

## Memorandum

**To:** Lower Minnesota River West 1W1P Policy Committee  
**From:** Greg Williams, Barr Engineering Co. and Jack Bushman, Sibley SWCD  
**Subject:** Proposed issue priority tiers for Plan development  
**Date:** May 26, 2021  
**Project:** 23721014  
**c:**

The Lower Minnesota River West Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Partnership (Partnership) is tasked with identifying and prioritizing resources and issues of concern as part of Plan development. Establishing priority issues is important to focus planning and implementation efforts on the problems that are of greatest concern to the Partners and Plan stakeholders.

### Prioritization of Issue Statements – Draft Issue Tiers

As part of this process, the Steering Team developed eight issue statements presented to the Policy Committee at its March 4, 2021 meeting. The Policy Committee, Advisory Group, and Steering Team completed a pairwise comparison to rank the issue statements by relative importance. The scores were averaged by each participant group as shown in Figure 1.

Following the issue statement prioritization exercise, the Steering Team met to discuss proposed issue priority tiers (i.e., levels). Steering Team deliberation considered the results of the prioritization exercise, responses to Plan notification letter, results of the public survey, and available data sources. The Steering Team recommended two possible issue hierarchies: one including two tiers, and one including three tiers.

|                                  | <b>Tier 1<br/>(more important)</b>   | <b>Tier 2</b>  | <b>Tier 3<br/>(less important)</b>  |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Option 1<br/>(Two Tier)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion &amp; sedimentation</li> <li>• Surface water quality</li> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• Altered hydrology</li> <li>• Soil health</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundwater quality</li> <li>• Groundwater sustainability</li> <li>• Natural Resources</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Option 2<br/>(Three Tier)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion &amp; sedimentation</li> <li>• Surface water quality</li> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• Altered hydrology</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil health</li> <li>• Groundwater quality</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundwater sustainability</li> <li>• Natural Resources</li> </ul> |

These options are presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3, respectively. In both options, the following issues are considered top priorities of similar significance:

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- Erosion & sedimentation
- Surface water quality
- Flooding
- Altered hydrology

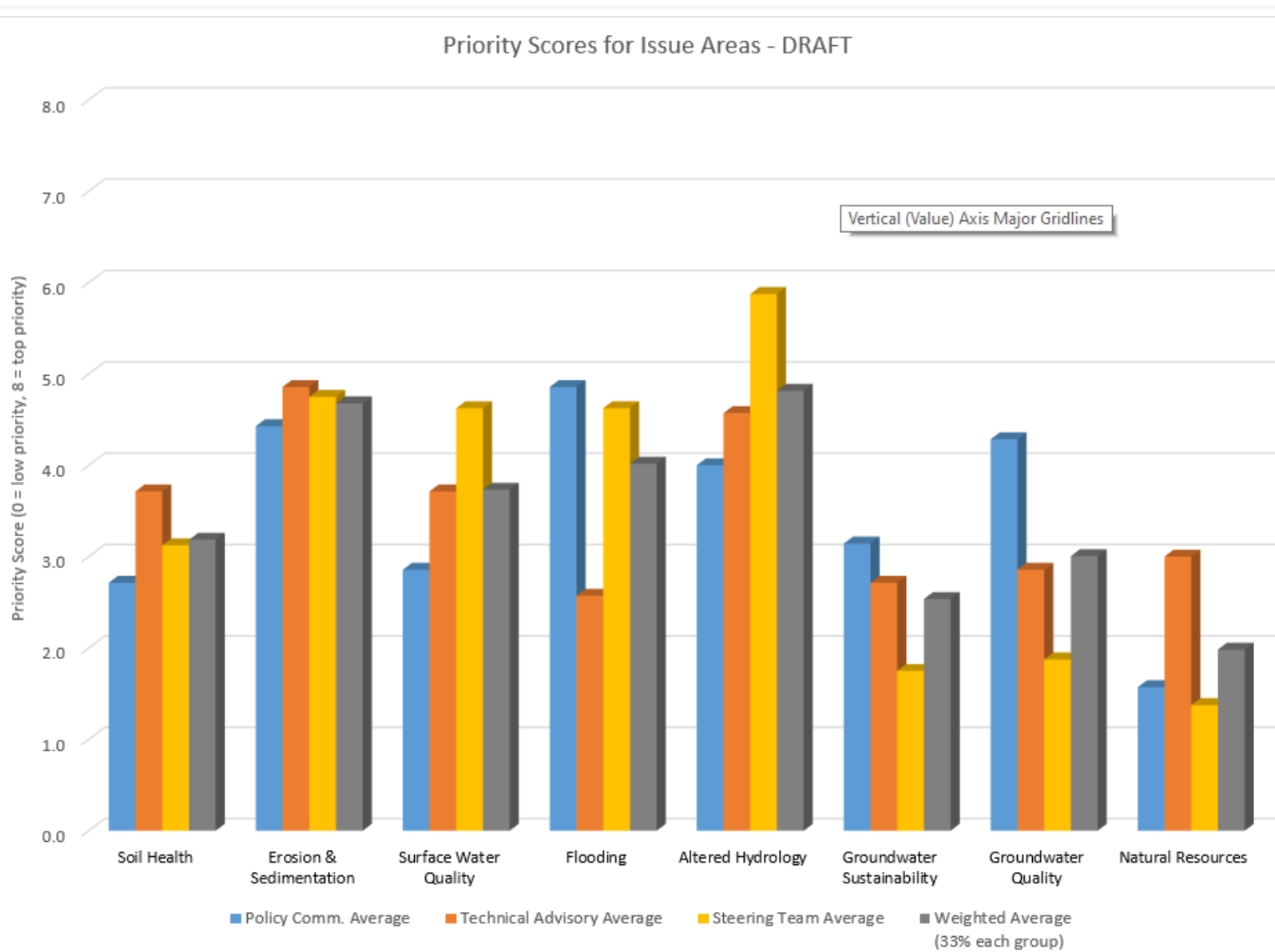
The relative importance of other issues varies between Options 1 and 2.

### **Significance for Planning and Implementation**

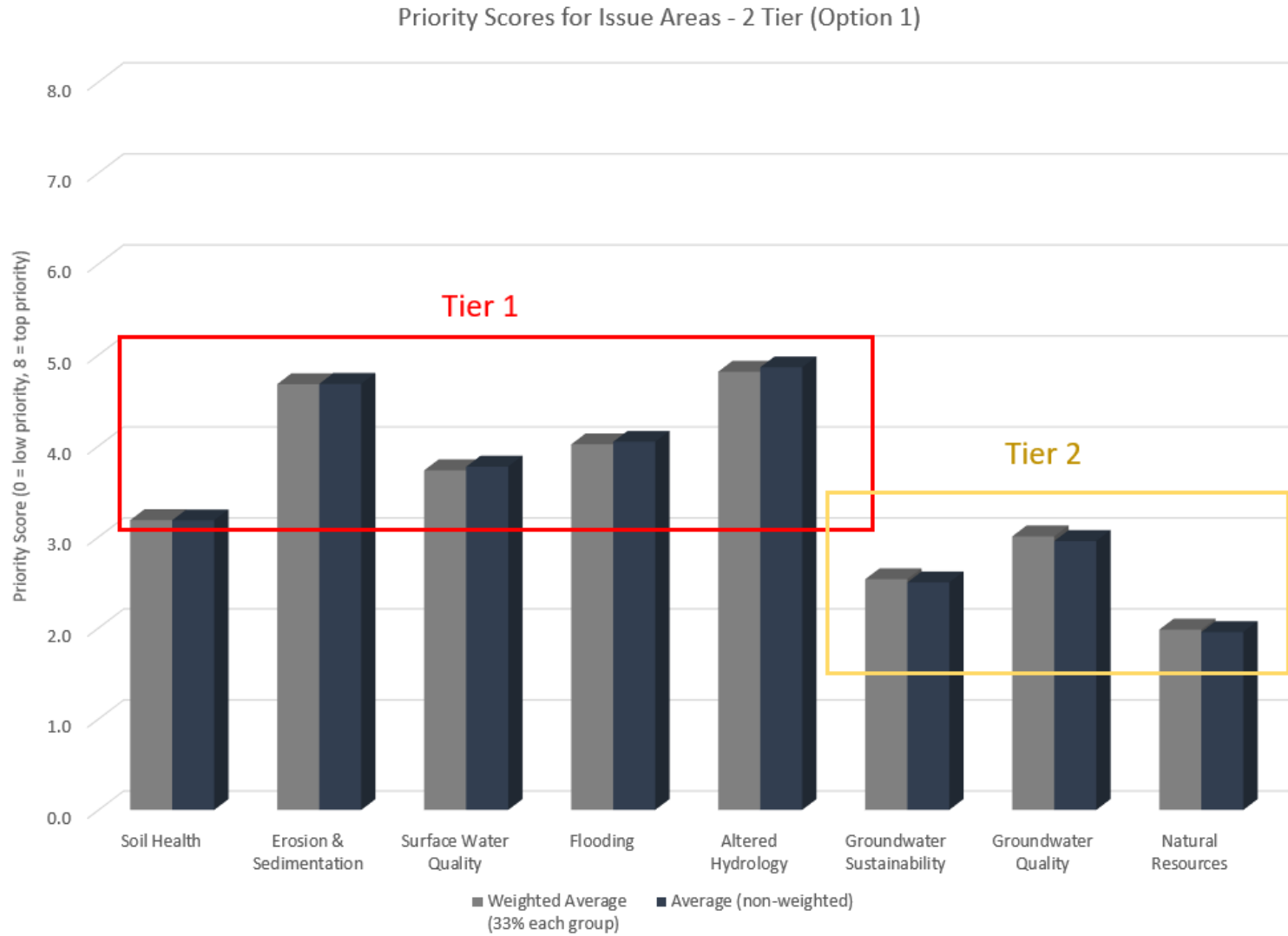
The relative significance of issue areas will have bearing on the remainder of the planning process and implementation. For example, greater emphasis may be placed on developing measurable goals for higher tier issues (note: Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources staff recommend including goals for all issue areas). In developing a targeted implementation schedule, activities to address higher priority issues may be included with higher frequency and/or greater funding. Note that although greater emphasis may be placed on higher priority issues, the Steering Team expects that activities to address all issue areas will be included to varying degrees within the targeted implementation schedule.

### **Requested Policy Committee Action**

The Steering Team requests that the Policy Committee consider the two recommended issue hierarchy options and select a single issue hierarchy to proceed with Plan development.



**Figure 1 Results of Issue Statement Prioritization Exercise**



**Figure 2 Proposed Issue Hierarchy Option 1 (Two Tier)**



**Figure 3 Proposed Issue Hierarchy Option 2 (Three Tier)**