



**Mississippi Headwaters Board
Meeting Agenda
Cass County Courthouse
Walker, MN
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86160659832>
December 19, 2025
10:00 am**

10:00 AM

- **Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

10:05 AM Approve/Amend

- Agenda
- Consent Agenda – November 2025 Expenses & Minutes

Correspondence

- Press Release

Planning and Zoning (Actions)

- M12a25- Morrison County Belle Prairie Park

Action / Discussion Items:

- Audit Follow Up
- Legislative effort to raise MHB base- discussion
- Minnesota Traditions social media- discussion/action
- We Are Water- Little Falls- discussion
- Executive Directors report-discussion

Misc: Legislature Update (if any), County Updates

Meeting Adjourned - Thank you

Mtgs: January 23, 2026 9:00 AM- MHB BOARD MEETING- Walker MN.

Mississippi Headwaters Board
November 21, 2025
Cass County Courthouse, Walker, MN
Optional interactive technology: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89730243253>

MEETING
MINUTES

Members present: Ted Van Kempen (Hubbard), Scott Bruns (Cass), Craig Gaasvig (Beltrami), Bobby Kasper (Morrison), Michael Kearney (Aitkin), and Tim Terrill (Executive Director).

Video Interactive Reasons: None

Others Present: Chris Lahn (Northern Township), Brent Rud (Beltrami ESD), Greg Larson (Beltrami)

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Ted VanKempen asked if there were any additions to the agenda. **M/S (Kearney/Kasper) to approve of the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**

M/S (Barrows/Gaasvig) to approve of the Consent agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence/Outreach

1. Tim Provided pictures of the biennial conference along with a post from the Crow Wing County social media site. He also provided the board with a press release that was sent out to the MHB newspapers about the check presentation to Bowen Lodge for an archaeological study.

Planning and Zoning

B11a25- Coulthart Variance- Greg Larson from Beltrami County presented the Variance before the board which would involve tearing down and rebuilding a cabin at the same location with an increased height (from 14 to 19 feet), and a slightly larger footprint of forty-four square feet. Greg explained the property is on Cass Lake with the same structure setback as the previous home. The current impervious surface will remain at 24 percent. Discussion ensued and Comm. VanKempen asked if there was a stormwater management plan submitted, and Greg responded that a stormwater plan was submitted in 2020, but a new one would be required. Comm. Kasper asked if the septic system is compliant and Greg responded that it was just approved. **M/S (Gaasvig/Barrows) to approve of the Variance with conditions. Motion carried unanimously.**

NT11a25- Mikkelson Variance- Chris Lahn, Northern Township administrator presented the request to tear down and rebuild a house, moving it from forty-six feet to 68 feet from Lake Bemidji which is still short of the required 100-foot setback. Chris explained that the impervious surface would increase slightly but remain under the 31.25% threshold with a stormwater mitigation plan. Chris stated that the stormwater mitigation

plan is submitted for review to Northern Township. Discussion ensued and Comm. VanKempen expressed support for the variance since the structure would be moved back further from the lake. **M/S (Gaasvig/Kasper) to approve of the Variance. Motion carried unanimously.**

NT11b25- Borgenson Variance- Chris Lahn presented the request for a small accessory shed structure to replace a damaged one from the 2025 Bemidji Storm. He explained that it can't meet the 100-foot setback, and the plans show that the accessory structure will be placed around 50 feet from the OHWM. He noted the structure is temporary in nature. Discussion ensued and Comm. Gaasvig noted that it is just a shed with no septic, water, or drainage issues. **M/S (Gaasvig/Barrows) to approve of the Variance. Motion carried unanimously.**

MN Power Boswell Solar Construction project- Tim shared information about Minnesota Powers planned solar generation project in Cohasset. He noted that the project is on the Mississippi and by rule, requires consultation with the DNR and the MHB. Tim brought up the proposed schedule that MN Power suggested, and he explained what the Comprehensive Plan states about infrastructure utilities. He mentioned that potential concerns about tribal approval, setbacks from the Mississippi River, and whether solar panels are considered impervious surfaces. Commissioners brought up that Itasca County zoning should be invited to the meeting as well. In conclusion, Tim will attend a meeting in mid-December with MN Power and the DNR and will raise questions about the topics.

Action/Discussion:

1. **Minnesota Traditions social media bids-** Tim presented a bid from White Box Media for \$34,396 to run the 2026 social media campaign. He explained this funding is to focus on AIS education and behavioral change. Discussion ensued and many Commissioners questioned the value of continued AIS education when so many people are aware of it. It was thought that the funding could be better spent on AIS prevention or remediation. They thought that this may not be a space that MHB wants to occupy any longer. Tim answered questions regarding ownership of the content and SM platforms saying that MN Traditions is owned by the MHB and not Fishing the Wildside and that funding comes from county contributions and not MHB base funding. There was also discussion regarding whether this wasn't funded than what MN Traditions could be used for in the future. **M/S (Gaasvig/Kasper) to deny the bid from White Box Media. Motion carried with 5 ayes, and one nay from Comm. VanKempen.** Comm. Barrows suggested that a survey be sent out to contributing counties asking about their satisfaction with the program and this be tabled until next month.
2. **Legislative efforts for MHB base funding-** Tim mentioned about submitting a Bill request to Rep. Josh Heintzeman who is currently the Environment and Natural Resources Chair to help raise the base of MHB funding. Commissioners agreed with the idea and Comm. Barrows suggested sending letters to all committee members and MHB Representatives and Senators for support.

3. **Resourcetainment Structure- Tabled until December.**

Executive Directors Report

1. Tim mentioned that after the land exchange is passed and completed, he plans to invite partners to discuss with Bowen Lodge about future acquisition or easement options. Comm. Barrows cautioned against spending too much time on private property matters.

County Updates- None

M/S (Barrows/Bruns) to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Ted Van Kempen, Chair

Executive Director Tim Terrill

November SFY'26 Budget Summary		YTD spending/rei mbursement	Projected Budget	% of budget spent	
<u>Revenues:</u>	<u>Monthly Amount</u>				<u>Notes</u>
Governor's DNR grant (53290)	\$ 30,313.00	\$ 69,752.40	\$ 124,000.00	56.25%	non competitive quarterly reimbursement
LSOHC grant (53290)		\$ 4,692.48	\$ 7,800.00	60.16%	LSOHC reimbursement
Guidebook sales (58400)		\$ 242.84	\$ 100.00	242.84%	reimbursment for Guidebook sales
Enbridge program (58300)			\$ 8,000.00	0.00%	enbridge reimbursement
Miscell. Other revenue (58300)		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	16.67%	Visit Grand Rapids payment
MCIT Dividend (58300)	\$ 14.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 200.00	7.00%	MCIT refund
County Support (52990)			\$ 12,000.00	0.00%	8 county support
Total	\$ 30,327.00	\$ 75,701.72	\$ 34,100.00		
<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>Monthly Amount</u>				<u>Notes</u>
Salaries/Benefits FICA/Med/PERA/LIFE/LTD/Hlth/ WC(61000)	\$ 9,408.32	\$ 50,763.36	\$ 123,307.00	41.17%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
MCIT insurance/work comp/liability (61500)			\$ 3,000.00	0.00%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
MHB board Per Diem (62680)	\$ 450.00	\$ 850.00	\$ 3,000.00	28.33%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Hotel/Meals/travel exp. (63340)		\$ 165.23	\$ 500.00	33.05%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Commissioner Mileage (62720)	\$ 988.40	\$ 1,391.00	\$ 3,500.00	39.74%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Employee Mileage (63320)	\$ 236.60	\$ 2,382.66	\$ 5,500.00	43.32%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Professional Services (62990)	\$ 5,669.15	\$ 21,711.15	\$ 35,000.00	62.03%	CW financial services, Biennial Conference room, Big Check Printing
Office supplies/operations (64090)	\$ 188.50	\$ 1,300.31	\$ 3,000.00	43.34%	telephone, Dropbox renewal, laser pointer
Training & Registration Fees (63380)		\$ 450.00	\$ 800.00	56.25%	
Total	\$ 16,940.97	\$ 79,013.71	\$ 177,607.00		

Governor's DNR grant is always \$124K every year

LSOHC grant is around \$6K to \$8K every year

*The total under revenue does not reflect the \$124K because it is a non-competitive grant, and amounts are in the fiscal year.

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2025 11 TO 2025 11

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT PROJ JNL EFF DATE	SRC REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
74830	53290	Natural Resources							
						REVISED BUDGET			.00
					PER 01		-31,013.04	-31,013.04	
					PER 04		-8,051.74	-39,064.78	
					PER 05		-33,595.97	-72,660.75	
					PER 07		-39,439.40	-112,100.15	
					PER 08		-8,802.84	-120,902.99	
					PER 10		-9,609.64	-130,512.63	
25/11	1201 11/26/25	GNI					-30,313.00	-160,825.63	
	ST OF MN	DNR1Q-26							
	LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:			.00	CREDITS:		-160,825.63	NET:	-160,825.63
74830	58300	Miscellaneous Other Revenue							
						REVISED BUDGET			.00
					PER 01		-17,750.00	-17,750.00	
					PER 02		-32,700.00	-50,450.00	
					PER 03		-13,000.00	-63,450.00	
					PER 04		-350.00	-63,800.00	
					PER 05		-1,000.00	-64,800.00	
					PER 07		-1,000.00	-65,800.00	
					PER 10		-3,500.00	-69,300.00	
25/11	969 11/21/25	GNI					-14.00	-69,314.00	
	EFT	MCIT PAYABLES DIVIDEND							
	LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:			.00	CREDITS:		-69,314.00	NET:	-69,314.00
74830	61000	Salaries & Wages - Regular							
						REVISED BUDGET			.00
					PER 01		6,215.61	6,215.61	
					PER 02		6,625.85	12,841.46	
					PER 03		6,464.23	19,305.69	
					PER 04		6,464.23	25,769.92	
					PER 05		11,312.42	37,082.34	
					PER 06		6,464.24	43,546.58	
					PER 07		6,464.24	50,010.82	
					PER 08		6,464.24	56,475.06	
					PER 09		6,464.24	62,939.30	
					PER 10		9,696.36	72,635.66	
25/11	538 11/14/25	PRJ PR1114 1251114	1251114		1251		3,232.12	75,867.78	
	PAY111425	WARRANT=251114	RUN=1 BI-WEEKL						
25/11	1197 11/28/25	PRJ PR1128 1251128	1251128		1251		3,232.12	79,099.90	
	pay1128255	WARRANT=251128	RUN=1 BI-WEEKL						
	LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:			79,099.90	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	79,099.90

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2025 11 TO 2025 11

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC	REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
74830	61200	Active Insurance						REVISED BUDGET			.00
							PER 01		2,034.70	2,034.70	
							PER 02		2,034.70	4,069.40	
							PER 03		2,034.70	6,104.10	
							PER 04		2,037.30	8,141.40	
							PER 05		2,035.35	10,176.75	
							PER 06		2,035.35	12,212.10	
							PER 07		2,035.35	14,247.45	
							PER 08		2,035.35	16,282.80	
							PER 09		2,035.35	18,318.15	
							PER 10		2,035.35	20,353.50	
25/11	538	11/14/25	PRJ	PR1114	1251114	1251114	1251		1,006.02	21,359.52	
		PAY111425	WARRANT=251114 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL								
25/11	1197	11/28/25	PRJ	PR1128	1251128	1251128	1251		1,029.33	22,388.85	
		pay1128255	WARRANT=251128 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL								
LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:					22,388.85	CREDITS:			.00	NET:	22,388.85
74830	61300	Employee Pension & FICA						REVISED BUDGET			.00
							PER 01		871.06	871.06	
							PER 02		933.21	1,804.27	
							PER 03		908.73	2,713.00	
							PER 04		908.73	3,621.73	
							PER 05		1,522.02	5,143.75	
							PER 06		908.73	6,052.48	
							PER 07		908.72	6,961.20	
							PER 08		908.73	7,869.93	
							PER 09		908.72	8,778.65	
							PER 10		1,398.39	10,177.04	
25/11	538	11/14/25	PRJ	PR1114	1251114	1251114	1251		454.37	10,631.41	
		PAY111425	WARRANT=251114 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL								
25/11	1197	11/28/25	PRJ	PR1128	1251128	1251128	1251		454.36	11,085.77	
		pay1128255	WARRANT=251128 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL								
LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:					11,085.77	CREDITS:			.00	NET:	11,085.77
74830	62100	Telephone						REVISED BUDGET			.00
							PER 01		61.53	61.53	
							PER 02		61.80	123.33	
							PER 03		61.46	184.79	

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2025 11 TO 2025 11

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
						PER 04		61.66	246.45	
						PER 05		61.30	307.75	
						PER 06		61.23	368.98	
						PER 07		61.21	430.19	
						PER 08		60.85	491.04	
						PER 09		60.87	551.91	
						PER 10		62.08	613.99	
25/11	544	11/18/25	API 006205		248190	42877		6.09	620.08	
	W C111825	COUNTY WIDE BILL			CONSOLIDATED TELECOM					
25/11	1197	11/28/25	PRJ PR1128	1251128	1251128	1251		55.00	675.08	
	pay1128255	WARRANT=251128	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
	LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:				675.08	CREDITS:	.00	NET:	675.08	
74830	62680	Non-Employee Per Diems								
						REVISED BUDGET				.00
						PER 01		200.00	200.00	
						PER 03		500.00	700.00	
						PER 04		150.00	850.00	
						PER 05		250.00	1,100.00	
						PER 06		200.00	1,300.00	
						PER 08		200.00	1,500.00	
						PER 09		200.00	1,700.00	
25/11	369	11/03/25	API 100532		247701	1967850		50.00	1,750.00	
	W A110425	MHB MEETING PER DIEM			MORRISON COUNTY AUDI					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API 003257		247703	42800		50.00	1,800.00	
	W A110425	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			GAASVIG, CRAIG					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API 008091		247704	1967847		50.00	1,850.00	
	W A110425	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			BRYAN RAMSRUD					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API 006995		247705	1967848		50.00	1,900.00	
	W A110425	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			CORY SMITH					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API 003356		247706	42801		50.00	1,950.00	
	W A110425	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			HUBBARD COUNTY TREAS					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API 006952		247707	42803		50.00	2,000.00	
	W A110425	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			MICHAEL KEARNEY					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API 003356		248866	42988		50.00	2,050.00	
	W A112525	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			HUBBARD COUNTY TREAS					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API 100532		248868	1968321		50.00	2,100.00	
	W A112525	MHB MEETING			MORRISON COUNTY AUDI					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API 003257		248869	42987		50.00	2,150.00	
	W A112525	MHB MEETING & MILEAGE			GAASVIG, CRAIG					

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2025 11 TO 2025 11

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC	REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API	006952		248870	42990		50.00	2,200.00	
	W	A112525	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		MICHAEL KEARNEY					
LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:						2,200.00	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	2,200.00
74830	62720	Non-Employee Mileage									
REVISED BUDGET										.00	
						PER 01			285.60	285.60	
						PER 03			555.80	841.40	
						PER 04			92.40	933.80	
						PER 05			488.60	1,422.40	
						PER 06			325.90	1,748.30	
						PER 08			285.60	2,033.90	
						PER 09			348.60	2,382.50	
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	006980		247702	42816		60.20	2,442.70	
	W	A110425	MHB	MEETING MILEAGE		ROBERT F. KASPER					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	003257		247703	42800		152.60	2,595.30	
	W	A110425	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		GAASVIG, CRAIG					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	008091		247704	1967847		145.60	2,740.90	
	W	A110425	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		BRYAN RAMSRUD					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	006995		247705	1967848		127.40	2,868.30	
	W	A110425	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		CORY SMITH					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	003356		247706	42801		98.00	2,966.30	
	W	A110425	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		HUBBARD COUNTY TREAS					
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	006952		247707	42803		65.80	3,032.10	
	W	A110425	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		MICHAEL KEARNEY					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API	003356		248866	42988		39.20	3,071.30	
	W	A112525	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		HUBBARD COUNTY TREAS					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API	006980		248867	43029		121.80	3,193.10	
	W	A112525	MHB	MILEAGE		ROBERT F. KASPER					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API	003257		248869	42987		71.40	3,264.50	
	W	A112525	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		GAASVIG, CRAIG					
25/11	1096	11/24/25	API	006952		248870	42990		106.40	3,370.90	
	W	A112525	MHB	MEETING & MILEAGE		MICHAEL KEARNEY					
LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:						3,370.90	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	3,370.90

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2025 11 TO 2025 11

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC	REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
74830	62990			Prof. & Tech. Fee - Other							
							REVISED BUDGET				6,300.00
							PER 01		9,735.32	9,735.32	
							PER 02		525.00	10,260.32	
							PER 03		525.00	10,785.32	
							PER 04		66,827.50	77,612.82	
							PER 05		525.00	78,137.82	
							PER 06		17,825.00	95,962.82	
							PER 07		7,375.00	103,337.82	
							PER 08		525.00	103,862.82	
							PER 09		525.00	104,387.82	
							PER 10		21,212.00	125,599.82	
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	003534		247651		1967849	2,046.20	127,646.02	
	W A110425			SIGNAGE COST			FISHING THE WILDSIDE				
25/11	369	11/03/25	API	121437		247700		42799	5,130.15	132,776.17	
	W A110425			BIENNIAL CONFERENCE			BREEZY POINT RESORT				
25/11	1324	11/30/25	GNI						14.00	132,790.17	
				BREM PCARD			Big Check printing				
							TIM TERRILL-FIRST IMPRESSION PRINTING-Big Check printing				
25/11	1437	11/30/25	GEN						525.00	133,315.17	
				RECURRING			FINANCIAL SERVICE				
				LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		133,315.17	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	133,315.17
74830	63320			Employee Mileage							
							REVISED BUDGET				.00
							PER 01		248.97	248.97	
							PER 02		408.10	657.07	
							PER 03		159.11	816.18	
							PER 04		246.82	1,063.00	
							PER 05		238.07	1,301.07	
							PER 06		264.46	1,565.53	
							PER 07		461.09	2,026.62	
							PER 08		455.70	2,482.32	
							PER 09		553.77	3,036.09	
							PER 10		675.50	3,711.59	
25/11	890	11/25/25	API	007742		248838		1968315	236.60	3,948.19	
	W OOP1025			OCTOBER MILEAGE			TERRILL,TIM				
				LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		3,948.19	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	3,948.19
74830	64090			office supplies							
							REVISED BUDGET				.00
							PER 02		50.61	50.61	
							PER 04		15.10	65.71	

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2025 11 TO 2025 11

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC	REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
							PER 05		34.30	100.01	
							PER 06		16.37	116.38	
							PER 07		100.30	216.68	
							PER 08		583.79	800.47	
							PER 09		76.69	877.16	
							PER 10		106.02	983.18	
25/11	1324	11/30/25	GNI						119.88	1,103.06	
	BREM	PCARD	dropbox renewal								
			TIM TERRILL-DROPBOX WNHXBZL9VYF-renewal								
25/11	1324	11/30/25	GNI						7.53	1,110.59	
	BREM	PCARD	laser pointer								
			TIM TERRILL-PETSMART #2755-laser pointer								
LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:					1,110.59	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	1,110.59	
GRAND TOTAL --- DEBITS:					257,194.45	CREDITS:		-230,139.63	NET:	27,054.82	

37 Records printed

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Matthew Donley **



IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE 12/1/25

Media Contact

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Mississippi Headwaters Board hold Biennial Conference at Breezy Point Resort

The Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) held a biennial conference to discuss the success of the partnerships they have formed over the years. John Jaschke, Executive Director of the Board of Water & Soil Resources opened the meeting to show the accomplishment of a One Watershed One Plan program that helps counties and local implementers like Soil & Water Conservation Districts get much needed pollution prevention practices built. Other highlights were the Miss. Headwaters Habitat Corridor Program that pays landowners to permanently protect critical fish and wildlife habitat along the first four hundred miles of the Mississippi River, its major tributaries, and headwater lakes. Over 11,900 acres have been protected over the past nine years. Another highlight was the passage of a federal bill in the House of Representatives to allow a land exchange to proceed in Itasca County. The land exchange will permanently protect around thirty-five acres of outstanding biodiverse habitat by allowing it to become public land that can be enjoyed by everyone. Other presentations including the Minnesota Traditions aquatic invasive species (zebra mussels) social media program www.facebook.com/MinnesotaTraditions, and recreational paddling opportunities were presented as well. DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen closed the meeting by addressing DNR programs that work well in this area along with an emphasis on recreational opportunities and programs that will be coming about next year.

Board of Adjustment

Applicant: Morrison County

Variance Request:

Construct retaining walls visible from the water body with no demonstrated erosion

Ordinance Section:

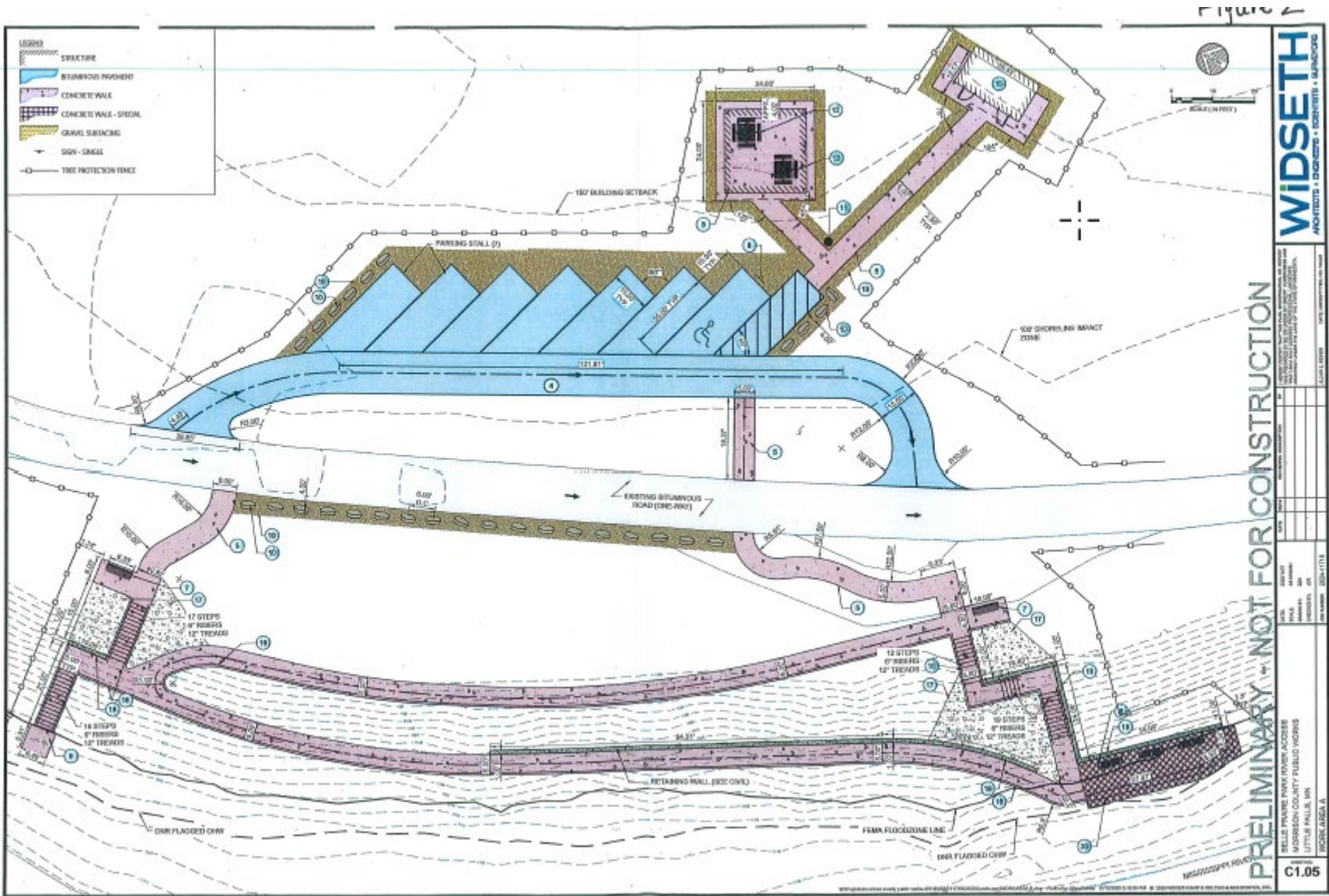
710.41 Minor Topographic Alterations. A permit for minor alterations may authorize the following activities:

- H. The construction of a retaining wall when a documented erosion problem exists. Retaining walls over five (5) feet in height require an engineer or landscape architect's written approval of the design as part of the permit application.
- J. Retaining walls not visible from the shore by virtue of topography or vegetation assuming summer leaf-on conditions

Morrison County

















12/05/2025



12/05/2025



12/05/2025



12/05/2025



12/05/2025



12/05/2025



12/05/2025

Board of Adjustment

Applicant: Morrison County

Application/Staff Report Highlights:

- This 138.2-acre property is located in Section 14 of Belle Prairie Township, adjacent to the Mississippi River. It is known as the Belle Prairie Park, a county-owned park overseen by the Public Works Department.
- The area adjacent to the river, across from the playground, features a stairway leading to the river that is in disrepair and poses a safety hazard. The Public Works Department was awarded a \$924,516 grant from the Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trails Commission to implement a new, handicap-accessible ramp and landings to replace the staircase. The County Board of Commissioners entered into a contract agreement with the State of Minnesota on September 10, 2024.
- This ramp is a concept that was adopted into the Morrison County Belle Prairie Master Plan by the Morrison County Board of Commissioners.
- The ramp will switch back along the bank of the river at a slope and angle compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. This is allowable by ordinance as stairways, lifts, mobility paths, and landings are allowed within the shore impact zone.

Board of Adjustment

Applicant: Morrison County

Application/Staff Report Highlights:

- The plan calls for 182 feet of poured concrete retaining walls, varying in height, all of which are four feet or shorter. They will be visible from the water body, and the need for retaining walls does not exist; it will be created as a result of this project. The applicant requests a variance for the retaining walls associated with this project.
- If this variance is granted, the Mississippi Headwaters Board must certify it. The Mississippi Headwaters Board Comprehensive Plan allows for stairways, lifts, and landings, but is silent on retaining walls.

**Board of Adjustment Findings
(PID 02.0395.000)**

Applicant: Morrison County

Variance Request: Construct retaining walls visible from the water body with no demonstrated erosion

Date of Hearing: December 9, 2025

This 138.2-acre property is located in Section 14 of Belle Prairie Township, adjacent to the Mississippi River. It is known as the Belle Prairie Park, a county-owned park overseen by the Public Works Department.

The park offers the public recreational opportunities, including walking trails, a picnic shelter, playground, disc golf, scenic river views, and a boat landing.

The area adjacent to the river, across from the playground, features a stairway leading to the river that is in disrepair and poses a safety hazard. The Public Works Department was awarded a \$924,516 grant from the Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trails Commission to implement a new, handicap-accessible ramp and landings to replace the staircase. The County Board of Commissioners entered into a contract agreement with the State of Minnesota on September 10, 2024.

This ramp is a concept that was adopted into the Morrison County Belle Prairie Master Plan by the Morrison County Board of Commissioners.

The ramp will switch back along the bank of the river at a slope and angle compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. This is allowable by ordinance as stairways, lifts, mobility paths, and landings are allowed within the shore impact zone.

The installation will occur above the ordinary high-water mark, so DNR permitting is not required. Additionally, since the installation is above the base flood elevation, a floodplain permit is not needed, and evaluation of a rise in floodwaters is not necessary.

The plan calls for 182 feet of poured concrete retaining walls, varying in height, all of which are four feet or shorter. They will be visible from the water body, and the need for retaining walls does not exist; it will be created as a result of this project. The applicant requests a variance for the retaining walls associated with this project.

If this variance is granted, the Mississippi Headwaters Board must certify it. The Mississippi Headwaters Board Comprehensive Plan allows for stairways, lifts, and landings, but is silent on retaining walls.

Other features, such as parking and a picnic shelter, will be located at least 150 feet from the river. The existing boat landing south of this project will be improved in partnership with the DNR; however, no variance is needed for this work.

Applicable Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals:

Natural Resources and Open Spaces

Goal C2: Preserve natural resources identified as critical and sensitive including wildlife habitats, wetlands, forest lands, etc., within Morrison County.

Shoreland Development

Goal D1: Work to ensure that development occurring within the County's watersheds is done in a thoughtful and deliberate manner so as to balance environmental, social and economic goals to the greatest extent possible.

Goal E3: Ensure that the County's lakes and rivers remain a resource that is available for use and enjoyment by the general public.

Natural Resources and Open Space

Goal C1: Recognize the Mississippi River as a crucial natural resource within Morrison County and work to preserve and improve the long-term water quality of the River.

Applicable Morrison County Comprehensive Water Plan Goals and Objectives:

Surface Water Goal: To protect, enhance and maintain the quality of all surface waters in Morrison County (lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands)

Objective B: Ensure that land use decisions for shoreland development take environmental impacts and climate change into consideration

Land Use and Development Goal: To ensure that land use decisions are compatible with natural resource protection

Objective B: Ensure that land use decisions for shoreland development and plat development take environmental impacts into consideration

Objective D: Reduce the loss of natural habitat and enhance natural habitat communities when possible

Five members of the Board of Adjustment viewed the property before the hearing and were present at it.

A plat map, survey, aerial photographs, and figures were presented to the board.

76 notices were mailed; no comment was received.

The Board of Adjustment discussed the following at the public hearing:

- The soils along the slope and bank of the river are erodible and have some existing erosion around the stairways
- The need for this ramp is driven by the necessary replacement of the stairways and the need to make access to the park amenities inclusive of the elderly, veteran and disabled populations
- There is an archaeological site to the north of this location, and a bluff to the south
- Vertical support is needed in the form of retaining walls to support the pathway
- Native plantings will screen the retaining walls from the water

The following factors for consideration of a practical difficulty were:

1. Is the request in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Morrison County Land Use Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan.
2. Is the applicant proposing to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the Land Use Ordinance.
3. Will the issuance of the variance maintain the essential character of the locality.
4. Is the alleged practical difficulty due to circumstances unique to the property.
5. Is the need for the variance created by actions other than the landowner or prior landowners.
6. Does the alleged practical difficulty involve more than just economic considerations

Conclusion

1. The Morrison County Board of Adjustment found the request is in harmony with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Ordinance. The applicant has demonstrated that this project is in alignment with several comprehensive plan goals and objectives, and the screening of the retaining walls brings this request in harmony with the ordinance. (5) yes (0) no
2. The Board of Adjustment found the applicant is proposing to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the Land Use Ordinance. This access path is part of a public park that must meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. In order to achieve that, retaining walls are necessary. The planting plan will provide screening from the water, which makes this request reasonable. (5) yes (0) no
3. The Board of Adjustment found the issuance of the variance will maintain the essential character of the locality. With the planting plan, the retaining wall installations will barely be seen from the water. (5) yes (0) no
4. The Board of Adjustment found the alleged practical difficulty is due to circumstances unique to the property. The requirement to meet ADA requirements, challenging topography, an archeological site and bluff conditions limit the site selection options for this project. (5) yes (0) no
5. The Board of Adjustment found the need for the variance is created by actions other than the landowner or prior landowners. This is a public park, and there is a responsibility to the public to provide accessibility and safety to all who utilize it. (5) yes (0) no
6. The Board of Adjustment found the alleged practical difficulty does involve more than just economic considerations. This project must address accessibility, which drives a particular design standard. (5) yes (0) no

Based on the findings and the criteria stated in Minnesota Statutes 394.27, Brent Lindgren made a motion, seconded by George Sandy, to approve the variance request to install up to 182 feet of retaining walls, up to four feet in height, associated with the installation of an ADA compliant ramp and landings as detailed within the application.

Chair
Morrison County Board of Adjustment

Date

Hi Tim, this is correct. You will not need an audit unless you exceed the threshold of \$1,000,000.

Thank you,

William Struck

Peterson Company Ltd
Certified Public Accountants
[952-442-4408](tel:952-442-4408) Office
[952-442-2211](tel:952-442-2211) Fax
www.pclcpas.com
william@pclcpas.com

Send me files: <https://www.clientaccess.com/sharesafe/#/qXfCGC>

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From: Tim Terrill <timt@mississippiheadwaters.org>

Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 10:38

To: William Struck <William@pclcpas.com>

Subject: FW: Update on Reporting Requirements Due to Legislative Changes

Hi William,

I received this email from OSA and I am sure you are aware of this. The MHB doesn't fall under a WMO, nor does it supply funding to a WMO, so this doesn't apply to us.

My question to you is I understand that the legislature voted to raise the audit threshold limit to \$1M for special districts. Below is a snippet of what was sent to me many months ago. Could you please verify this?

Additionally, below is a snippet of Chapter 39 of the 2025 Regular Session. This was just recently passed, so there is still very little information available regarding the implementation of these changes. However, it was noted in the bill that the effective date would be August 1, 2025, so it is likely that the Mississippi Headwaters Board would still have an audit threshold of \$276,000 for their 6/30/2025 audit. In future years, this threshold will be set at \$1,000,000 and adjusted for inflation each year.

(b) If the offices of clerk and treasurer are combined as provided by this section and the city's annual revenue for all governmental and enterprise funds combined is more than the amount in paragraph (c), the council shall provide for an annual audit of the city's financial affairs by the state auditor or a public accountant in accordance with minimum auditing procedures prescribed by the state auditor. If the offices of clerk and treasurer are combined and the city's annual revenue for all governmental and enterprise funds combined is the amount in paragraph (c), or less, the council shall provide for an audit of the city's financial affairs by the state auditor or a public accountant in accordance with minimum audit procedures prescribed by the state auditor at least once every five years, which audit shall be for a one-year period to be determined at random by the person conducting the audit.

(c) For the purposes of paragraph (b), the amount in ~~2004~~ 2025 is ~~\$150,000~~ \$1,000,000, and ~~in 2005 and after,~~ \$150,000 is adjusted annually thereafter for inflation using the annual implicit price deflator for state and local expenditures as published by the United States Department of Commerce.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2025, and applies to audits performed for 2026 and thereafter.



Mississippi Headwaters Board

Crow Wing County Historic Courthouse - 326 Laurel St. Brainerd, MN 56401

Web Site: www.mississippiheadwaters.org

December 10, 2025

Peterson Company Ltd
570 Cherry Drive
Waconia, MN 55387

Dear Peterson Company Ltd:

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the governmental activities and General Fund of Mississippi Headwaters Board as of June 30, 2025, and for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements, for the purpose of expressing opinions on whether the basic financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position and results of operations, where applicable, of the various opinion units of Mississippi Headwaters Board in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted for governments in the United States of America (U.S. GAAP).

Certain representations in this letter are described as being limited to matters that are material. Items are considered material, regardless of size, if they involve an omission or misstatement of accounting information such that, in the light of surrounding circumstances, there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

We confirm that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves as of December 10, 2025:

Financial Statements

- We have fulfilled our responsibilities, as set out in the terms of the audit engagement letter dated June 30, 2025, for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements of the various opinion units referred to above in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of the system of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
- We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
- We acknowledge our responsibility for compliance with the laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements.
- We have reviewed, approved, and taken responsibility for the financial statements and related notes.
- We have a process to track the status of audit findings and recommendations.
- We have identified and communicated to you all previous audits, attestation engagements, and other studies related to the audit objectives and whether related recommendations have been implemented.
- The methods, data, and significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates and their related disclosures, are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement, or disclosure that is reasonable in the context of the applicable financial reporting framework.
- All component units, as well as joint ventures with an equity interest, are included and other joint ventures and related organizations are properly disclosed.
- All funds and activities are properly classified.
- All funds that meet the quantitative criteria in GASB Statement No. 34, *Basic Financial Statements—and Management's Discussion and Analysis—for State and Local Governments*, GASB Statement No. 37, *Basic*

Financial Statements—and Management's Discussion and Analysis—for State and Local Governments: Omnibus as amended, and GASB Statement No. 65, *Items Previously Reported as Assets and Liabilities*, for presentation as major are identified and presented as such and all other funds that are presented as major are considered important to financial statement users.

- All components of net position, nonspendable fund balance, and restricted, committed, assigned, and unassigned fund balance are properly classified and, if applicable, approved.
- Our policy regarding whether to first apply restricted or unrestricted resources when an expense is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position/fund balance are available is appropriately disclosed and net position/fund balance is properly recognized under the policy.
- All revenues within the statement of activities have been properly classified as program revenues, general revenues, contributions to term or permanent endowments, or contributions to permanent fund principal.
- All expenses have been properly classified in or allocated to functions and programs in the statement of activities, and allocations, if any, have been made on a reasonable basis.
- Deposit and investment risks have been properly and fully disclosed.
- All required supplementary information is measured and presented within the prescribed guidelines.
- With regard to investments and other instruments reported at fair value:
 - The underlying assumptions are reasonable and they appropriately reflect management's intent and ability to carry out its stated courses of action.
 - The measurement methods and related assumptions used in determining fair value are appropriate in the circumstances and have been consistently applied.
 - The disclosures related to fair values are complete, adequate, and in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
 - There are no subsequent events that require adjustments to the fair value measurements and disclosures included in the financial statements.
- With respect to the preparation of the financial statements we have performed the following:
 - Made all management decisions and performed all management functions;
 - Assigned a competent individual to oversee the services;
 - Evaluated the adequacy of the services performed;
 - Evaluated and accepted responsibility for the result of the service performed; and
 - Established and maintained controls, including a process to monitor the system of internal control.

Information Provided

- We have provided you with:
 - Access to all information, of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements of the various opinion units referred to above, such as records, documentation, meeting minutes,⁸ and other matters;
 - Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit;
 - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity and others from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
- We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- We have provided to you our evaluation of the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events present, and we believe that our use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate. We have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud that affects the entity and involves:
 - Management;
 - Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - Others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- We have no knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, vendors, regulators, or others.
- We are not aware of any pending or threatened litigation, claims, and assessments whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements and we have not consulted legal counsel concerning litigation, claims, or assessments.
- There have been no communications from regulatory agencies concerning noncompliance with or deficiencies in accounting, internal control, or financial reporting practices.
- Mississippi Headwaters Board has no plans or intentions that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities.

- We have disclosed to you all guarantees, whether written or oral, under which Mississippi Headwaters Board is contingently liable.
- We have disclosed to you all nonexchange financial guarantees, under which we are obligated and have declared liabilities and disclosed properly in accordance with GASB Statement No. 70, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Nonexchange Financial Guarantees*, for those guarantees where it is more likely than not that the entity will make a payment on any guarantee.
- For nonexchange financial guarantees where we have declared liabilities, the amount of the liability recognized is the discounted present value of the best estimate of the future outflows expected to be incurred as a result of the guarantee. Where there was no best estimate but a range of estimated future outflows has been established, we have recognized the minimum amount within the range.
- We have disclosed to you all significant estimates and material concentrations known to management that are required to be disclosed in accordance with GASB Statement No. 62 (GASB-62), *Codification of Accounting and Financial Reporting Guidance Contained in Pre-November 30, 1989 FASB and AICPA Pronouncements*. Significant estimates are estimates at the balance sheet date that could change materially within the next year. Concentrations refer to volumes of business, revenues, available sources of supply, or markets or geographic areas for which events could occur that would significantly disrupt normal finances within the next year.
- We have identified and disclosed to you the laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on financial statement amounts, including legal and contractual provisions for reporting specific activities in separate funds.
- There are no:
 - Violations or possible violations of laws or regulations, or provisions of contracts or grant agreements whose effects should be considered for disclosure in the financial statements or as a basis for recording a loss contingency, including applicable budget laws and regulations.
 - Unasserted claims or assessments that our lawyer has advised are probable of assertion and must be disclosed in accordance with GASB-62.
 - Other liabilities or gain or loss contingencies that are required to be accrued or disclosed by GASB-62
- Mississippi Headwaters Board has satisfactory title to all owned assets, and there are no liens or encumbrances on such assets nor has any asset or future revenue been pledged as collateral, except as disclosed to you.
- We have complied with all aspects of grant agreements and other contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of noncompliance.

Information Provided

We have provided you all minutes of the meetings of managers, directors, committees of directors, or those charged with governance, or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared.

Reported Finding

We have provided to you our view on the one reported audit finding, conclusion, and recommendation, as well as a planned corrective action.

Cybersecurity

There have been no cybersecurity breaches or other cyber events whose effects should be considered for disclosure in the financial statements, as a basis for recording a loss contingency, or otherwise considered when preparing the financial statements.

Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures

- The significant judgments made in making the accounting estimates have taken into account all relevant information of which we are aware.
- We have consistently and appropriately selected and applied methods, assumptions, and data when making accounting estimates.
- The assumptions we used in making and disclosing accounting estimates appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of Mississippi Headwaters Board, when relevant to the accounting estimates and disclosures.

- We have obtained and applied appropriate specialized skills and expertise in making accounting estimates.
- We are not aware of any events subsequent to the date of the financial statements that require adjustment to our accounting estimates and related disclosures included in the financial statements.

Required Supplementary Information

With respect to the budgetary comparison schedule accompanying the financial statements:

- a. We acknowledge our responsibility for the presentation of the budgetary comparison schedule in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
- b. We believe the budgetary comparison schedule, including its form and content, is measured and fairly presented in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
- c. The methods of measurement or presentation have not changed from those used in the prior period.

Tim Terrill, Executive Director

Ted Van Kempen, Board Chair

Hey Tim,

Well, membership in a committee could change, but usually they stay until next election. The committee appointing process is after the election and prior to start of Session. The House is projected to remain in a tie (63 GOP and 63 DFL), He will still be the Co-Chair with Rep. Fischer. If for whatever reason that number changes, it'll have profound effect downstream (Not to mention that you'll have to talk to the other chamber for their support too).

As for drafting bill language, would be best to ask him and the Rep. Fischer first on what their targets/goals/objectives are on your proposed language. Either can request a draft that will then go through the committee process. Getting members to vote in a bipartisan way would be the only way to get anything passed through committee. The other way about it is to lay over the bill in the hopes that it'll get included in an omnibus bill later.

Good luck.

I will be the GOP CLA for Environment, Amy Zipko is the GOP CA, Peter Strohmeier is the DLF CA, as for their CLA, used to be Jared Margolis, but he is no longer with the DFL Caucus, so usually, it'll be the next CLA assigned to Co-Chair Fischer.

Shaelong Yang

Committee Legislative Assistant
Representative Josh Heintzeman | District 06B
Representative Aaron Repinski | District 26A
2nd Floor, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street

From: Tim Terrill <timt@mississippiheadwaters.org>
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2025 11:02 AM
To: Shaelong Yang <Shaelong.Yang@house.mn.gov>
Cc: 'Ted Van Kempen' <ted.vankempen@co.hubbard.mn.us>
Subject: Questions regarding Environmental & Natural Resources Committee

Hello Legislative Assistant Shaelong Yang to Rep. Heintzeman,

The Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) requested that I draft a letter to Rep. Heintzeman, MHB Senators and Representatives, and the Environmental & Natural Resources Committee requesting an increase in funding for the next biennium. I will be requesting Rep. Heintzeman to write a bill, and the Env. & Natural Resources Committee to pass the bill in the next session.

Before I do so, I need a few questions answered. Will Rep. Heintzeman be the Chair or co-chair for the next session? Will there be a co-chair like there was in the last session? Will the Committee members change from the previous session, and if so, when are they appointed to the committee? Could you please answer these questions and provide me with any other pertinent information based on what I have provided you?

Thank you so much for answering these questions.

Best,

Tim Terrill
Director of the Miss. Headwaters Board



Mississippi Headwaters Board

Crow Wing County Historic Courthouse - 326 Laurel St. Brainerd, MN 56401

Web Site: www.mississippiheadwaters.org

1/1/2026

Representative Josh Heintzeman and Rep. Fischer
2nd Floor, Centennial Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Honorable Rep. Heintzeman;

The Mississippi Headwaters Board (**MHB**) is an eight-county (Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, and Morrison) joint-powers board formed in 1980 with the signing of a Joint-Powers Agreement. In 1981, the Minnesota legislature duly authorized MHB to preserve and protect the outstanding and unique natural, scientific, historical, recreational, and cultural values of the first four hundred miles of the Mississippi River. (See Minn. Stat. § 103F.361, Subd. (1) and (2); Minn. Stat. § 103F.361-377). The board is comprised of eight local county commissioners from eight separate counties, and the legislature and eight member counties agreed that local control through consistent zoning and common administration in the MHB jurisdictional area is essential to managing the Mississippi River.

The MHB County Commissioners have a responsibility as elected officials to protect the Mississippi River and Headwaters Lakes in an efficient and fiscally accountable manner. That being stated, the MHB has exceeded their financial allocation from the state and request that you write a bill to increase our funding from \$248,000 per biennium to \$350,000 per biennium to help MHB fulfill their statutory obligation and continue to allow for local control to protect the habitat, clean water, and vibrant recreational economy of our area. Some of the goals we hope to accomplish in the next biennium is to enforce the MHB Comprehensive Plan which provides consistent zoning administration on the first four hundred miles of the Mississippi River. We also plan to permanently protect 4 miles of shoreline and 1250 acres through easement and/or fee-title acquisition by working with committed conservation partners to protect the drinking water and increase habitat connectivity on the Mississippi River, the 9 Headwaters Lakes, and major tributaries. We also plan to visit with over 500 high school students in the MHB member counties to educate them about careers in conservation. The eight member MHB counties have discussed increasing their local, annual, county support as well. Through the oversight of County Commissioners, it has been almost ten years since the MHB requested an increase. Passing this bill in 2026 to increase our allocation will help support the regulatory and voluntary efforts of the MHB Comprehensive Plan to protect the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River.

Our Executive Director, Tim Terrill, can be reached at 218-824-1189 or at timt@mississippiheadwaters.org to discuss this issue at your convenience. The board thanks you in advance for your commitment to protecting the Mississippi River.

Sincerely,

Ted Van Kempen
Mississippi Headwaters Board Chairman



Mississippi Headwaters Board

Crow Wing County Historic Courthouse - 326 Laurel St. Brainerd, MN 56401

Web Site: www.mississippiheadwaters.org

1/1/2026

Environmental & Natural Resources Committee member
Room G3 of the Capitol Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Honorable Rep. Heintzeman; (change using individual name)

The Mississippi Headwaters Board (**MHB**) is an eight-county (Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, and Morrison) joint-powers board formed in 1980 with the signing of a Joint-Powers Agreement. In 1981, the Minnesota legislature duly authorized MHB to preserve and protect the outstanding and unique natural, scientific, historical, recreational, and cultural values of the first four hundred miles of the Mississippi River. (See Minn. Stat. § 103F.361, Subd. (1) and (2); Minn. Stat. § 103F.361-377). The board is comprised of eight local county commissioners from eight separate counties, and the legislature and eight member counties agreed that local control through consistent zoning and common administration in the MHB jurisdictional area is essential to managing the Mississippi River.

The MHB County Commissioners have a responsibility as elected officials to protect the Mississippi River and Headwaters Lakes in an efficient and fiscally accountable manner. That being stated, the MHB has exceeded their financial allocation from the state and request that you **pass** a bill to increase our funding from \$248,000 per biennium to \$350,000 per biennium to help MHB fulfill their statutory obligation and continue to allow for local control to protect the habitat, clean water, and vibrant recreational economy of our area. The eight member MHB counties have discussed increasing their local, annual, county support as well. Through the oversight of County Commissioners, it has been almost ten years since the MHB requested an increase. Passing this bill in 2026 to increase our allocation will help support the regulatory and voluntary efforts of the MHB Comprehensive Plan to protect the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River.

Our Executive Director, Tim Terrill, can be reached at 218-824-1189 or at timt@mississippiheadwaters.org, to discuss this issue at your convenience. The board thanks you in advance for your commitment to protecting the Mississippi River.

Sincerely,

Ted Van Kempen
Mississippi Headwaters Board Chairman

Email

Hello Mississippi Headwaters Board Representatives and Senators,

The Mississippi Headwaters Board (**MHB**) is an eight-county (Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, and Morrison) joint-powers board formed in 1980 to prevent federal control and protect the first four hundred miles of the Mississippi River through consistent zoning. the MHB board, which is comprised of eight county commissioners from eight different counties, has exceeded their financial allocation from the state and is requesting that Co-Chairs Representative Heintzeman and Representative Fischer of the Environment and Natural Resource Finance Committee write a bill to increase MHB funding from \$248,000 per biennium to \$350,000 per biennium to help MHB fulfill their statutory obligation and continue to allow for local control to protect the habitat, clean water, and vibrant recreational economy of our area. The board wishes your support in this endeavor and to encourage both chairs of the committee to work in a bipartisan way to accomplish this task.

Thank you,

Tim Terrill
MHB Executive Director



Minnesota Traditions AIS social media program

MHB Comprehensive Plan

C.4. To Protect and Enhance Recreational Values

Goal: Facilitate and maintain new and existing partnerships with stakeholders to promote, develop, and protect the recreational opportunities that complement the Mississippi River.

The MHB will:
















- work with local, county, and state partners to coordinate efforts and improvements to the Great River Road and the Mississippi River Trail to help people experience the river in a meaningful way;
- help coordinate multi-purpose water and recreational trail plans to encourage planning and implementation consistency at a regional level.
- work with local, county, and state partners to coordinate efforts to protect the member counties from invasive species.

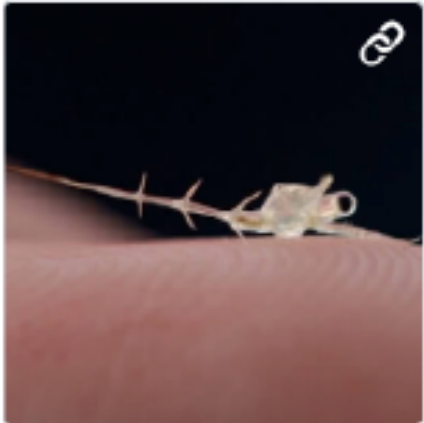


The Process & Timeline

- Minnesota Traditions is an MHB program and everything produced is the property of MHB.
- November 2024- February 2025- I ask 87 counties if they would like to contribute to the AIS social media campaign. (Around \$63,800 was raised last year with \$4,390 used for my administrative time).
- April- October 2025- Marketer (FWS) Runs AIS social campaign with 3 post per week on topics like dock and lifts, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, water sports, boating and sailing, and waterfowl hunting.
- November 2025-March 2026- Marketer (FWS) runs campaign with one post per week while I ask for support.

Performance- Is the Audience Responding?

Title			Views ⓘ ↑↓	Reach ⓘ ↑↓
 Wrapping up lake season? AIS can hitch a ri...	 Photo •  Minnesota Traditions	<button>Boost</button> <button>...</button>	1,297	1,013
 Wrapping up lake season? AIS can hitch a ri...	 Photo •  mntraditions	<button>Boost</button> <button>...</button>	2,565 2,244 from ads	2,511 2,474 from ads
 So relaxing	 Text •  Minnesota Traditions	<button>Create ad</button> <button>...</button>	--	64
 Perfect picnic spot!	 Reel •  Minnesota Traditions	<button>Boost</button> <button>...</button>	606	500
 Perfect picnic spot: A) Lakeside 🦋 B) Park...	 Reel •  mntraditions	<button>Boost</button> <button>...</button>	103	84









They sound like a cartoon villain... But...

Wed Jun 11, 10:36am

Views: 25.2k
Comments: 55
Likes: 141
Shares: 39

Comparison to Similar Organizations

Page	Page likes
 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Welcome to the official Minnesota Department of Natural Resource...	99.7K
 Minnesota Traditions Educating on how to protect our great state's lakes & rivers from Aq...	44.7K
 PlayCleanGo Preventing the spread of invasive species with easy, actionable step...	26.8K
 Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center Founded in 2012 with backing from the Minnesota state legislature, ...	1.6K
 Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers Clean, Drain, Dry is the national campaign raising awareness of inva...	1.2K
 Clean Drain Dry Initiative Clean Drain Dry is the national public awareness campaign to preve...	671



AIS Coordinator Survey

- MAISRC Newsletter- The research also identified important perception gaps. While anglers correctly recognized birds as dispersal vectors, they significantly underestimated human activities as invasion pathways, with only 47% believing anglers could contribute to plant dispersal through equipment or boats! [Note: I would bet on this number being much higher for Minnesota anglers.]
- These findings suggest anglers represent an underutilized resource for early detection of aquatic invasives. Effective engagement requires targeted education addressing knowledge gaps around human-mediated dispersal and the risks of releasing aquarium organisms.

2025 MN Outdoor Recreation Economic Impact Report

County	Out. Rec. Economic Output	Proportion of GDP from Out. Rec.
Morrison	\$90,409,715	2.98%
Crow Wing	\$338,454,684	4.78%
Aitkin	\$43,001,747	3.95%
Itasca	\$145,636,379	3.33%
Cass	\$98,365,100	3.93%
Hubbard	\$58,291,313	3.05%
Beltrami	\$193,778,652	4.08%
Clearwater	\$18,783,212	2.38%

Brainstorming Ideas for Other Social Media Opportunities

- Use MN Traditions as a basic MHB social media site. Similar to how counties or SWCD's promote awareness about the good they do.
- Number 1 + Promote what MHB counties, SWCD's, agencies are doing with respect for the Mississippi River. (Conservation practices, County recreation and practices, Keep it Clean awareness, and AIS infrastructure)
- Number 1 + 2 + Continue with promoting the Mississippi River recreation and natural resource recreation along with economic development with cities, counties, and Great River Road.

Minnesota Traditions AIS Social Media Survey

Hello contributing AIS Coordinators,

The Miss. Headwaters Board is conducting a survey to assess the effectiveness of our social media program. Could you please answer this survey of questions below?

Background: In 2015, the MHB created an AIS social media campaign to help provide consistent messaging about AIS prevention and awareness. Minnesota Traditions aims to create lasting behavior change by making prevention a natural part of every outing. Could you please answer the following questions and send this back to me by **December 5, 2025**? Your thoughtful feedback is appreciated.

1. How have you used the MN Traditions Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube platforms currently and in the past?

I haven't used them

Yes both currently and in the past.

YouTube Videos are a good educational tool. Social media posts help us broaden our reach.

2. Is there a value that you see in the program?

I see the importance to letting people know and be aware of local AIS issues and how it effects our communities.

You're asking the right questions. I especially like the statement in the background section, "Minnesota Traditions aims to create lasting behavior change by making prevention a natural part of every outing." The last part of that, "making prevention a natural part of every outing," is so powerful and such a good way of expressing how you want people to think about it.

Certainly, we are not well versed in developing themes, campaigns, or content. MN Traditions performs those tasks for us. Otherwise we would have to perform this locally likely spending more time in training than actual content delivery.

Yes, the shared content helps us, and we can reach more people.

3. Are you satisfied with the program?

Yes

Yes. It seems that the reach has still been significant despite the decline in program funding over the years.

Yes. It's nice knowing that you are working to address AIS issues and continuing to educate boaters.

4. What ways could we improve our efforts?

Don't know

You might consider adding a sentence after that along the lines of "We want our social media program to be a helpful resource for you and the people you serve."

Developing a network of partners to share content across their platforms. Such as Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Facebook.

AIS is an evolving issue. Just continuing to adapt your messages to changing resource concerns is a good idea.

5. Does MN Traditions social media occupy a niche in your county AIS programing?

Does this duplicate any of your current AIS programs or does it compliment them? If duplicating or complimenting, in what way?

I believe this would duplicate similar programs that we are also supplementing funding.

MN Traditions fulfills the social media section of our program, a skill set we do not have available through the County. We would struggle to generate and widely distribute AIS messaging on social media platforms without MN Traditions to assist us. The Northern MN sense and place that comes through with MN Traditions is greatly appreciated.

MN Traditions does not duplicate any of our current in-house efforts. Social media as a messaging format keeps AIS prevention on recipients minds at suitable times and places.

MN Traditions themes and delivery are unique as is their focus. Many partners such as MN DNR Facebook cover a wide variety of topics including forests, boating, foraging, parks, grants, fishing, safety, and very rarely aquatic invasive species. The consistent sense of place and delivery MN Traditions provides is greatly appreciated and does not seem to duplicate any other social media campaigns. We feel MN Traditions complements our other educational and outreach platforms.

In our county, we don't get much boat traffic for fishing or recreation. But we do have a good number of waterfowl hunters, so its nice to have material specific to those users.

Executive Director Report

October - November 2025

Personnel, Budget, Administration, Information & Education, Correspondence

1. Reviewed monthly budget.
2. Prepared monthly agenda packet.
3. Sent in monthly expense report.
4. Sent press release to newspapers.
5. Reviewed monthly variances as they are brought forward by counties.
6. Called Counties to ask for MN Traditions funding.

Meetings & Networking

11/24 Provided audit materials to Peterson Company LTD and answered state required audit questions.

11/24 Wrote email to Rep. Heintzeman's legislative assistant asking questions for sending a request to the Env. & Natural Resources Council for an increase in funding. Received reply back on process.

11/25 Ask to speak at the Water Trails Task Force meeting in Grand Rapids in March 2026. I would talk about MHB signage, the use, needs, and general assessment of water trails in Itasca County.

12/2 Talked with DNR information officer Kristi Coughlon and when the 4 videos are produced, MHB will talk with MN DNR social media coordinator Shana Payton to discuss social media collaboration between the DNR and MHB.

12/2 Held 15 minute conversation with CW County Administrator Debbie Erickson about the concept of promoting county natural resource areas on the Mississippi River. She is interested in promoting the recreational aspects of the Mississippi and Crow Wing county recreational opportunities using social media.

12/16 Participated in a UMN webinar called Exploring Qualitative Values of the Mississippi River: What People Think and Why It Matters.

12/5 Talked with Kathy Docter from the State Auditors office and had the MHB reclassified as a joint powers board instead of a water management organization. We are still required to fill out the SDFR financial forms along with financial records, but not required to pay for an audit since we fall under the threshold of \$1M.

12/8-9 Attended AMC Conference.

12/10 our ML26 accomplishment plan received an additional \$367K increase due to a projected economic forecast. This is a 28% increase from our original allocation and the accomplishment plan will need to be updated to reflect the increase.

12/11 Talked with William Struk from Peterson accounting about our audit and the process by which he obtained those numbers.

12/11 Met with Jim Stafford from CW IT and discussed moving off county internal internet and using guest WiFi internet and what that might mean.

12/12 Provided comment on Mississippi River-Sartel One Watershed One Plan on the draft goal framework section.

12/12 Talked with Katie Benes from Itasca county about the Boswell Solar Construction project.