



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Agenda Item

Item 5. B. – Request from Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

In 2018, Mr. Scott Sparlin, Executive Director for the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River, requested the LMRWD provide financial assistance to an initiative to seek legislative funding for water storage projects within the Minnesota River watershed. The LMRWD agreed to fund the project over the course of two years (\$5,000 per year). The District provide funds as a match to other funds raised for the project.

In 2021, the Minnesota Legislature included funding for water storage projects and now Mr. Sparlin is planning to request federal funds for projects. He is requesting that the LMRWD consider funding this work. A request from Mr. Sparlin is attached along with a timeline and budget for the project. The 2022 budget has funds that could be used for this project. Funds could come from either the Education line or from the Watershed Resource Restoration Fund.

Attachments

LMRWD Funding Request dated 9/21/2021

Draft Workplan Timeline for the LMRWD dated 9/21/2021

Recommended Action

Motion to approve funding request as a match to other funds raised

9-2-21

Lower Minnesota River Watershed

Linda Loomis, Administrator

112 5th St. East, Suite 102

Chaska, MN 55318

Building on our success in securing a Water Storage Program for the Minnesota River Basin this past legislative session, The Minnesota River Congress is now moving into the federal phase of our Water Storage Initiative. Our goal is to secure federal funding for the program by engaging our Minnesota Senators and Representatives to create legislation and/or gain access to current legislation. This action will provide the state program the adequate resources it will need to be implemented basin-wide and to the scale it needs to have significant impacts on the river system.

We are asking for \$10,000 over the next 2 years to cover a portion of our initiative's costs related to accomplish this goal. As in the past we are seeking funding from all partners to the degree they can give. The dollars you have donated in the past have made it easier to raise funds overall and with everyone chipping in something it makes us all good partners.

We appreciate your past support of our collective efforts and are asking for your support to continue this important work. We need funds to see this to its fruition. We highly value our partnership and will work diligently to make this a reality. We are also continuing to grow our already significant support for this critically needed program and with you on board we are stronger.

Contact me any time at 507 276 2280 or sesparlin@gmail.com

Thank you for your most serious consideration

Scott Sparlin Coordinator/Facilitator, Minnesota River Congress
Executive Director, the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River

Minnesota River Congress/CCMR Water Storage Legislative Initiative
Work Plan-Timeline 9-1-21 to 7-1-23

September 1st, 2021, to July 1st, 2023

On behalf of our partnership, I have already made contacts with Senator Tina Smith's staff and Senator Amy Klobuchar's staff and have begun the process of setting up direct meetings to strategize best ways of moving to obtain federal support for our new state Water Storage program. I will meet in an on-going capacity with the two senator's staff and will attempt to also meet in person with the senator's themselves when they are in Minnesota in this regard. I will use electronic media communications daily to assess and accelerate progress and do the associated work involved in gaining key support from those decision makers at the federal level regarding the senate. This will involve some travel to and from the Metro and other Minnesota cities on occasion.

I and members of our partnership will also contact key Minnesota U.S. Representatives and their staffs to strategize and identify those in leadership roles who can gain support for and move legislation through the U.S. House. This will require on-going electronic and in person communications. Some of the communications will require travel to the metro and various parts of the state.

I will continue to meet with state agency staff, commissioners, Watershed Districts, SWCD's and local units of Government as well as Tribal Governments to help make the current Water Storage program at the state level a success. This will be by creating a set of parameters and developing a criterion for potential projects of all size and scope. Process will be key in the success of the program and demonstration of the various sizes and types of water storage needs to be completed. This action will create the interest needed to secure federal funding. Parts of this action will also possibly take over a year to complete and demonstrate.

I will provide a first-year report to the LMRWD by 9-1-22 and a final report by the ending date of 7-1-23

Periodic updates will always occur and will be forwarded as the process continues. **Total of on-going tasks \$5,000.00**

Minnesota River Congress/CCMR Water Storage Legislative Initiative
Draft Work Plan-Timeline 9-1-21 to 7-1-23

January 15, 2021, to December 15th, 2022

I and our partnership will have identified high priority funding sources including both existing sources and potential legislative bills that would need to be developed. All the work associated with the legislative process would need to include that of intensive monitoring, assessment and numerous meetings and process requirements such as developing and delivering testimony and consultations with various legislative staff and partners

Total \$3000.00

December 15th, 2022, to July 1st, 2023

I and partners will foster the final phases of advancing legislation or federal program development or modification and monitor and accelerate either existing situation to its final approval and enactment as law. This will also entail a great deal of electronic and in person communications and travel will also be required. Further monitoring and development of program parameters will most likely also be needed in the final phases prior to federal approval.

Total \$2000.00