

Observation-Well Network

Since 1944, DNR has managed a statewide network of water-level-observation wells (obwells). Most of these are dedicated observation or monitoring wells. Soil and Water Conservation Districts under contract with DNR measure most of the obwells monthly (typically March through November) and report the readings to DNR. Some of the obwells are active water-supply wells and are measured less frequently. DNR has also installed automated water-level-recording instruments in many of the obwells in the 11-county metropolitan area. Water level readings are available via the DNR web page. There are 54 actively measured obwells within the North & East Metro Working Boundary area (Figure). Thirteen of these wells have been constructed since 2009.

Some appropriation permit holders also maintain observation wells as required in permit conditions. The cities of Hugo and Woodbury monitor water levels in multiple observation wells as permit conditions, and municipal water suppliers are generally required to monitor water levels in their water-supply wells. The Valley Branch Watershed District measures water levels in 15 observation wells in January, June, and December. Historical data from inactive or sealed obwells and data from obwells in areas outside the GWMA boundary also provide useful information.

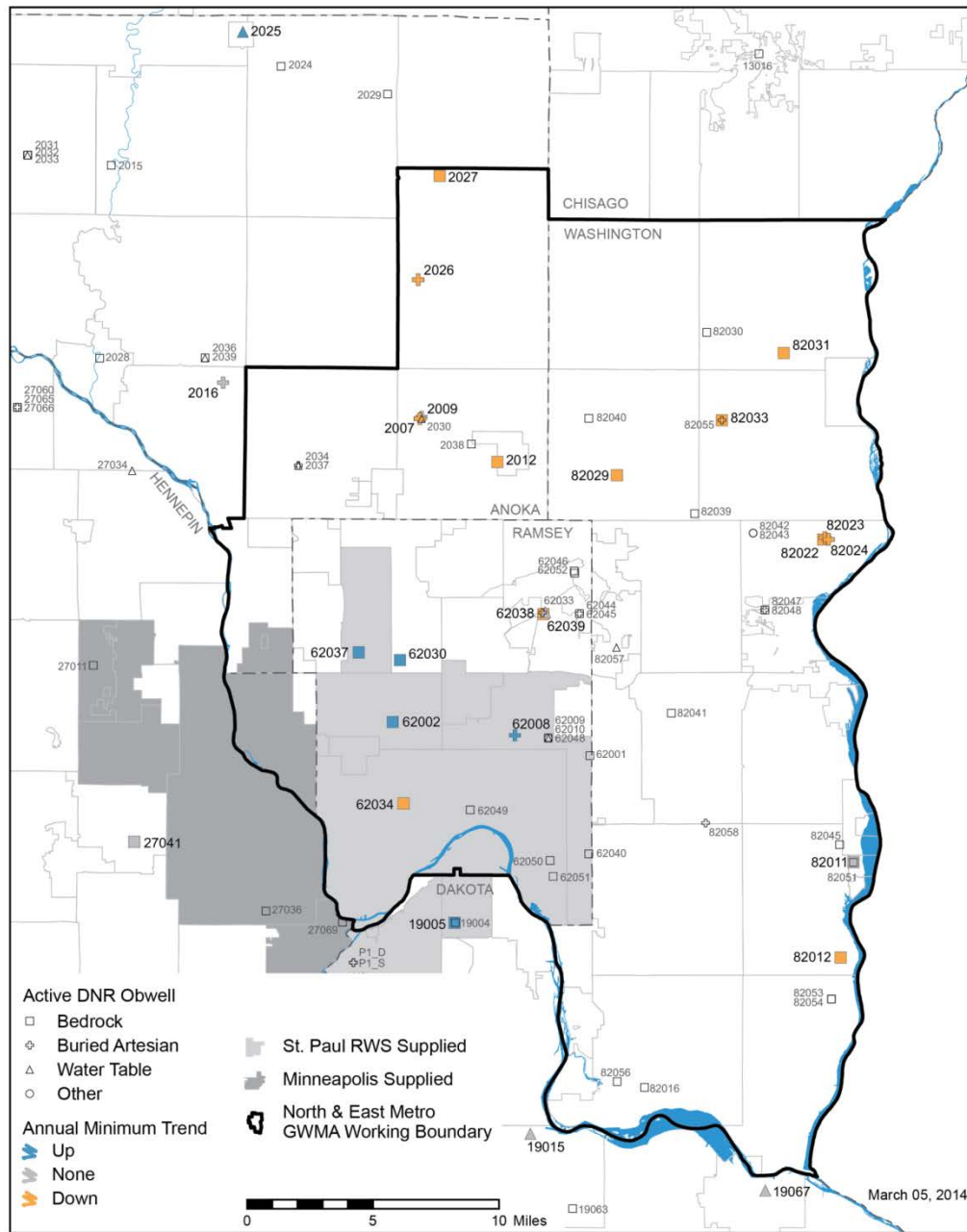


Figure: Active obwells in the DNR network and trends in annual water-level minima (1993 – 2012)