



**Mississippi Headwaters Board
Meeting Agenda
Cass County Courthouse
Walker, MN
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89344557389>
June 26, 2026
9:00 am**

9:00 AM

- Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

9:05 AM Approve/Amend

- Agenda
- Consent Agenda – May 2026 Expenses & Minutes

Planning and Zoning (Actions)

- None

Correspondence

- June Press Release
- Aitkin Lakes & Rivers Fair

Action / Discussion Items:

- MHHCP Update with Wildlife Report Map- informative
- MHHCP program coordinator contract renewal- informative
- Appointing Board Member as Responsible Person for EIN- Action
- Resolution Granting Authority to Conduct Banking Transactions- Action
- Executive Directors report-informative

Misc: Legislature Update (if any), County Updates

Meeting Adjourned - Thank you

Mtgs: July 24, 2026 9:00 AM- MHB BOARD MEETING- Walker MN.

One or more members of the MHB board may attend remotely

Mississippi Headwaters Board

May 22, 2026

Cass County Courthouse, Walker, MN

Optional interactive technology:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86418827366>

MEETING

MINUTES

Members present: Michael Kearney (Aitkin), Ted Van Kempen (Hubbard interactive), Scott Bruns (Cass), Steve Barrows (Crow Wing), Bobby Kasper (Morrison interactive), Brian Ramsrud (Clearwater interactive), Craig Gaasvig (Beltrami interactive), and Tim Terrill (Executive Director).

Video Interactive Reasons: interactive due to scheduling conflicts

Others Present: Marcel Noyes, Hubbard County SWCD Supervisor

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Kearney asked if there were any additions to the agenda. With no response from the other Commissioners, **M/S (Bruns/Gaasvig) to approve of the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Kearney asked to approve of the consent agenda. **M/S (VanKempen/Ramsrud) to approve of the consent agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**

Planning and Zoning

None

Correspondence/Outreach

1. Tim presented the May press release to the board which showed the MHB board receiving a report on the Regional Stormwater Implementation and cities involved. The study encompassed eleven cities and was funded through the Clean Water Legacy Fund.
2. Tim reported on the Morrison County Mighty Mississippi Cleanup. He showed the board a video that he made which featured eighteen Scouting America kids cleaning up Belle Prairie Park and afterwards paddling down the Mississippi River to LeBourget Park. This event helped the Scouts earn sustainability badges for environmental stewardship and canoe paddling skills. A follow up social media post was created after the event which provided 953 views with 9 interactions.
3. Tim provided a video of the Bemidji Mississippi River Clean up event in which the MHB's role was to promote the event through social media. Social media boosting proved effective in driving volunteer awareness because one boosted post received 4.3K views and 73 reactions. Twelve volunteers participated in the effort, including Beltrami County Commissioner John Carlson and Bemidji City Council member Emelie Rivera.

Action/Discussion:

- 1. MHB Office Lease Agreement with Crow Wing County-** A new lease agreement drafted by Crow Wing County was presented for board approval. The lease covers approximately 153 square feet on the 3rd floor of the Crow Wing County Courthouse at no cost (in-kind contribution). The executive director confirmed that Crow Wing County has been added to the MCIT insurance policy as required. **M/S (Gaasvig/Kasper) to approve of the lease. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 2. High School Report-** The Executive Director presented an end-of-year summary of school visits conducted as part of the annual work plan. Fourteen schools participated, and 10 classroom visits were completed. The Career Day event in Bemidji generated approximately 1,800 student impressions. Tim shared the teacher survey used to gather feedback following presentations and requested input from the Board. Comm. Gaasvig identified a grammatical error in survey question five and recommended revising the verb tense to ensure subject verb agreement.
- 3. MPCA Large River Study-** The executive director presented a fact sheet from the MPCA's Large River Study, which assesses the entire Mississippi River system on a 10-year cycle. The study showed that the northern section of the Mississippi (Itasca State Park to Brainerd area) is in good health. A Total Suspended Solids (TSS) impairment exists between the cities of Grand Rapids and Brainerd due to natural soil composition changes, not watershed activity. South of St. Cloud, more complex issues arise from additional tributaries and urban runoff. Key strategies include protection of the northern section, managing phosphorus from tributaries, and stormwater/agricultural runoff management. Discussion ensued and Comm. Barrows expressed pride in the health of the northern river section and credited the MHB board's stewardship. He raised concern about the health of the river south of MHB's jurisdiction and suggested the board advocate for improved management in those sections. Noted the contrast between the St. Croix River (clear) and the Mississippi at their confluence (brown). It was noted that the report was informative and enjoyable to read. In conclusion, the MHB corridor portion of the Mississippi River is in good environmental health.
- 4. Certificate of Deposit Rates-** The executive director raised the possibility of investing a portion of the organization's fund balance in CDs to generate interest income, prompted by a discussion last month with Comm. Gaasvig during a 6-year outlook planning session. Tim presented CD rate comparisons from Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union and Wells Fargo. He noted that shorter-term CDs currently offer higher rates than longer-term ones (inverted yield curve). The organization has approximately \$267,000 in fund balance, and a quarterly DNR reimbursement of approximately \$34,000 is received within a 4-month turnaround time from expenses incurred. Discussion ensued and Comm. Gaasvig suggested investing at least \$150,000 total, split across two CDs with different terms to manage liquidity. Proposed \$100,000 in a 13-month CD at 3.55% and \$50,000 in a 7-month CD at 3.75%, estimating approximately \$5,000–\$6,000 in interest over roughly a year. Comm. Kasper raised the question of whether the deposits are FDIC-insured, noting some credit unions may not be covered. Tim said he would check on that before investing. **M/S (Gaasvig/Kasper) to approve of investing \$100,000 in a 13-month CD at 3.55% and \$50,000 in a 7-month CD at 3.75% at Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union. Roll call was taken. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 5. Peter Jacobson Contract-** The executive director provided an update on two contracts with Peter Jacobson related to the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Program (MHHCP). In the fall of 2025, the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) asked partners to develop a methodology and rationale identifying where conservation work would occur and why those areas were being prioritized. In response, the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project (MHHCP) partnership, through the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) contracting process, contracted with Peter Jacobson to prepare a report evaluating the relationship between terrestrial habitat quality and watershed land protection at a hydrologic scale within the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Project Corridor program area. The report provides the scientific and strategic basis for identifying and prioritizing watersheds

for future conservation efforts over the next several years. Tim stated the report has been completed and will be presented to the MHB Board at the June meeting.

Following completion of the report, the partnership reviewed the findings and determined that additional priority maps were needed to support implementation efforts and clearly demonstrate to the Council where conservation work will be focused. As a result, a contract was developed to allow Jacobson to prepare maps identifying priority watersheds based on the wildlife habitat data and analysis contained in the Wildlife Report. Tim stated that both contracts are funded by the LSOHC program. Chair Kearney asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board, and none were raised.

Executive Directors Report

Updates on various MHB activities and partnerships were presented to the board.

1. Tim contacted Senator Hawj's office on April 21 to request a meeting to propose new MHB funding legislation for the next legislative session. Representative Heintzman is expected to carry a new bill next year but believes that it will be crucial to get support from Sen. Hawj. Tim proposed reaching out to Leonard Fineday (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe) to build political support for MHB funding, framing it around mutual benefit for Leech Lake tribal Mississippi River protection. He stated that he has seen in the past that when MHB receives a funding increase that the LLBO receives an increase as well. He believed this might be a good strategy. Chair Kearney stated that he received the draft letter from Tim and advised him to send it to the MHB board for review and request comments.
2. On May 13th, a Bemidji landowner contacted Tim regarding the Lake Irving project, praising phosphorus reduction efforts but questioning whether water sampling represents a clear picture of lake health given recurring algae blooms. Tim referred the landowner to MPCA project manager Phil Votruba for water quality data and citizen monitoring opportunities.
3. Since the MHB has assumed responsibility for facilitating the posting of AIS and event promotion content, Tim has observed an increase in posting frequency. Under the existing contract, twelve posts would have been scheduled between May 1 and May 14; however, because the MHB now controls content development and posting schedules, he was able to generate 17 posts during the same period. He anticipates this trend will continue, given the availability of AIS-related content and the ability to post more frequently. Tim also informed the Board that although the annual budget includes \$6,400 for boosted posts, he may be unable to fully utilize those funds due to a \$1,000 monthly credit card limit. He noted that boosted posts from last year's advertising campaign typically ranged from \$50 to \$100 per post, which was sufficient to reach the intended audience.
4. Tim investigated whether the SWCDs would be interested in participating in an MHB-administered BWSR Cooperative Weed Management grant. The purpose of the grant is to support the restoration of native plant communities impacted by terrestrial invasive or noxious weeds and to encourage collaborative efforts to manage invasive species, address emerging weed threats, and restore native plant communities using an integrated, ecosystem-based approach. Because the entire Mississippi River corridor falls within a priority area, Tim explored the possibility of the MHB administering the grant while SWCDs implemented projects locally. Responses from SWCDs varied. Some indicated they were already applying independently, while others stated they already had funding available through WBIF to support similar efforts. Given the grant's maximum award amount of \$30,000, implementing the program on a regional scale would dilute the grant's effectiveness. A more practical approach may be to pursue partnership opportunities with individual SWCDs or LLBO and apply for grants annually if interest continues.

County Updates- Comm. Barrows raised the question of whether the board should establish a deadline for variance requests to allow more advance notice of virtual vs. in-person meetings, and whether meetings should be held when no substantive business exists. Discussion ensued and it was suggested that the possibility of submitting a deadline for variance requests so the board has more than a couple of days' notice when a meeting will be virtual, allowing it to be held at Crow Wing County instead of Walker. Comm. Gaasvig expressed a strong preference for in-person meetings, citing today's technical difficulties as evidence that virtual meetings can be problematic. Comm. Van Kempen asked whether there is a statutory or Bylaw requirement for meeting frequency, and Tim replied that there is none. He also asked if Crow Wing County has better Zoom/virtual meeting infrastructure, and Comm. Barrows stated that they use a different platform than Zoom (Microsoft Teams). Tim provided a brief explanation of the noticing timeline stating that variances typically arrive by the second or third week of the month, and the newspaper notice is the third Wednesday of the month with notice sent to commissioners on Friday of the same week. When asked why the meetings were held in Walker, he replied that it was where MHB used to office at, and it was chosen as the historic meeting place due to geographic centrality. Comm. Gaasvig suggested that there is no variance or substantive business, the meeting should simply be skipped rather than held virtually.

Comm. Barrows also shared a personal health update with the Board.

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

Chair

Executive Director Tim Terrill

May SFY'26 Budget Summary for DNR grant r		YTD spending/rei mbursement	Projected Budget	% of budget spent	
Revenues:	Monthly Amount				Notes
Governor's DNR grant (53290)	\$ 22,948.28	\$ 142,784.57	\$ 124,000.00	115.15%	non competitive quarterly reimbursement
LSOHC grant (53290)		\$ 9,312.92	\$ 7,800.00	119.40%	LSOHC reimbursement
Guidebook sales (58400)		\$ 242.84	\$ 100.00	242.84%	reimbursment for Guidebook sales
Enbridge program (58300)		\$ 8,976.30	\$ 8,000.00	112.20%	enbridge signage and resourcetainment reimbursement
Miscell. Other revenue (58300)		\$ 3,361.60	\$ 6,000.00	56.03%	AIS admin revenue
MCIT Dividend (58300)		\$ 14.00	\$ 200.00	7.00%	MCIT refund
County Support (52990)		\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	100.00%	8 county support
Total	\$ 22,948.28	\$ 176,692.23	\$ 34,100.00		
Expenses:					Notes
Salaries/Benefits FICA/Med/PERA/LIFE/LTD/Hlth/ WC(61000)	\$ 16,590.01	\$ 116,742.41	\$ 123,307.00	94.68%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
MCIT insurance/work comp/liability (61500)		\$ 2,570.00	\$ 3,000.00	85.67%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
MHB board Per Diem (62680)	\$ 250.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	66.67%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Hotel/Meals/travel exp. (63340)	\$ 7.61	\$ 430.95	\$ 500.00	86.19%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Commissioner Mileage (62720)		\$ 2,604.62	\$ 3,500.00	74.42%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Employee Mileage (63320)	\$ 232.00	\$ 3,918.17	\$ 5,500.00	71.24%	reimbursed by Gov. DNR grant
Professional Services (62990)	\$ 1,025.00	\$ 30,415.15	\$ 35,000.00	86.90%	CW Finance, Hubbard Freshwater Festival, Morrison clean up supplies
Office supplies/operations (64090)	\$ 63.07	\$ 2,026.91	\$ 3,000.00	67.56%	telephone, photo converter app
Training & Registration Fees (63380)		\$ 450.00	\$ 800.00	56.25%	
Total	\$ 18,167.69	\$ 161,158.21	\$ 177,607.00		

Governor's DNR grant is always \$124K every year
LSOHC grant is around \$6K to \$8K every year

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2026 05 TO 2026 05

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
74830	53290		Natural Resources							
								REVISED BUDGET		.00
								PER 01	-61,594.54	-61,594.54
								PER 04	-7,706.30	-69,300.84
26/05	464	05/08/26	GNI						-22,948.28	-92,249.12
	ST OF MN	DNR OMB	DNR3Q-26							
			LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		.00		CREDITS:	-92,249.12	NET:	-92,249.12
74830	61000		Salaries & Wages - Regular							
								REVISED BUDGET		.00
								PER 01	6,464.24	6,464.24
								PER 02	6,464.23	12,928.47
								PER 03	6,870.96	19,799.43
								PER 04	6,658.16	26,457.59
26/05	227	05/01/26	PRJ PR0501	1260501	1260501	1260			5,825.89	32,283.48
	PAY050126	WARRANT=260501	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
26/05	704	05/15/26	PRJ PR0515	1260515	1260515	1260			3,329.09	35,612.57
	PAY051526	WARRANT=260515	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
26/05	1621	05/29/26	PRJ PR0529	1260529	1260529	1260			3,329.08	38,941.65
	PAY052926	WARRANT=260529	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
			LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		38,941.65		CREDITS:	.00	NET:	38,941.65
74830	61200		Active Insurance							
								REVISED BUDGET		.00
								PER 01	2,448.52	2,448.52
								PER 02	2,448.52	4,897.04
								PER 03	2,450.13	7,347.17
								PER 04	2,449.29	9,796.46
26/05	227	05/01/26	PRJ PR0501	1260501	1260501	1260			1,238.36	11,034.82
	PAY050126	WARRANT=260501	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
26/05	704	05/15/26	PRJ PR0515	1260515	1260515	1260			1,220.79	12,255.61
	PAY051526	WARRANT=260515	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
26/05	1621	05/29/26	PRJ PR0529	1260529	1260529	1260			13.15	12,268.76
	PAY052926	WARRANT=260529	RUN=1	BI-WEEKL						
			LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		12,268.76		CREDITS:	.00	NET:	12,268.76

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2026 05 TO 2026 05

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
74830	61300		Employee Pension & FICA							
										REVISED BUDGET .00
										PER 01 908.91 908.91
										PER 02 908.93 1,817.84
										PER 03 970.53 2,788.37
										PER 04 938.30 3,726.67
26/05	227	05/01/26	PRJ PR0501	1260501	1260501	1260		660.15		4,386.82
			PAY050126 WARRANT=260501 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL							
26/05	704	05/15/26	PRJ PR0515	1260515	1260515	1260		469.15		4,855.97
			PAY051526 WARRANT=260515 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL							
26/05	1621	05/29/26	PRJ PR0529	1260529	1260529	1260		504.35		5,360.32
			PAY052926 WARRANT=260529 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL							
			LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		5,360.32		CREDITS:	.00	NET:	5,360.32
74830	62100		Telephone							
										REVISED BUDGET .00
										PER 01 60.86 60.86
										PER 02 61.47 122.33
										PER 03 61.85 184.18
										PER 04 62.07 246.25
26/05	704	05/15/26	PRJ PR0515	1260515	1260515	1260		55.00		301.25
			PAY051526 WARRANT=260515 RUN=1 BI-WEEKL							
26/05	742	05/19/26	API 006205		258535		44339	7.01		308.26
			W C051926 ACCOUNT 00023555-8 CONSOLIDATED TELECOM							
			LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:		308.26		CREDITS:	.00	NET:	308.26
74830	62680		Non-Employee Per Diems							
										REVISED BUDGET .00
										PER 03 500.00 500.00
										PER 04 150.00 650.00
26/05	1470	05/26/26	API 100532		258952		1972124	50.00		700.00
			W A052626 MHB MEETING PER DIEM MORRISON COUNTY AUDI							
26/05	1470	05/26/26	API 003257		258953		44415	50.00		750.00
			W A052626 MHB MEETING PER DIEM GAASVIG, CRAIG							
26/05	1470	05/26/26	API 006952		258954		44417	50.00		800.00
			W A052626 MHB MEETING PER DIEM & MILEAGE MICHAEL KEARNEY							
26/05	1470	05/26/26	API 003356		258955		44416	50.00		850.00
			W A052626 MH HUBBARD COUNTY TREAS							

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2026 05 TO 2026 05

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
26/05	1470	05/26/26	API 008091		258956	1972123		50.00	900.00	
	W A052626	MHB MEETING PER DIEM			BRYAN RAMSRUD					
		LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:			900.00	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	900.00
74830	62720		Non-Employee Mileage			REVISED BUDGET				.00
						PER 03		669.97	669.97	
						PER 04		251.05	921.02	
26/05	1470	05/26/26	API 006952		258954	44417		84.10	1,005.12	
	W A052626	MHB MEETING PER DIEM & MILEAGE	MICHAEL KEARNEY							
		LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:			1,005.12	CREDITS:		.00	NET:	1,005.12
74830	62990		Prof. & Tech. Fee - Other			REVISED BUDGET				.00
						PER 01		15,419.01	15,419.01	
						PER 02		525.00	15,944.01	
						PER 03		1,104.00	17,048.01	
						PER 04		5,227.50	22,275.51	
26/05	297	05/05/26	API 007203		257831	44259		250.00	22,525.51	
	W A050526	HUBBARD SWCD FRESHWATER FESTIV	HUBBARD COUNTY							
26/05	547	05/12/26	API 008590		258279	44329		8,400.00	30,925.51	
	W A051226	JACOBSON CONTRACT #1	PETER JACOBSON							
26/05	568	05/12/26	GNI 906050	Britny.MCC 63366				-47.42	30,878.09	
	iNovah	April Bremer								
26/05	1038	05/19/26	API 100532		258570	1971954		250.00	31,128.09	
	W A051926	PARK CLEAN UP SUPPLIES	MORRISON COUNTY AUDI							
26/05	1863	05/29/26	GNI					31.37	31,159.46	
	BREM PCARD	personal								
		TIM TERRILL-AMAZON.COM*BC2ZU9XZ0-personal								
26/05	1863	05/29/26	GNI					16.05	31,175.51	
	BREM PCARD	personal								
		TIM TERRILL-AUDIBLE*KAO8G1S13-personal								
26/05	1863	05/29/26	GNI					11.48	31,186.99	
	BREM PCARD	AIS Ads								
		TIM TERRILL-FACEBK *CNR42NMYG2-AIS Ads								
26/05	1932	05/29/26	GEN					525.00	31,711.99	
	RECURRING	FINANCIAL SERVICE								
		LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS:			31,759.41	CREDITS:		-47.42	NET:	31,711.99

ACCOUNT DETAIL HISTORY FOR 2026 05 TO 2026 05

ORG YR/PR	OBJECT JNL	PROJ EFF DATE	SRC REF1	REF2	REF3	CHECK #	OB	AMOUNT	NET LEDGER BALANCE	NET BUDGET BALANCE
74830	63320		Employee Mileage							
										REVISED BUDGET .00
										PER 01 282.80 282.80
										PER 02 266.51 549.31
										PER 03 179.80 729.11
										PER 04 377.00 1,106.11
26/05	1247	05/26/26	API 007742		258929	1972109		232.00	1,106.11	1,338.11
			W OOP0426	April Mileage		TERRILL,TIM				
										LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS: 1,338.11 CREDITS: .00 NET: 1,338.11
74830	63340		Hotel & Meals Travel Expense							
										REVISED BUDGET .00
										PER 01 174.06 174.06
										PER 02 12.58 186.64
										PER 03 23.63 210.27
										PER 04 35.51 245.78
26/05	1863	05/29/26	GNI					7.61	245.78	253.39
			BREM PCARD	board meeting meal						
				TIM TERRILL-SUBWAY 13720-board meeting meal						
										LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS: 253.39 CREDITS: .00 NET: 253.39
74830	64090		Office supplies							
										REVISED BUDGET .00
										PER 02 57.08 57.08
										PER 03 218.08 275.16
										PER 04 26.95 302.11
26/05	1863	05/29/26	GNI					1.06	302.11	303.17
			BREM PCARD	photo converter						
				TIM TERRILL-MICROSOFT*STORE-photo converter						
										LEDGER BALANCES --- DEBITS: 303.17 CREDITS: .00 NET: 303.17
										GRAND TOTAL --- DEBITS: 92,438.19 CREDITS: -92,296.54 NET: 141.65

29 Records printed

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



PROTECTING THE FIRST 400 MILES

IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE 6/1/26

Media Contact

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Mississippi Headwaters Board Receives Report on benefit of Lake Irving Project in Bemidji

Executive Director Tim Terrill presented the seasonal phosphorus trend data that had been provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, highlighting water quality conditions before and after implementation of the PMA 25 Lake Irving project. The project, which was supported by the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) through Enbridge funding and carried out in partnership with the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District and the City of Bemidji, was designed to improve water quality by reducing phosphorus inputs and stabilizing nutrient levels over time.

The graph illustrated that phosphorus concentrations became more stable following project installation, indicating that the investment of public funds has been effective in reducing seasonal fluctuations and improving overall water quality conditions. The data demonstrated how targeted conservation efforts and collaborative partnerships can produce measurable environmental benefits, particularly in protecting lakes and waterways from excess nutrient loading that can contribute to algae blooms and degraded aquatic ecosystems.

Commissioner Barrows commented that this type of outcome-based information is valuable for County Commissioners to share with their county boards, as it provides tangible evidence of the effectiveness of MHB's work and the importance of partnerships in delivering successful conservation projects. He noted that presenting measurable results helps communicate the return on investment from conservation funding and illustrates how collaborative efforts can lead to long-term improvements in water quality and resource protection.

2026 Aitkin Rivers & Lakes Fair





Stakeholder Support from
MN DNR & The Nature
Conservancy



Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project

MHHCP 2016- 2026

Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project

Program Goal :

What: Protect critical fish and wildlife habitat along the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River (the Headwaters), its major tributaries, 9 headwaters lakes

Where? Headwaters Counties:
Clearwater, Beltrami, Hubbard, Cass, Itasca, Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Morrison Counties



Funding Since 2016

- **OHF Phases 1-9**
\$34,487,000
- **Clean Water Fund**
\$1,000,000
- **Phase 10 to be received 7/1/2026**
\$2,700,000
- **Phase 11 applied for 5/23/2026**
\$5,000,000 (easements and MHB only)



MHHCP Project Goal:

Land conservation next to already protected land (public or private under easement) to expand or create large, contiguous complexes and corridors for permanent protection of critical fish and wildlife habitat.

How?

RIM Conservation Easements

Partners: BWSR + 8 Headwaters SWCDs

Permanent conservation on private lands;
no public access.

Fee-Title Acquisitions

Partner: The Trust for Public Land

Land conveyed to a public owner

i.e. MN DNR or appropriate county; public access.



Accomplishments Since 2016

June 2026

Completed to Date:

- **65 RIM conservation easements:**
6,520 acres, 56 miles of shoreland
- **13 fee-title acquisitions:**
6,492 acres; 16 miles shoreland

In Process:

14 projects in process; 1,432 acres, 5 shore miles



Total Land Conservation Achievement 2016-2026

78 Land Conservation Projects

13,012 acres

381,394 shoreland feet

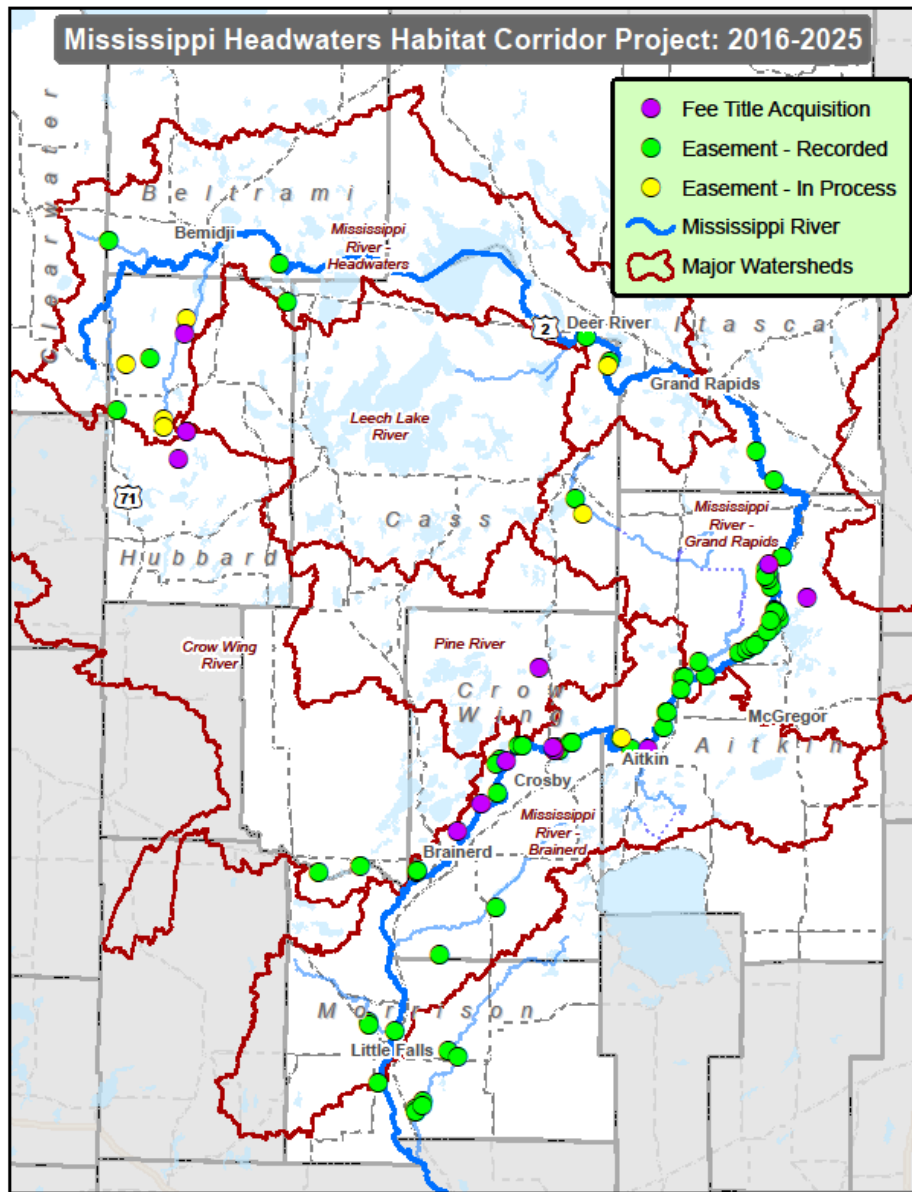
72 shore miles

Projects on River Main Stem:

242,342 shoreland feet

45 shoreland miles

63% of permanent
habitat conservation is
on the Mississippi River



Why Is Habitat Protection Important?

- Clean (well-oxygenated) water is habitat for fish.
- Upland habitat is home to 350+ species of animals and birds.
- The river provides critical food and shelter for migratory waterfowl.
- Prevents fragmentation of critical habitats such as forests, shorelands, grasslands, and wetlands.
- Enhanced public recreational opportunities.
- Habitat protection=clean drinking water for over 2 million Minnesotans downstream and beyond.

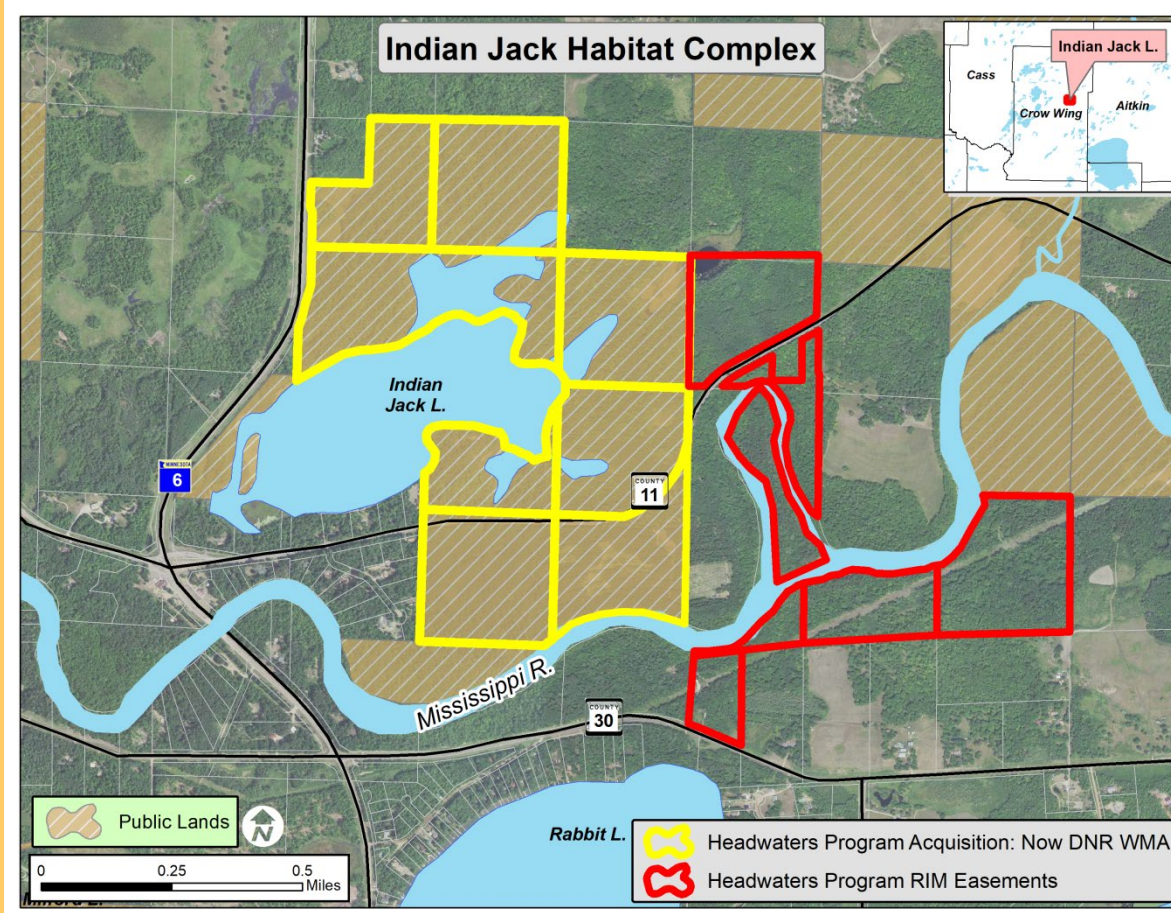


Habitat Complex Example

Indian Jack Habitat Complex

Crow Wing County

594 acres, 2.5 miles of lakeshore, and
3 miles of river



2 acquisitions

WMA -264 acres

Addition 35 acres

2 conservation easements

104 acres

combined with

190 acres of existing public land



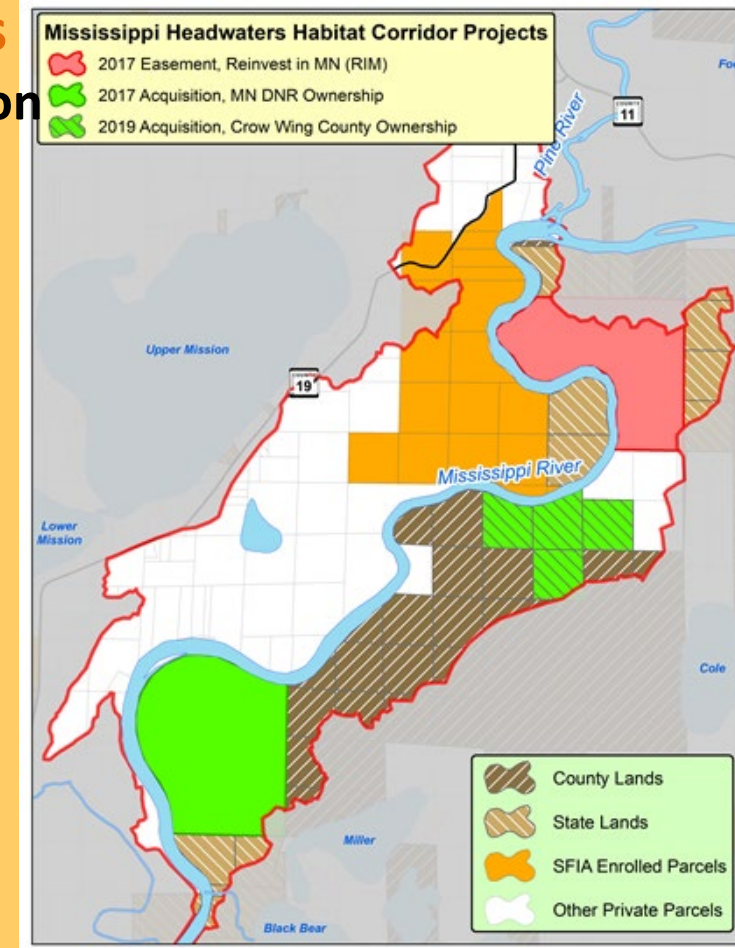
Crow Wing Mississippi River Complex



2 fee-title acquisitions
Crow Wing Forest Addition
State Forest Addition

2 easements
1,672+ acres of
contiguous
protected upland and

Total: 9+ miles of
Mississippi
River shoreland





SWCD Partners

8 Headwaters SWCDs

- Outreach to priority landowners
- Field inspections and landowner communications
- Assists landowner with process and recording of easement
- Responsible for local monitoring

- Processes easement applications
- Holds the easements into perpetuity
- Responsible for monitoring and violation resolution
- Contracts with SWCDs for easement application, processing, and local monitoring



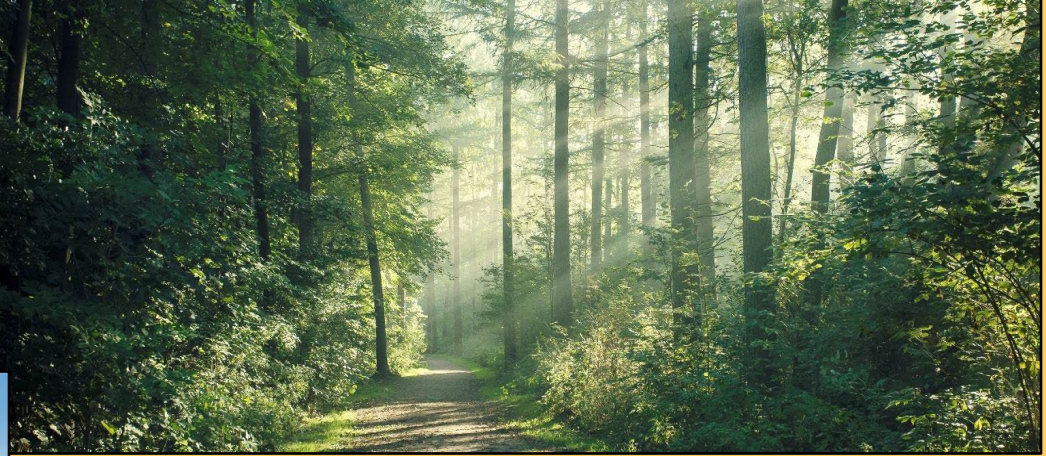
Working With Conservation-Minded Landowners

Dick and Barbara Schuh; easement
on ½ mile of Mississippi shoreline
and 166 acres

“This is just pristine, and we’d like
to keep it that way”



Laden Lake (Sheep Ranch)



Hubbard County

**2,529 acres purchased
from TCF and appended to
DNR Paul Bunyan State
Forest.**

**6.5 miles shoreland
Largest donation of private
land to the state forest
system.**

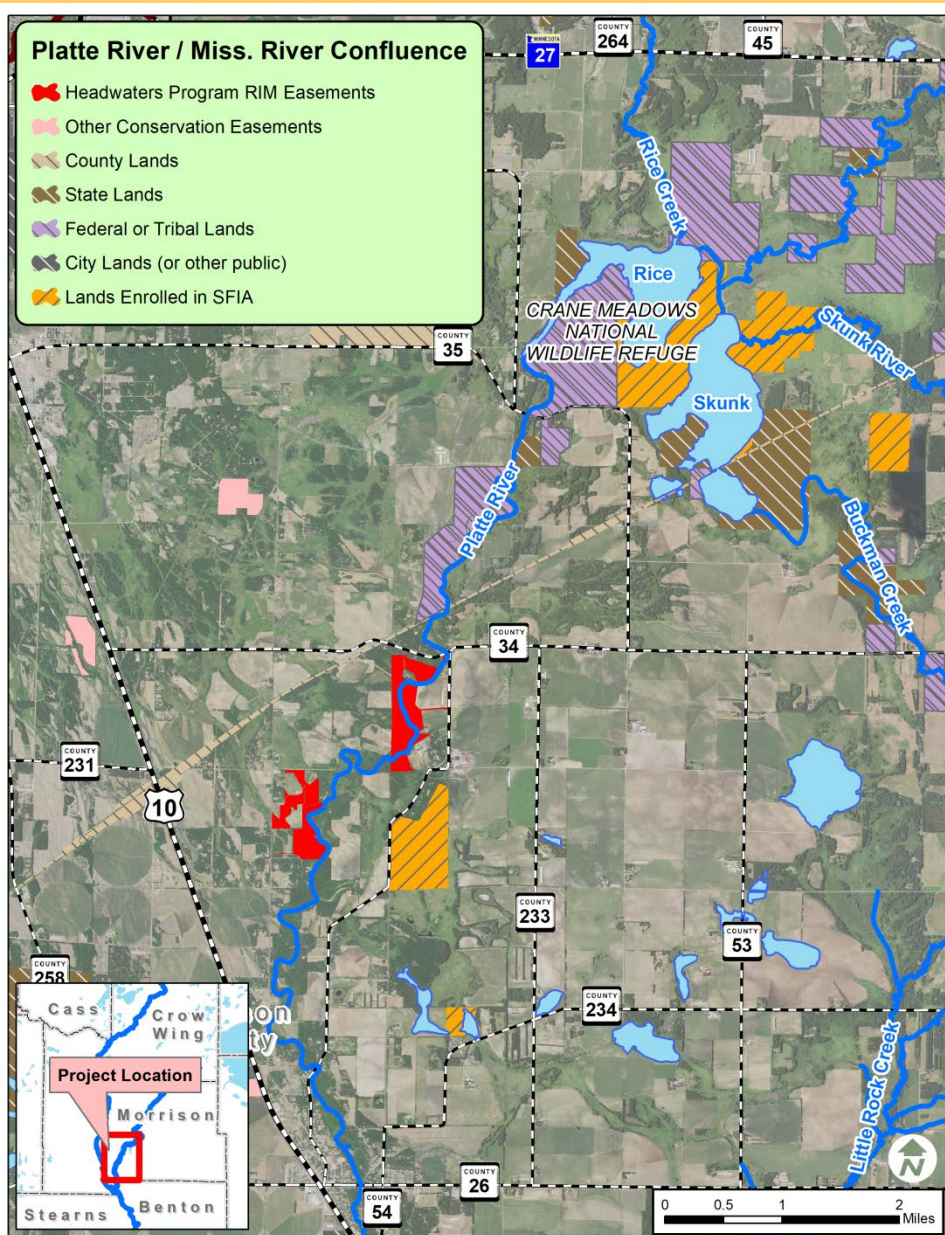
Habitat Complex Example

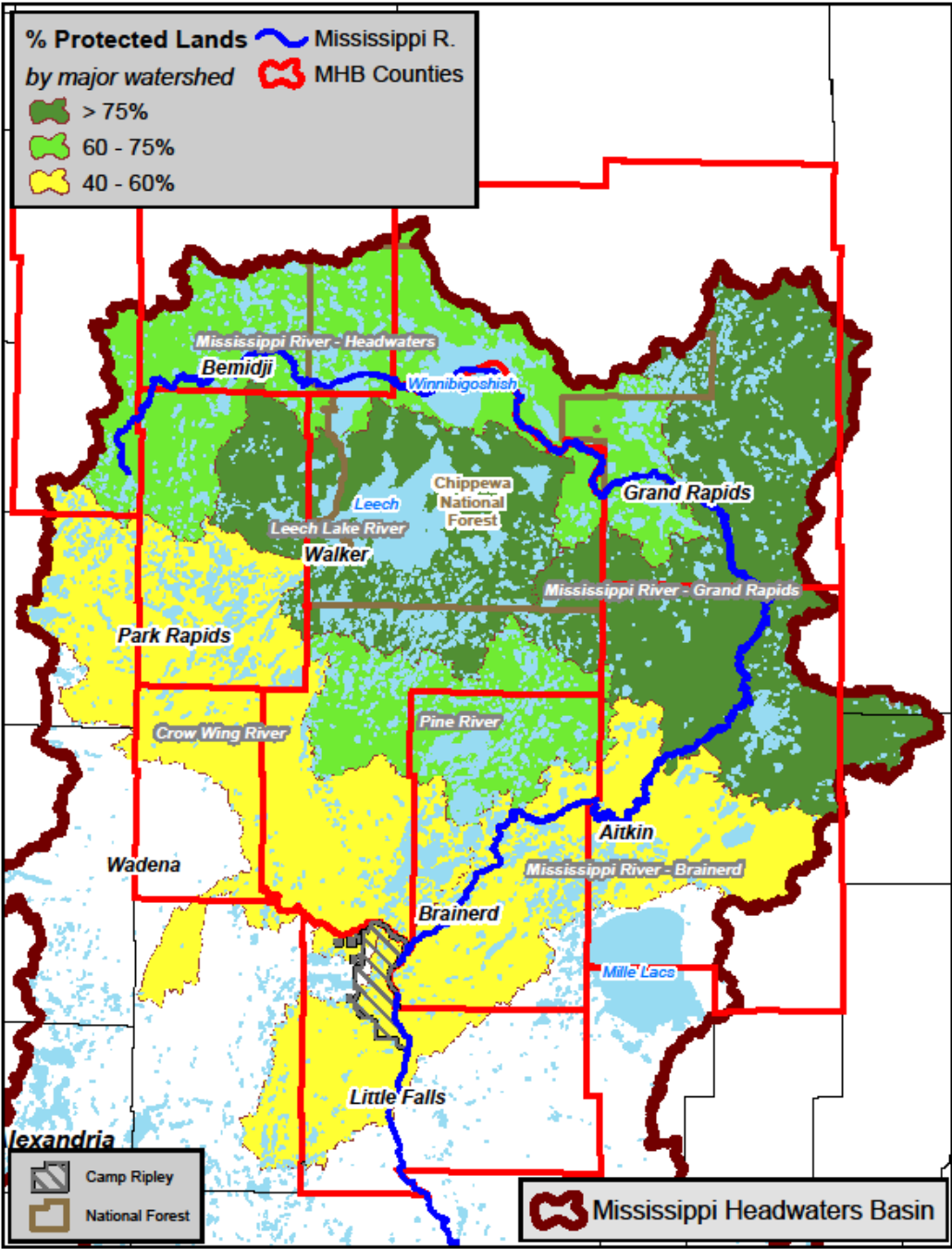
Protecting Major Tributaries

Platte River Complex/ Morrison -
-A Major Mississippi Tributary

5 easements completed on
the Platte River
3 miles of river shoreland

Several easements on other
major tributaries—
Swan River
Little Elk River





Future Directions?

6 Major Watersheds

Mississippi Headwaters

Mississippi Grand Rapids

Mississippi Brainerd

Pine River

Leech Lake

Crow Wing River

Mississippi Headwaters Protection Summary

Major Watershed Name	% Protected Lands (includes SFIA)	General Management Strategy
Leech Lake	79.4%	Vigilance
Mississippi Grand Rapids	75.2%	Vigilance
Mississippi Headwaters	72.5%	Protection
Pine River	65.6%	Protection
Mississippi Brainerd	52.2%	Protection
Crow Wing River	46.6%	Protection

Wildlife Habitat Benefits of Watershed Protection

MAY 17, 2026

WILDLIFE HABITAT BENEFITS
OF WATERSHED PROTECTION
PREPARED FOR THE MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS HABITAT
CORRIDORS PROJECT

PETER C. JACOBSON
CONSULTING SCIENTIST



*With Support from the Minnesota
Outdoor Heritage Fund*

Three Maps studied to look for similarities

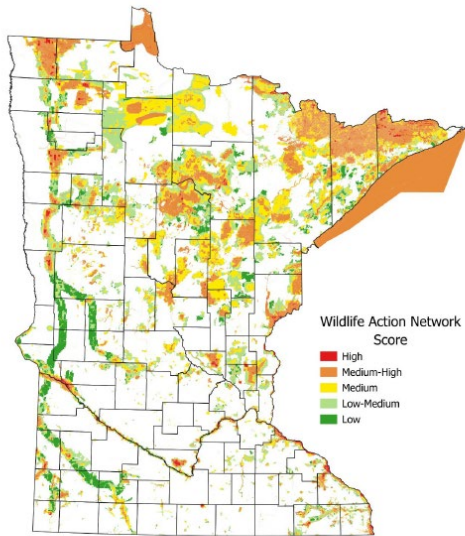


Figure 2. Priority wildlife habitat lands identified by the 2015 Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan.

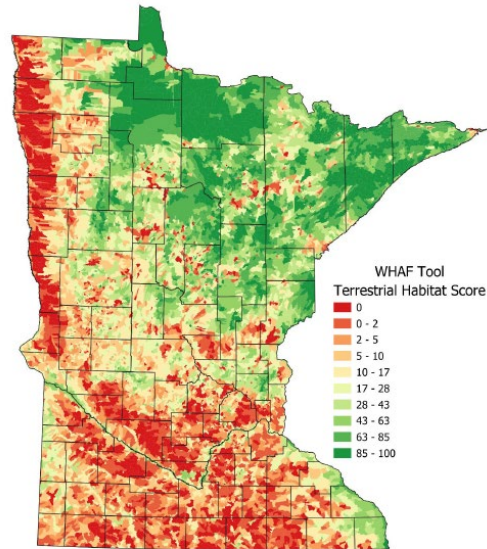


Figure 3. Terrestrial habitat scores from the DNR Watershed Health Assessment Framework by DNR Level 08 Catchments.

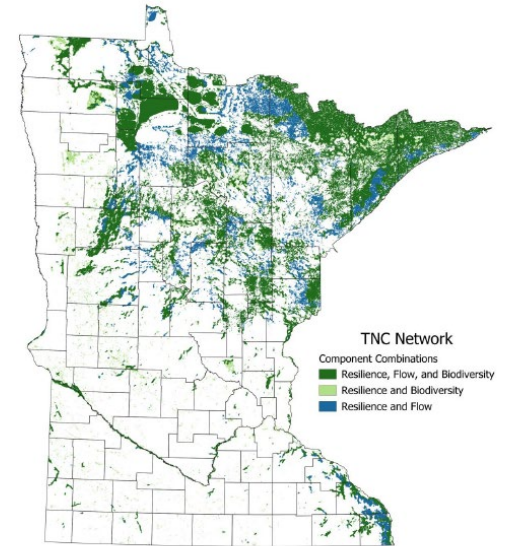


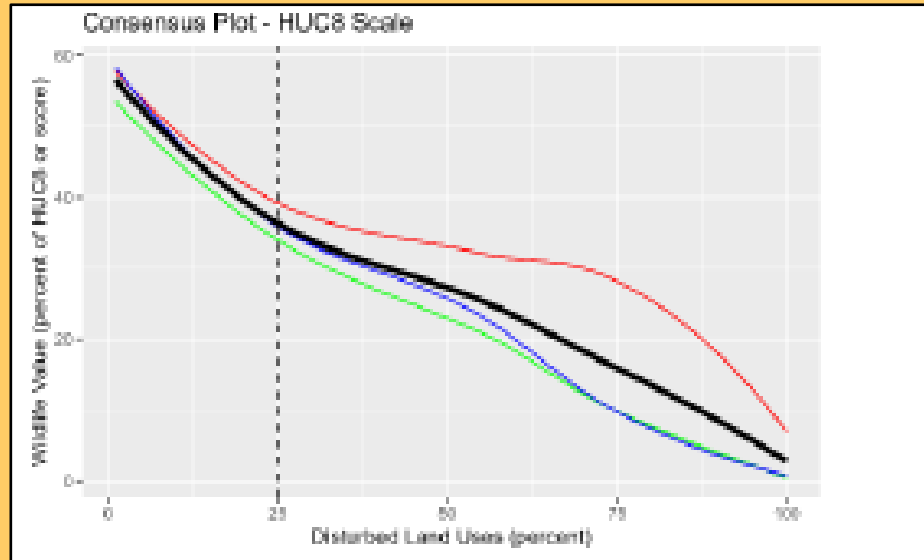
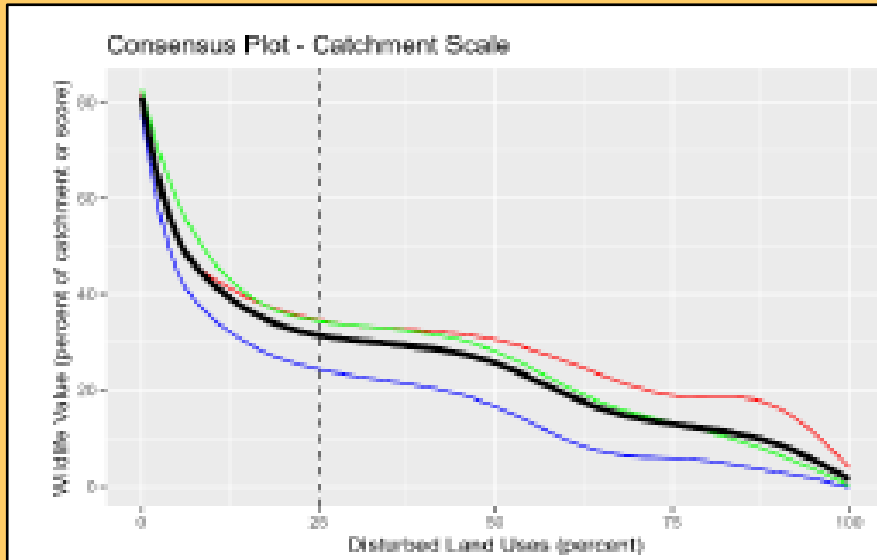
Figure 4. High value lands for resilience to climate change, ecological flow, and biodiversity identified by The Nature Conservancy's Resilient and Connected Lands Network (Anderson et al. 2023).

**Wildlife Action
Network Score**

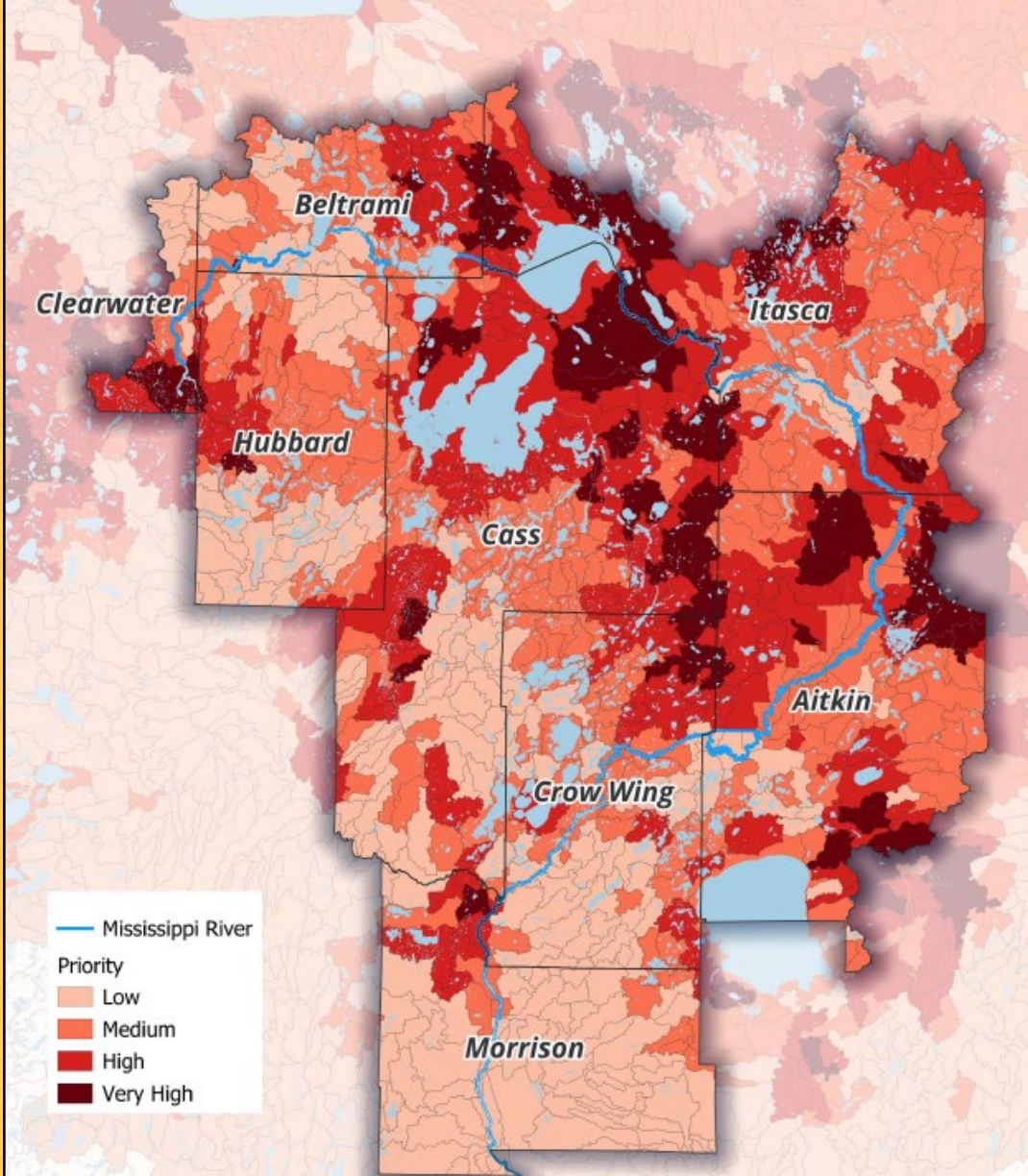
**Watershed Health
Assessment
Framework**

**TNC Resilient and
Connected Lands
Network**

Consensus Plots



**As land use disturbance increases;
the wildlife values decreased.**



Wildlife Priority DNR Minor Watersheds for the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridors Project

Choosing Critical Parcels

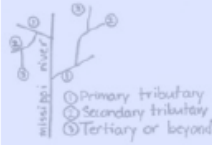
Active Easement Outreach by SWCDs:

- **RAQ scores**
 - R= riparian**
 - A= Adjacency to public land or another easement**
 - Q= Habitat Quality**
- **Priorities in 1W1Ps that fit the criteria of MHHCP**
 - RAQ scores for water quality**
- **Landowners that contact SWCDs with interest**

Fee-title Acquisitions

- **Additions to DNR AMAs or WMAs**
- **Land a County would like to acquire to consolidate or expand holdings**

Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project Easement Ranking

Landowner Name:				RAQ Score	
Parcel Number(s):					
County:					
Score	Max	Standard	Ranking Criteria		Field Comments
Habitat Biodiversity					
	25	General Biodiversity	MBS Biodiversity Ranking 25 = outstanding 20 = high 15 = moderate 10 = below 5 = not identified	or MN Biological Survey Ranking; Click for Link	Wildlife Action Network Ranking 25 = high/med-high 20 = medium 15 = low-medium 10 = low 5 = not identified
	15	Migratory Waterfowl Habitat	Wild rice present, floodplains, riparian wetlands, river ox bows, shallow wetlands and other habitat suitable to migratory waterfowl.		
	20	Forest Land Cover	10% = 2pts	Points are based on the proportion of the parcel that is undisturbed forest; priority forest type and/or perennial grasses.	
Parcel Suitability					
Shoreline Protection Prioritization					
	30	Shoreline Protection	Mississippi River, Primary Tributary, Reservoir, and Headwater Lakes 30pts= >3000ft of Shoreline 25pts= 2000 < 3000ft Shoreline 20pts= 1000 < 2000ft Shoreline 15pts= 500 < 999ft Shoreline	Secondary Tributary of Mississippi River 25pts= >3000ft of Shoreline 20pts= 2000 < 3000ft Shoreline 15pts= 1000 < 2000ft Shoreline 10pts= 500 < 999ft Shoreline	Tertiary Tributary of Mississippi River or any other waterbody 20pts= >3000ft of Shoreline 15pts= 2000 < 3000ft Shoreline 10pts= 1000 < 2000ft Shoreline 5pts= 500 < 999ft Shoreline
	10	Parcel Size	10 pts= > 175 acres 8 pts= 100 < 175 acres	6 pts= 50 < 100 acres 4 pts= 20 < 50 acres	 <p>① Primary tributary ② Secondary tributary ③ Tertiary or beyond</p>
	10	Parcel Enrollment	Score based on the proportion of the parcel enrolled in the easement (Example: 1 pt = 10% - 10 pts = 100%)		
	10	Wetland Fringe	Score based on the width of the wetland fringe (distance from open water to upland) (Example: 1 pt = 10ft - 10 pts = 100ft)		
Habitat Corridor Connectivity & Continuity					
	25	Adjoining Public Land	Adjacency points for adjoining public land directly or adjoining public land through a conservation easement. (25 pts for 3 sides, 20 pts for 2 sides; 15 pts for 1 side; 10 pts for diagonal or 1 parcel away)		
	10	Adjoining Privately Protected Land	10 pts for adjoining privately protected land (ie. easement) or another easement application.		
Habitat Fragmentation Risk					
	15	Development Risk	Score based on the percent of the land that is developable. Examples of areas that are not developable: wetlands, open water (Example: 1.5 pt = 10% - 15 pts = 100%)		
1W1P Subwatershed Prioritization					
	15	Watershed Goals	The parcel is located within a priority subwatershed, as identified in the One Watershed, One Plan document for a major watershed within the Mississippi Headwaters 8 counties.		
Professional Judgement					
	15	Professional Judgement	0-15 points; professional judgement examples that could influence the score: the parcel's unique features, unique resources on the land, lack of disturbance, property owner's management plan, property was previously enrolled in a conservation program (2c, SFIA)		
0	200	Maximum Number of Points		Password: Mississippi	
0	100	Ranking Score (max. score / 2)			

MHB Easement Ranking Sheet

- Habitat Biodiversity
- Parcel Suitability
- Habitat Corridor and Continuity
- Habitat Fragmentation Risk
- 1W1P Subwatershed Prioritization
- Professional Judgement



From the beginning to the end of the first 400 miles of the of the Mississippi River— it's critical headwaters.

Questions?

Mississippi Headwaters Board Contract

This non-exclusive Agreement (“Agreement”) is made, effective upon execution by all parties (“Effective Date), by and between the Mississippi Headwaters Board, located at 326 Laurel St., Brainerd, MN 56401 (“MHB”) and West Communications, with its principal office located at 25839 Trailside Run, Nisswa, MN 56468.

ARTICLE 1: RECITALS

WHEREAS, MHB was established in 1980 under Minnesota Statutes 103F.361-378 to identify and protect the natural, cultural, scenic, scientific and recreational values of the Mississippi River’s first four hundred miles; and

WHEREAS, MHB and West Communications agree to enter into this Agreement whereby West Communications will provide services to coordinate the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project which is an easement and fee-title program, and the MHB will act as organizational oversight to the contractor and will monitor progress.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises, covenants and mutual promises contained in this Agreement, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties do hereby agree as follows:

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

2.1 Purpose.

MHB and West Communications agree that the purpose of this Agreement is to contract with West Communications to coordinate the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project.

ARTICLE 3: TERM OF GRANT AGREEMENT

- 3.1 ***Effective date:*** The date the MHB obtains all required signatures. **The Grantee must not begin work under this grant agreement until this Grant Agreement is fully executed and the Grantee has been notified by the Executive Director to begin the work.**
- 3.2 ***Expiration date:*** December 31, 2026, or until all obligations have been satisfactorily fulfilled, whichever comes first.

ARTICLE 4: DEFINITIONS

4.1 Definitions.

For the purposes of this Agreement and the Schedules hereto, unless there is something in the context inconsistent therewith, the following words and phrases will have the following meanings:

- (a) **Agreement** means this Agreement as the same may be amended from time to time in accordance with the terms hereof and the expressions “herein”, “hereof”, “hereto”, “above”, “below” and similar expressions if used in any sub-paragraph, paragraph, sub-

section, Section or Article of this Agreement refer and relate back to the whole of this Agreement and not to that sub-paragraph, paragraph, sub-section, Section or Article only, unless otherwise expressly provided;

- (b) **“Confidential Information”** means information that is deemed nonpublic or confidential pursuant to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act;
- (c) **Event of Default** means, with respect either West Communications or MHB, that:
 - (i) such Party makes an assignment of its assets for the benefit of its creditors or makes a proposal to its creditors under any bankruptcy or insolvency legislation of any jurisdiction;
 - (ii) a petition in bankruptcy is filed and presented against such Party or a receiver, receiver and manager, custodian or similar agent is appointed or takes possession of any property or business of such Party;
 - (iii) such Party ceases or threatens to cease to carry on its business;
 - (iv) an execution, sequestration, extent or other process of any court becomes enforceable against such Party or a distress or analogous process is levied upon the property of such Party or any part thereof that is not cured within sixty (60) days;
 - (v) in the case of either Party, any of the representations or warranties given hereunder are found to be incorrect or untrue and, as result, have a material, adverse effect upon such Party carrying out its obligations hereunder;
 - (vi) either Party’s failure to remedy a material breach of this Agreement within sixty (60) days of receipt of written notice from the other Party specifying in detail the nature of such breach.
 - (vii) written notice from any authorized agency finding either Party’s contract activities pursuant to this Agreement to be in violation of the law.
 - (viii) in the case of either Party if is found to be engaged in illegal contract or purchasing activities and/or no longer exists under the applicable law.
- (d) **“Parties”** means the parties to this Agreement, specifically West Communications and MHB and **“Party”** means any one of West Communications and MHB;

ARTICLE 5: PROJECT INFORMATION

5.1 Project Deliverables.

- Communicate and coordinate regularly with MHB member counties to advise and assist with landowner outreach.

- Work with the Trust for Public Land to identify and target potential parcels for acquisition.
- Maintain relationships with BWSR Conservation Easement Section staff to coordinate assignment of easements to legislative appropriations and maintain efficient tracking of easements submitted to BWSR.
- Coordinate Technical Committee meetings and take minutes of the meetings.
- Annually write and submit grants, and revisions as needed, to the LSOHC and testify annually before them.
- Report and fulfill the responsibilities of appropriated LSOHC grants by meeting final reporting requirements.
- Produce and distribute any communication to promote the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project.

5.2 Action Steps and Timeline.

The duration of this contract will be through December 31, 2026, and will meet the above deliverables.

5.3 Project payment.

Payment for services will occur on a reimbursement basis whereas MHB will submit allowable expenses through Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) reporting forms to the DNR on a quarterly basis.

5.4 Meals, Lodging, and Mileage expenses

Any incurred travel expenses will be paid according to the DNR reimbursement rate for LSOHC administered projects.

ARTICLE 6: FINANCIAL NEED AND RESOURCES

6.1 Funding.

MHB shall provide funding from date of signature to December 31, 2026 not to exceed the amount of \$20,000 at a rate of \$95 per hour for Project coordination through reimbursement from the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage fund.

ARTICLE 7: TERMINATION

7.1 Term

The period of this Agreement will commence on date of signature and expire on December 31, 2026.

7.2 Termination

This Agreement shall be terminated prior to the expiration of the Term, funding is terminated, or grant is no longer funded:

- (a) immediately upon either Party providing written notice to the other Party in the event of the occurrence of an Event of Default with respect to the other Party. Termination of this Agreement pursuant to this Subsection (a) shall not limit, in any way, the recourse to any remedies available to either Party at law or in equity; or
- (b) Thirty (30) days following delivery by either Party of written notice to the other Party to that effect.

7.3 Payment upon Termination

In the event of termination of this Agreement, each Party shall perform its obligations up to and including the effective date of termination.

7.4 Rights and Obligations on Termination or Expiry

Upon the expiry of the Term or the termination of this Agreement and in addition to the other obligations of each Party as set forth herein, each Party shall promptly and unconditionally return or cause to be returned to other Party, as the case may be, all data, property, documentation and other materials supplied by or at the direction of one Party to the other Party or to any of its employees or agents.

ARTICLE 8: LIMITED LICENSE TO USE OF NAMES AND TRADEMARKS

8.1 Limited License To Use Name and Logo

Each Party grants the other Party a limited license to use its name and logo in advertising and promoting the events as contemplated in this Agreement, including the use of its logo on any merchandise authorized by both Parties.

8.2 Approval Required Before Use of Name and Logo

Prior to a Party using the other Party's name and logo, such Party shall first call or email the other Party for prior approval, such approval will not be unreasonably withheld.

ARTICLE 9: GENERAL CONDITIONS

9.1 Notices

Whether or not so stipulated herein, all notices, communication, requests and statements (the "Notice") required or permitted hereunder shall be in writing.

Any Notice required or permitted hereunder shall be sent to the intended recipient at its address as follows:

- (i) Mississippi Headwaters Board
ATTN: Executive Director
Address: 326 Laurel Street
City/State: Brainerd

Zip: 56401
Email: timt@mississippiheadwaters.org
Telephone: (218)-824-1189

Notice shall be served by the following means:

- (a) By delivering it to the Party on whom it is to be served via email or US postal mail. Notice delivered in this manner shall be deemed received when actually delivered to such Party through these methods.

9.2 Governing Law, Jurisdiction, and Attorney's Fees

This Agreement shall be interpreted and construed in accordance with and governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota. Any dispute arising out of this Agreement shall be adjudicated in Crow Wing County, Minnesota. In any action or proceeding to enforce rights under this Agreement, the prevailing Party will be entitled to recover costs and reasonable attorney's fees from the other Party

9.3 Force Majeure

Neither Party hereto shall be liable to the other for default or delay in performing its obligations hereunder if caused by fire, strike, riot, war, act of God, delay of carriers, governmental order or regulation, complete or partial shutdown of plant by reason of inability to obtain sufficient raw materials or power, and/or any other similar or different occurrence beyond the reasonable control of the Party so defaulting or delaying. The Party whose performance is prevented by any such occurrence shall notify the other Party thereof in writing as soon as is reasonably possible after the commencement of such occurrence, setting forth the full particulars in connection therewith, shall remedy such occurrence with all reasonable dispatch, and shall promptly give written notice to the other Party of the cessation of such occurrence.

9.4 Assignment

Neither Party shall have the right to assign or otherwise transfer its rights and obligations under this Agreement except with the prior written consent of the other Party, provided that a successor in interest by merger, by operation of law, assignment, purchase, or otherwise of the entire business of either Party shall acquire all interest of such Party hereunder. Any prohibited assignment shall be invalid.

9.5 Relationship

Each Party is an independent entity under the terms of this Agreement. Neither Party, by virtue of this Agreement, will have any right, power, or authority to act or create any obligation, expressed or implied, on behalf of the other Party. Except as otherwise provided or as may hereafter be established by a written agreement executed by authorized representatives of the Parties, all operational expenses incurred by either Party will be borne by the Party incurring the expense. Neither Party will hold itself out as, nor claim to be, an agent of the other Party and will not make any claim, demand, or application to or for any right or privilege applicable to an agent of the other Party.

9.6 Indemnity

Each party agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold the other harmless from any and all claims and demands of Members or Participants, which may result from the negligence of the other in connection with

its duties and responsibilities under this Agreement, unless such action is a result of intentional wrongdoing of the other party. Each party agrees that it will be responsible for its own acts and the result thereof to the extent authorized by law and shall not be responsible for the acts of the other party and the results thereof.

9.7 Limitations of Liability

Excepting the parties' indemnification obligations hereunder, neither party shall, by reason of termination of this Agreement or otherwise, be liable to the other party for any punitive, special, incidental, or consequential damages including, but not limited to the following: compensation or damages for loss of present or prospective profits or revenues; loss of actual or anticipated commissions on sales or anticipated sales; expenditures, investments, or commitments made in connection with the establishment, development, or maintenance of the selling representation created by this Agreement or in connection with the performance of obligations, regardless of the form of action, whether in contract, tort, or other legal theory. The foregoing limitation shall apply (A) even if such party has been advised of the possibility of such damages and (B) notwithstanding any failure of essential purpose of any limited remedy herein.

9.8 Binding Effect

This Agreement binds and inures to the benefit of the Parties hereto and their respective successors and permitted assigns.

9.9 Entire Agreement

The individuals signing this Agreement hereby represent that they are authorized, on behalf of their respective organizations, to execute this Agreement and the Agreement contains the entire understanding between the Parties concerning the subject matter.

9.10 Severability

In the event that any of the terms of this Agreement are in conflict with any rule, law, statutory provision, or are otherwise unenforceable under the laws or regulations of any applicable government or subdivision thereof, such terms shall be deemed stricken from this Agreement, but such invalidity or unenforceability shall not invalidate any of the other terms of this Agreement. This Agreement shall continue in force, unless the invalidity or unenforceability of any such provisions hereof does substantial harm to, or where the invalid or unenforceable provisions compromise an integral part of, or are otherwise inseparable from, the remainder of this Agreement.

9.11 Waiver

Failure by either Party to take action or assert any right hereunder shall not be deemed a waiver of such right in the event of the continuation or repetition of the circumstances giving rise to such right.

9.12 Successors

All rights and remedies of the Parties hereunder shall inure to the benefit of their successors and assigns.

9.13 Amendments

This Agreement shall not be deemed or construed to be modified, amended, rescinded, canceled,

or waived, in whole or in part, other than by written amendment signed by both Parties.

9.14 Confidentiality

The Parties agree and understand that each Party that all information that each Party possesses shall be considered public unless such information qualifies as an exception under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Parties agree to not disclose Confidential Information and shall take all reasonable measures to enforce the obligation of confidentiality and use contained herein with respect to any of their employees or former employees who while in the employ of the Parties have access to Confidential Information. In the event of unauthorized disclosure of Confidential Information, the disclosing Party will indemnify, and hold the non-disclosing Party harmless from any and all claims, suits, fines, penalties, causes of action, damages, liabilities, expenses, and attorneys' fees incurred as a result of the disclosing Party's unauthorized disclosure of Confidential Information. The disclosing Party will be bound by, and will pay, the amount of any settlement, judgment, penalty, fine, and award as well as any and all costs, expenses, and attorneys' fees incurred by the non-disclosing Party as a result of the unauthorized disclosure.

9.15 Reference to Articles, Provisions, and Sub-provisions

As used herein, reference to any Article, Provision, or Sub-provision shall be only with reference to an Article, Provision, or Sub-provision of this Agreement unless specifically indicated otherwise.

9.16 Counterparts

This Agreement may be executed and delivered in any number of counterparts, by facsimile copy, by electronic or digital signature or by other written acknowledgement of consent and agreement to be legally bound by its terms. Each counterpart when executed and delivered will be considered an original but all counterparts taken together constitute one and the same instrument.

9.17 Execution and Delivery of Documents

Each of the Parties hereto, legal representatives, successors, and assigns shall do all things to execute and deliver any and all documents which may be necessary at any time to carry out and effectuate the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

9.18 Recitals and Schedules

The Parties hereby confirm and ratify the matters contained and referred to in the Recitals and this Agreement and agree that it and the various schedule(s) hereto are expressly incorporated into and form part of this Agreement, notwithstanding that such Schedules may not be expressly referred to herein. If a conflict arises between any provision contained in this Agreement and any provision contained in any of the schedules hereto, the provisions of this Agreement shall prevail.

ARTICLE 10. AGREEMENT

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Agreement effective the date hereof.

Mississippi Headwaters Board

By _____
Authorized Signature-**Signed**

By _____
Name-**Printed**

Title _____

Date _____

West Communications

By _____
Authorized Signature-**Signed**

By _____
Name-**Printed**

Title _____

Date _____



RESOLUTION 2026-02

Mississippi Headwaters Board

GRANTING AUTHORITY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD MEMBERS TO CONDUCT TRANSACTIONS, AND INITIATE ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) Executive Director is hereby authorized to open or cause to be opened an account or accounts on behalf of and in the name of the MHB with the Bank or Federal Credit Union (FCU) according to the FCU's "Terms and Conditions of Deposit Accounts" and any modifications or amendments thereto, and to execute and enter into any other agreement with the FCU for the deposit, withdrawal or transfer of any funds from or to said account(s).

WHEREAS, the MHB Board hereby delegates the authority to make electronic fund transfers to the Executive Director for calendar year 2026 and any officer or other person named below is hereby authorized to initiate electronic fund transfers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that any officer or person hereinafter named is hereby authorized for and on behalf of the MHB to endorse in the name of the MHB and to cash, negotiate or deposit in such account(s) any money, checks, drafts, orders, notes and any other instruments for the payment of money held in a Certificate of Deposit

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any checks, drafts, orders or any other withdrawal order including any withdrawal and/or transfer of funds requested to be made by electronic or similar means and any and all other directions and instructions of any character with respect to funds of the MHB with the Bank or FCU may be signed or initiated with a signature by any one of the following or by any person authorized by the following,

Tim Terrill, Executive Director
Michael Kearney, Chairman of the Board
Steve Barrows, Secretary/Treasurer

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED a list of all completed electronic fund transfers will be reported to the MHB Board at the next regular meeting, in accordance with normal claim review procedures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MHB Board, has full power and lawful authority to adopt the foregoing resolution and to confer the powers therein granted to the persons names above.

This resolution was adopted by a vote, Ayes ___ Nays:___ , of the Mississippi Headwaters Board on **June 26, 2026**, and will be made of record in accordance with the Minutes of same.

I, **Michael Kearney**, Chair of the Mississippi Headwaters Board, hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of the resolution of the MHB board with the original record thereof on file in the MHB Office, Crow Wing County, Minnesota, as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said board at a meeting duly held on **June 26, 2026** and that the same is a true and correct copy of said original record and of the whole thereof, and that said resolution was duly passed by said board at said meeting.

Witness my hand and seal this **26th day of June, 2026**.

Michael Kearney
Chair

Executive Director Report

May - June 2026

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. MHHCP proposal sent in on May 22nd for \$5M. This year the Trust for Public Land did not request any funding from this appropriation due to remaining funds available from previous proposals.
7. Registered for Aitkin Rivers and Lakes Fair which will be held at the Long Lake Conservation Center. I will on Saturday, June 20th from 9:00 am to 2 pm and have a informational display table that provides awareness about the Mississippi Headwaters Board.
8. Placed signage map and information on website for paddle between Ft. Ripley and Belle Prairie Park.
9. My computer was reimaged on June 17th and some information was lost in the history folder because it was saved to a One Drive location but IT doesn't know which account it was placed in.

Meetings & Networking

5/20 Connected with Itasca District Manager Andy Arens and we will be working with them next year to promote their annual clean up event.

5/21 Working with Cohasset Park & Rec Coordinator Stephanie Kessler to secure transportation for the Paddle & Pint event.

5/21 Held conversation with new BWSR Board Conservationist Brett Arne about how MHB can help SWCD's and BWSR with implementation or education efforts.

5/26 Talked with landowner who stated that there was some rocks being pushed into Lake Winni at Denny's resort. As requested, I provided him with the name and phone number of the MHB Commissioner in Cass County.

5/26 Held conversation with LLBO plant program director Kate Hagsten on a weed management partnership between the MHB and LLBO. Due to the grant being due on June 30, 2026, we both concluded that I should hold a conversation with her in February 2027 and discuss areas on the Mississippi or Public Water Accesses in the LLBO reservation area that may need ecological management and/or removal of invasive species.

5/28 I used a Crow Wing County resolution as a model to develop an MHB resolution that designates authority to the Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, and me to conduct banking transactions related to the Certificate of Deposit that I am in the process of establishing with Mid-Minnesota

Federal Credit Union. I made several modifications because the MHB resolution is narrower in scope, and I sent it to the County Attorney for review.

6/1 Following board review, I contacted Leonard Fineday, a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO), to discuss potential strategies for increasing legislative appropriations that would benefit both the Mississippi Headwaters Board and the LLBO. My intent is to explore opportunities for collaboration and to leverage Mr. Fineday's relationships and experience so we may be able to improve the likelihood of securing additional resources that support our mutual conservation objectives.

6/2 Called the Chippewa National Forest in Walker to see if they know of any public water accesses or areas by the Mississippi River that may need management of invasive plant species or re-establishment of native vegetation. I am planning to apply next year for a BWSR grant and work with the LLBO and other organizations to help protect the natural values of the Mississippi River, and I wanted to do some planning work ahead of time to find available sites.

6/3 Attended the Morrison County Local Water Plan and EQIP Local Work Group meeting, where participants reviewed the successes of the SWCD and partner organizations in protecting and improving water quality throughout the county. I also provided input on local natural resource concerns to help the Natural Resources Conservation Service identify priorities and target its EQIP program toward the needs of county landowners.

6/5 Met with Sen. Green over coffee to familiarize him with what the MHB does. I provided him with a brief history of the formation of the MHB and then provided him with some examples of how we have helped local counties and SWCD's through our work. He received a thorough knowledge about us, and I learned his political views on topics. During the conversation I showed him a map of the percent protected watersheds that immediately drain to the Mississippi River and used that as a talking point to say we take a targeted and prioritized approach to protecting the Mississippi River. Later he asked me to send him a copy of that map. After two hours of talking, I asked him about the process on how to pass a bill through committee, and he said it would be best to work with the Chair.

6/8 Chippewa National Forest Supervisor Michael Stansbury is writing a brief to the Chief of the Forest Service to help prioritize staff time and resources for the Bowen Lodge Exchange. The MHB set up a meeting between Stansbury, Stauber, and local agencies many years ago, and that is the reason why the land exchange is still moving forward.

6/8 Met with MHHCP partners to discuss the next steps for the wildlife prioritization map. The meeting focused on review of the wildlife habitat prioritization map developed by Peter Jacobson, and the need to validate the map with wildlife managers to incorporate their local knowledge of migratory waterfowl and non-game species to identify additional conservation areas for targeted outreach. The team also agreed that a future opportunity will be available to transform the wildlife prioritization map into a web based targeted outreach tool for SWCD's and partners to utilize.

6/10 Went to Bemidji and was interviewed on the program Chat About. I talked a little bit about the formation of the MHB along with some of our programs which included the MHHCP program, Minnesota Traditions AIS social media, and signage and paddling events.

6/13 Attended Aitkin Paddle Your Glass Off, which is a resource retention event created by the MHB and implemented through the Aitkin Chamber and county. Around 100 people showed up to the event, and MHB promoted it on social media by collaborating with Aitkin county. The

posts received 559 views and 13 interactions. The post event influencer videos received almost 2000 views and 39 interactions.

6/16 Talked with Crow Wing SWCD and they mentioned they are hiring an intern next month to help their staff out with various jobs. I was asked if the MHB had any jobs for the intern to do, and I said I could use one to help with paddling events because they are understaffed.