

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE- RED RIVER BASIN FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION WORK GROUP FISCAL YEAR 2012 & 2013 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Red River Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG or Work Group) was originally formed in 1998 to address issues related to the development of flood damage reduction projects in that portion of the Red River of the North Basin in Minnesota. The Flood Damage Reduction Work Group works to ensure the full implementation of the 1998 Red River Mediation Agreement. Minnesota Session Laws 2011, First Special Session, chapter 2, section 4, subdivision 3 requires the Commissioner of Natural Resources to submit a report to the Legislature on accomplishments achieved in fiscal years 2012 and 2013 with state funding (\$264,000 per fiscal year) granted for implementation of the Red River Mediation Agreement.

FY 2012-13 Accomplishments

The FY 2012-13 spending plan approved by the Work Group allocated \$264,000 each fiscal year to support collaborative watershed-based efforts to implement the 1998 Mediation Agreement. For all expenses incurred, an equal match is provided by expenses incurred by individual watershed districts and the Red River Watershed Management Board. Funds were allocated and expended to plan and implement projects to achieve flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement goals in the following categories:

Project Team Support. This budget item includes activities that directly support activities of watershed-based project teams to develop and implement projects. In FY 2012-13 funds were provided to eight watershed project teams investigating the following projects:

- Roseau River Wildlife Management Area (Roseau River Watershed District)
- Beltrami Island Forest Impoundment (Roseau River Watershed District)
- Big Swamp Project (Two River Watershed District)
- Tamarac River Watershed (Middle, Snake, Tamarac Watershed District)
- Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration Project (Red Lake Watershed District)
- Garden Slough Project (Sand Hill River Watershed District)
- Moccasin Creek Dam Operation Plan Amendments and Subwatershed Planning (Wild Rice Watershed District)
- Goose Prairie Wildlife Management Area Enhancements (Wild Rice Watershed District)
- Lower Wild Rice River Rehabilitation (Wild Rice Watershed District)
- Manston Slough Restoration (Buffalo Red Watershed District)
- South Branch of the Buffalo River Restoration (Buffalo Red Watershed District)
- Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Restoration (Buffalo Red Watershed District)
- Redpath Project (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)
- Brandrup 9 Problem Identification (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)
- Western 32 / Rabbit River Problem Identification (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)
- West Branch 12 Mile Creek Project (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)
- Doran Creek Project (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)

Project Monitoring. This budget item primarily supports water quality monitoring of mediation projects. Water quality monitoring is based on a monitoring plan which often includes monitoring before and after project construction and upstream and downstream of projects. In FY2012-13, funding was used to monitor 16 projects as well as assist in development of project monitoring plans. In FY 2012-13, additional monitoring funds were invested in monitoring wetlands at project sites to begin to develop appropriate methods to assess the effects of projects on wetland community conditions.

Project Acceleration Grants. This budget item funded engineering efforts to supplement the project team process for the following projects:

- Roseau Wildlife Management Area Enhancement (Roseau River Watershed District)
- Beltrami Island State Forest Assessment (Roseau River Watershed District)
- Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration Project (Red Lake Watershed District)
- Swede Grove Lake (Buffalo Red Watershed District)
- Redpath Project (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)
- Western 32 Project (Bois de Sioux Watershed District)

Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC). The TSAC provides technical and scientific advice to the Work Group primarily through development of technical papers. TSAC membership includes a range of disciplines from hydrology and engineering to ecology, wildlife, soils, wetlands, and water quality. In FY2012-13, TSAC conducted meetings to discuss potential projects and completed Technical Paper No. 14.

Facilitation Grants. Funds traditionally are allocated to this budget item to fund a third-party professional facilitator to assist project teams when internal issues are encountered that could significantly impede the project team process. No funds were used for this purpose in FY 2012-13.

Communications and Outreach funds were used toward public outreach including distribution of a newsletter and meeting notices for the annual conference.

Work Group Meetings and Conference. The Work Group and Red River Watershed Management Board host an annual conference where watershed districts, state and federal agencies, local governments and citizens to review accomplishments, increase their understanding of ongoing flood damage reduction and natural resource issues, and discuss future projects. The conference is typically attended by approximately 75 participants. The FY2013 conference included a special session on the perspectives of agricultural producers on flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement. In FY2013, funds supported costs incurred to host the meeting.