

Senator Fong Hawj
Chair, Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
3231 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 31, 2025

RE: SF1569 – Red River Basin Mediation Agreement Funding

Dear Chair Hawj,

Our organization supports Senate File 1569, which supports implementation of the 1998 Red River Basin (RRB) Flood Mediation Agreement. Watershed districts in the RRB provide in-kind funds as match to state funds and the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB), acting as the fiscal agent for the Mediation Agreement, provides a mixture of cash and in-kind match.

As interest in water storage expands in Minnesota, this concept is demonstrating results for flood reduction and water quality benefits. Multi-purpose water storage projects are a critical approach to meeting water quality while reducing flood impacts to communities and individuals.

The Flood Damage Reduction Work Group implements the Mediation Agreement, which supports local project teams as they develop multipurpose water storage projects that provide both flood damage reduction and natural resources enhancement benefits in the RRB of Minnesota. The local project team process is key to brings all local, state and federal partners and stakeholders together at the project concept phase to study a problem and to develop alternatives. The Mediation Agreement reduces and limits controversies about how multipurpose flood mitigation and water storage projects are developed and implemented.

The program has brought watershed districts, counties, state and federal agencies, environmental groups, farmers, landowners, citizens, and related groups together for over 25 years. Please consider funding for SF1569. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rich Biske
Director of Water and Land Protection
The Nature Conservancy