

Red River Basin River Watch Program



INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE
EDUCATION • AGRICULTURE • PROSPERITY



Celebrating 30 years of River Watch

The Red River Basin River Watch Program (RW) offers innovative watershed education initiatives to schools and communities throughout the Red River of the North Basin. Rooted in the belief that education is the most effective means of transforming attitudes and behaviors, RW provides hands-on science and watershed exploration activities for elementary, middle, and high school students. These activities are designed to engage students, deepen their understanding of water resources, and challenge them to think critically about water resource issues.

Supported by the Red River Watershed Management Board and local watershed districts, the RW program has become a widely supported educational program. RW students have collected valuable water quality data, which is utilized by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to complement the state's surface water assessments.

Funding from the Clean Water Legacy Fund has enabled the expansion of the RW program offering participants additional opportunities to learn how to protect and improve Minnesota's vital water resources, including:

- Biological Monitoring - River Watch Forum
- River of Dreams - River Explorers
- Teacher/Student Training



Funding Request 2026-2027

The Red River Watershed Management Board is seeking funding from the State of Minnesota to match local investments. The River Watch bill proposes \$170,000 in funding for the first year and \$170,000 for the second year, drawn from Minnesota's General Fund or as a continuation of funding from the Clean Water Legacy Fund. This grant will support the ongoing success of the Red River Basin River Watch Program.

Contact

Rob Sip, Director, RRWMB - rob.sip@rrwmb.org | (218) 474-1084

Charles Fritz, IWI Executive Director - charles@iwinst.org | (701) 388-0681

Danni Halvorson, Director, IWI CWE - danni@iwinst.org | (218) 280-0515

River Watch



INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE

EDUCATION • AGRICULTURE • PROSPERITY

Program

River Watch, provided by the International Water Institute, enhances watershed understanding and awareness for tomorrow's decision-makers through direct hands-on, field-based experiential watershed science. Schools throughout the Red River of the North Basin participate in a variety of unique and innovative watershed engagement opportunities suited to their school, community, and watershed needs.



Activities

Water Quality Monitoring:

Students collect water quality data from area rivers

Biological Monitoring:

Students collect and identify macroinvertebrates revealing stream health

River Explorers Kayaking:

Students paddle and document stream conditions

Annual River Watch Forum:

Teams complete an annual assignment and attend a Forum tailored to watershed science

Objectives

- Enhance science capacity related to water quality issues
- Build awareness of river ecosystems and watershed connections
- Outdoor, hands-on learning

Numbers

- 35 schools over 30 years
- 15,000 Water Quality Samples
- 20 schools involved in the 2024 -2025



Contact

Asher Kingery - asher@iwinst.org

Danni Halvorson - danni@iwinst.org

