
Leverage local watershed planning & implementation

Track progress through adaptive management



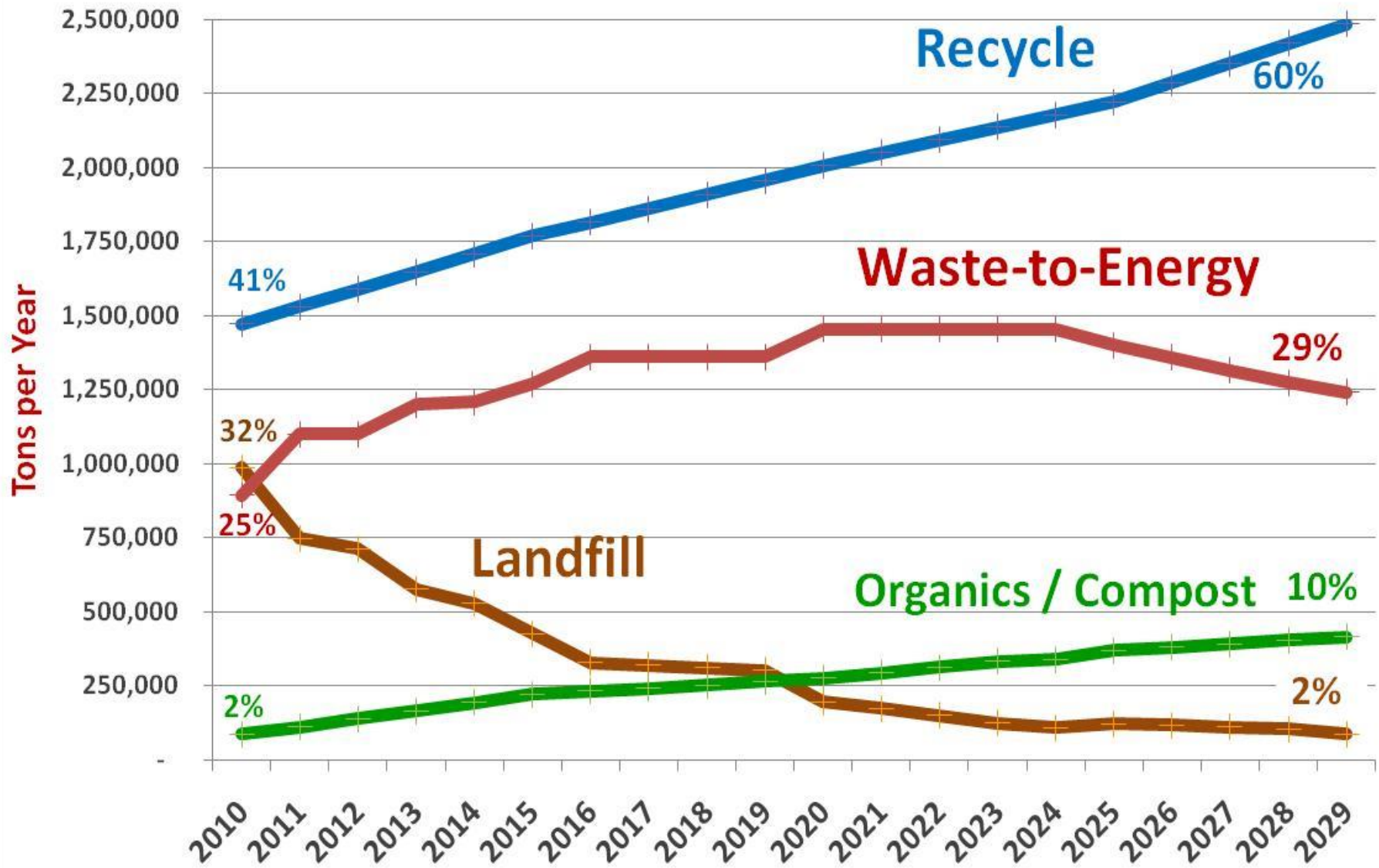
# Solid Waste Management

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# Policy Plan Objectives 2010 to 2030



# UNSession

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*The Unsession is a first-of-its-kind effort to make government better, faster, simpler and more efficient for people. We want to improve service, shorten wait times, eliminate old and outdated rules, and undo anything else that makes government nearly impossible for people to understand.*

[gov.ideas@state.mn.us](mailto:gov.ideas@state.mn.us)

*Minnesota.gov*  
navigate your state



# Closing thoughts

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- ❑ Significant contributions of pollutants to Minnesota's air, land and water originate outside the state
- ❑ However, it is incumbent upon us to do our part to reduce local contributions



# For your consideration...

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- ❑ To improve the environment and reduce public health risks/vulnerabilities:
  - Reduce waste generation; increase energy efficiency; reduce GHG emissions
  - Increase recycling/composting; reduce landfilling
  - Reduce mobile source air pollution
  - Prevent non-point water pollution
  - Improve soil health
  - Strengthen local ordinances and enforcement

