



Minnesota River Board

Plan of Work

July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011 (FY11)*

*some aspects of the work plan have been carried forward from FY10 and extend beyond FY11

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MRB Approved on _____
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Minnesota River Board Basics

In 1992, the Minnesota River Citizen's Advisory Committee (MRCAC) was formed. In 1994, the MRCAC released the report, *Working Together: A Plan to Restore the Minnesota River*. The report detailed ten recommendations (listed below) that the participants believed would improve Minnesota River health.

- restore floodplains and riparian areas,
- restore wetlands,
- manage drainage ditches and storm sewers as tributaries,
- improve land management practices,
- monitor water quality throughout the Minnesota River Basin,
- establish a "Minnesota River Commission" to oversee the clean-up effort,
- establish local joint powers agreements,
- improve technical assistance to local governments,
- engage the general public, and
- enforce existing laws

As a result of the MRCAC recommendations and increasing Minnesota River awareness, the Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board (formally changed names to the Minnesota River Board in 2009 and hereafter referred to as MRB) was forged in 1996 (*Minnesota Statute 103F.378*). The MRB was founded on

- the desire to collaborate and leverage in a judiciously appropriate manner and
- the desire to assume a leadership role and be more pro-active in the coordination of basin-wide water quality improvement efforts at all levels.

Mission and Vision

The MRB is founded on and conducts its business based on the principles and objectives outlined in our Mission and Vision statements.

MRB Mission Statement

"To provide leadership, build partnerships, and support efforts to improve and protect water quality in the Minnesota River Basin"

MRB Vision Statement

"Conservation and restoration of Minnesota River resources and our way of life can only be achieved by a cooperative effort between citizens and all levels of government and business."

Organizational Structure

The MRB partnership structure (Figure 1) has been in place since 2003 and remains a desirable and productive organizational profile. The internal structure of the Minnesota River Board itself should be evaluated, possibly for greater inclusion of basin partners. The relationship between the Water Resources Center (WRC) and the MRB has been very good and has been highlighted by legislators during MRB negotiations. The WRC has facilitated stability and progress for both entities. Significant dedication to re-establishing relations and partnerships with the watershed programs needs to and will occur over the next few years.

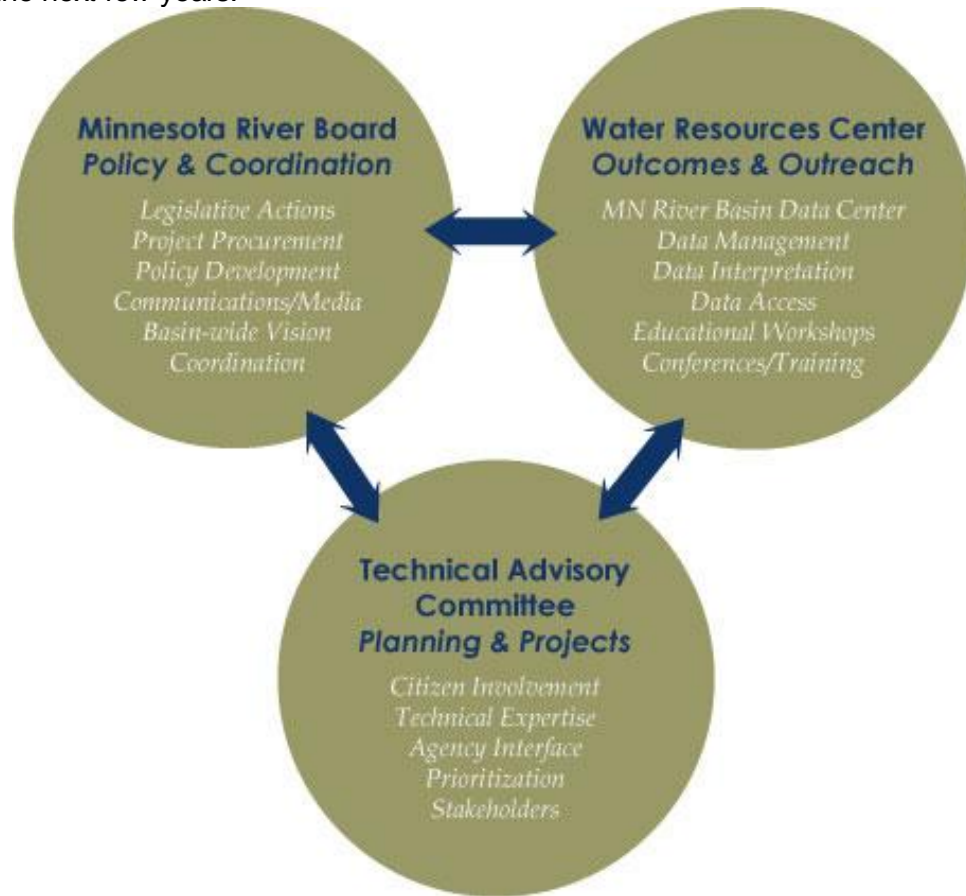


Figure 1. MRB Organizational Structure

Staff and Contact Information

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Membership

The MRB is a joint powers board charged with coordinating efforts to improve water quality in the 38-county Minnesota River Basin and providing reporting for and assistance to 12 major watersheds (Figure 2). Upon acceptance of the joint powers agreement, each county with dues paid in full shall have one county commissioner as its delegate to the board and one county commissioner as an alternate. A technical and citizen advisory committee was established to advise the board and consisted of a technical representative from each participating county in the basin and citizens who are not county employees, but who have an interest in agriculture, conservation, sporting activities, and other relevant areas as determined by the board. This committee has not been active and should be revitalized, as input from these basin stakeholders is critical for the positive advancement of the board's mission. For counties wishing to return to the board, a new policy detailing re-admission procedures was approved in January of 2008. Contact the MRB staff for more information.

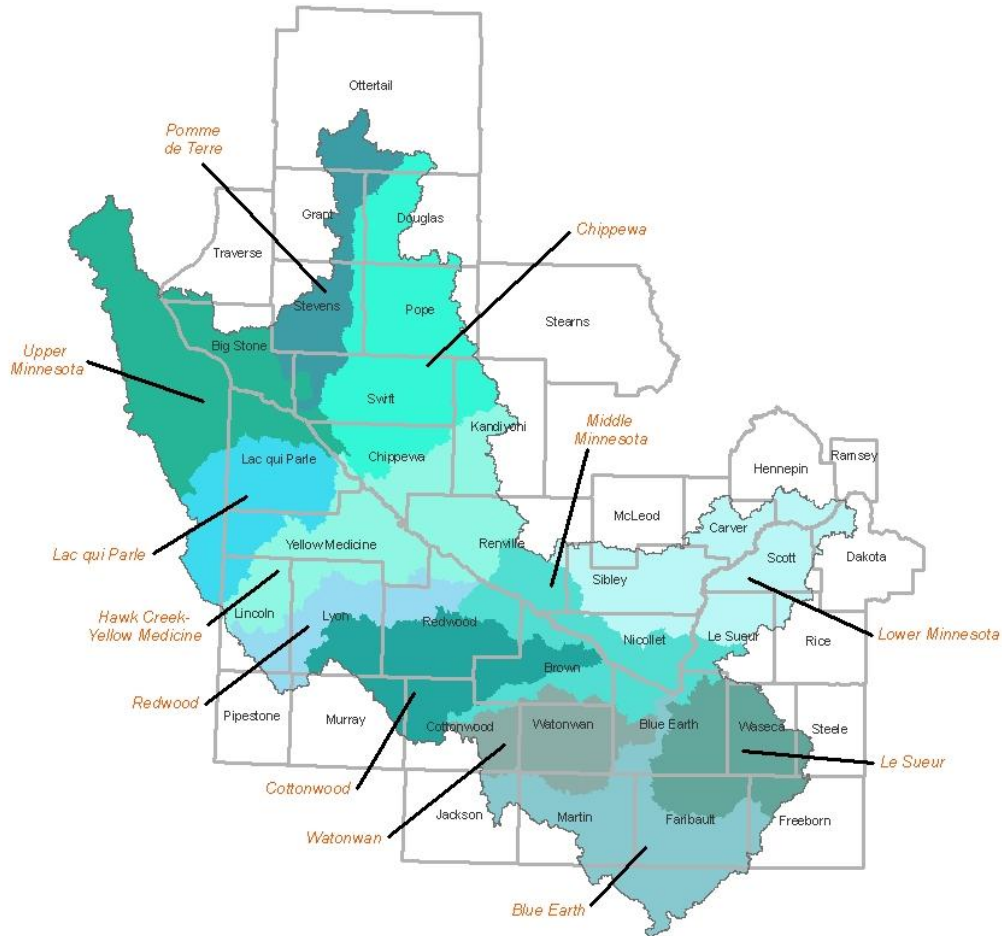


Figure 2. Figure denotes the Minnesota River basin made up of 12 major watersheds and 38 counties associated with the Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board.

FY11 Plan of Work

In 2006, the MRB completed a “Procedures Guide and Strategic Plan (2006-2010)” to guide our work (<http://www.minnesotariver.org>) and in FY08 produced the first work plan under the renewed legislative funding scenario. As a result of these plans, a substantive review of our statutory obligations and an ongoing assessment of what the MRB could and should be for the Minnesota River and our partners have been completed. As a result of these conversations, the FY09 work plan included a directive to update the statutory language that guides the MRB duties and processes. Bills were introduced in the 2009 session and subsequently passed both houses of the legislature and was signed by the governor.

The 2009 statutory update has brought greater focus to the FY10 and now FY11 work plans, clarifying MRB roles as a multi-major watershed entity, a de-emphasizing provision of local implementation project management (as those duties are best managed by local watershed project and conservation district staff), and serving as an additional voice for the Minnesota River basin. As part of these changes, a technical and citizen advisory committee has been re-initiated and what we hope will become an annual fall professional’s assembly has been started. We want to be a part of building stronger partnerships among basin professionals, moving policy forward, and getting issues on the table.

In FY10, the MRB staff focused substantively on our ongoing CIG grant to move forward the concept of Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota. This grant has provided an important platform for ecosystem services to gain momentum in Minnesota – both in the basin and beyond. The Marketplace concept will continue to be an important focus area for the MRB during the upcoming year, and additional funds to elevate this initiative have been applied for. As has occurred in the past few years, we have set lofty goals and done our best to challenge ourselves to achieve them, but inevitably in our successes, comes a few shortfalls. A few goals from the FY10 plan will be carried forward into the FY11 plan, as they were not accomplished to satisfaction and we desire to keep working on them. In the following FY10 summary section (Section 1), we address our progress, shortcomings, and items to be carried forward to the FY11 work plan.

The FY11 Work Plan (Section 2) is structured using a set of goal statements that are then followed by a series of actions and products that will serve as progress measures. Certain aspects of the FY10 plan will include some carry-over portions of goals from previous work plans that are viewed as still critical for the MRB to complete. The FY11 work plan will include fewer focus areas; however, the areas that have been identified are heavy work load and intensive management projects. The staff of the MRB feel strongly that we should focus on fewer items with more intensity, rather than spreading ourselves too thin. Section 3 overviews the budget for FY11 and highlights the anticipated expenditures and income.

The CMM project will be our greatest work load effort during the upcoming year. Other focal points for the MRB in FY11 will include:

- 1) Finalizing reports on groundwater in the basin and status of re-determination of ditch benefits across the basin counties,
- 2) Development of a task group to complete a new strategic plan,
- 3) Development of the Blue Thumb program in the basin, and
- 4) Enhancement of the technical and citizen advisory team, to include their involvement in grant review, conference planning, and policy development.

SECTION 1 - FY10 WORK PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The acronyms are as follows: Executive Director (E), Program Director (P), Office Manager (O), and Contractual Services (C).

GOAL 1. Effectively manage the second year of the Conservation Innovation Grant, now known under the project name Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota (CMM).

- A) Provide administrative support services (accounting, contracting, invoicing, match tracking, and financial reporting) for the CMM project team. (6/10 - O)
- B) Coordinate and facilitate the National CMM Advisory Team, including setting up meetings, assisting with travel, establishing and clarifying duties, and working with partners to establish and distribute agendas. (6/10 - P)
- C) Coordinate and facilitate the Policy Committee(s) for project areas within the Minnesota River Basin, including setting up meetings, assisting with travel, establishing and clarifying duties, securing policy that works for all areas of the Minnesota River Basin, and working with partners to establish and distribute agendas. (6/10 - E)
- D) Coordinate and facilitate the Technical Committee(s) for project areas within the Minnesota River Basin, including setting up meetings, assisting with travel, clarifying duties, and working with partners to establish and distribute agendas. (6/10 - P)
- E) Provide support to the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance in associated with the CIG by hiring and providing HR services, work space and transportation for an employee that will work on the CMM project by transferring CMM funds to the Water Resources Center to cover the costs of the employee (8/09 - E)
- F) Serve as the overall project advocate and liaison between the MRB and the project partners, including provision of update on project issues and progress to the Executive Director and assisting with project tasks as requested from project partners. (6/10 - P)

The NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant to develop the Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota (CMM) concept was the major focus of the Minnesota River Board staff this past year. As a result, the initiative consumed a substantial portion of the executive director and program director's workload. The project is on task and we continue to coordinate this effort that involves more than a dozen different committees and collaborators from across the country, with focus on building a program and relationships in five major watersheds: Middle, Lower, Watonwan, Blue Earth, and Le Sueur. The MRB also provides administrative support to the Sauk River Watershed in its capacity as a contractual partner in this grant. Goal 1A has been completed to the satisfaction of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (CIG grant administrator) and Kamell Johnson deserves our gratitude for managing this project on her limited funding. She has devoted substantive volunteer hours to ensure that all obligations have been met. Goal 1B has been managed by Susie Carlin. The National Advisory Team met on-site in the Sauk River Watershed in August 2009; it is scheduled to meet again in the Lower Minnesota River Watershed in June 2010. Susie has completed the tasks of this goal, but coordinating with people from across the country that have a variety of budgetary and workload restrictions has been very challenging for her. Goal 1C has been completed and the Policy Committee has been formed for the Minnesota River Basin. The 8-member team is comprised of stakeholder representatives as identified by the Minnesota River Board. A contract was developed with the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA) for their participation in the CMM project and Brooke Hacker was hired by GBERBA to serve as the new Ecosystem Services Specialist. As part of this agreement, the MRB worked with MSU Mankato to provide hiring assistance, thereby fulfilling Goal 1E. Brooke works directly with GBERBA and is currently housed at the Blue Earth SWCD office. Program Director Carlin, along with substantive assistance from Brooke Hacker, have done a very good job of achieving Goal 1D. The Technical Committee has been very active, developing a CMM Minnesota River Business Plan, setting technical objectives, and moving forward on forms and procedural planning. Goal 1F duties have been met by all staff and we expend considerable energy and resources advocating for Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota and providing assistance to the contractual partners. Overall, this project is on task and progressing very well. The partners, grant sponsors, and agency liaisons have been pleased with the work done to date.

GOAL 2. Efficiently complete MRB administrative duties on schedule and be accountable for expenditures of public funds.

- A) Prepare, obtain MRB and BWSR approval for, and implement FY10 Work Plan and budget. (approval by 8/09, completion by 6/10 - E)
- B) Provide a progress report to BWSR by February 1, 2010. (2/10 - E)
- C) Complete Executive Committee planning sessions in 10/09 and 4/10. (4/10 - E)
- D) Complete an annual internal audit. (5/10 - O)
- E) Conduct performance reviews as scheduled for the staff (6/10 - E).
- F) Bring non-member counties back to the MRB, with an objective of securing at least 1. (6/10 - E)
- G) Hold 6 full board meetings (bi-monthly), one of which will serve as the annual meeting, and two of which will be in partnership with basin organizations. (6/10 – P/O/E)
- H) Write at least two grant and/or contract applications to bring external funds into the MRB to support our financial foundation and bring needed projects to the basin and provide significant cash and in-kind contributions to the projects. (6/10 - E)

MRB administrative duties have been completed on schedule (Goal 2A). The Goal 2B deadline was again missed this year, and Director Fisher takes full responsibility for the delay in getting the progress report to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. The report was submitted May 13, 2010 to Jeff Nielsen. Two Executive Committee meetings were held (Goal 2C), an internal audit was successfully completed (Goal 2D), and performance reviews were conducted (Goal 2E). Non-member counties were approached and presented opportunities to rejoin, but none pursued membership, perhaps due to budget restraints (Goal 2F). Unfortunately, we lost one county during FY10, as Yellow Medicine County submitted a resolution removing themselves from the board once again. Highlights from the year include an annual meeting in Redwood Falls on water conservation featuring nationally recognized speakers, partner hosted meetings in Blue Earth (Faribault County) and Morris (Stevens County) (Goal 2G). Two major grant applications were submitted to further support Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota: one to Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources and another for the next phase of the Conservation Innovation Grant program (Goal 2H).

GOAL 3. Reconvene the technical and citizen advisory committee and work with this committee to develop a process of communications and input.

- A) Facilitate completion of a start-up meeting for the Minnesota River Basin Tech/Citizen advisory committee and utilize funding to defray the costs. (10/09 - E)
- B) Work with basin stakeholders to determine a committee structure and process of technical representatives and citizen representatives whose input is critically important to the future work of the MRB. (12/09 - E)
- C) Develop a plan on which to formally gather input from and to provide services to the advisory group, including a formal process of communications and meeting schedule. (2/10 - E)

The technical and citizen advisory committee was reinstated and has met formally twice. At a meeting on October 1, 2009 in Morton, Steve Lawrence (Pope County) addressed technical and citizen members of the basin regarding the need for technical and citizen participation in the MRB. He called for volunteers to participate in the planning committee and 22 people indicated a willingness to serve. Ten participants from across the basin were brought together to develop a new technical/citizen team. Therefore, Goal 3A was achieved with some delays. The planning members are still working on Goal 3B. The initial proposal is to develop a communication

structure and input process (between the tech/citizen team and the MRB) with three Advisory Units: Upper (Lac qui Parle, Pomme de Terre, Chippewa, and Upper Watersheds), Middle (Hawk, Yellow-Medicine, Redwood, Cottonwood Watersheds, and the Middle west of Hwy 15), and Lower (Watonwan, Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Lower Watersheds, and the Middle east of Hwy 15). The committee will continue to meet in late FY10 and early FY11 to finalize this plan. They will determine structures for each group, identify additional stakeholders to be represented (statutory review included), and institute a formal communication and meeting schedule as listed in Goal 3C.

GOAL 4. Facilitate improved and increased communications between the MRB and our partners and among basin stakeholders.

- A) Collaborate with the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance and various projects of the MRB and Water Resources Center to implement a MRB newsletter (2-4 pages), including features written by and/or regarding delegates, county staff, watershed professionals, and others. (10/09 – P/C/E)
- B) Include condensed articles on major Minnesota River issues, similar to Envision 2020 reports. (start by 11/09 and then ongoing after that - C)
- C) Monthly website update that feature the products from 4A and 4B, along with event notices and other items of interest. (6/10 – C)
- D) Contract with communications staff at the Water Resources Center for assistance on completing this task. (10/09 - E)
- E) Support ongoing enhancements of communications efforts in conjunction with MPCA, local media outlets, provision of press releases, etc....(6/10 – E/C)

This goal continues to be a difficult effort to fully engage in and implement. The MRB has partially achieved Goal 4A, as we regularly provide information to the MN River Watershed Alliance; however, we have not been able to implement an MRB newsletter. The MRB continues to provide support and services to the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance, which provides newsworthy information via e-mail and newsletter updates (Goal 4B). Goal 4C has been difficult to complete due to budgetary restraints. We have attempted to utilize internal staff and students to accomplish this task (Goal 4A) however, progress has been minimal and we are assessing end-of-year funds to determine if we can contract this out. The MRB has been supporting ongoing enhancements in and continuation of communication efforts – providing news information to the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance and the MPCA's Watershed Network, and developing press releases as needed on critical issues.

GOAL 5. Promote and complete a program of continuing education, outreach, and partnership to enhance and encourage ongoing interest and work in Minnesota River Basin improvement efforts.

- A) Utilize the expertise of the Technical Committee to identify the educational needs of the basin and work with the technical committee to prioritize programming dollar expenditures. (11/09 - E)
- B) Based on input from 5A, put out an RFP for workshop, continuing education, and/or conference opportunities. (11/09 - E)
- C) Complete at least one major and one minor workshop in the basin based on selection criteria and needs identified from the technical/citizen advisory committee. (6/10 – E/P)
- D) Bring back the Minnesota River Research Forum series in association with the Water Resources Center and other basin partners. (4/10 – E).

Given the delays in establishing the technical and citizen advisory team, Goals 5A and 5B have not been completed as described above. Instead, we informally spoke with a wide range of basin members and identified a variety of needs. This effort led to the water conservation focus at the MRB Annual Meeting and a Watershed Basin Professionals Assembly that was held on October 1 to focus on issues such as the basin bill legislation and methods of measuring progress. A Request for Proposals was released in March for programming grants and we received over \$42,000 in requests for the available \$9,000. Several projects were funded, including:

- Chippewa SWCD/Chippewa SWCD Conservation Field Days/\$1,700*
- GBERBA/Testing CMM in the Greater Blue Earth River Basin/\$3,000*
- Coalition for a Clean MN River/Working Together for the MN River/\$3,000*
- CURE/Annual River and History Weekend & River Signage/\$1,300*

The two conferences listed above, the educational tours/programs held at the Blue Earth and Morris meetings, and the Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota National Advisory Committee meeting fully account for successful completion of Goal 2C, which continues to be one of the MRB's greatest strengths. Planning is underway for the Minnesota River Research Forum (Goal 5D), with a target date of January 2011.

GOAL 6. Serve as an ongoing legislative and funding resource for the basin.

- A) Work with the advisory group and delegates to identify legislative issues that the MRB could provide support and advocacy for during the 2010 session. (11/09 - E)
- B) Provide services as requested to support the various watershed and water quality interests in the Minnesota River basin, allowing the voice of 38 counties to be heard on issues in local areas, St. Paul, across the region, and beyond. (6/10 – E/P)
- C) Provide assistance to agencies, counties, watersheds, etc.... in the dissemination of information regarding policy changes, funding opportunities, and staffing/project service options. (6/10 – E/P)
- D) Provide grant preparation assistance as requested, with a target of at least 2 collaborations that benefit multiple major watersheds and/or local partners. (6/10 – E)
- E) Provide a minimum of 2 presentations on behalf of the MRB and our partners as requested. (6/10 – E/P)

To satisfy Goal 6A, the MRB staff made numerous announcements at watershed meetings, at MRB meetings, and at the Watershed Basin Professionals Assembly indicating that the MRB is available to serve as a voice for the basin. But very few partners have accepted that offer and therefore the MRB completed very little legislative work this past session. The MRB continues to provide input to the basin bill language and process and Director Fisher has been asked to provide comment on legislation that will govern water use from the Mount Simon Aquifer. Due to limited participation in Goal 6A, Goal 6B was also limited. The MRB has served as a venue for agencies to present policy changes, to announce monitoring program alterations, and to advertise funding cuts/opportunities. The MRB and the Water Resource Center have been collectively invited by the US Army Corps of Engineers to serve on the Minnesota River Integrated Watershed Study team. The MRB/WRC has also hosted a wetland specialist training program by the University of Minnesota and served on the planning team for the Minnesota Clean Water Framework (Goal 6C). Goal 6D was completed this year with three collaboration grants being prepared and submitted – LCCMR (\$600,000+) and CIG (\$800,000+) submitted by the MRB and the Mississippi River Basin Initiative (\$300,000+) submitted by the Redwood SWCD. The MRB staff have presented at more than 15 events this past year, including professional conferences, annual watershed meetings, and environmental fairs. Therefore, Goal 6E has readily been completed.

GOAL 7. Complete a substantive outreach effort to deliver the Minnesota River Progress Report results (developed as part of the FY09 BWSR grant) to basin communities, water quality improvement stakeholders, legislators, and agencies.

- A) Deliver the report for review by legislators, agency staff, conservation professionals, MRB delegates, the basin technical team, and others and establish a series of meetings to discuss the product and mechanisms for improvement (10/09 – E/C)
- B) Formally deliver and present the Biennial Progress Report developed during FY08 and FY09 to the MRB delegates and partners at the November Board Meeting (11/09 – E/C)
- C) In conjunction with other progress reports, trend assessments, and basin planning efforts, advance a series of town hall meetings across the basin to deliver a message of basin water quality progress, continued challenges, and community involvement. (6/10 – E/C)

The Minnesota River Progress Report will be completed and ready for distribution by June 2010. The report is a thorough collection of the restoration and protection work that is ongoing in the Minnesota River Basin. The report highlights the impacts those efforts have had on our basin environment, culture, and economics. The report overviews projects throughout the basin by major watershed. The document addresses ongoing concerns, recommendations for future work, and a basin timeline. The staff at the Water Resources Center have provided significant assistance to the development of this document. Due to the expansive scope and level of detail in the report, it is still in the final draft phases and portions of Goal 7A, 7B, and 7C are not yet complete. These goals will be carried forward to FY11.

GOAL 8. Based on Goal 7 feedback, develop a framework on which to build the next iteration of the Minnesota River Progress Report that will be completed in FY11.

- A) Gather input as part of the Goal 7 information meetings and determine if appropriate measures were utilized for the progress report, giving consideration to new measures that should be included for future reports, deletion of measures with limited or difficult to understand data, and determining which measures provide the most valuable information (5/10 – E/C)
- B) Develop a plan on which to base the FY11 biennial progress report. (6/10 – C)

Goal 8 has been moved to FY11, at which time Goal 7 items will be complete.

GOAL 9. Become an involved member in the ongoing discussion of Basin Watershed Organization legislation, including an evaluation of the MRB membership structure.

- A) Join, as opportunities arise, in forums, committees, legislative hearings, and work groups to continue providing input into basin and watershed management legislation and policy modification proposals. (1/10 - E)
- B) As part of 9A, complete a work session on watershed based management options with the executive committee and other interested parties, including legislative sponsors, watershed representatives, and others to provide input into future proposals. (11/09 - E)
- C) Utilize the information gathered in 9A and 9B to determine the MRB position on such matters and then provide support or opposition as requested by the delegates (1/10 - E)

- D) Evaluate the current MRB structure to determine if any changes at this time would be appropriate. (1/10 - E)

Basin management legislation continued in the past year, but at a much lower profile due to larger budget issues before the legislature. There were limited opportunities for involvement, but Director Fisher completed Goals 9A, 9B, and 9C as best possible. At the Basin Professionals Assembly, basin bill information was shared, stakeholders thoughts were collected, and "next steps" were suggested. The results of these roundtable discussions were provided to the legislative authors of the bills. As part of this process, Executive Committee work sessions continue to evaluate the MRB structure. In addition, structural questions have been raised with the planning team on the technical and citizen advisory team. Their feedback to the MRB delegates suggests that both the basin bill language and the partnership vision should incorporate a more inclusive and diverse board delegate membership.

GOAL 10. Recognize the contributions of professionals, citizens, and students in the Minnesota River Basin.

- A) Provide an awards/incentive program for junior and senior high students from the basin participating in sanctioned science fair programs. (5/10 - P)
- B) Provide an undergraduate scholarship and an undergraduate research award for two students studying in the basin that are focused on water quality issues. (5/10 - P)
- C) Award two deserving participants from the basin with the "Confluence" and "Tributary" awards. (6/10 - E)
- D) Institute a delegate, watershed, and project spotlight section in future watershed communications associated with Goals 4 and 5 above. (6/10 – P/C)

Goal 10 sections A, B, and C have all been successfully delivered. A total of seven awards were presented to Science Fair participants at the high school, middle school, and elementary levels for projects that assessed watershed, water quality, or other biotic research. The recipients of the FY09 MRB Undergraduate Research Awards presented their findings to the MRB delegates at the March 2010 meeting. In FY10, one Undergraduate Research Grant and three MRB Scholarships were awarded to deserving students in the basin. The annual MRB professional awards were presented at the July 2009 annual meeting. Mary Homan (Confluence Award) was recognized for her work in the Lac qui Parle and Yellow Bank Clean Water Partnership. Jim Doering (Tributary Award) was recognized for his innovative work with the Redwood Cottonwood River Control Area, and as both a citizen and now an employee of the City of Redwood Falls. Goal 10D was not instituted, pending completion of Goals 4 and 5.

GOAL 11. Evaluate the potential of bringing the Blue Thumb program into areas across the Minnesota River basin by working with the Rice Creek Watershed and delivering information to our partners.

- A) Establish contact with and meet with the Rice Creek Watershed District staff to learn more about the Blue Thumb Program. (10/09 - P)
- B) Identify appropriate venues and develop information materials for the dissemination of information regarding the Blue Thumb program among Minnesota River Basin stakeholders. (12/09 - P)
- C) Work with at least one basin entity to establish partnership in the Blue Thumb program and/or determine how the Blue Thumb program could be applied in our basin (4/10 - P)

Program Director Carlin met with Rice Creek Watershed District staff and identified possible opportunities for collaboration (Goal 11A). During Blue Thumb's open enrollment period (December 2009), the MRB became a Blue Thumb partner. MRB staff continue to explore Blue Thumb's potential for providing innovative outreach and educational materials to homeowners throughout the basin (Goal 11B). An MRB intern will assist with Blue Thumb tasks during Summer 2010. Blue Thumb material will be shared with technical partners—SWCDs, county staff, watershed projects, and watershed districts—while encouraging them to join during the next open enrollment period in December 2010 (Goal 11C).

GOAL 12. Status evaluations of priority issues to county delegates and basin citizens.

- A) Prepare and implement a plan to survey counties in the basin regarding the status of re-determination of benefits on county ditch systems. (11/09 – E/C)
- B) Present the findings of Measure 12A to the MRB and then determine a course of action and implement such action. (6/10 - E)
- C) Prepare and implement a plan to survey Minnesota River basin citizens and stakeholders regarding groundwater concerns, monitoring status, and research needs – including a summary of known contaminants, research, and management strategies for aquifers under the MRB territory. (6/10 - E/P/C).

Progress on Goal 12A is underway. An interview script and plan to survey all basin counties has been developed and interns will collect data in May/June 2010. These results will present the results to the MRB (Goal 12B). Goal 12C has also been initiated and a draft report has been completed. The document needs more detail and thus MRB interns will visit aquifer and groundwater experts this summer.

SECTION 2 – FY11 GOALS AND PROGRESS MEASURES

(GOALS ARE NOT IN PRIORITY ORDER) *For each goal statement listed below, a set of progress measures and/or tasks are also noted. For each task, the lead staff member responsible for making sure the task/progress measure is completed is noted as an acronym. The acronyms are as follows: Executive Director (E), Program Director (P), Office/Grants Manager (O), Ecosystem Services Specialist (S), and Contractual Services (C) to be hired out. Where more than one is listed, the first one is the responsible party with the others listed providing significant assistance. This does NOT imply that the only tasks each staff member will be working on are those listed – other duties can and will be assigned.*

GOAL 1. Effectively manage the Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota (CMM) Initiative.

- A) Provide administrative support services (accounting, contracting, invoicing, match tracking, and financial reporting) for the CMM project team, including management of the grants administration team. (O)
- B) Coordinate and facilitate the National CMM Advisory Team, including setting up meetings, assisting with travel, establishing and clarifying duties, and working with partners to establish and distribute agendas. (P)
- C) Coordinate and facilitate the Policy Committee for the Minnesota River Basin, including setting up meetings, assisting with travel, establishing and clarifying duties, securing policy that works for all areas of the Minnesota River Basin, and working with partners to establish and distribute agendas. (E,O)
- D) Coordinate and facilitate the Technical Committee(s) for project areas within the Minnesota River Basin, including setting up meetings, assisting with travel, clarifying duties, and working with partners to establish and distribute agendas. (S,P)
- E) Secure additional funding to continue serving as a CMM project advocate and liaison among the MRB, existing partners, and other interested entities from within and outside the MN River Basin. Assisting with project tasks, including grant submission, as requested from project partners. (E,O,P,S,C)

GOAL 2. Efficiently complete MRB administrative duties on schedule and be accountable for expenditures of public funds.

- A) Prepare, obtain MRB and BWSR approval for, and implement FY11 Work Plan and budget. (E,O,P,S,C)
- B) Provide a progress report to BWSR as noted in the grant agreements. (E)
- C) Complete Executive Committee planning sessions in 10/10 and 4/11. (E)
- D) Complete an annual internal audit. (O)
- E) Conduct performance reviews as scheduled for the staff (E).
- F) Hold 6 full board meetings (bi-monthly), one of which will serve as the annual meeting, and two of which will be in partnership with basin organizations. (E,P,O)
- G) Write at least two grant and/or contract applications to bring external funds into the MRB to support our financial foundation and bring needed projects to the basin and provide significant cash and in-kind contributions to the projects. (E,P,O,S,C)
- H) Visit each county board during the next fiscal year to deliver project updates, discuss report findings, and review future efforts. (E)
- I) Develop a set of committees to better deliver MRB programs and gather MRB input and work with delegates to determine committee assignments.

GOAL 3. Formalize the structure, roles, and procedures for the technical and citizen advisory committee and fully implement and engage these partners.

- A) Facilitate ongoing development meetings of the technical and citizen advisory group(s), provide funding as available to complete work sessions, and develop a name for the group under which they will operate. (E)
- B) Work with the advisory team members and MRB delegates to develop and identify a structure in which the advisory team will operate, roles that this team can assist with, roles that the MRB can fulfill to assist our technical and citizen stakeholders, and procedures to improve communication about basin initiatives, policy development, and funding. (E)
- C) Utilize the expertise of the technical and citizen advisory team to review grant applications as appropriate, develop an agenda for and deliver the fall professionals assembly, review MRB structure and make recommendations to the delegates, and identify policy and in-service focal points on which the MRB can deliver assistance. (E)

GOAL 4. Work with the Water Resources Center at Minnesota State Mankato, the MPCA Watershed Network, and the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance to develop an ongoing outreach effort as a participant in regular communications.

- A) Collaborate with the communication entities listed above to implement a monthly MRB segment in one or more existing watershed communication programs, including features regarding delegates, county staff, watershed professionals, projects, policy issues, etc... (C,P,E)
- B) Contract with communications staff at the Water Resources Center for assistance on completing this task. (E)
- C) Become a regular participant in the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance and MPCA watershed network and provide materials to support improved visibility for the MRB (P)

GOAL 5. Promote and complete a program of continuing education, outreach, and partnership to enhance and encourage ongoing interest and work in Minnesota River Basin improvement efforts.

- A) Utilize the expertise of the Technical Committee to identify the educational needs of the basin and work with the technical committee to prioritize programming dollar expenditures. (E,P)
- B) Complete an RFP to provide local programming assistance to support workshops, continuing education, and/or other educational opportunities, using the technical and citizen advisory team as the application review team. (E)
- C) Complete at least one major and one minor workshop/outreach event in the basin to support the needs of basin citizens, professionals, and/or elected officials. (E,P,S)

GOAL 6. Serve as an ongoing legislative, funding, and research resource for the basin.

- A) Work with the advisory group and delegates to identify legislative issues that the MRB could provide support and advocacy on behalf of. (E)
- B) Provide services as requested to support the various watershed and water quality interests in the Minnesota River basin, allowing the voice of 38 counties to be heard on issues in local areas, St. Paul, across the region, and beyond. (E,P)
- C) Provide assistance to agencies, counties, watersheds, etc.... in the dissemination of information regarding policy changes, funding opportunities, and staffing/project service options as requested. (E,P)
- D) Provide grant preparation assistance as requested, with a target of at least 2 collaborations that benefit multiple major watersheds and/or local partners. (E,P)
- E) Provide a minimum of 2 presentations on behalf of the MRB and our partners as requested. (E,P,O,S,C)
- F) Continue involvement in and track the progress of basin management legislation. (E)

GOAL 7. Complete a substantive outreach effort to deliver the Minnesota River Progress Report results (developed as part of the FY09 and FY10 BWSR grant) to basin communities, water quality improvement stakeholders, legislators, and agencies.

- A) Deliver the report for review by legislators, agency staff, conservation professionals, MRB delegates, the basin technical team, and others and establish a series of meetings to discuss the product and mechanisms for improvement (E,P)
- B) Formally deliver and present the Biennial Progress Report to the MRB delegates and partners (E,C)
- C) In conjunction with other progress reports, trend assessments, and basin planning efforts, engage our watershed partners in EACH major watershed from across the basin to deliver a message of basin water quality progress, continued challenges, and community involvement – using these opportunities to determine what the focus of the next biennial report will be – due to come out June 2012. (E,P,C)

GOAL 8. Recognize the contributions of professionals, citizens, and students in the Minnesota River Basin.

- A) Provide an awards/incentive program for junior and senior high students from the basin participating in sanctioned science fair programs. (P)

- B) Provide an undergraduate scholarship and an undergraduate research award for two students studying in the basin that are focused on water quality issues. (E,P)
- C) Award two deserving participants from the basin with the “Confluence” and “Tributary” awards. (E,O,P)
- D) Institute a delegate, watershed, and project spotlight section in future watershed communications associated with Goal 4 above. (E,P,C,O,S)

GOAL 9. Establish the Blue Thumb program into areas within the Minnesota River basin by working with the Rice Creek Watershed District and various partners to deliver information and demonstrate how this program could work here.

- A) Work with MN River Basin partners to determine some potentially interested parties and work to have these groups enroll in the Blue Thumb Program during the application period. (P)
- B) Identify appropriate venues and develop information materials for the dissemination of information regarding the Blue Thumb program among Minnesota River Basin stakeholders. (P)
- C) Work with at least one basin entity to demonstrate a Blue Thumb related program or project. (P)

GOAL 10. Status evaluations of priority issues to county delegates and basin citizens and continued evaluation of progress in the basin.

- A) Deliver the results of the FY10 survey on status of ditch redeterminations in the basin counties to the MRB and develop a plan to disseminate the information. (E)
- B) Continue to refine and develop a report on aquifer state of knowledge in the Minnesota River Basin. The foundation will be based on a preliminary report prepared by a MSU, Mankato student on behalf of the MRB. Information will include monitoring status, research needs, known information about contaminants, management strategies, and policy under the MRB territory. (E,P).
- C) Complete an assessment of jurisdictional overlap, including a GIS layer that shows all jurisdictional areas, regarding water, watershed, and other water-related issues. Work with our basin partners to secure such information to identify discussion points. (E,C)
- D) Develop a presentation on the process of monitoring and status of Biota in the Basin – including use as a progress measure and improvements that have been seen. (E,P)
- E) Work with collaborators to secure funds and provide assistance for a Lake Pepin stakeholder exchange that brings Lake Pepin citizens and leaders to our area and brings ours there to build bridges and better identify the mutual problems that exist. (P,E)
- F) As part of the outreach efforts listed above, bring in a hypoxia speaker to bring the MRB delegates the most up to date information that is available. (E,P)

Proposed MRB FY11 Budget

Line Items (details listed below budget)	Funding Source Used for Line Item Expense				Totals
	State of MN	County Income	2008 CIG	External	
FY11 Income (estimated as of 5/17/20)					
Reserve Funds Carried Forward		\$12,088		\$2,292	\$14,380
State of Minnesota - BWSR Grant	\$84,000				\$84,000
County Dues Collection - FY11		\$41,585			\$41,585
MCIT Insurance Refund (estimated)		\$1,255			\$1,255
CIG Indirect Cost Recovery (estimated)		\$29,630			\$29,630
2008 CIG - Conservation Marketplace			\$370,368		\$370,368
Mt Simon Monitoring (estimated)				\$8,877	\$8,877
Totals	\$84,000	\$84,558	\$370,368	\$11,169	\$550,095
FY11 Estimated Expenses					
0.50 FTE Executive Director		\$30,427	\$7,779	\$4,000	\$42,206
0.49/0.70 FTE Office/Grants Manager		\$2,527	\$15,930	\$1,500	\$19,957
0.94 FTE Program Director	\$41,841				\$41,841
1.0 FTE Ecosystem Services Specialist			\$38,938		\$38,938
Student Worker(s)	\$2,000	\$2,000			\$4,000
Fringe Benefits (All Staff)	\$11,357	\$11,722	\$20,806	\$1,720	\$45,605
MCIT Insurance		\$2,935			\$2,935
MRB Meeting Expenses		\$1,200			\$1,200
MRB Communications/Reporting	\$11,088	\$2,945			\$14,033
Travel	\$6,500	\$6,500			\$13,000
Printing	\$1,650	\$1,650			\$3,300
Awards/Student Incentives Program	\$1,000			\$575	\$1,575
Supplies/Equipment		\$500	\$2,920		\$3,420
Misc CIG/CMM Expenses			\$10,000		\$10,000
Legal Retainer		\$1,200	\$1,200		\$2,400
Technical Advisory Committee Expenses	\$1,000	\$1,000			\$2,000
MSU Contract Indirect Costs (8%)	\$5,737	\$10,952		\$578	\$17,267
Outreach/Programming	\$1,827	\$9,000		\$2,796	\$13,623
CMM Partner Expenses			\$272,795		\$272,795
Reserve Funds	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	\$84,000	\$84,558	\$370,368	\$11,169	\$550,095

Income Details

- Reserve Funds held by the MN River Board from FY10.
- State of MN: the MN legislature has currently approved a grant of \$84,000 to aid in the administration, outreach, and reporting progress in the MN River Basin.
- County Income: Dues collected from member counties in 2010 for use during the FY11 fiscal year. Dues were held stable for FY11.
- MCIT Insurance Refund: The estimated value of our dividend check from MCIT Insurance.
- CIG Indirect Cost Recovery – indirects of 8% collected on all funds paid out as part of the CIG.
- CIG (CMM) Contract Allowance: Income to cover expenditures associated with the Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota project – both internal and external expenditures.
- Mt. Simon Monitoring: Payment for services rendered to Mt Simon Permit Holders and the MN Department of Natural Resources to facilitate, mediate, and provide data management to an aquifer monitoring initiative.

Expenditure Details

- Executive Director: 50% of the Executive Director's annual salary, spread out based on where work will be completed.
- Administrative Assistant: Funds a 49% FTE Office Manager to facilitate the CMM, Mt. Simon, and day-to-day administration of funds, grants, and accounting and meeting logistic needs through August 31. Then converts to a 0.7 FTE on September 1 due to increasing demand on this position.
- Program Director: Being tied to State Funding, this position will be funded based on the appropriation from the state of Minnesota, with some supplemental funding used from the CIG/CMM and other sources, we will not propose a reduction in this position for FY11, but reduction will be likely in FY12 and will be tied directly to the BWSR grant (% based on the remaining grant amount from the original \$100,000/year).
- Ecosystem Services Specialist – a 1.0 FTE position fully funded by the CIG and contracted in association with the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance.
- Student Worker(s): Funding for a summer intern to assist with a variety of tasks.
- Fringe Benefits: Estimated Health Insurance, Required Leave, FICA, etc.... for all MRB staff and students listed above
- MCIT Insurance: Estimated Annual Insurance Payment
- MRB Meeting Expenses: Base expenses for 6 MRB business meetings and 2 executive committee planning sessions, including room rental and refreshments. Tours, speaker fees, per diem and other travel costs, etc... are budgeted for in Programming and Travel below.
- Communications/Reporting: Postage (\$1,000), cellular phone charges (\$600), MRB Office phones (2 lines, \$1,345), web site, press release, and project reporting assistance from WRC staff (\$11,088).
- Travel: Designated Vehicle for MRB (\$7,560), Staff Lodging and Travel to Conferences, including registration fees, (\$750); executive committee per diem (\$3,000), Misc. Staff, Delegate, and Guest Expenses, such as personal mileage (\$1,690)
- Printing: Preparation of various reports, newsletters, stationary needs, in-house copy needs via printer lease at MSU (\$3,300)
- Awards Program: "Tributary" and "Confluence" Awards (\$225 - \$100 each plus \$25 for supplies), MRB Scholarships (two at \$250), Science Fair Awards (\$350, 4 Sr/Jr awards at \$50, 4 Elementary awards at \$25, plus \$50 for supplies), Undergraduate Student Research Award (1 at \$500)
- Supplies/Equipment: Various office supplies, software upgrades, chairs, etc... as needed, primarily in support of the CIG/CMM in conjunction with project partners and basin stakeholders.
- Misc CMM/SIG Expenses include such items as conference calls, meeting expenses, etc... that are specifically unique to the CMM project.
- Legal Retainer: \$200/month retainer fee for Rinke Noonan, split between county and grant funds.
- Tech/Citizen Advisory Committee: Provide meeting facilities and refreshments for designated advisory committee meetings, potentially including travel allowances and per diem for formal representatives as funds allow. Some funds may also be used to offset costs of committee representatives to attend MRB meetings as formal liaisons.
- MSU Indirect Costs: Approximately \$215,839 of this budget will need to be contracted with the Water Resources Center at MN State University, Mankato to cover 100% of staff salary and fringe plus large portions of Communications/Reporting, Travel, and Printing. An 8% indirects rate will apply based on our agreement with MSU, Mankato from 2008.
- Outreach/Programming: Funds for Workshops, trainings, and conferences on grants/funding opportunities, ongoing research, program updates, annual meeting events, etc..., including items like the MRB Annual Meeting and a Minnesota River Research Forum
- CMM Partner Expenses - Services as allowed in the CIG agreement for technical services to be contracted out as needed, including legal services (included under legal retainer below), web site development, model evaluation, and technical planning provided by various potential partners.
- Reserve Funds – although none are listed, it is our hope that once carry-forward funds are identified, we will be able to restore some dollars to this line item.