

# *Processing Implementation Plan*

December 2001

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Recommended by the Processing-Landfilling Committee

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# *Processing Implementation Plan*

## *2001*

### *I. Overview*

#### *A. History:*

In 1985, the Minnesota Legislature adopted a law requiring that all mixed municipal solid waste ("MSW") generated in the seven metropolitan counties that is not recycled must be processed at a resource recovery facility. In response, four metropolitan counties developed and financed three resource recovery facilities: HERC, NRG-Newport and NRG-Elk River. Ramsey and Washington Counties' contract with NRG-Newport continues until 2007. Anoka and Hennepin Counties' contract with NRG-Elk River continues until 2009 and Hennepin County's contract with HERC continues until 2018.

The Regional Solid Waste Master Plan, adopted on December 16, 1998 by the Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board ("SWMCB") and approved by the OEA in 1999, established a principal MSW processing outcome and three intermediate processing outcomes. The principal MSW processing outcome is that, by 2017, the region will process 65% of MSW that has not been reduced or recycled. This Processing Implementation Plan ("Plan") addresses the intermediate outcomes:

- (1) by 2000, complete a processing implementation plan;
- (2) through 2003, use 100% of the existing processing capacity; and
- (3) by 2003, increase processing capacity for the region by 158,500 additional tons per year.

In June 2001, a Citizens Jury met in the Twin Cities to hear testimony on current waste management practices as well as several alternatives for addressing solid waste issues, and developed recommendations for managing the region's solid waste. The Citizen Jury findings reaffirmed the waste management hierarchy and the role of processing in that hierarchy through the useful life of the existing facilities.

This Plan fulfills the first intermediate outcome by examining current and projected processing in the six-county SWMCB region and by recommending actions that the individual Counties and the SWMCB should take to meet the remaining intermediate processing outcomes. Although SWMCB continues to support the principal MSW processing outcome of processing 65% of MSW in 2017, until additional guidance is received from the Minnesota Legislature following the work of the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee, the Plan will not address this outcome.

#### *B. 2000 Intermediate Outcome*

The first intermediate processing outcome was to complete this Plan by 2000. The Processing Committee worked to complete the Plan on schedule; however, in late 2000 MSW deliveries declined to processing facilities and additional work on the Plan was required. Due to continued uncertainties regarding MSW deliveries, the Plan is limited to addressing the two remaining intermediate MSW processing outcomes.

#### *C. 2003 Intermediate Outcomes:*

The remainder of the Plan is focused on the other two intermediate outcomes:

- Through 2003, 100% of current metropolitan MSW processing capacity will continue to be fully utilized to process MSW not reduced or recycled. (Currently calculated at 1,153,100 tons.)
- By 2003, metropolitan MSW processing capacity will increase by 158,500 tons up to a total annual MSW processing capacity of 1,312,500 tons for metropolitan area waste.

***I. Through 2003, 100% of current metropolitan MSW processing capacity will continue to be fully utilized to process MSW not reduced or recycled.***

***A. Current Processing Capacity***

To determine whether or not 100% of the current metropolitan MSW processing capacity is being utilized annually, the first step was to identify available permitted capacity. There is a total permitted capacity of 1,153,100 tons with three facilities serving the metropolitan area. HERC, at 365,000 tons per year, processes the MSW by combusting on site. NRG Newport, at 400,000 tons per year<sup>2</sup>, and NRG Elk River, at 388,100 tons per year (excluding waste from non-metro counties) process the MSW into refuse derived fuel ("RDF"). The RDF is then transported for combustion at the Great River Facility in Elk River and Xcel Energy's Red Wing and Wilmarth facilities. The Counties have the responsibility to deliver the MSW.

Once MSW is delivered, whether or not the Facility processes it may vary based on a variety of considerations. HERC's capacity is consistently at its permit limit of 365,000 annually. The combustion capacity at Great River Energy and the Xcel Energy facilities fluctuated initially largely due to technical and maintenance issues, but more recently due to shortfalls in MSW deliveries. Notwithstanding these delivery shortfalls, the integrated solid waste management system for the region is often called "combustion limited". When the combustors are not operating at full capacity, the RDF throughput cannot be maximized at NRG's RDF processing facilities and less MSW is processed into RDF creating more residue for landfilling. Lack of combustion capacity can ultimately limit MSW deliveries to the facilities due to tipping floor constraints. Therefore, to meet the first intermediate goal, the Counties must focus on whether or not 1,154,000 tons of MSW is being delivered to the three facilities.

***B. Waste Deliveries and Processing in 2000***

***1. NRG Newport 2000:***

In 2000, Ramsey and Washington Counties offered haulers a choice of contracts. A hauler could deliver all of the waste it collects in Ramsey and Washington Counties or could contract to deliver a portion of the waste collected. The contracts had a minimum "floor" and a maximum "ceiling" to assure an accurate number for budgeting purposes.

For comparison purposes, the following indicates the amounts delivered in 1998, 1999 and 2000.

Tons delivered by Ramsey and Washington Counties:

1998: 412,378

1999: 393,228

2000: 395,459

1. **NRG Elk River 2000:**

MSW deliveries were down in the beginning of the year compared to previous years. When experiencing waste supply shortages, Hennepin County assures sufficient tonnage to meet HERC's capacity prior to Elk River. Although by year-end it was hoped that some of this shortfall would be made up, shortfalls were experienced in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. These were due to a combination of diversions of MSW by NRG during November, lower than expected tonnage delivered by haulers into the Hennepin system during December, and a series of combustion problems at the combustor, GRE, limiting its combustion capacity for the year to 284,000. Hennepin County landfilled approximately 6,200 tons of MSW in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter due to diversions and the inability of NRG to accept the MSW for processing into Refuse Derived Fuel.

3. **HERC in 2000:**

HERC received 372,151 tons and processed its permit limit of 365,000 tons.

4. **Summary for Processing 100% through 2000:**

For comparison purposes, the following charts provide the total delivered to the three processing facilities in 1997, 1998, 1999 as well as 2000. In 1997, a minor shortfall of 2,564 tons to NSP Newport was experienced. In 1999, there was a 1385-ton shortfall at NSP Elk River and in 2000, that processing shortfall grew to 31,767 tons.

1997 MSW Processing Data				
<i>Delivered to:</i>				
<i>From:</i>	NRG- Newport	NRG- Elk River	HERC	Total
Anoka		149,511		149,511
Carver		646	2,728	3,374
Dakota	15,703	763	137	16,603
Hennepin		238,392	366,369	604,761
Ramsey	278,656	-	-	278,656
Washington	103,077	-	-	103,077
<b>Total Deliveries</b>	397,436	389,312	369,234	1,155,982
Metropolitan Facility Capacity	400,000	388,100	365,000	1,153,100
1. Data is from the 1997 Certification Reports				
2. Hennepin's report was used for HERC deliveries				

## 1998 MSW Processing Data

**Delivered To:**

<b>From:</b>	NRG- Newport	NRG- Elk River	HERC	Total
Anoka	-	152,358	-	152,358
Carver	-	5,028	886	5,914
Dakota	13,290	137	763	14,190
Hennepin	25	228,765	363,269	592,059
Ramsey	318,296	11	-	318,307
Washington	95,075	-	-	95,075
<b>Total Deliveries</b>	426,686	386,299	364,918	1,177,903
Metropolitan Facility Capacity	400,000	388,100	365,000	1,153,100

1. Data is from the 1998 Certification Reports

## 1999 MSW Processing Data

**Delivered To:**

<b>FROM:</b>	NRG- Newport	NRG- Elk River	HERC	Total
Anoka	-	154,531	-	154,531
Carver	-	5,241	802	6,043
Dakota	9,526	1,427	219	11,172

Hennepin	-	225,516	367,651	593,167
Ramsey	302,549	-	-	302,549
Washington	90,359	-	-	90,359
<b>Total Deliveries</b>	402,434	386,715	368,672	1,157,821
Metropolitan Facility Capacity	400,000	388,100	365,000	1,153,100
<i>1. Data is from the 1999 Certification Reports</i>				

2000 MSW Processing Data				
Delivered To:				
FROM:	NRG- Newport	NRG- Elk River	HERC	Total
Anoka		157,348	-	157,348
Carver		5,519	2,595	8,114
Dakota	7,446	1,414	665	9,525
Hennepin		192,014	368,891	560,905
Ramsey	304,503			304,503
Washington	90,956	38		90,994
<b>Total Deliveries</b>	402,905	356,333	372,151	1,131,389
Metropolitan Facility Capacity	400,000	388,100	365,000	1,153,100
<i>1. Data is from the 2000 Certification Reports</i>				

### ***C. Waste Deliveries and Processing in 2001:***

#### ***1. NRG Newport 2001:***

Ramsey and Washington Counties negotiated waste delivery agreements for 2001 in late 2000. As a result of those negotiations, the Counties anticipated a sharp decline in deliveries, as two

large haulers decided to deliver a small portion, rather than all of their waste, to the facility. This was projected to result in 50,000 fewer tons being delivered in 2001 than in 2000.

In addition, in late December 2000 and for a few months in early 2001, another hauler began diverting almost all of its waste from Newport. This action spurred the Counties to reexamine a number of solid waste policy issues and both County Boards have taken steps to redesign parts of the solid waste system. Currently 345,000-367,000 tons of MSW are estimated for delivery in 2001.

### **2. NRG Elk River 2001:**

In the first quarter of 2001, there was a shortfall in MSW deliveries. Although sufficient MSW quantities returned to the facility in April, the overall capacity available in 2001 at NRG Elk River has been reduced because GRE, for technical reasons, is more "combustion limited" than usual. The availability of Unit #3 (50% of GRE's capacity) has been limited in 2001 primarily due to boiler tube leaks which have resulted from tube erosion. The tube leaks are being studied by GRE but the 2001 budget has been adjusted from 305,000 to 275,000. During this same time frame, NRG has not increased deliveries to Xcel Energy Wilmarth facility but has reduced production through diversions, lower yields resulting in higher residue amounts, and transferring MSW from the facility floor to a landfill.

### **3. HERC 2001:**

It is anticipated that HERC will continue to process at its permit limit of 365,000 in 2001.

### **4. Summary for Processing 100% through 2001:**

Projected shortfalls in processing for 2001 are 33,000-55,000 at NRG Newport; and 30,000 at NRG Elk River. For NRG Newport, the shortfall is due to delivery shortfalls. For Elk River, a large portion of the shortfall is due to technical problems at GRE. There are no projected shortfalls for HERC in 2001.

## **D. Prospects for Meeting 100% of Current Processing Capacity in 2002**

### **1. NRG Newport 2002:**

NRG, Ramsey and Washington Counties amended their service agreements to allow NRG to market unused facility capacity. The counties are currently negotiating waste delivery contracts for 2002.

### **2. NRG Elk River 2002:**

Hennepin County anticipates delivering 215,000 tons to NRG Elk River which is approximately 30,000 below its maximum annual contract capacity not including allowable diversions of 11,000 tons. Anoka County has contracted with haulers for four years for the County's weekly contract capacity of 3,000 tons. GRE has set its combustion capacity at its Elk River Station at 295,000 RDF tons in 2002. This budget is slightly reduced from previous years due to a scheduled turbine overhaul on one of the boilers, but greater than the availability experienced at the facility in 2000 and 2001.

### **3. HERC 2002:**

It is anticipated the HERC will operate at full capacity of 365,000.

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## **E. Maximizing Deliveries. Steps Counties Have Taken:**

Since many interstate waste designation ordinances were found unconstitutional by various courts pursuant to the Commerce Clause in the early 1990s, the four SWMCB Counties under "put or pay"

contracts for waste processing have subsidized the tipping fees for MSW deliveries to the processing facilities. The subsidy approach is consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's Carbone decision. These subsidies allow haulers to participate in the processing system by minimizing the negative financial impact of this more expensive waste management option. There have also been substantial changes in the hauling industry over the past several years. MSW collection is extremely competitive. The Counties have been hesitant to reduce the level of subsidies, which would increase the facility tipping fees. Interviews in 2000 with haulers for Ramsey and Washington Counties indicated that a tipping fee increase would force several haulers to increase prices to customers or move waste to out of state landfills. Dakota and Carver Counties have also subsidized haulers under contract to deliver waste to processing facilities. Counties have continuing concerns with the increasing level of subsidies and use of public funds required.

<b>Processing Subsidies (Service Fees)</b>				
County	1999 Subsidy	2000 Subsidy	Budgeted 2001 Subsidy	Estimated 2002 Subsidy
Anoka	\$3,626,616	\$4,000,000	\$4,500,000	\$5,000,000
Carver	\$171,130	\$175,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Dakota	\$63,880	\$63,688	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000
Hennepin	\$11,024,302	\$11,300,000	\$13,000,000	\$15,300,000
Ramsey	\$6,649,775	\$8,000,000	\$9,200,000	\$11,460,000
Washington	\$2,459,506	\$3,000,000	\$3,200,000	\$4,240,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,995,209</b>	<b>\$26,475,000</b>	<b>\$31,450,000</b>	<b>\$37,550,250</b>

Within the last few years, the Counties have attempted to set a competitive tipping fee for haulers that contract to deliver MSW to Elk River, Newport and HERC. However, the Counties are concerned that increasing subsidies creates a disincentive to reduce and recycle. The former SKB composting facility in Dakota County, now owned by NRG Processing Solutions, LLC, ("NRG PS") has privately set its tipping fee.

<b>Beginning 2001 County Established Tipping Fees, Processing Fees and Costs</b>

Facility	Contracted/Adjusted Hauler Tip Fees	Tip Fee without Contract	Estimated Average Per Ton Processing Cost	Estimated Average Per Ton Subsidy
Elk River				
Anoka MSW	\$38.75	\$68	\$68	\$29.25
Newport				
Ramsey MSW	\$38	\$67	\$68	\$30
Washington MSW	\$38	\$67	\$68	\$30
Dakota MSW	\$55	\$67	\$68	\$12
Hennepin System				
Hennepin MSW	\$39	\$60	\$60	\$21
Dakota MSW	\$52	\$64	\$60	\$12
Carver MSW	\$45	\$64	\$61	\$16
NRG PS Facility	Varies	\$45	\$55	\$12
Dakota				
Carver				

***F. The State's Contribution; Processing Payment:***

The 2001 Legislature enacted a \$5 per ton processing payment to reduce tipping fees. The tipping fees at the various facilities are a function of subsidies, capital, operations and maintenance expenses. The processing payment program has been funded for the 2001-2002 biennium and is to continue for the next biennium, sunsetting in 2004. Each County is intending to utilize the state processing payment as follows:

- ***Ramsey and Washington Counties:*** Effective October 1, 2001, the Counties reduced the tipping fee at the Facility from \$38.00/ton to \$34.00/per ton using the state processing payment.
- ***Anoka County:*** Effective for waste delivered after July 1, 2001 for haulers with contracts, Anoka County is rebating the payment directly to the hauler upon receipt by the County.
- ***Hennepin County:*** Hennepin County intends to pass the processing payment back to the haulers as a rebate on their disposal bill.
- ***Dakota County:*** The County currently provides a \$12/ton processing incentive to licensed Dakota County haulers who bring Dakota County generated waste to a processing facility (NRG PS, HERC, and Newport NRG). The incentive was implemented in 1996 and through additional Board actions is in effect until 2003. The additional \$5/ton offered by the State of Minnesota will be applied to the \$12/ton making the total payment \$17/ton, contingent upon State fund availability. Dakota County haulers must enter into an agreement with and report to the County to receive both payments.
- ***Carver County:*** It is proposed to increase hauler subsidy to \$20/ton for any waste delivered into the regional system for processing.

***G. Conclusion:***

Even with increasing amounts of MSW available and increasing subsidies from the County and State governments, some of the Counties continue to experience waste shortfalls. Increases in waste

deliveries are unlikely so long as haulers that own landfills and transfer stations continue to deliver the MSW they collect to their own landfills, despite state law and the region's goal of fully utilizing existing MSW processing capacity.

**H. County Recommendations for Utilizing 100% of Current Capacity:**

It is recommended that each of the six SWMCB Counties keep in mind a regional approach to maximize available capacity and minimize costs and adopt the following County specific strategies to meet the first intermediate goal of processing 1,153,100 tons per year.

**Anoka:**

- Work with NRG and GRE to assure that Wilmarth's combustion capacity is being fully utilized.
- Continue to work closely with haulers and contract for the MSW deliveries.
- Maintain subsidy to reduce cost to haulers of delivering MSW to NRG Elk River.
- Work with public entities and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to achieve and maintain compliance by public entities with the Policy Plan, Master Plan and the Public Entities Statutes (Minn. Stats. §§ 115A.46, subd. 5 and 115A.471), if needed.

**Ramsey:**

- Continue to work closely with haulers and contract for the MSW deliveries.
- Use appropriate tools, such as a reduced tipping fee, to assure delivery of waste to Newport.
- Work with public entities and the MPCA to achieve and maintain compliance by public entities with the Policy Plan, Master Plan and the Public Entities Statutes.
- Work with NRG to assure that Wilmarth's combustion capacity is being fully utilized.

**Washington:**

- Continue to work closely with haulers and contract for MSW deliveries.
- Use appropriate tools, such as a reduced tipping fee, to assure delivery of waste to Newport.
- Work with public entities and the MPCA to achieve and maintain compliance by public entities with the Policy Plan, Master Plan and the Public Entities Statutes.
- Work with NRG to assure that Wilmarth's combustion capacity is being fully utilized.

**Dakota:**

- Continue to work closely with haulers and contract for MSW deliveries.
- Continue to mandate (as a condition of recycling funding) that all public entity buildings comply with the Public Entities Statutes.
- Consider level of County subsidy to reduce cost to haulers of delivering MSW to NRG Newport and NRG PS for processing.
- Negotiate with NRG processing capacity for County haulers at both NRG Newport and NRG PS.

**Carver:**

- Continue to work closely with haulers and contract for the MSW deliveries.

- Maintain levels of processing by continuing to use Freeway Transfer Station.
- Consider level of subsidy to reduce cost to haulers of delivering MSW to Hennepin County System.
- Negotiate with NRG processing capacity for County haulers
- Work with public entities and the MPCA to achieve and maintain compliance by public entities with the Policy Plan, Master Plan and the Public Entities Statutes.

**Hennepin:**

- Continue to work closely with haulers and contract for the MSW deliveries.
- Maintain subsidy to reduce cost to haulers of delivering MSW to the Hennepin County system.
- Work with public entities and the MPCA to achieve and maintain compliance by public entities with the Policy Plan, Master Plan and the Public Entities Statutes.
- Work with NRG and GRE to assure that Wilmarth's combustion capacity is being fully utilized.

**I. SWMCB: Recommended Next Steps for Utilizing 100% of Current Capacity:**

It is recommended that the SWMCB take the following steps

- Work with the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee to assure new state policies related to solid waste management address the concerns outlined in this plan.
- Monitor NRG PS's progress with organics processing as well as maximizing RDF processing.
- Continue to work closely with the State of Minnesota to obtain greater State assistance in maximizing existing processing capacity in the region.
- Evaluate changes in the waste management industry and economic factors influencing the industry.
- Work closely with the Metropolitan Council to ensure regional solid waste policies are reflected during the Council's review of its Regional Blueprint.

***I. By 2003, metropolitan MSW processing capacity will increase by 158,500 tons.***

**A. Overview:**

By 2003, the end of a five year planning period, there will be significantly more waste available for processing than there is capacity at the three facilities. When developing the Plan, the SWMCB determined that although the region hoped to maintain a processing level of 65% for all waste not recycled or reused, it was unlikely that such a goal could be achieved in 2003. Instead, the Plan sets an additional processing goal in the amount of 158,500 tons by 2003. To address increasing processing capacity by 158,500 tons, a technical study was completed to evaluate whether or not changes could be made at existing waste-to-energy facilities to meet this 2003 goal. A second technical study also was completed to evaluate source separated composting options to meet the increased capacity goal. In addition, Hennepin County continued to work on eliminating the permit cap placed on processing at HERC.

**B. Technical Evaluation of Waste-to-Energy Facilities:**

A "Regional System Technical Evaluation," dated March 13, 2000, was prepared by The Barlow Group. Consistent with past findings, the study determined the existing waste processing system is primarily constrained by limited combustion capacity. The Barlow Group suggested improvements to the existing RDF combustors that could result in 100,000 tons of additional MSW processing. This is possible without adding an additional processing line at the Newport Facility.

The Barlow Group also confirmed that in the event HERC's permit cap is lifted, an additional 42,000 tons of MSW can be processed annually. During the 2000 legislative session, initial steps

were taken by Hennepin County to lift the permit cap on HERC. For purposes of the intermediate goal, this Plan will assume that additional 42,000 tons of annual capacity will become available by 2003.

Regarding technical improvements to the RDF facilities, it is the opinion of The Barlow Group that all such technical improvements are in the best interests of NRG, Great River Energy and NSP.

**C. Technical Evaluation of Source Separated Composting:**

Assuming the improvements outlined by The Barlow Group occur and HERC's permit cap is lifted, only 14,000 additional tons of processing capacity must be identified to meet the 2003 goal. To identify this additional capacity, a "Technical Review for Processing Source Separated Materials at Existing Facilities," dated July 18, 2000, was prepared for the SWMCB by DSM Environmental Services, Inc. According to the study, the NRG Processing Composting Facility (referred to in the report as the SKB facility) presents the most immediate opportunity to process source separated organic wastes if such wastes can be directed to the NRG PS Facility.

The technical modifications and costs associated with the other two composting facilities reviewed, Wright County and East Central Solid Waste Commission, excluded them from further consideration for meeting the intermediate 2003 processing goal. NRG Processing can currently accept and process 10,000 tons of organic waste and has recently proposed adding more capacity. DSM identified organic wastes being delivered to transfer stations which may provide sufficient quantities of organic rich loads to supply to the Composting Facility. A pilot project was also recommended to verify the Composting Facility's capability to expand.

Theoretically, NRG's acquisition of the SKB Composting Facility should result in a more regional approach for processing MSW if the NRG system is utilized to divert MSW suitable for source separated organic composting. NRG PS is in the process of submitting a permit to the MPCA for 450 tons per day processing and transfer for processing capacity. Dakota County, as owner of the facility site, is a co-permittee.

**D. Eliminating HERC's Permit Limitation:**

During the 2000 legislature, a permit cap limiting processing to 365,000 tons at HERC was eliminated. As noted earlier, this would allow for 42,000 more tons of processing. The County is continuing to work with HERC so that HERC can modify its permits with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the City of Minneapolis which currently limit the amount of waste processed at HERC.

**A. Recommendations for Increasing Processing by 158,500 Tons:**

It is recommended that prior to any County commencing negotiations to extend existing processing contracts, all Counties fully explore a regional approach to facility usage and identify cost savings that would be associated with such an option. In addition, each of the six SWMCB counties should consider adopting the following specific strategies to increase processing in the region by 158,500 tons:

**Anoka:**

- o Work closely with Hennepin County to explore with NRG and Great River Energy the proposed technical changes recommended by The Barlow Group and a time frame for implementation.

**Hennepin:**

- o Work closely with Anoka County to explore with NRG and Great River Energy the proposed technical changes recommended by The Barlow Group and a time frame for implementation.
- o Continue to work on a permit amendment at HERC to allow for additional processing.

**Dakota:**

- Examine ways to work with school districts and other public or private organic rich waste generators to identify source separated materials for delivery to NRG PS. The evaluation should include whether a subsidy is needed and the level of subsidy required.
- Explore the feasibility of diverting organic rich loads from transfer stations to the NRG PS for processing. (DSM observed organic rich loads at transfer stations but did not identify the origin of these wastes).

**Carver:**

- Examine ways to work with school districts and other public or private organic rich waste generators to identify source separated materials for delivery to the NRG PS. The evaluation should include whether a subsidy is needed and the level of subsidy required.

**Ramsey:**

- Explore different options to manage the entire waste stream, including reduction, recycling, and waste processing.

**Washington:**

- Explore different options to manage the entire waste stream, including reduction, recycling, and waste processing.

***F. SWMCB: Recommended Next Steps for Increasing Processing by 158,500:*** It is recommended that the SWMCB continue to support the individual counties' implementation of strategies listed above. The SWMCB needs to evaluate other waste assurance options region-wide to meet the Policy Plan's integrated solid waste processing goals. Regional lobbying efforts should be focused on greater assistance from the State of Minnesota. Prior to acting on the 2003 intermediate goal to increase processing, the SWMCB should wait for state legislative direction and financial support. In addition, the SWMCB should consider:

- Performing a complete risk analysis on the impact of electrical deregulation if MSW processing is considered as "green" power within a "renewable energy" portfolio, or is precluded from such designation.
- Continuing to work with the State of Minnesota to achieve greater State financial assistance in meeting the region's goals. To meet the intermediate goals, such assistance could range from helping to subsidize processing costs to exploring other legal methods to assure MSW deliveries for processing.
- Performing research on landfills receiving MSW from the metropolitan area and because of the availability of landfilling, considering what additional changes the Counties need to make to their systems to meet the intermediate processing goals.
- Coordinating lobbying at the federal level on authorization of interstate waste flow control.
- Monitoring public waste collection market participation efforts and facilitating communication among member Counties.
- Identifying challenges with collection and processing of source separated materials and financially supporting a source separated composting pilot project.

***I. Overall Conclusion:***

Many uncertainties in waste deliveries remain system-wide regardless of the level of subsidy and these uncertainties have been heightened by the consolidation of the hauling community. As a result, it is difficult to plan for increased processing capacity. The long term future of waste processing is questionable without increased state support. The Processing Committee may consider revisiting and modifying this Plan following the work of the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee, any amendments to

the Waste Management Act and any additional state assistance identified during the 2002 legislative session.