



FRESHWATER

STRATEGIC PLAN **2020–2025**

Updated April 2021

“Freshwater will include people and communities of diverse backgrounds in shaping water goals and interests, particularly people and communities that have not been meaningfully included in discussions of water and environmental issues and policies.”

—Dr. Valery Forbes, Freshwater Board of Directors

MISSION

Inspire and empower people to value and preserve our freshwater resources

VISION

There is clean and abundant water for all, now and in the future

Clean water is protected, impaired water is restored

Groundwater is conserved and protected

Water-related climate change impacts are minimized

VALUES

Freshwater's values holistically inform our work towards durable change, including our internal operations and the approaches we use to build towards impact through our programs. In alignment with our mission and values, we collaborate with and leverage the work of others.

- 💧 We value **equity and inclusion of diverse perspectives** in shaping our shared water future, and seek to rectify the historical and continued exclusion of under-resourced communities in the making of water policy and budget decisions.
- 💧 We value **safe and reliable water** for all Minnesotans and everyone downstream.
- 💧 We value **community-led solutions** that foster equitable and durable change.
- 💧 We value **science and evidence-based principles** as a basis for our advocacy and action.
- 💧 We value **convening collaboratively** and serving as a catalyst for constructive dialogue and change.
- 💧 We value **teamwork, transparency, integrity and shared leadership**.
- 💧 We value **sustainability in our operations** (reducing water use and energy consumption, reaching carbon-neutral impact and zero waste production).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Natural water systems (streams, wetlands, vegetation buffers, shorelines, etc.) and constructed systems for water treatment and control (quantity and quality) are resilient.

STRATEGY

Support research, analyze and report on water resource issues, trends, scientific studies and data.

- 💧 Improve understanding of critical water issues (such as mining discharges and unsustainable groundwater use) by collaborating with academic partners and other experts to research, analyze, and report findings and recommendations.
- 💧 Support use of climate change modeling, and evidence-based decisions to mitigate the impact of climate change on freshwater systems.
- 💧 Using existing research and programs, analyze water data to promote sustainable use of groundwater in ways that balance human and ecosystem demands — now and in the future.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Governmental systems for freshwater achieve durable solutions.

STRATEGY

Advocate for federal, state and local policies based on sound science.

- 💧 Cooperate with watershed-scale efforts to reduce non-point source pollutants (such as nitrogen, phosphorus, chloride, bacteria and sediment), with an emphasis on restoring natural water systems.
- 💧 Focus advocacy efforts on legislation, rules and plans that improve and protect water quality and quantity to ensure sustainability.
- 💧 Cooperate with others to advance public policies that support economic systems for land use, markets and water infrastructure that recognize water as an irreplaceable asset and reward its preservation.
- 💧 Advance water equity (safe, affordable, accessible water) for under-resourced communities, urban and rural.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Citizens and communities understand and support effective freshwater practices.

STRATEGY

Educate, engage and communicate with Minnesotans, tribal communities, local governments, and state and federal policy leaders.

- 💧 Increase social awareness and public engagement in protecting water through education.
- 💧 Identify innovative and best practices to reduce water pollution, and increase their use in the public and private sectors.
- 💧 Develop opportunities for Freshwater members to engage directly in Freshwater's work.
- 💧 Reduce participation barriers, increase equitable access to Freshwater programs and services for under-resourced communities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Freshwater is a thriving environmental nonprofit organization.

STRATEGY

Build sustainable organizational programs, financial resources and management systems by 2025.

- 💧 Assure Freshwater embraces equity, inclusion, diversity, and cultural competency, internally and externally.
- 💧 Continue building a culture of philanthropy to benefit Freshwater.
- 💧 Assure Freshwater's internal systems are efficient, transparent and accountable.
- 💧 Assure Freshwater's investment policy reflects sound financial principles and organizational values.