



# LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

## Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting

Wednesday August 21, 2019

### **Agenda Item**

**Item 7. A. - MAWD Resolution - Minnesota River Congress**

### **Prepared By**

Linda Loomis, Administrator

### **Summary**

At the July Board of Managers meeting, the LMRWD agreed to support the Minnesota River Congress in its work to get the State of Minnesota to support increasing water storage in the Minnesota River Basin and also funding more storage. The Board of Managers asked staff to prepare a resolution to send to the MAWD Board in support of this work. Staff has prepared a resolution for the Board of Managers to adopt.

Staff used the resolution that Area VI of MASWCD and other information provided by Scott Sparlin and Ted Suss as the basis for the attached resolution.

### **Attachments**

RESOLUTION 19-08 - SUPPORT FOR MANAGING WATER FLOWS IN THE MINNESOTA RIVER BASIN THROUGH INCREASED WATER STORAGE AND OTHER STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES  
MAWD Resolution Back Ground Information

### **Recommended Action**

Motion to adopt Resolution 19-08

Manager \_\_\_\_\_ introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION 19-08

LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

SUPPORT FOR MANAGING WATER FLOWS IN THE MINNESOTA RIVER BASIN THROUGH  
INCREASED WATER STORAGE AND OTHER STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

WHEREAS, virtually all of the natural water storage that once existed on the landscape in the form of prairie potholes, wet meadows, and even small lakes in the Minnesota River Basin has been eliminated through agricultural drainage; and

WHEREAS, increased agricultural drainage and increased impervious surfaces in municipal areas along with significantly increased precipitation patterns is dramatically increasing water flow in our rivers and streams; and

WHEREAS, high water levels in rivers and streams flood adjacent low lying areas, erode stream banks, creates backup on existing tile and ditch systems, and increases sediment transfer downstream; and

WHEREAS, many acres of farm fields are flooded each year, sometimes multiple times each year, by river and stream flooding thereby preventing planting or destroying growing crops; and

WHEREAS, storing water in upstream areas of the landscape will mitigate and slow the amount of water moving into rivers and streams and reduce flooding and erosion; and

WHEREAS, storing water in upstream areas of the landscape and other strategies such as improving soil health will mitigate and slow the amount of water moving into rivers and streams and reduce flooding and erosion; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota River Congress, [a citizen-led group focusing on the natural resource and economic health of the Minnesota River Basin] is spearheading an initiative to increase water storage on the landscape using recommendations from the Collaborative for Sediment Source Reduction (CSSR) study as a basis for its initiative; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota River Congress is planning to introduce legislation at the state and federal levels to secure significant funding, specifically for surface water storage on the landscape in the Minnesota River Watershed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Managers of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District supports efforts to manage the flow of water in the Minnesota River Basin and the Minnesota River Congress in its efforts to increase water storage on the landscape; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Managers of the LMRWD that it supports the Minnesota River Congress in its efforts to secure state and federal programs targeted specifically to increase surface water storage in the Minnesota River Watershed.

Adopted by the Board of Managers of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District this 21st day of August, 2019.

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Jesse Hartmann, President

ATTEST:

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David L. Raby, Secretary/Treasurer

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was seconded by Manager \_\_\_\_\_ and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Hartmann, Raby and Frey; and the following voted against the same: None. Whereupon said resolution was declared passed and adopted, this 21st day of August, 2019, signed by the President and his signature attested by the Secretary/Treasurer.

# Background Information

## 2019 MAWD Resolution

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Proposing District: Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

Contact Name: Linda Loomis

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Resolution Title: SUPPORT FOR MANAGING WATER FLOWS IN THE MINNESOTA RIVER BASIN THROUGH INCREASED WATER STORAGE AND OTHER STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

### Background that led to the submission of this resolution:

The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) is the local sponsor for the US Army Corps of Engineers maintenance of the navigation channel in the Minnesota River. As the local sponsor the LMRWD has seen the amount of sediment increase significantly. The increase in sediment has increased the cost for the LMRWD to manage dredge material that is removed from the river to maintain navigation.

Numerous studies of the MN River Basin attribute the increase in sediment to an increase in the flow of water from increased agriculture drainage; increased impervious surfaces created by municipal development and increased precipitation patterns.

The LMRWD was approached by the Minnesota River Congress to ask for support for its initiative to increase the amount of water storage in the MN River Basin and seek funding for this initiative at the state and federal levels. The LMRWD agreed to support the MN River Congress and the Board of Managers felt it was appropriate to request support from MAWD for this initiative.

### Ideas for how this issue could be solved:

The Minnesota River Congress is approaching organizations responsible for managing water in the MN River Basin, such as Counties and SWCDs (drainage authorities) to solicit support. Several MASWCD Areas have adopted resolutions of support for increasing water storage. In addition several area legislators have agreed to introduce legislation to commit state funding to support CREP programs or develop a new program similar to CREP to take land that could be used for water storage out of production.

Anticipated support or opposition from other governmental units?

The Minnesota River Congress is a coalition of many organizations in the MN River Basin and many of the governmental units are part of the coalition. There may be oppositions from any group that feels their own funding may be lessened because of this program.

This issue is of importance to (Check one)

- The entire state        X
- Only our region
- Only our district