

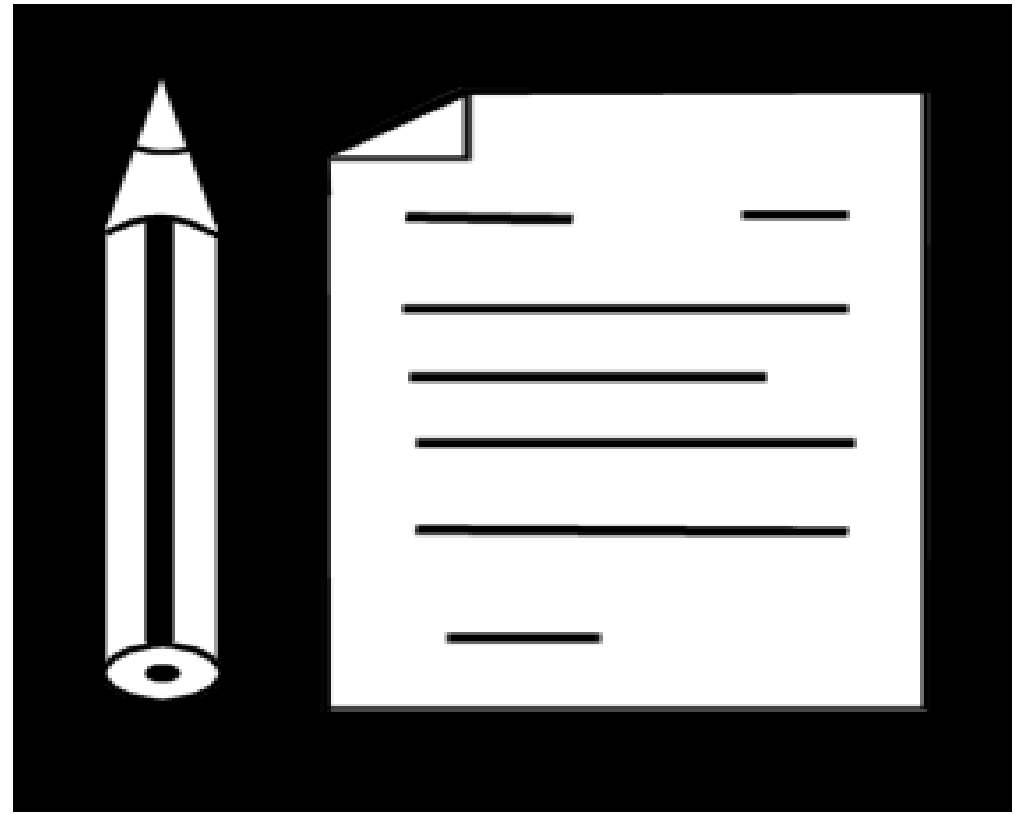


Mississippi Headwaters Board Biennial Report 7/1/23—6/30/25

Director's Report

Advancing Our Influence:

Over this past biennium the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) has implemented many practices that protect the natural, recreational, cultural, historical, and scientific values of the Mississippi River. While this helps protect our treasured resource, the MHB board has also used its authority and political persuasion to further increase wholistic protections for the Mississippi River. From the passage of a federal bill to Board recommendations for other agencies, the MHB has tirelessly worked to clarify conversations and focus other's visions to promote unity of thought and conversation. I hope you enjoy reading this highlight report on how we have furthered our mission.



Bowen Lodge Land Exchange

For the past four years the MHB has been working with the Chippewa National Forest, Representative Pete Stauber, Senator Tina Smith, and Senator Amy Klobuchar to move a bill forward to protect environmentally sensitive land on Lake Winnibigoshish. The board developed a resolution of support and worked with these three federal legislators to pass a House bill to allow a land exchange between the Chippewa National Forest and Bowen Lodge. While the bill passed in the House of Representatives in 2025, the bill is currently being considered by the Senate.

While legislative work was being done, the MHB also worked with the Chippewa National Forest to administratively move the land exchange forward. It is expected that the land exchange will occur in October 2025

Success Story:

MHB has successfully clarified the benefits of this bill among federal legislators in order to create common support and strategy for this vital piece of legislation. Unifying legislators on this issue is the most effective way to preserve and protect the land.



Rep. Pete Stauber Visiting landowner Bill Heig on his property to discuss a land exchange



Rep. Pete Stauber



Sen. Tina Smith



Sen. Amy Klobuchar

Morrison SWCD Soil Health Day

On August 9th, 2023 the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District hosted their second annual Cultivating Soil Health Field Day at the Sobieski Community Center. It was a great turnout with over 120 farmers and consumers in attendance. Speakers came from across MN to promote the benefits of soil health practices.

The event started with time for networking between speakers and vendors. There was a full house of vendors including Arnold's Equipment, Centra Sota Cooperative, Environmental Tillage Systems- Soil Warrior, Farm Service Agency, LaCrosse Seed, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Minnesota Department of Agriculture's MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program, Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District, Saddle Butte Ag, and Udermann's Custom No-till Planting and Drilling attended the meeting. This was a great time for farmers to talk one on one with the speakers about their personal experiences of the adoption

Success Story:

The MHB provided funding to the Morrison SWCD to facilitate conversations to promote and support soil health.



Morrison Soil & Water Conservation Soil Health Day



Farmer's networking and discussing options to improve soil health

MAPCED Economic Development Award For RESOURCETAINMENT

Resourcetaintment is a unique concept developed by the Mississippi Headwaters Board to promote Mississippi River paddling events that spread awareness about this natural resource and boost local economic development. The implementation of the concept was executed by Aitkin County, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Aitkin County Water Trails committee which promotes a “Naturally Better” recreational/economic branding campaign for the cities and towns in the county. A paddle down the Mississippi was held for the general public and a social hour was put on after the paddle to provide an opportunity for the public to engage with local vendors. Over the past three years this format has generated almost \$10,000 worth of economic activity for local restaurants and craft breweries. This collaboration is a key factor in the success of Resourcetaintment, and all stakeholders in this process worked diligently to turn this concept into a successful reality.

Success Story:

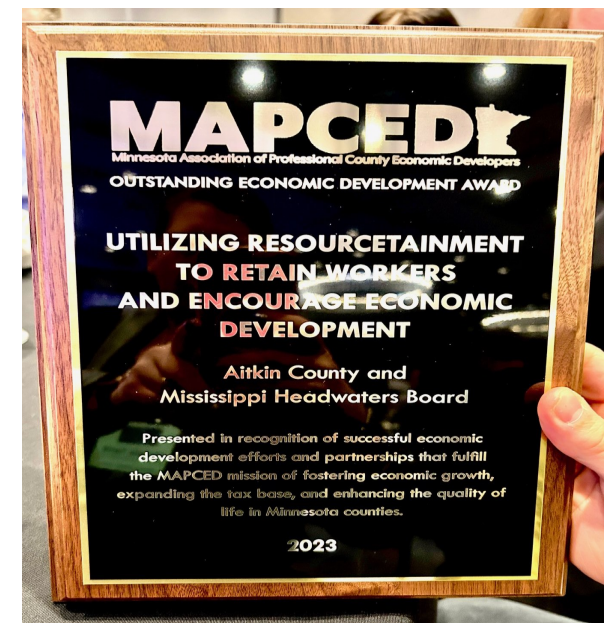
This model was replicated in multiple MHB counties and generated \$ in the 2023 to 2025 season.



Loading of kayaks onto trailer for transport to launching site.



MHB & Aitkin County receiving MAPCED Award for Economic Development at Assoc. of MN Counties Annual Conference.



MN Assoc. of Professional County Economic Developers Award

Regulatory Actions

