

# 2019 Outstanding Conservationist Craig Eldred, City of Waconia

The Carver SWCD has selected Craig Eldred, Public Services Division Director at the City of Waconia as the 2019 Outstanding Conservationist. Under Craig's direction, the Waconia Public Services Division has been a leader in the metro area for municipal stormwater management.

Recently the City partnered with the Carver County Water Management Organization (WMO), the Carver SWCD, and Bayview Elementary school to create a stormwater reuse system (pictured below) to irrigate the ball fields at the school. After a rainfall, stormwater is collected and treated, and later used to irrigate the fields lessening the need to rely on groundwater. This project is estimated to save 22,000 gallons of water, and \$200 per day in the summer.

Craig also had a vision for a second stormwater reuse project, which created a reuse utility networks that allows private landowners and businesses to also tap into the reuse system. Stormwater is again collected, stored, and reapplied to green spaces, reducing nutrient loading to downstream waterbodies, and lessens the demand on groundwater supplies.

The Public Services Division has also led a stormwater project around Fountain Park Pond located in downtown Waconia directly across from City Hall. This area services approximately 60-acres and drains directly into Lake Waconia. Contaminated sediment was removed from the pond, and the pond was expanded to provide additional flood storage. Best management practices installed around the pond, and in the park included pervious pavers in the adjacent parking lot, bioretention basins, an iron enhanced sand filter was added to the pond shelf, native vegetation was planted around the pond, and raingardens were installed.

***Congratulations to Craig Eldred and the City of Waconia!***

