



Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board

Plan of Work July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008 (FY08)

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MRB Approved on _____
Submitted by _____

William Stangler, MRB Chair

Minnesota River Board – A Re-Introduction

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 (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 efforts at the local level.

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 structure (Figure 1) has been in place since 2003 and remains a desirable and productive organizational profile. This is a good model and should be preserved. The relationship between the Water Resources Center and the MRB was notably highlighted by several legislators during the last session – cited as a great partnership that facilitates 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.

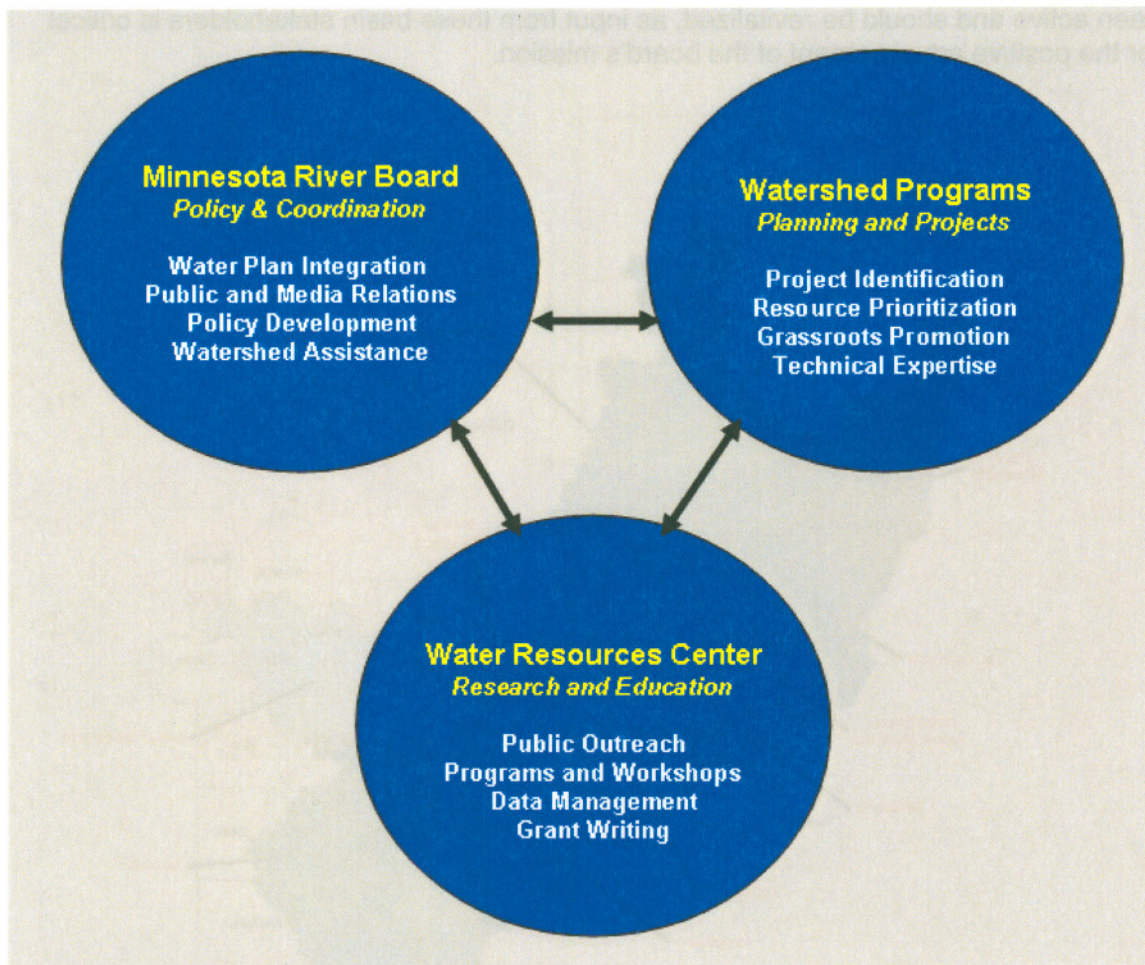


Figure 1. MRB Organizational Structure

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.

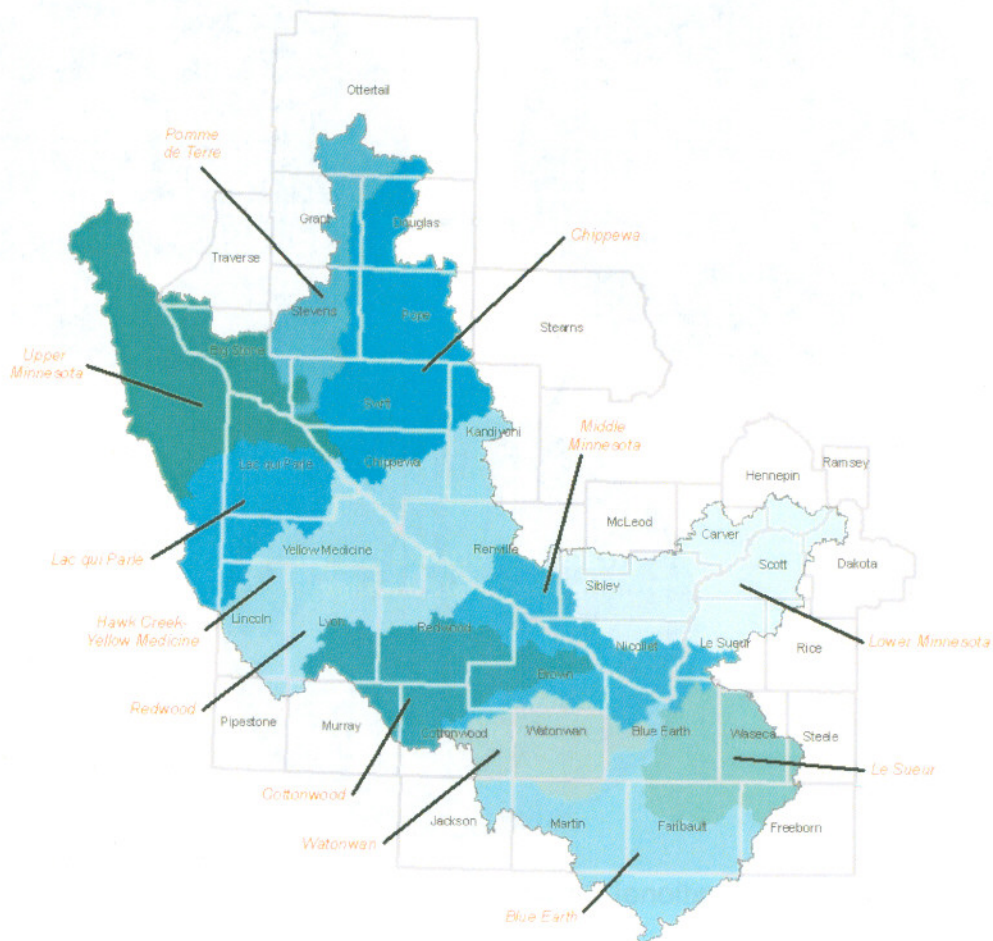


Figure 2. Figure denotes the Minnesota River basin made up of 12 major watersheds and 38 counties associated with the Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board.

FY08 Plan of Work

In 2006, the MRB completed a "Procedures Guide and Strategic Plan (2006-2010)" to guide our work (<http://www.minnesotariver.org>). As a result of the plan, a substantive review of our statutory obligations was completed. For each component, the plan identifies several strategies for improvement. The following plan of work is detailed via a series of goal statements that highlight specific actions to be accomplished in FY08. *For each component, progress measures are listed and targeted completion dates are noted in parentheses.*

- 1) Complete fiscal adjustments, including MRB fiscal year procedures and budgets, as a result of additional legislative funding.**
 - a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Secure MRB approval to adjust start of fiscal year from January 1 to July 1 of each year (July 2007),
 - ii. Extend calendar year 2007 budget to end June 30, 2008, rather than December 31, 2007 (July 2007) and
 - iii. Prepare, obtain MRB and BWSR approval for, and implement a new work plan and budget for FY08 (August 2007).
- 2) Develop a position description for and hire a full-time staff member for the MRB to assist in the implementation of this work plan.**
 - a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Develop position description (July 2007),
 - ii. Obtain MRB and State of MN approval for the position description and announce the position opening (September 2007),
 - iii. Convene search/interview committee (September 2007), and
 - iv. Complete interviews for and hire staff member (November 2007).
- 3) Develop a process to measure and report the results of projects in the 12 major watersheds within the Minnesota River basin and complete the first report (2007 legislation requirement).**
 - a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Conduct a meeting with representatives from agencies, watersheds, and counties to discuss and recommend a reporting plan and its components, including funding acquired, projects implemented, potential water quality improvements, and future needs (January 2008),
 - ii. Develop a set of measures to be used to gauge progress (January 2008),
 - iii. Complete a draft report and circulate to those involved in 3.a.i above (April 2008), and
 - iv. Finalize and submit a progress report to the legislature, governor, basin stakeholders, and other interested parties (June 2008)

- 4) To help facilitate #3 above, compile water and strategic plans for counties and watersheds in the Minnesota River basin and summarize to identify common themes, priorities, and missions.**
 - a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Provide a county water plan summation report to the Minnesota River Board and other interested stakeholders (December 2007), and
 - ii. Facilitate #3 above by developing a draft set of suggested parameters to use to measure success in county water planning based on product 4.a.i (March 2008).
- 5) Contact and visit with each of the non-participating counties (non-members) and present the results of #11.**
 - a. Progress Measures
 - i. Complete a visit with each non-member county board and water planning staff to present benefits information and determine the needs of non-member counties to fully evaluate modes of change that could increase the potential for each to return to the board (January 2008) and
 - ii. Bring at least one county back to the MRB from non-member status to full-member status (June 2008).
- 6) Convene a multi-disciplinary task force to update the Minnesota River basin water plan that includes clean up goals, milestones, and measures of success that are consistent with the results of #4 above.**
 - a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Conduct a meeting (possibly in conjunction with 3.a.i above) and MPCA to discuss the potential for MRB involvement in a new Minnesota River Basin plan (December 2007) and
 - ii. If deemed appropriate for the MRB to take the lead on such a plan, initiate development of and complete a draft plan (June 2008).
- 7) Evaluate MRB relations with and modes of assistance to basin partners, including the major watersheds, counties, NGOs, South Dakota, Iowa, and the citizens.**
 - a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Complete at least one visit with each participating (Member) county board, each of the major watersheds, and as many other stakeholders groups as possible (March 2008) and
 - ii. Prepare a report on our evaluation for the MRB and various basin partners and develop an outreach plan, with detailed programming options, to better serve the basin water quality planners and watershed staff (June 2008).

8) Complete at least two executive committee planning sessions.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Complete a mid-term progress planning session to go over strategies for the upcoming year with new and old officers (December 2007) and
- ii. Complete an end-of-year planning session to finalize the upcoming year's work plan and budget (April 2007)

9) Develop and implement an MRB communications process.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Evaluate communication options, such as newsletters, email lists, press releases, etc...and determine the best course of action to pursue (January 2008),
- ii. Determine items to be included in regular communications (January 2008), and
- iii. Implement action described in 9.a.i (June 2008).

10) Re-initiate formal annual reports that will be provided to state agencies (including BWSR), basin partners and legislators, and the Governor's office.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Evaluate the potential combination of this task with #3 above (January 2008) and
- ii. Complete an annual report the reviews and highlights MRB programs, progress, and use of public funding (June 2008).

11) Develop a presentation that highlights the activities of the MRB and the benefits and values of MRB membership, to include, but not be limited to reduced cost/complimentary professional development opportunities, technical services, grant writing, and meeting facilitation.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Collect information from participating counties about services, benefits, and values they attribute to being part of the MRB (October 2007),
- ii. Develop a "package" of services and perks available to MRB members (November 2007), and
- iii. Prepare a presentation and/or other media products to help convey the message about MRB membership values to non-member counties and other interested parties (December 2007).

12) Reconvene the technical and citizen advisory committee, either as one unit or separately, to advise the Minnesota River Board about strategic directions for work, topics of need, and modes in which the MRB can be of assistance and provide services for the watershed to lobby legislators and other policy makers as needed. Serve as a sounding board for policy issues associated with water quality in the basin.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Establish a budget to help cover the costs of those identified in 12.a.i above to participate in two meetings per year and collect information as needed (August 2007),
- ii. Establish a committee of technical representatives and citizen representatives whose input is critically important to the future work of the MRB (November 2007),
- iii. Conduct at least one technical and citizen advisory committee meeting to gather input (December 2007), and
- iv. Provide a set of recommendations to the MRB based on the input from the technical and citizen advisory committee (January 2008).

13) Develop MRB informational materials that can be made available for various Minnesota River events and utilize these products as part of a visibility plan that will identify and propose strategies to increase the awareness of the MRB and its programs.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Develop an MRB visibility plan (October 2007),
- ii. Develop a brochure that highlights the MRB mission, programs, and strategic objectives (October 2008) and
- iii. Develop a high quality display for use at county fairs, basin events, etc.... (January 2008)

14) Continue the current MRB Awards and expand the awards program to demonstrate support for water-related education in the basin.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Develop and implement an awards/incentive program for junior and senior high students from the basin participating in sanctioned science fair programs (January 2008),
- ii. Develop and implement an undergraduate scholarship program for students in the basin studying water quality issues (February 2008), and
- iii. Award two deserving participants from the basin with the "Confluence" and "Tributary" awards (May 2008).

15) Improve the MRB role in educational and research-based outreach to basin partners.

a. Progress Measures:

- i. Complete at least one major and one minor workshop, training event, or conference based on the plan developed as part of #6 and #7 above (June 2008).

- 16) Prepare a calendar that establishes activities for the MRB on an annual basis.**
- a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Development of calendar that sets the upcoming calendar year's meeting times and locations, officer nominations and installments, budget preparation, staff reviews, etc.... (November 2007).
- 17) Serve as a fiscal agent and/or information dissemination source for basin partners regarding Clean Water Legacy Act and other potential funding opportunities.**
- a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Hold at least one information meeting to facilitate the dissemination of grant information associated with Clean Water Legacy Funding and other programs supported by BWSR, MPCA, and other agencies/funding sources (October 2007) and
 - ii. Serve as the fiscal agent and/or grant preparation agent for at least 2 water quality grant applications that benefit MRB members and our partners (June 2008).
- 18) Review Minnesota Statute 103F.378 and determine if changes are needed during the 2008 session.**
- a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Evaluate the need for statutory change based on input from MRB members and partners (November 2007) and
 - ii. If changes are deemed necessary, work with basin legislative leaders to submit bills to make suggested modifications on the 2008 session (January 2008).
- 19) Secure new "projects" that will bring in external funding to the Minnesota River Board.**
- a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Write at least one successful grant and/or contract that will bring external funds into the MRB program (June 2008).
- 20) Identify new partnerships and bring people together to facilitate coordinated funding applications and continue to promote and enhance our existing project partnerships.**
- a. Progress Measures:
 - i. Meet with the Middle Minnesota River team and prepare at least one additional grant application, which also helps satisfy 17.1.ii (September 2007),
 - ii. Provide a minimum of 2 presentations on behalf of the BMP Challenge and Nutrient Trading AgFlex/CIG project and sign up at least 100 acres in the BMP Challenge program (May 2008),
 - iii. Meet at least twice with the Lake Crystal Clean Water Partnership and determine if any additional MRB assistance is needed at this time (May 2008), and
 - iv. Identify at least one new partnership and provide services in the form of grant application assistance, facilitation, and or other technical services (June 2008).

Proposed MRB FY 08 Budget

Line Items (details listed below budget)	Funding Source Used for Line Item Expense			Totals
	State of MN	County Dues*	External**	
<u>Available Funds</u>	\$ 100,000	\$ 29,900	\$ 20,000	\$ 149,900
<u>Expenses</u>				
0.5 FTE Executive Director	\$ 13,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,100	\$ 38,100
0.2 FTE Assistant Director	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,100	\$ 0	\$ 2,100
1.0 FTE Watershed Specialist	\$ 33,100	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 33,100
Student Worker	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,100
Fringe Benefits (All Staff)	\$ 18,700	\$ 7,800	\$ 4,300	\$ 30,800
MCIT Insurance	\$ 0	\$ 2,400	\$ 0	\$ 2,400
MRB Meeting Expenses	\$ 0	\$ 750	\$ 0	\$ 750
Communications	\$ 2,700	\$ 1,000	\$ 0	\$ 3,700
Travel	\$ 9,700	\$ 1,450	\$ 250	\$ 11,400
Printing	\$ 3,500	\$ 0	\$ 950	\$ 4,450
Awards Program	\$ 600	\$ 400	\$ 0	\$ 1,000
Supplies/Equipment	\$ 2,500	\$ 0	\$ 500	\$ 3,000
Marketing/Promotions	\$ 7,200	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 7,200
Outreach/Programming	\$ 8,000	\$ 0	\$ 1,800	\$ 9,800
Total Expenditures	\$ 100,000	\$ 29,900	\$ 20,000	\$ 149,900

*County Dues for calendar year 2007 are being stretched for 6 additional months (January 2007 to June 2008) to get the county dues contributions into a state fiscal year cycle, thus county contributions are slightly less than projected on the original budget. County 2008 dues will then be applied to the July 2008 to June 2009 fiscal cycle.

**External funds include estimates on anticipated grants and contracts for projects and other paid services provided by the Minnesota River Board.

Executive Director: 50% of the Executive Director Fisher's annual salary

Assistant Director: 20% of Assistant Director Wiley's annual salary

Watershed Specialist: 100% of watershed specialist salary (10/07 - 6/08) yet to be hired

Student Worker: 224 hours of student worker assistance

Fringe Benefits: Estimated Health Insurance, Required Leave, FICA, etc.... for all MRB staff listed above

MCIT Insurance: Estimated Annual Insurance Payment

MRB Meeting Expenses: Expenses for 6 MRB business meetings (\$600, facilities and refreshments), 2 executive committee planning sessions (\$150)

Communications: Postage (\$2,125), cellular phone and data services (\$1,575)

Travel: Designated Vehicle for MRB use (8/07 – 6/08; \$5,450), Guest Travel to various MRB Meetings (\$4,050); staff and executive committee per diem and personal mileage (\$1,900)

Printing: Preparation of various reports, newsletters, stationary needs, in-house copy needs (\$4,450)

Awards Program: "Tributary" and "Confluence" Awards (\$350), MRB Scholarship (\$350), Science Fair Support/Awards (\$300)

Supplies/Equipment: Office furniture for watershed specialist (\$600), Palm Treo and two cell phones (\$400), computer for watershed specialist (\$1,300), office supplies and items for meetings (\$700)

Marketing/Promotions: Advertising for new position (\$1,700), Brochure development and printing (\$900), Display development and construction (\$1,800), Marketing/visibility implementation (\$2,800)

Outreach/Programming: Technical/citizen advisory committee meetings (\$1,800), workshop, trainings, and conferences on grants/funding opportunities, ongoing research, program updates, etc... (\$8,000)