

Mississippi Headwaters Board Work Plan

July 1st, 2014 to June 30th, 2015

This Work Plan is submitted as required by Minnesota Statue 103F.361 to 103F.377 and the MNDNR. The Work Plan is to be implemented by the joint powers board member counties of Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca and Morrison in conjunction with the attached budget.

WORK PLAN:

The Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) participates with and provides leadership and staff support to citizens and partners within the Upper 400 mile Mississippi River corridor, as funding permits, in four program areas:

- A.** Long Range Planning through administration of the Comprehensive Plan
- B.** Resource Stewardship, River utilization and Best Management Practices implementation
- C.** Public Education, Information and Incentives.
- D.** Administration.

The Mississippi Headwaters Board has made river protection a priority, and remains ready to champion the development of this cause. The funding necessary to complete this will require utilizing many revenue streams such as: Clean Water Legacy, general appropriation, Outdoor Heritage funding, and private funding opportunities. The work plan and budget constitute an effective plan to coordinate Mississippi Headwaters Board efforts with the Minnesota's water protection initiatives. This organization is up to the challenge with and through the on-going support of the state of Minnesota, our eight member counties, various local agencies, and private partners. Below are key initiatives that the Mississippi Headwaters Board plans to execute, followed by the four program area details as mentioned above.

2015 INITIATIVES

I. To add value by bringing implementation resources to the upper Mississippi headwaters area through the following initiatives:

- A.** Eighteen percent of the counties in MN (16 of 87) of which eight are in the Mississippi Headwaters Board area will utilize the sub-watershed model as a water plan strategy as a basis for grant attainment.
- B.** The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) recognizes this sub-watershed tool for Soil and Water Conservation District grant requests.
- C.** An increase in both public and private funding sources toward the Mississippi Headwaters Board to coordinate efforts of environmental partners.

- D. Strategically leverage federal dollars for protection of the Mississippi river by working with Camp Ripley, MN Forest Resource Council, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to assist these organizations in protecting the river.

Outcome: To add value by bringing implementation resources to the Mississippi headwaters area.

Timeline: 5 years

Measurable: See letters A-D above as benchmarks.

II. Prioritization Conference

The Executive Director will plan and implement a meeting on November 20th and invite the legislative delegation that represents the Mississippi Headwaters Board area along with regional and state staff from the DNR, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and BWSR to attend. Emphasis will be on the sub-watershed prioritization strategic approach; an update on other decision support tools being utilized by local resource professionals, and Source Water Protection information.

Outcome: The legislative delegation and state officials will have a better understanding of how the MHB sub-watershed prioritization strategy directly applies to the conservation work being done within the eight county area, and demonstrate how improved integration of state and local planning efforts will be utilized within the Mississippi Headwaters area

Timeline: July 2014 - November 2014

Measurable: A survey will be developed to determine if the outcomes are reached.

III. Storm water Planning grant (BWSR)

The Executive Director will work with MS4 cities within the MHB corridor and engineering firms to develop storm water planning options for participating cities. After completion, a meeting with all the MS4 cities will be held to answer questions regarding storm water practices and functions.

Outcome: MS4 cities will be able to understand the options and complexities of storm water planning; a better understanding of storm water practices and functions will be obtained; and a closer working relationship will be developed with the MHB.

Timeline: July 2014 -May 2015

Measurable: One meeting will be held in December of 2014.

IV. MN Forest Resource Council Opportunity

The Executive Director will be a member of the North Central Landscape Committee and utilize this role to develop landscape stewardship plans leading to increased resources for the eight county area.

Outcome: The North Central Landscape Committee will integrate landscape stewardship plans in the Mississippi Headwaters Board area.

Timeline: July 2014 - June 2015

Measurable: Executive Director will be placed on the North Central Landscape Committee and compile minutes which demonstrate movement toward desired outcome.

V. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

The Executive Director will apply for Initiative Foundation funding to coordinate and assess current and new innovative strategies.

Outcome: Counties, Department of Natural Resources, and Soil & Water Conservation District partners will benefit from assessment and coordination activities of the MHB by learning about the effectiveness of assessed strategy.

Timeline: July 2014 – June 2015

Measurable: Participation from Counties and Soil and Water Conservation Districts on assessment of current operations and capacity to implement AIS program.

PROGRAM AREAS

A. Long range planning through administration of the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Review the existing plan annually and update as needed.
2. Facilitate public hearings in each county on any plan changes.
3. Facilitate communication and cooperation between the counties and other agencies via resolutions of support and cooperative agreement procurement.
4. Continue to assist the eight individual Mississippi Headwaters Board counties in the development and improvement of a river specific Water Plan chapter amendment specific to water quality objectives along the first 400-miles of the river corridor.
5. Submit reports as required to State and DNR.
6. Review and certification of land use actions within the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River corridor.
7. Prepare and present to the appropriate policy committees of the Minnesota legislature a biennial report concerning the action of the Board in exercising the authority granted by the legislature under sections 103F.361 to 103F.377

B. Encourage Resource Stewardship and Best Management Practices.

1. Partner with entities that work within the MHB area through exchange of report analysis (i.e. GIS and existing data sets).
2. Seek effective interface with lake and river citizen groups.
3. Continue to encourage new techniques and practices specifically in municipal annexations and townships through communication and collaboration.
4. Review, certify, and track city and township ordinances as they affect the Mississippi Headwaters corridor, while supporting each in the strategic development and implementation of projects along the river.
6. Update and maintain the Mississippi Headwaters Board web site to provide the public with easy access to information about the board, and other pertinent regulatory information.
7. Conduct public meetings and training as necessary to afford opportunity to the public to be fully informed of the plan, Best Management Practices and project cost-share opportunities.
8. Advocate safe and environmentally conscientious community and public recreational access to and usage of the river corridor.
9. Produce literature for the on-going education of river stewardship.

10. Support the positions of the Mississippi Headwaters Board and perform tasks as required to fulfill the State statute and values of the board.
11. Continued attention to the coordinated management of headwaters dams as a system rather than individual sites in the Mississippi Headwaters Board corridor.
12. Work with counties on Aquatic Invasive Species prevention strategies.

C. Plan Implementation through Public Education, Information and Incentives.

1. Seek funding for various Mississippi river quality programs.
2. Participate and encourage implementation of goals through collaboration on partner projects in the Minnesota Upper Mississippi watershed basin.
3. Seek opportunities to inform the public of water monitoring opportunities and practices.
4. Work with other area organizations and partners on various grants throughout the Upper Mississippi River for water monitoring programs.

D. Administration:

Consistent with the MCIT (Minnesota County Trust Insurance) and other government policies, Mississippi Headwaters Board will administer, coordinate, and communicate efficiently and ethically in the public interest, to provide cost efficient, reliable and courteous public service to the best of its ability. This will be accomplished in compliance with the enabling statute and the Comprehensive Land-use Plan. The computer programs will be used to the maximum potential within the abilities of staff, taking into consideration that many constituents rely on traditional means of communication and cannot be neglected.

1. Provide technical support, staff support, comment, training and review as needed.
2. Ensure consistent, administered action of minimum standards through zoning procedures and a prioritized risk assessment methodology for specific river focused objectives.
3. Provide review and comment of conditional use projects in the corridor.
4. Certify county actions on variances, ordinances, and amendments to zoning ordinances; or utilize process for appeal.
5. Work with applicants (and/or local zoning personnel) prior to the board meeting in order to improve application quality and compliance.
6. Meetings (External Operations)
 - a. The Mississippi Headwaters Board will meet monthly or as necessary to review and certify zoning variances, amendments and ordinances from the eight member counties.
 - b. Prepare testimony as needed.
 - c. Provide an agenda that provides information on budget, correspondence, actions, and pertinent issues.
 - d. Meet with the Technical Advisory Committee as deemed necessary to review over the Comprehensive plan and area zoning requirements.
 - e. Mississippi Headwaters Advisory Committee will meet according to the by-laws and as deemed necessary.
 - f. Assemble a Project Review Committee to assist the board with filtering area zoning/environmental projects for board involvement.
 - g. Administer and maintain professional services and contracts as needed.
7. Internal Operations

- a. The Executive Director with the direction of the Mississippi Headwaters Board will oversee activities in compliance with the Crow Wing Personnel Policy and continue the planning process to acquire funding for the position to oversee day to day operations and ensure funding sustainability.
 - i. Define duties & obligations.
 - ii. Assure eight county participation with the Mississippi Headwaters Board activities.
 - iii. Locate/strengthen ties with other partners and legislative agencies.
 - iv. Formal planning process for continued development of Mississippi Headwaters Board role.
- b. The Fiscal Agent with the direction of the Executive Director will perform office duties in compliance with the Personnel Policy.
 - i. Maintain office and computer network.
 - ii. Maintain website and mailing list files.
 - iii. Archive old files.
 - iv. Address needs in compliance with the MCIT, OSHA, and other recommendations.
 - v. Maintain financial system and provide:
 - Revenue accounts, invoices, contracts and expenditures.
 - Monthly financial reports to the Mississippi Headwaters Board.
 - Assistance for audits.
 - Prepare annual and FY budget, materials, and requests for each county.
 - Coordinate annual budget.
- c. Staff Development
 - 1. Continued professional education of staff.
 - 2. Fulfill federal, state, local and Mississippi Headwaters Board requirements for employees as discussed in the Crow Wing County Personnel Policy.