



THE GREAT STORMWATER DEBATE

February 29, 2012

Speaker Biographies

Peter R. Willenbring, PE, Vice President, WSB & Associates

Pete is a principal and co-founder of WSB & Associates. Since starting the firm in 1995, he has developed and managed the Water Resources and Environmental Engineering Groups and selected day-to-day operations of the firm. From 1987 to 1995, he served as Manager of the Water Resources Department at OSM and Associates, and from 1980 to 1987 as a Project Manager and then Associate at E.A. Hickok and Associates. Prior to that time, he worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as an Environmental Engineer in the Surveillance and Analysis Division.

Pete is a registered professional engineer, with 30 years of experience providing consulting services to more than 100 city, county, state, and federal clients. He has expertise in most fields of civil engineering, but is widely recognized to have developed special expertise in the fields of water resource and environmental engineering, project management, design, and planning.

Over the course of his career, Pete has managed water resource related projects or regulatory programs for more than 50 cities or watershed districts within the Twin Cities metropolitan area. He has reviewed, analyzed, designed, or managed the construction of more than 1,000 projects that were built to manage storm runoff rates, volumes, or quality in lakes, streams, or drainage systems throughout the State of Minnesota.

Pete is a part-time instructor at the University of Minnesota, teaching a master's degree course entitled "Water Resource and Environmental Engineering" to graduate students enrolled in the U of M's Master of Infrastructure Engineering Program. He periodically provides expert witness testimony on matters related to storm sewer system design, flooding, and construction management and is a trained civil mediator. Pete received national recognition in 2010 being selected as the "Water Resource Manager of the Year" by the American Public Works Association.

James Wisker, Director of Planning, Projects and Land Conservation, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

James Wisker is the Director of Planning, Projects and Land Conservation at the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. James started at the District in 2005 after receiving a B.S. in Ecology, Evolution and Behavior from the University of Minnesota and is currently pursuing a M.S. in Water Resource Science from the University of Minnesota. During his time at the District he has served as a compliance inspector, and managed the inspection, regulatory and planning programs. In his current role at MCWD, James is responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of the MCWD's ten year capital improvement and land conservation initiatives as well as working to develop new water resource policies and programs to help the District meet its goals. With an organizational philosophy of innovation and partnership, many of these projects, policies and initiatives have been developed in close coordination with other local, regional and state agencies, in addition to the public and business communities.

In 2011, James concluded work on a four year process undertaking comprehensive revisions to the District's water resource regulations, including changes to the wetland protection and stormwater management rules. Most recently, James has worked to develop and implement a comprehensive vision for improvements to the Minnehaha Creek Corridor in partnership with the City of Hopkins and St. Louis Park. This work will protect open space, improve regional stormwater management, stabilize streambank and remeander Minnehaha Creek to filter runoff, control flooding and improve habitat while reducing crime and enhancing the redevelopment potential of this vital corridor.

James has served as an elected official on the Hennepin Soil and Water Conservation District, received the 2009 Minnesota Division Stewardship Award from the Isaak Walton League and was recently recognized by the State in 2011 as the Outstanding Watershed District Employee of the year.