



MISSISSIPPI RIVER ST. CLOUD WATERSHED ENTITY

FY25 Watershed Based Implementation Funds Work Plan

Vision Statement: Collaborating to conserve, improve, and achieve measurable progress toward natural resource goals in our shared watershed.

Background

Biennially, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) allocates funding for the implementation of water quality activities outlined within Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans (CWMP) throughout the State of Minnesota. These funds, known as Watershed Based Implementation Funds (WBIF), serve as the primary baseline source of funding for CWMPs. For Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), the anticipated allocation of funding for the Mississippi River St. Cloud Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan is \$1,271,008. These funds, which expire on December 31, 2027, can be put towards many of the activities outlined within the MRSC CWMP. The MRSC Joint Powers Entity Board (MRSCJPE Board) will consider and then approve a Work Plan for this funding source, execute a grant agreement with BWSR, guide program and project selection, confirm expenditures, and regularly review progress towards CWMP goals.

FY25 WBIF Work Plan Summary

FY25 is the first installment of funds that will be used to carry out the MRSC CWMP. The partnership will utilize the funds in a variety of ways, addressing all applicable priority issues within the CWMP. A summary of this work is provided below while a detailed accounting of activities is provided at the end of this document in Table 1.

Administration: An estimated \$117,300 (9.2% and including 1,522 staff hours) of funding will be used to administer the grant and JPE. Activities in this category include:

- Watershed Coordinator (Dan Cibulka, Sherburne SWCD)
- Fiscal Agent (Kyle Weimann & Stephanie Hatzenbihler, Stearns SWCD)
- Meeting Note Taking and Minutes (Sherburne SWCD)
- Website Maintenance (Mille Lacs SWCD)
- Third-Party Attorney Representation (tbd)
- Financial Audit expenses
- JPE Board insurance (tbd)

Staff Time: Due to the lack of reliable and sufficient staff capacity funding, an estimated \$325,308 (25.6%) will provide support for staff to carry out tasks pertaining to existing projects as well as develop future projects:

- Project Development (1,591 staff hours): Staff time to provide outreach leading to the development of targeted water quality programs and implementation of projects.

- Education and Outreach (550 staff hrs): Staff time to produce outreach materials, coordinate local or regional workshops or field days, and otherwise promote targeted water quality programs for future projects. The MRSCWE partners anticipate that both individual office outreach efforts as well as coordinated, watershed-wide outreach efforts will occur.
- Technical Assistance and Engineering (2,426 staff hrs): Support for site assessment, surveys, preliminary analysis, and design construction supervision and inspection of completed projects. Funds may be used for staff with appropriate Job Approval Authority (JAA), or staff assisting those with JAA, including but not limited to local County staff, SWCD staff, Technical Service Area staff, third-party consultants or engineers, etc.

Project and Program Installation: Approximately \$828,400 or 65.2% is anticipated to be used for program implementation or installation of individual projects. Activities identified for this biennium include:

- Agricultural Practices: engineered or ecological practices primarily associated with agriculture such as diversions, grade stabilizations, filter strips, water and sediment control basins, grassed waterways, etc.
- Forestry Practices: Establishment or improvement of long-term forestry practices to improve or protect water quality or control soil erosion such as tree and shrub planting and establishment, riparian forest buffer, etc.
- Groundwater: For constructed practices. The sealing and permanent closure of water wells and irrigation water management.
- Non-Structural Management Practices: Ecological or other practice types that are non-structural in nature including, but not limited to, cover crops, conservation tillage (reduced tillage, no till), residue management, nutrient management, prescribed grazing, ecological plantings, etc. Carp management is included within this category.
- Planning and Assessment: For grants where specifically allowed, category reflects development of specific plans or special studies, such as nutrient management plans, farm planning/ certification, LIDAR analysis, subwatershed assessment, in-lake practice feasibility studies, and feedlot inspection and compliance plans.
- Streambank or Shoreland Protection: Constructed or vegetated solutions to stabilize and protect the banks and beds of streams and lakes.
- Urban Stormwater Practices: Primarily constructed practices associated with the development and redevelopment of urban areas, designed to accept and treat stormwater runoff. Examples include, but not limited to, bioretention, biofiltration, permeable surfaces, water reuse, sediment basins, grade stabilizations, diversions, etc.
- Wetland Restoration / Creation: The re-establishment of wetlands.

Distribution of FY25 WBIF Dollars

Figure 1 displays the anticipated breakdown of FY25 WBIF dollars. The categories displayed are standard BWSR-defined categories often used in reporting on state grants in the program "eLink".

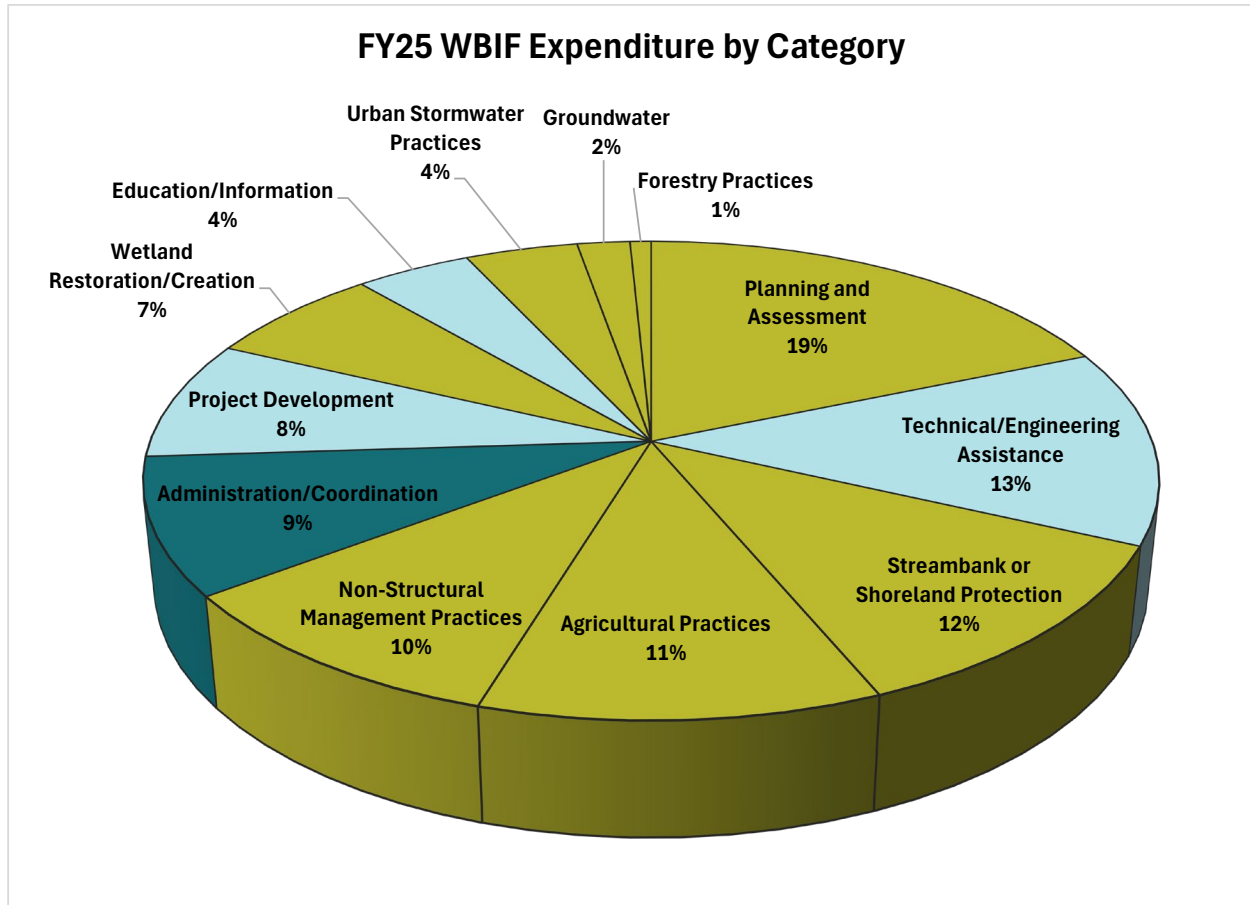


Figure 1: FY25 WBIF Dollars by Category. Light blue = staff capacity and planning, Dark blue = grant and JPE administration, Yellow = projects and programs.

Note that the amounts for each category are estimated. The MRSCWE Grant Program Policies document details reassignment or reallocation of grant funds.

Measurable Outcomes

Upon completion of the proposed activities outlined in this Work Plan, the following anticipated outcomes are described below and summarized in Table 1.

Pollution Reductions

- Total Nitrogen - 1,625 lbs/yr
- Total Phosphorus - 395 lbs/yr
- Sediment - 275 tons/yr

An additional 1-2 irrigation BMPs and 175 acres of forestry BMPs will be completed, pollutant reductions cannot be calculated at this time.

Planning Efforts or Studies

- Subwatershed or Targeting Assessments - 3
- Multipurpose Drainage Management Plans - 1
- Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study - 1
- Carp Management Feasibility Study - 1
- Policy Feasibility Study - 1

Planning efforts, assessments, or studies will consist of investigations completed within High Priority or Priority areas that may lead to the implementation of on-the-ground practices. Additionally, these efforts may lead to consideration of policies, ordinances, or other non-construction related best management practices that provide alternative ways to protect or restore water quality.

Education and Outreach Activities

- Events: 2
- Promotions: 15

The MRSC CWMP discusses the importance of education and outreach to promote conservation amongst landowners as well as to identify future projects on the landscape. Education and outreach activities are largely described within the CWMP as falling into one of two categories, either events or promotions. Events are coordinated and often facilitated meetings, workshops, or other gatherings that encourage implementation of conservation practices through a formal or informal discussion. Promotions may achieve the same purpose as events, but can be described as a type of publication such as a newsletter, postcard, marketing campaign, social media marketing effort, etc.

Prioritizing and Targeting

The MRSCWE Joint Powers Board and staff wish to ensure that the most impactful activities receive first consideration of available funding. With this goal in mind, activities will be considered and selected based upon Prioritizing and Targeting.

Prioritizing: The MRSC CWMP outlines areas that are the most impactful to work within and will likely produce benefits to multiple Priority Issues (groundwater, surface water, habitat, etc.). For the first biennium of CWMP implementation, the partnership will focus activities within areas deemed High Priority and Priority as determined by the Multiple Benefit Analysis (MBA) presented within the MRSC CWMP (pg. 103).

Targeting: The MRSC CWMP defines targeting as including three subcomponents - Activity Type, Timing, and Location. Every effort will be made to ensure that the most effective practice is selected, the scheduling of the Implementation Plan is referenced, and the location of the activity is most effective possible to achieve the greatest conservation benefit. Where possible, projects and programs will be proposed and approved that have considered and met appropriate targeting elements. The use of subwatershed assessments, feasibility studies, conservation plans, or other such tools shall guide implementation of practices by the MRSCWE.

Table 1: FY25 WBIF Activities, Outcomes and Plan Reference

eLink Activity Category	Grant Budget	non-State Match	Measurable Outcomes	Plan Reference
Administration/Coordination	\$117,300	\$0	Administration and coordination of watershed plan and JPE activities	Plan administration (pg 199 of CWMP)
Agricultural Practices	\$140,000	\$45,000	Nitrogen: 85 lbs/yr Phosphorus: 165 lbs/yr Sediment: 170 tons/yr	HWER Zone: 01, 02, 03, 04 ER Zone: 01, 02, 03, 04 SFR Zone: 01, 02, 03, 04 CWR Zone: 03, 04 PCJC Zone: 03, 04 SCOC-04 OCMR-03
Education/Information	\$55,000	\$0	Events: 2 Promotions: 15	All Education and Outreach Action IDs
Forestry Practices	\$10,000	\$0	Acres protected or restored: 175	HWER Zone: 07, 08 ER Zone: 07, 08 SFR Zone: 07, 08
Groundwater	\$25,000	\$12,500	Irrigation Water Management Projects: 1 or 2	HWER-03 ER-03 SFR-03
Non-Structural Management Practices	\$127,744	\$15,686	Nitrogen: 740 lbs/yr Phosphorus: 110 lbs/yr Sediment: 55 tons/yr	HWER Zone: 01, 04, 07 ER Zone: 01, 04, 07, 11, 15 SFR Zone: 01, 04, 07 CWR-01 PCJC-01 OCMR-01 SCOC-01
Planning and Assessment	\$237,256	\$0	Subwatershed Assessments: 3 Carp Management Feasibility Study: 1 Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study: 1 Policy Development: 1 Multi Purpose Drainage Management Plan: 1	ER Zone: 04, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 SCOC Zone: 12, 16, 18 OCMR Zone: 11, 13, 14 WW-09
Project Development	\$102,308	\$0		n/a
Streambank or Shoreland Protection	\$150,000	\$46,250	Phosphorus: 20 lbs/yr Sediment: 25 tons/yr	HWER-06 ER ZONE: 06, 12 SFR Zone: 06, 12 CWR Zone: 02, 06, 13
Technical/Engineering Assistance	\$168,000	\$0		n/a
Urban Stormwater Practices	\$53,400	\$5,340	Phosphorus: 15 lbs/yr	ER-09 SFR-10
Wetland Restoration/Creation	\$85,000	\$21,250	Nitrogen: 800 lbs/yr Phosphorus: 85 lbs/yr Sediment: 25 tons/yr	HWER-05 ER-05 SFR-05
Grand Total	\$1,271,008	\$146,026	Nitrogen: 1,625 lbs/yr Phosphorus: 395 lbs/yr Sediment: 275 tons/yr Educational Events: 2 Educational Promotions: 15 Planning Efforts or Studies: 7 Acres of additional BMPs: 175 # of Irrigation Projects: 1-2	82 of the CWMP's 159 individual Action IDs will be worked upon with FY25 WBIF grant dollars.