

Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB)
Strategic Planning Session III
March 30, 2012
Northern Light Casino, Walker, MN
Minutes

10:03 am - Meeting was called to order/pledge of Allegiance

- Group introductions

The 2012 Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) Chair Lyle Robinson (Hubbard County) thanked everyone for attending. He also made special note of the Mississippi Headwaters Guide Book that was for sale at the registration table for those interested. He then asked that the group go around the room and identify themselves by name and the organization they represent.

After introductions, a short video was played that provided the attendees with the history of the Mississippi Headwaters Board. MHB Chairman Lyle Robinson concluded by introducing Chris Pence (Crow Wing County Land Services Supervisor) to help facilitate discussion on the specific details of the newly acquired Clean Water Funds Accelerated Implementation Grant (AI) by the MHB.

Chris explained to the group that a packet was placed on the tables for each of the attendee to use for frame-by-frame reference during the Power Point overview of the AI Grant project (see attached). He also provided a synopsis of the Agenda for the day:

- 1) MHB History and board activity – Chris Pence (Crow Wing County Land Service Supervisor)
- 2) AI Grant detail and process – Dan Steward (BWSR)
- 3) Technical over-view of the MHB AI Grant Project - Mitch Brinks (Crow Wing County Water Specialist)
- 4) Summary/Open discussion (Q/A) – MHB Commissioner Paul Thiede (Crow Wing County)

The group was informed that a ‘Comment’ card will be handed out following Q/A. Each attendee was asked to fill one out and to give it to Pam Kichler (MHB Admin. Asst.) prior to Lunch

10:25 am to 11:30 am – AI Grant Project Review

- MHB History and Board activity

Key points:

- a) MHB Inception and Statutory requirements
- b) Mission
- c) Past accomplishments and
- d) Why this Grant and why now?

– Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation Grant detail and process (Power Point)

Key points:

- a) Context of the 2008 Clean Water Land and Legacy amendment
- b) Clean Water Fund allocation - 7 categories of funding
- c) ‘Implementation’ is the specific focus of the grant/proposed project

- d) Use of existing water quality data for assessment, trends, priority formulation; and language introduction into county plans as it relates to the river corridor

– Technical Summary: Project Narrative (Power Point)

Key points:

- a) Project vision and components
- b) Existing data assemblage: Local, State, Federal, Tribal & NGO involvement/coordination (portions supplied as ‘in-kind’). Also looking to avoid areas of work duplication
- c) 50 % will involve Contracting Work & Water Quality analysis using GIS
- c) Develop future conservation strategies for the corridor area
- d) Add river corridor conservation language to existing county water plans
- e) Gain future leverage to attract other grant opportunities for projects

At this point of discussion, Dan Steward (BWSR) was brought back to cover the Water Quality Analysis component. He further explained how this MHB AI Grant project will be modeled after a 2008-2009 ‘three county’ lake analysis program but will also be linked with what the DNR and MPCA have done w/lake data assessment and restoration modeling.

Mitch Brinks (Crow Wing County Water Specialist) provided an example of the type of data matrix & mapping that will be used, after which Chris Pence (Crow Wing County Land Services Supervisor) then summarized what happens next:

- ▶ Chris and Mitch will meet with each county (i.e. GIS/Water Planners/ESD personnel) to see what data is already there and what is still needed
- ▶ Ask what each county’s commitment is to the project and what’s their level of involvement
- ▶ What’s in it for the counties?
 - Identify and prioritize highly sensitive areas
 - Update Water Plans to include river/watershed language – required for state / federal grants
 - Possible development of a bi-annual gathering, a forum to encourage collaboration

11:30 pm – Summary

MHB Commissioner Paul Thiede (Crow Wing County) capsulated the information that was previously covered by starting with a summary of four things that this organization has set out to do w/this Grant:

- 1) Screening – focus on what is the river data already known, and what’s missing
- 2) Formulate priorities based on that data
- 3) Create uniform river/watershed language not yet included in county water plans
- 4) Establish where the MHB wants to go with this grant and how to develop the strategy to engage all 8 counties now and in the future

The attendees were again thanked for their participation. It’s the MHB’s intention to keep the dialog open and everyone is encouraged to forward to the MHB office, any suggestion/comments.

11:40 am to 12:00 pm – Q/A and Comments

- 1) Are there plans to do any work with the entities south of the 400 miles? **A** – The current focus is on the first 400 mile corridor protected by the MHB, but there may be many opportunities to open future dialog w/other stakeholders down stream

- 2) What is meant by 'Wild' and 'Scenic' designation, there are so many different rules? **A** – Statute designation for MHB is 500 and 1000 ft. in from the Mississippi River. There's few 'Wild' designated areas in the first 400 miles, most are 'Scenic'
- 3) Unclear designation information leads to problems w/variances. **A** – It is hoped that this grant will help gather the necessary existing data to better equip and assist local government in their decision making. The case of the Little Falls (old Larson Boat Works) is a prime example of the need for the MHB. This organization may also want to re-approach the municipalities again, opening dialog on issues of who's ordinance
- 4) There has been past issues due to the lack of information of the work of the MHB, but most would support this Grant project. Some suggested they would also like to see the River Watch program re-energized someday
- 5) The mapping aspect of this project will prove to be extremely important but the project may also need to be broadened to focus on other water / land in the watershed
- 6) Are we doing anything with the tributaries? **A** – This plan will gather some data and look for problem spots but the initial focus will be the MH 400 mile river corridor
- 7) Much of the land is State and Federal; why not get money from them? **A** – The success of this program will help the MHB (and the individual counties) apply for future grants on specific problem areas (i.e. stream bank erosion). There's foreseeable advantages applying for grants with the power of a unified JPB of eight counties
- 8) If you compare the river to lakes, lakes have lake associations to deal w/local problems. Who is the 'association' for the river – the MHB. The organization will coordinate w/BWSR and others once the data identifies problem areas. It will also encourage landowners to apply for grants, to help mitigate problems etc.

12:00 pm – Thank You - Adjournment

Prior to lunch, the group heard from former Senator Bob Lessard, key proponent of the bill and legislation for the inception of the MHB in 1981. Bob provided some history and thoughts on the future of this organization and shared news of possible resource opportunities through the Legacy amendment. After Bob Lessard finished, the attendees were provided lunch.

12:08 pm – Break for Lunch

Through the lunch hour, the attendees listened to DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr. The Commissioner was asked to be the Key note speaker today to allow him to share ideas and related news on conservation programs currently underway. He also highlighted available funding opportunities.

During the hour long talk, the Commissioner also provided details of his past personal and professional experiences, his thoughts on the MHB as an organization and its critical past & future role in championing river protection. He pointed out that the Governor assigned all of the appointed Commissioners three principles to follow: Promote jobs, ensure government works for Minnesotans and advance open/on-going communication w/citizens. Commissioner Landwehr's primary initiative is 'the voice of those in Northern Minnesota be heard in St. Paul'. He is excited about the future of this organization, and feels the MHB's newly acquired grant project will accelerate and reinforce the true definition of 'conservation' (wise use) of State funds. In closing, he re-emphasized his commitment to this board, and that he will do everything to make sure that the MHB stays in the State budget with elevated funding, ensuring that the MHB remains a viable entity for the future. The charge for all of us is and should remain, Water Quality and Water Protection. It is very important to Minnesota at all levels and must be preserved for generations to come.

The Upper Mississippi River Gather 4 started immediately following lunch.



Prioritizing Conservation Project Implementation in the 400-mile Mississippi Headwaters



Clean Water Funds: 2012

Accelerated Implementation Grant	\$100,000
Leveraged Funds*	\$25,000
Total Project Budget	\$125,000

* Leveraged Funds include required 25% match

Targeted Water:

Headwaters of the Mississippi River

Project Sponsor:

Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB)

Partners:

Member Counties: Clearwater, Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, Itasca, Aitkin, Crow Wing, Morrison

Grant Period:

January 2012 - December 2014

Project Contact:

Mitch Brinks
 (218) 824-1128
 mitch.brinks@co.crow-wing.mn.us
 http://mississippiheadwaters.org/



Project Narrative

The 400-mile stretch of the Mississippi River from its Headwaters at Lake Itasca to Morrison County near Little Falls is the focus of this project and the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) is the local sponsor.

The Headwaters project will gather existing water quality data to determine river water quality over time. Electronically available land use information will be gathered and coordinated among all 8 counties along the river. Together, this information will help identify two main types of areas along the river: 1) areas of concern where water quality is showing degradation, and 2) areas that are critical to long-term water quality protection.

The MHB, working in cooperation with the member counties will develop implementation plans and strategies geared specifically for the Mississippi River and incorporate them into the individual County Comprehensive Local Water Plans. These recommendations would be specific strategies, often crossing county boundaries for implementation.

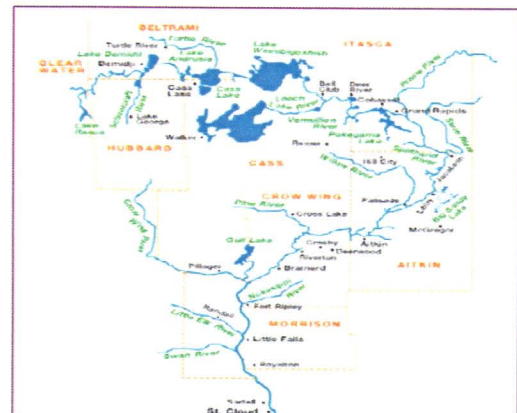
With this type of priority information in hand, the MHB and the member counties can coordinate funding strategies for targeted, effective implementation of conservation practices that take advantage of future Clean Water Land and Legacy funding opportunities as well as providing greater coordination among the counties on planning and applying existing land use authority.

Measurable Outcomes:

Water quality trend analysis along the river, critical area identification and implementation strategy identification

Coordinated dataset of Geographic Information Systems & analysis of land use along the project corridor.

Integrate implementation strategies into Comprehensive Local Water Management Plans



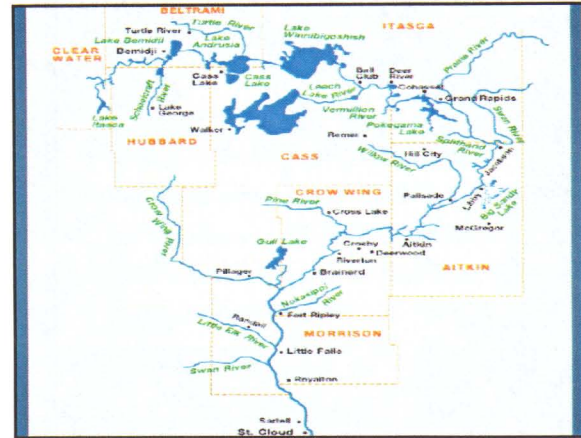
Prioritizing Conservation Projects Implementation in the 400-mile Mississippi Headwaters

Presented to:
Mississippi Headwaters Counties

Presented by:
Mitch Brinks & Chris Pence
Crow Wing County Land Services

Dan Steward
Board of Water & Soil Resources

Date:
March 30, 2012





Basics of the Grant

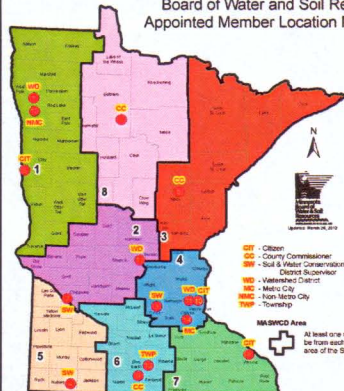
- December 2011: Received BWSR accelerated implementation grant
- Title: *Prioritizing Conservation Projects Implementation in the 400-mile Mississippi Headwaters*
- Amount: \$100,000
- Match Requirement: 25% (cash or in-kind)
- Time Frame: 3 years (2012 – 2014)
- Grant Coordinator: Crow Wing County

BWSR Grant Process

- 2008: Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment Passed
- Created 4 different Funds:
 - Clean Water (33%)
 - Outdoor Heritage (33%)
 - Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund (19.75%)
 - Parks & Trails (14.25%)
- Clean Water Fund (Implementation)
 - BWSR Clean Water Assistance
 - **BWSR Clean Water Accelerated Implementation**
 - BWSR Conservation Drainage
 - BWSR Community Partners
 - MDA Ag BMP Loans / Livestock Waste Management
 - SSTS Abatement
 - MDH Well Sealing Grants



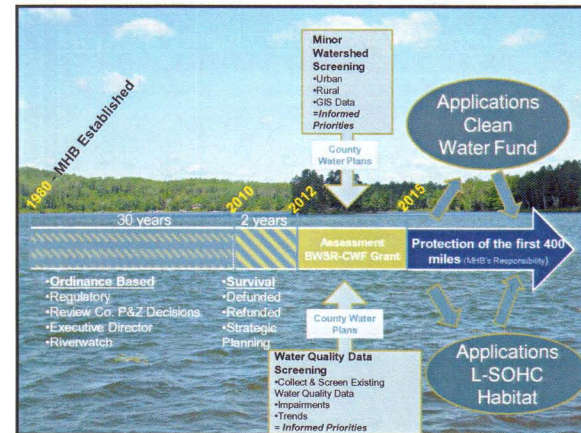
Board of Water and Soil Resources Appointed Member Location Map (2012)



ID	Member	Appt. Ends
1	Gene Tiesmann	2014
2	Steve Sauerland	2016
3	Robert Strand	2013
4	Paul Lempert	2014
5	Brian Neustadt	Chair, 2014
6	Gerald Amburg	Vice Chair, 2015
7	Quentin Sirbanks	2015
8	John Meier	2013
9	Tom Lovell	2013
10	Jack Dillmore	2016
11	Joseph Collins	2016
12	Todd Pitzer	2015
13	Sandra Looker	2016
14	Christy Fogarty	2013
15	Keith Hulseath	2015

Agency Seats
 16, Marlene Wohlman, MDA
 17, Chris Ehrum, MDH
 18, Tom Landwehr, DNR
 19, Pam Sleeper, UME
 20, Rebecca Flood, MPCA

All seat one member must be from each MNSWCD area of the State



Project Vision:

Developing the framework & prioritization methods for protection strategies & implementation projects along the corridor

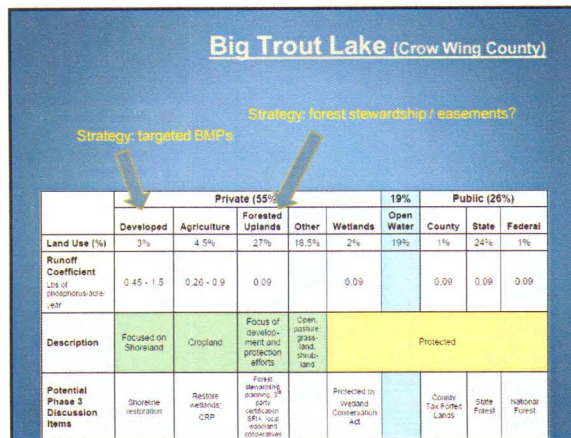
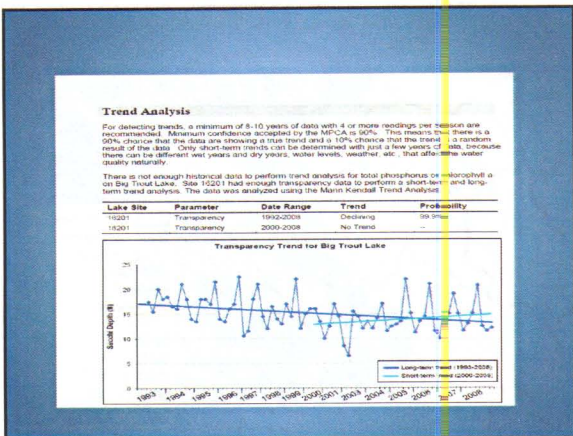
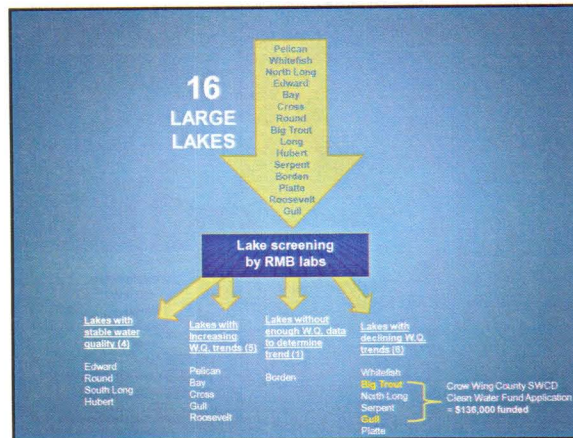
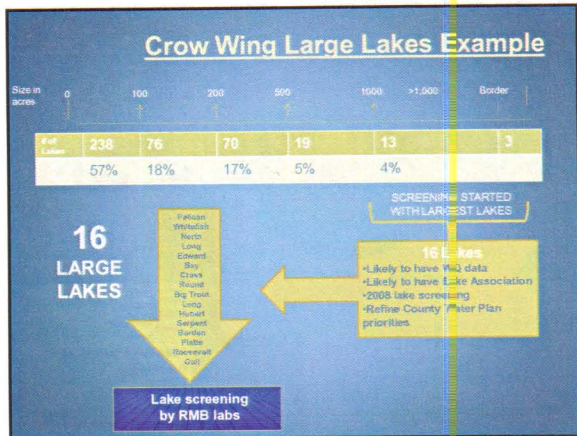
- ### Vision: Components
- **Framework**
 - Stakeholders: bringing together of folks
 - Coordinated effort going forward
 - **Methods**
 - Rely on available data and methodologies developed by DNR, MPCA, others
 - Allows us to ask the right questions
 - Helps us determine priority locations to focus on
 - **Strategies for protection:**
 - Forest stewardship planning
 - Conservation easements / Acquisition for sensitive areas
 - **Projects**
 - Restoration / protection of sensitive areas
 - Developing performance standards for land use activities in the corridor
 - Identifying location for future trails, river access points, etc.
 - **Corridor:** MHB Jurisdiction along the first 400 miles of the Miss. River

- ### Project Components
- **Contract Work**
 - Water Quality Data Analysis (45% of grant)
 - GIS Data Gathering & Analysis (14% of grant)
 - Consultative Overview of Data and Implementation Recommendations (10%)
 - **Local Involvement**
 - County Water Planners
 - County GIS Staff
 - County Planning & Zoning Administrators
 - Tribal entities
 - State and federal agencies
 - **Implementation Strategies** (based on findings from above)
 - **County Water Plan Update** Mississippi River Charter
 - **Miscellaneous**
 - Meetings & public presentations, Administrative (<3%)

- ### Contract Work Summary
- **Water Quality Data Analysis (45% of grant)**
 - Environmental laboratory to gather and summarize all available water quality data
 - Assessments and trend analysis similar to large-lake assessments
 - Work with MPCA's Intensive Watershed Monitoring program
 - **GIS Data Gathering & Analysis (14% of grant)**
 - Land-related data that is geographic in nature
 - Determine if any land use trends exist
 - Provide baseline data
 - Model for identifying sensitive areas for targeted implementation projects
 - **Consultative Overview of Data and Implementation Recommendations (10%)**
 - Consultant: Sandy Verry

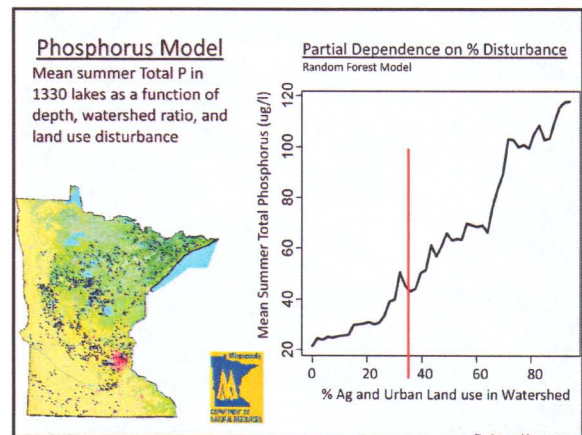
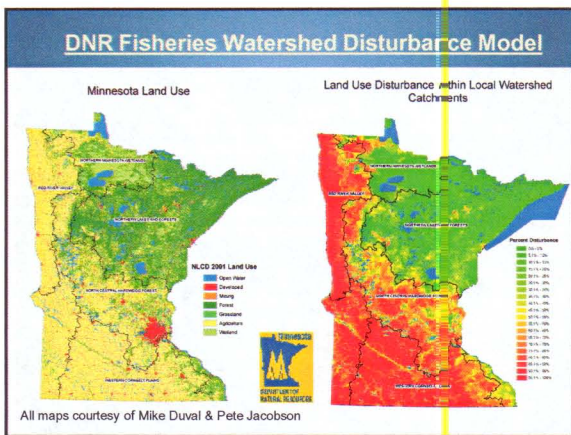
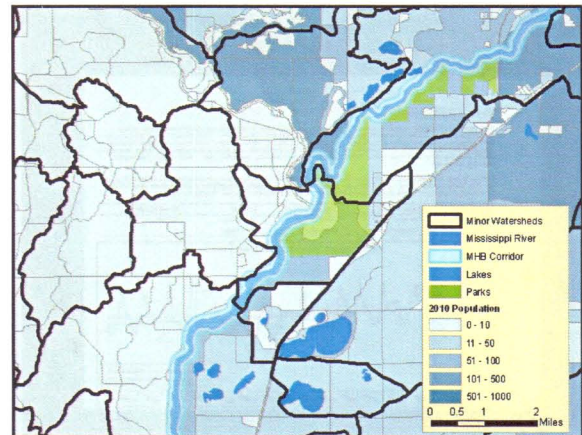
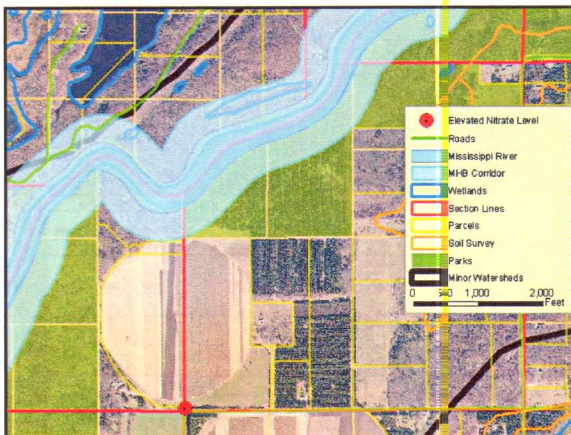
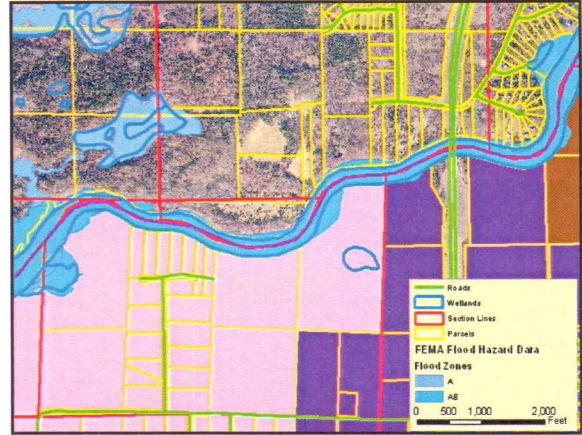
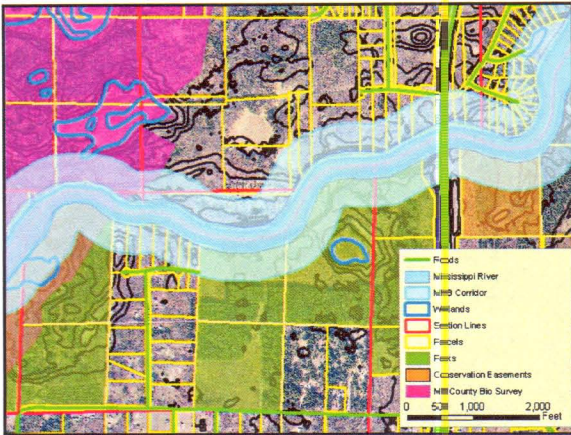
- ### Contract Work: Water Quality Analysis
- Pull together existing water quality data related to the river
 - Water Chemistry (Phosphorus, chlorophyll a, mercury)
 - Water Clarity (Total Suspended Solids)
 - Fish and other biological indicators
 - Vegetation (wild rice, etc.)
 - Flow
 - River watch data
 - Sources: MPCA, USGS, Army Corps of Engineers, DNR, MHB
 - Assessments and trend analysis similar to large-lake assessments

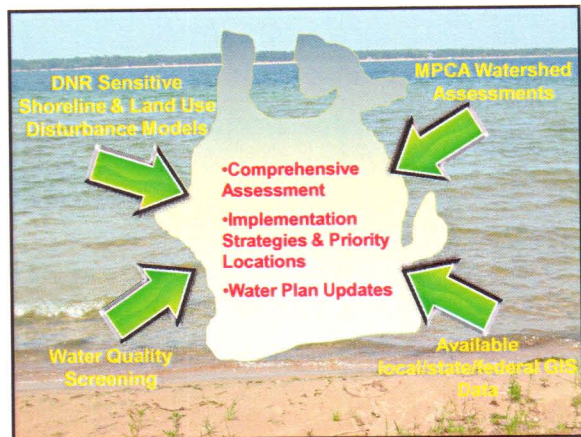
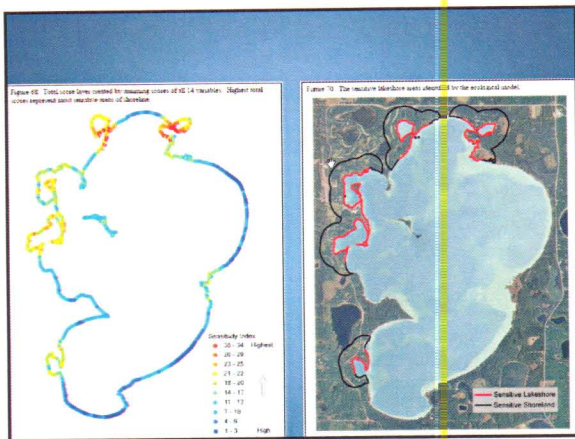
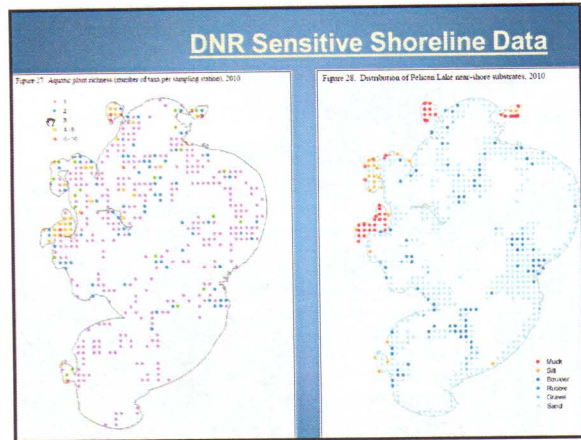
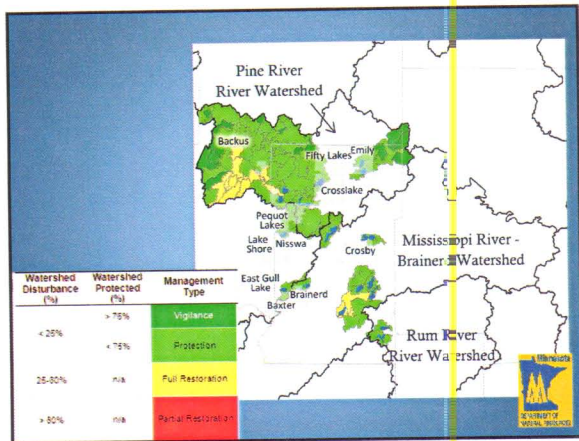
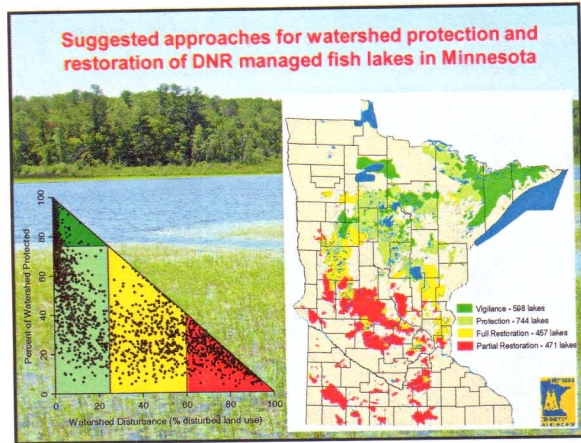
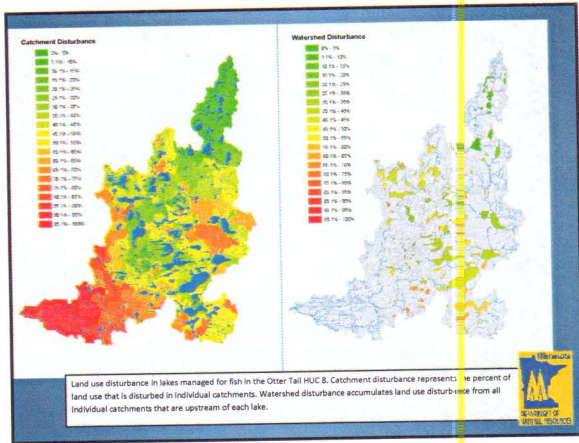
- ### Lake Screening
- **Round 1: 3 County Pilot (2008-2009)**
 - 45 Large Lakes (generally >1,000 acres)
 - \$75,000
 - Aitkin
 - Cass
 - Crow Wing
 - **Round 2: 13 Counties (2011-2012)**
 - 144 Large Lakes (generally > 500 acres)
 - \$95,000
 - Aitkin
 - Becker
 - Beltrami
 - Cass
 - Clearwater
 - Cook
 - Crow Wing
 - Douglas
 - Hubbard
 - Koochiching
 - Otter Tail
 - Stearns
 - Wright



- ### Contract Work: GIS
- Goal: Analysis of land area along corridor using a geographic information system (GIS)
 - Scope: Limited to 500-1000 ft or adjacent minor watershed
 - Data assembly & synthesis from all sources
 - Types of Data:
 - Ownership (public vs. private)
 - Land Use/Cover
 - Wetlands
 - Impaired waters
 - Bluffs / Steep slopes
 - Soil types
 - Culturally sensitive areas
 - Demographic data
 - Trails
 - Boat Landings
 - Impervious surfaces/developed areas
 - MN County Biological Survey data
 - Parcels & Land Use Classifications

- ### Contract Work: GIS
- Broad baseline data
 - Data collection and analysis broad enough to allow MHB and other entities the ability to make informed decisions about a wide variety of environmental, recreational, cultural, and transportation projects and issues that fall within the MHB's comprehensive plan
 - Build GIS model specific enough to identify sites for implementation of future projects and initiatives
 - Model Goals:
 - Identify highly-sensitive shorelines along Corridor
 - Develop tool to prioritize stretches of shoreline where future efforts could be most successful
 - Identify watersheds most in need of protection efforts due to various stressors
 - Identify gaps for further research
 - Refine model as we go





Contract Work: Consultant Review

- Consultative Overview of Data and Implementation Recommendations (10%)
 - Consultant: Sandy Verry
 - U.S. Forest Service, Retired
 - River/Watershed Consultant throughout upper Midwest
 - Review data collected
 - Provide insights during the modeling process
 - Ideas for future implementation strategies

County Involvement Summary

- Initial meetings with each County
 - Discuss project & existing work along river corridor
 - Explain need for GIS data
 - Pulling together existing data
 - Time commitment
 - Level of involvement is flexible
- Bi-annual get-together
 - Project update
 - Share results from water quality & GIS analysis
 - Brainstorm for possible future implementation strategies or areas to focus further study on
- Water Plan Update: Mississippi River Chapter
- Bigger Picture: Allow MHB to leverage future funding in partnership with LGUs & NGOs

Questions?

■ Contact us:

- Mitch Brinks, Crow Wing County Water Protection Specialist
 - mitch.brinks@co.crow-wing.mn.us
 - 218-824-1128
- Chris Pence
 - Chris.pence@co.crow-wing.mn.us
 - 218-824-1125
- Dan Steward, BWSR
 - Dan.steward@state.mn.us
 - 218-828-2598

MHB GIS Data Matrix for Prioritizing Conservation Projects Implementation in the 400-mile Mississippi Headwaters

Counties	Human & Cultural Uses										Socio-economic									
	Soils	Lakes	Wetlands	Miss. R.	Streams	Contours / Bluffs	Forest Types	MCBS	Land Use/ Land Cover	Feedlots	Impervious Surface	Watershed Disturbance	Septics	Dams	DNR Hi0 Permits	Cultural Sites	Towers	Conservation Projects	Ownership	Demo-graphic
Morrison	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Crow Wing	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Aitkin	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Itasca	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Cass	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Beltrami	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Hubbard	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S
Clearwater	F	L,S	S	L	L,S	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S	S	L,S	L,S	S,F	S	S,F	L,S	L,S,F	L,S,F	S

L = local source S = state source F = federal source Bold = data secured

Counties	Recreation																			
	Roads	RR	Counties	Mississippi Corridor	Designated forests	Watersheds	Zoning	Parcels	Easements	Sections	Section 1/4, 1/4s	Cities / Townships	Floodways	Address Point	Trails	Boat Landings	WMAs	Campgrounds	Parks	SNA's
Morrison	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Crow Wing	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Aitkin	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Itasca	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Cass	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Beltrami	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Hubbard	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S
Clearwater	L	L,S	S	L	L,S,F	S	L	L	L,S,F	L	L	L	F	L	L,S,F	L,S,F	S	S	L,S,F	S

DNR Com. Tom Landwehr speech

