

Mississippi Headwaters Board Biennial Report to the Minnesota Legislature 1987-1989



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Art by Kris Guggisberg
Courtesy of Northern Waters Canoe Rental



Letter to the 1989 Minnesota Legislature

In the 1985-87 Minnesota Legislative Biennium the Mississippi Headwaters Board continued to build its unique program of river protection and management. In the last two years, the board worked to strengthen administration of its ordinance and management plan in the eight member counties by:

- *Adopting a five-year plan for river protection activities;
- *Initiating water quality monitoring projects;
- *Providing regional leadership on water planning;
- *Coordinating regional information and education on state and federal activities in the river corridor, including review of the proposed revisions to state shoreland standards and management of the 1988 drought;
- *Implementing land stewardship programs, including an awards program and
- *Developing a zoning administration training program for members of planning commissions and boards of adjustment in the eight member counties.

Through April 1989, the MHB has invested \$155,154, in operations. Funds are appropriated to the MHB from the state's general fund and administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Bureau of Planning. The eight member counties have to date met the state grant with expenditures of \$326,263; required match for the biennium ending June 30, 1989, is \$338,400.

From the 1987-9 Minnesota Legislature, the Mississippi Headwaters Board has requested continuation appropriation of its \$169,200 operating grant. This is the same level of funding approved by the 1987 Legislature for the current biennium. This request has been recommended for appropriation by the Department of Natural Resources, Senate Finance and the Governor.

Additionally, the MHB has requested \$55,000 for the biennium to initiate implementation of the board's five-year plan. This request would support the five-year planning effort, education, ordinance review and update and reservoirs operations and coordination.

This is the fourth biennial report of the Mississippi Headwaters Board submitted pursuant to the requirements of Minnesota Statutes 114B et. seq. I am satisfied that the accomplishments of the last two years continue to demonstrate the ability of local cooperation to provide an effective management strategy for the Mississippi River. The success of the MHB model is made possible by the strong partnership forged by the state and the board.

May 1989

Howard Peterson, Chairman



History and Authority of the MHB

The Mississippi Headwaters Board was organized in 1980 as an alternative to federal control of the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River. The counties of Clearwater, Hubbard, Beltrami, Cass, Itasca, Aitkin, Crow Wing and Morrison entered into a joint powers agreement to preserve and protect the shorelands of the Mississippi River and seven Headwaters lakes in those counties. The counties adopted a shoreland zoning ordinance and land use and recreation management plans for public lands as the management tools to protect the river shorelands.

The MHB's approach of local management was experimental ten years ago. It's success can be measured by the programs that have used the MHB model to build new river and natural resources protection programs: in Minnesota, the North Shore Management Board and the Joint County Natural Resources Board, and nationally, the Upper Delaware River and Lower Wisconsin River.

The regulations of the Mississippi Headwaters Conservation Ordinance and Management Plan are the minimum standard of the eight member counties and the State of Minnesota. The Mississippi Headwaters Board meets monthly to review and certify zoning variances, amendments and subdivisions from the eight member counties. The board reviews conditional use permits in the river corridor.

The Mississippi Headwaters Board is also charged with planning for the area under its jurisdiction. The board's staff is administering Minnesota Future Resources Commission (formerly Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources) grants to the eight counties for Local Water Planning. The MHB is coordinating the regional level of Local Water Planning. The MHB has recently adopted a five-year plan addressing zoning administration and enforcement, identification and inventory of water quality problems and review of in-stream flow needs.

The Mississippi Headwaters Board provides public information services on water resources protection and management issues in the eight-county region. Activities of the 1987-9 biennium include:

- *Monthly publication of natural resources newsletter, "Tidings of the Mississippi Headwaters";**
- *Production of two video programs, "Discover the Headwaters" and "Managing the Mississippi";**
- *Coordination of Local Water Planning in the eight county region and with state agencies, including development of educational programs for county Local Water Planning Task Forces;**
- *Public information sessions on zoning administration, grant availability, water planning and legislation with lakeshore associations of the eight member counties;**
- *Presentations at regional, state and national conferences, including the February 1988 State Water Conference; the Midwest River Conservation Conference; the State Planning Agency's 1988 Environmental Quality Congresses; Crow Wing Regional Environmental Education Council's Water Quality Conference; Central Minnesota Water Quality Project's Planning Conferences.**
- *Membership on the State Local Water Project Manager's Committee; Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Shoreland Revisions Advisory Committee; Governor's Task Force on Twin Cities Water Supply.**
- *Facilitator of public meetings and information with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources during Summer 1988 drought. The Mississippi Headwaters Board coordinates meetings of the dam tenders of the first dams on the Mississippi River. This is a group of government and private industries. Although these dams have been operated for more than 100 years, in some cases, there has been no formal organization to share information and concerns. As a result of the organization of the Headwaters Dam Tenders Project the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to provide technical assistance to other dam tenders.**

Mississippi Headwaters Management Activities

Administration of the Mississippi Headwaters Conservation Ordinance and Management Plan begins at the county level. Activities of the counties in the river corridor since 1987 include:

AITKIN COUNTY inventoried and projected potential growth patterns for designated portions of the Mississippi corridor. Permit activity showed that river property adjacent to the Great River Road was becoming very desirable for development.

"A major portion of this property has a flood fringe which has never been delineated as a detailed study area on the original flood maps. The county was successful in convincing FEMA to conduct a detailed study of this particular river segment. The study originated in the spring of 1988 and will be completed in June or July of 89. The county will hold public hearings to adopt the new information." - Charles Bonneville, Aitkin County Planning and Zoning Administrator.

BELTRAMI COUNTY in joint cooperation with the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners and the Bemidji City Council, as well as the Mississippi Headwaters Board, undertook to fly 48 miles of shoreland properties on the Mississippi River and the following headwaters lakes: Bemidji, Irving, Carr, Marquette and Plantagenet. A. W. Research performed the aerial image analysis. The purpose of the program was to assist in locating non-complying, on-site sewer systems as well as other non-point pollution sources on these shoreland areas. The total cost of the project was \$14,752.50 with a 50 percent grant from the Mississippi Headwaters Board. Results of the program saw 33 new on-site sewer systems installed on Lake Bemidji in summer 1988." - Bill Patnaude, Beltrami County Planning and Zoning Director.

MORRISON COUNTY has attempted to instill a stronger sense of value, beauty and natural resource that the Mississippi River brings to the County. Stronger management practices regarding excavating and clean-up of unsightly areas through the cooperation of land owners, Planning & Zoning, Soil and Water and the DNR, have been encouraged. Through this management plan, emphasis has been placed on the preservation of the Mississippi River." - Roger Kuklok, Morrison County Zoning Officer.

Activities of the Technical Advisory Committee

The Mississippi Headwaters Board's Technical Advisory Committee is composed of the zoning officers and land commissioners of the eight member counties, representatives of townships in the Mississippi Headwaters area with shoreland zoning, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Forest Service personnel. The committee meets quarterly.

In 1985-7, the TAC adopted review of the ordinance and management plan as a primary activity. Since then the committee has:

*Proposed standards for conditional uses allowed in the Mississippi Headwaters Conservation Ordinance, including eliminating some uses and redefining existing uses. These standards are currently under review by planning commissions of the eight member counties and will be proposed for enactment in 1990.

*Revised the review and certification process of individual county zoning actions by the Mississippi Headwaters Board. The new process requires consistent county reporting on all requests for action in the Mississippi Headwaters corridor and a statement of findings of fact from each county on approved actions. The new process was adopted by the Mississippi Headwaters Board in December 1988 and implemented in March 1989.

*Hosted a training session for members of the boards of adjustment and planning commissions of the eight member counties of the Mississippi Headwaters area. Nearly 100 people attended the session describing administration of the Headwaters ordinance, legal issues of zoning and the new review and certification process of the Mississippi Headwaters Board. The session will be repeated, with some changes in topics, annually. MHB staff prepared and distributed a 50-page training manual.

Activities of the Citizens Advisory Committee

The Mississippi Headwaters Board's Citizens Advisory Committee is composed of sixteen individuals chosen by the eight counties and eight at-large members, representing tourism, wood products, utilities, recreation, conservation, historical preservation, sportsmen and agriculture.

In the 1985-7 biennium, the CAC set two priorities:

- *Development of information and education programs for river property owners and river users, and
- *Development of land protection programs for areas where zoning was not sufficient.

In 1987, the CAC hosted a regional meeting with land trust personnel at Deep Portage Conservation Reserve, Hackensack, to discuss alternative land protection strategies. The session was funded by a National Park River Local River Technical Assistance grant and brought together representatives of the the Land Trust Exchange, Hudson River Land Trust and Natural Lands Trust, with CAC and MHB members and other interested individuals.

CAC members hosted 15 public information meetings about the Mississippi Headwaters Board throughout the region.

In 1988, the CAC organized the Headwaters Heritage program. This program promotes river conservation and land stewardship. First activity of the new program was recognition of individual efforts to protect river and lake shorelands in the eight county area. Selection of the eight county winners was made by the Citizens Advisory Committee. Selection of the regional winner was made by three independent judges: Tim Campbell, Bemidji Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President; Max Fulton, Blandin Paper Co. Lands Manager, and Larry Wannebo, First American Bank Marketing Officer.

Headwaters Heritage Awards

Nine awards were made at the December MHB meeting to:

Donald McCollum, Clearwater County Commissioner, on behalf of his 10 years service to local river protection;

James and Delores Ekstrom, Beltrami County, on behalf of their efforts to assist archaeological investigations on their property and their protection of the cultural sites on their land;

Sheldon Nelson, Hubbard County, on behalf of his many years of volunteer service to promote water and land stewardship;

Lake Winnigibigoshish Resort Association, Cass County, on behalf of its efforts to protect the shoreline from continuing and severe erosion;

George Licke, Itasca County, on behalf of his efforts to improve water quality of the Mississippi River by securing an update municipal sewage treatment facility for the City of Deer River;

Margaret Adams, Aitkin County, on behalf of her support of river use by allowing an overnight canoe campsite on her property;

Henry Fellerman and the Rabbit Lake Town Board, Crow Wing County, on behalf of efforts to improve Mississippi River water quality by eliminating erosion;

Robert Siegel, Morrison County, on behalf of his many years of volunteer service in support of land and water stewardship.

A regional award was presented to **Lloyd Nesseth**, Itasca County, for his efforts to establish the Mississippi Headwaters Board.

Statement of Revenues and Operations

1. Revenues Received: \$169,600.00

2. Summary of In-Kind Expenses Reported by Member Counties

County	General Revenue	Land and Parks	Road and Bridge
Aitkin	14,828.00	53,964.35	
Beltrami	6,979.72	1,367.38	
Cass	28,527.04	144.00	1,250.00
Clearwater	3,557.70	5,917.00	
Crow Wing	44,929.14	899.00	135,538.03
Hubbard	731.72	58.20	11,062.79
Itasca	859.31	4,131.07	
Morrison	10,271.89	4,983.81	
TOTALS	\$110,684.32	\$67,907.91	\$147,670.82

In-Kind Reported (thru April 1989) 1987-9 Biennium: \$326,263.05

3. Summary of 1987-89 Operations by Fund (90% complete):

Salaries	60,962.60
Per Diem	15,085.00
Insurance	5,105.83
Pension	8,260.64
Legal Services	6,002.75
Professional Services	9,166.74
Office Support	23,020.08
Information and Education	4,045.31
Water Quality Programs	8,564.20
Management Plan Programs	12,720.70
Meetings	2,219.99

Total Operations (thru April 1989): \$155,153.84

1989 Mississippi Headwaters Board

Aitkin County	Margaret Sherman, Vice-Chair
Beltrami County	John Loftus, Secretary-Treasurer
Cass County	Virgil Foster
Clearwater County	Gene Petersen
Crow Wing County	Howard Peterson, Chairman
Hubbard County	Larry Burgoon
Itasca County	Bob Roufs
Morrison County	Bill Block

Molly MacGregor, Administrator
Jill Smith, Technical Clerk
Lloyd Nesseth, Consultant and Lobbyist
William Patnaude, Technical Advisory
Committee Chairman
David Wilander, Citizens Advisory
Committee Chairman

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