

Status Report: June 30, 1993

1. Program Title: Local River Planning - (as amended 5/6/92)

Project Manager: Daniel G. Retka
DNR Division of Waters
1201 E. Highway 2
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 327-4416

A. M.L. 91 Chapter 254, Article 1, Section 14, Subd: 3(c)

Biennial Total: \$400,000
Balance 6/30/93: 0

This appropriation is to the commissioner of natural resources for contracts of up to two-thirds of the cost to counties, or groups of counties acting pursuant to joint powers agreement, to develop comprehensive plans for the management and protection of up to eight rivers in northern and central Minnesota. The commissioner of natural resources shall include in its work plan for review and approval by the legislative commission on Minnesota resources a proposed list of rivers and a planning process developed by consensus of the affected counties. All plans must meet or exceed the requirements of state shoreland and floodplain laws.

B. Compatible Data:

During the biennium ending June 30, 1993, the data collected by the projects funded under this section that have common value for natural resource planning and management must conform to information architecture as defined in guidelines and standards adopted by the Information Policy Office. In addition, the data must be provided to and integrated with the Minnesota Land Management Information Center's geographic data bases with the integration costs borne by the activity receiving funding under this section.

C. Match Requirement: \$200,000 (Note: Match documented and reported
Funds Raised to Date: \$ 0 through planning process)

The match requirement has been met by provisions of in-kind services by the local planning authorities conducting local river planning activities. This match is a requirement of the grant agreement to the local planning authority(s) and is documented by reports to DNR throughout the planning process.

II. Narrative:

The purpose of this project is to continue to assist local units of government to plan for the wise management of rivers within their jurisdictions. Many rivers need land use management programs which go beyond the state's shoreland and floodplain management standards to ensure their protection and to guide development.

The proposed project, focusing on local leadership in river planning, parallels efforts in local water planning and the river planning and management efforts on the Mississippi, Minnesota and Big Fork Rivers, as well as the North Shore planning effort. The locally

controlled planning effort will integrate local, state and federal management capabilities while avoiding the stigma associated with state- or federally-mandated planning programs.

III. Objectives:

A. Select rivers to be planned and establish the fundamentals of local river planning processes.

A1. Narrative: The focus of this objective is to select the rivers to be planned and define the fundamentals necessary to qualify local planning proposals for funding.

A2. Procedures: Criteria for selection of rivers will include: miles of river, population, type of existing development including land ownership and land use, development potential, special problems or threats to the river, number of local units of government, whether all governmental units along the river reach are included, Outstanding Rivers Inventory rating, proposed shoreland classification(s), significant resources such as endangered species or historic and archaeological sites, amount requested, and others. The proposed public participation process must ensure that all effected interests are brought into the plan development phase in order to insure strong public acceptance as experienced with the Mississippi River, Big Fork River and North Shore Management Plans. Local units of government should form organized steering committees to develop planning proposals by consensus.

The Department has solicited applications for funding of specific planning proposals from counties or groups of counties in July, 1991 and will again in December, 1991. Where more than one governmental unit is involved Joint Powers Boards will be formed to oversee river planning and subsequent implementation. River planning proposals contained entirely within a county will be managed under the oversight of the existing county planning authority.

A3. Amount Budgeted: 0

A4. Product timeline:

	July 91	Jan 92	June 92	Jan 93	June 93
Develop Criteria	Aug.				
Solicit Application	Aug.	Dec.			
Selection of Rivers	Aug.	Dec.			
Formation of Local Planning mechanisms	July, 1991	ongoing			

A5. Status: Eight rivers have been identified. They are the St. Louis, Cloquet, and Whiteface Rivers in St. Louis, Carlton and Lake Counties, and Rainy and Rapid Rivers in Koochiching and Lake of the Woods Counties, the Roseau River in Roseau and Beltrami Counties, and Littlefork River in St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, and the Crow Wing River in Hubbard, Wadena, Cass, Todd, and Morrison Counties.

A6. Benefits: This process will allow local units of government and their river constituencies, where there is local interest in river protection and management, to develop consensus river planning programs which address issues of local concern. Strong public acceptance of the plan will be insured.

B. Local steering committees will be formed, potential issues identified, public meetings conducted, a work program developed, and a proposed organizational structure recommended.

B1. Narrative: It is necessary that the local governmental units proposing local river planning programs design and organize planning processes which reflect local development pressures and provide protection to significant river resources while involving all river stakeholders. Organizational steering committees will be formed to determine a recommended planning area, the planning process to be followed, a recommended organizational structure, and conduct public meetings.

B2. Procedures: In response to a request for planning proposals sent to the 42 county boards in the northern three DNR regions, the Department has received responses from the St. Louis River Board (a joint powers board consisting of St. Louis, Lake, and Carlton Counties, six townships representing the over 50 townships with river frontage, and the Fond du Lac Reservation) proposing a river planning program on the St. Louis, Cloquet and Whiteface Rivers; from Koochiching County proposing river planning on the Rainy and Littlefork Rivers; from Lake of the Woods County for the Rapid River, from the Roseau River Watershed District (with a resolution of support from the Roseau County Board); and from Cass County suggesting they will submit a proposal later this year for the Crow Wing River. Of these applications the St. Louis River Board is the only group to create a steering committee, complete the required organization steps and conduct public meetings to develop a work program.

Past experience with the development of the North Shore and Big Fork River Plans demonstrate that the organizational and development steps identified in this objective are a necessary component of any successful local planning program. A steering committee comprised of a number of North Shore interests met for nearly two years prior to the formation of the North Shore Board and the initiation of the North Shore Planning Program. The steering committee was a mixture of state and local agency personnel, local elected officials and members of the general public, some of whom were very polarized as a result of the earlier unsuccessful Coastal Zone Management planning efforts. A \$5,000 grant from the Department to the steering committee (the grant was actually to the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission to provide staff services) was necessary to secure professional staff to pull the work plan together near the end of the two year process.

The Big Fork River Board formed without the benefit of a steering committee or professional services in July, 1989. The Citizens Advisory Committee was formed in the Spring of 1990 at which time public meetings were held. The planning program got underway in the Summer of 1990. This experience demonstrates that even though the steering committee-public input-work program development phase was not formally incorporated into the process it took place anyway.

Program development grants will be executed to counties or groups of counties for the Rapid, Rainy and Crow Wing Rivers in order to allow the employment of professional services to:

- a. Initiate and facilitate organizational and planning meetings with affected township, city, county and other governmental entities (watershed districts, soil and water conservation districts, Indian reservations);
- b. Assist the governmental entities in establishing a steering committee;
- c. Assist in the development of any necessary joint powers agreement;
- d. Assist in the development of a proposed planning process, a work plan

schedule, and budget;

e. Assist in conducting public meetings and workshops;

f. Modify the planning process consistent with public input for submission for funding for plan development through the local river planning program;

g. Assist in conducting steering committee and joint powers board meetings.

B3. Amount budgeted: \$15,000

Grants Made:	Rainy River Management Board	\$5,000
	Rapid River Management Board	\$5,000
	Mississippi Headwaters Board for the Crow Wing River	\$5,000
Balance:		\$0

B4. Product Timeline: Ongoing during the biennium as proposals for the development of local rivers plans develop. Experience with the earlier successful planning programs indicates a period of from 6 months to two years is necessary to fully develop planning proposals.

B5. Status: Program development grants of \$5,000 each have been made to the Rainy River Management Board for the Rainy River, the Rapid River Management Board for the Rapid River, and the Mississippi Headwaters Board on behalf of the Crow Wing River. These programs development grants have led to Local River Planning Grant requests for the Rainy and Rapid Rivers.

A final report from the MHB for the Crow Wing River was received in October. A local river planning grant application for the Crow Wing River will not be forthcoming at this time. This program development grant has indicated that each of the Counties along the river have identified the River as an outstanding resource. A number of independent positive protection measures are being pursued. The report identifies the need for a comprehensive approach to river management and the need for an oversight entity. The Region 5 RDC and the MHB will provide administrative support. A future application for river planning grant assistance may result. The MHB will host a one day community education class on rivers, land use and water quality this spring.

B6. Benefits: This objective will insure public support for the local river planning proposal, will result in river resource threats and development pressures being appropriately addressed, and will begin the development of "local ownership" of the river plan. Experience shows this to be a necessary component of a successful planning program. It is possible that all planning program development grants will not result in proposed river planning programs.

C. Grants have been made to local units of government to develop management plans for the St. Louis, Whiteface, Cloquet, Rapid and Rainy Rivers.

C1. Narrative: Grant agreements based on the river planning work program were executed with the planning authority for each river planning project. The agreements specify the geographic scope of the project, the range of issues to be addressed, and the public participation process.

C2. Procedures: The following general process is followed:

- a. Assemble existing data on river resources including land ownership and land uses;
 - b. Assess the condition of the river and related land resources;
 - c. Identify the issues which need to be dealt with in the plan;
 - d. Develop the goals and objectives to be achieved as a result of the planning process;
 - e. Develop an action plan to address the issues identified and which will achieve the goals and objectives;
 - f. Develop an implementation program with responsibilities, costs and schedules for accomplishing the actions identified.
- C3. Amount budgeted: \$385,000
 St. Louis River Board Grant: \$287,000 (Includes Cloquet and Whiteface Rivers)
 Rainy River Board Grant: \$ 53,511
 Rapid River Board Grant: \$ 44,489
 Balance: 0
- C4. Product Timeline: There were three individual local planning processes involving five rivers undertaken through this initiative. Each project developed its own planning process and time frame under the general guidance of this work plan. Twelve to 24+ months are necessary to complete projects.
- This Local River Planning Program is managed with the intent to conduct the development of additional river plans in the future. Any planning proposals not able to be funded from this appropriation due to lack of funds or timing will be submitted as proposals for funding in future biennia for consideration of the Legislature.
- C5. Status: Consistent with the LMCR Local River Planning Work Program approved in August 1991, a grant in the amount of \$287,000 has been made to the St. Louis River Board. A two year planning program which began in October is on schedule. A draft final report of the river plan has been received. Public review meetings will be conducted during July & August, 1993 with the final report available in September. A 13 minute video of the St. Louis River and the planning process has been prepared.
- At it's May 6, 1992 meeting the Commission approved a local river planning grant to the Rainy River Management Board in the amount of \$53,511 and to the Rapid River Management Board in the amount of \$44,489. Grant agreements with both river boards have been executed and the river plans have been prepared. The final reports have been received.
- C6. Benefits: Plans for individual rivers have been developed which address issues and problems that pose threats to the river resource. A logical planning process is followed within a local planning framework.
- D. Provide Department of Natural Resources participation.
- D1. Narrative: The Department of Natural Resources has ongoing management and regulatory programs which provide river protection and management, i.e. shoreland and floodplain

management, trails, canoe and boating routes, fish and wildlife management, etc.. Identification of programs, informing local planning committees of program purposes, and incorporation of programs into local management plans will be accomplished. Local river planning activities will be coordinated with ongoing DNR management programs.

- D2. Procedures: A DNR Hydrologist will be assigned as the Department contact individual for each local planning effort. This employee attends meetings for the governing board and advisory committee providing input on an ongoing basis to provide coordination, technical assistance, and assure consistency with other DNR management programs. Other Department personnel representing specific resource management expertise will be called upon as necessary.
- D3. Amount Budgeted: DNR staff commitment to local river planning by the individual hydrologist must be significant to insure coordination with DNR programs and that inconsistencies with DNR policies and programs are addressed early in the river planning process. It is estimated that approximately 0.25 FTE has been dedicated to each recent local planning effort by the DNR primary contact person. To date, due to timing of local planning, it has been possible to assist the Big Fork River and North Shore planning efforts within existing workloads (because they did not occur at the same time). Consequently, it is unlikely the Department will be able to participate in more than one local planning process at a time depending on the availability of staff. The timing of grants will have to be adjusted accordingly, or funding made available for support staff.
- The contribution of staff support by other DNR resource professionals is not expected to require as much individual effort by any given individual and therefore will be provided as part of ongoing workload.
- D4. Product Timeline: Ongoing as required by grant allocations.
- D5. Status: DNR technical staff, along with staff from other federal, state, and local resource management agencies have been appointed as ex-officio members of the Citizens Advisory Committees of the St. Louis River Board, the Rainy River Management Board and the Rapid River Management Board. Participation from the DNR Division of Waters, Fish & Wildlife, Forestry, and Trails and Waterways has been provided. Significant staff effort has been devoted to the river planning efforts. A good working relationship between DNR staff and the Boards and their committees has resulted.
- D6. Benefits: Local planning activities have demonstrated that DNR staff participation as a partner in the development of local management plans results in bridges between local and state goals and objectives and management strategies. Much of the rancor toward state management programs which exists at the local level has evaporated. DNR/local relationships on other resource management programs has improved as well. Also, conflicts with agency policies and regulations have been raised sooner than later because of the hands on involvement of the DNR contact personnel. Serious conflicts have been avoided at the plan adoption/implementation stage. Local officials value the support and encouragement of DNR staff provided throughout the planning effort.

V. Evaluation

Public participation must be a necessary and significant component of the planning processes. Citizen advisory committees, public meetings and hearings, media relations,

and newsletters are utilized to insure the developed plans have a broad base of public support while providing protection to river resources. Implementation of the developed plans is expected to be considerably enhanced as a result. The entire local river planning concept is predicated on the active grass roots involvement of ordinary citizens in actually writing the river plan. It is imperative that local officials and citizens lead the design of the specific planning process, and the development of each unique river plan.

Individual plans are reviewed by DNR and other state and local agencies for consistency and compliance with established state management programs. The various state and federal management agencies are invited to review and comment on draft plans. All plans meet the minimum standards of the shoreland and floodplain management programs. The plans protect the rivers as well as meet local objectives regarding the appropriate development / protection mix. Through ongoing participation, review by the Department (and necessarily by other state and federal agencies) is provided throughout the planning process thereby avoiding disagreements upon project completion.

VI. Context

- A. After the flurry of river planning activity in the 1970s during which six rivers were designated as state Wild and Scenic Rivers, there has been a low level of interest in designating additional rivers in the 1980s. However, in the last year or two, local resource conflicts or threats have stimulated renewed interest in planning on the Big Fork River and more recently on the St. Louis/Cloquet/Whiteface River system. At the same time, the DNR has exhibited a renewed interest in providing additional protection for rivers. The Shoreland Rules which have recently been adopted provide enhanced opportunities for greatly improved river corridor management. The Department also realizes that some rivers merit comprehensive management and protection which go beyond the minimum standards of the Shoreland Program. This project initiates planning for rivers which local citizens and governments feel need special management and protection, and allows a local/state partnership in the implementation process as well. The state's role is to oversee the process to insure that it meets applicable state standards such as those of the Shoreland Program as well as commonly accepted planning standards.
- B. This project supplements other available river planning efforts such as the Wild and Scenic River program by providing an opportunity for local communities to initiate the planning process on rivers where they feel it is needed, and to control the planning process as well as the implementation of the plan. Department participation in the development of the plans avoids inconsistencies with state management programs.
- C. This project complements other similar efforts which have occurred, or are occurring, on the Big Fork River, the Upper Mississippi River, the North Shore of Lake Superior Management Plan, the Project Riverbend on the Minnesota River. In addition, DNR has various internal river management activities including hydropower project review, local water planning input and review, a Rivers Task Force, the Canoe and Boating Route program, and others. The proposed project is consistent with and complements these other programs.
- D. AID 335372
- E. Not available at this time.

VII. Qualifications

1. Program manager
Dan Retka
Regional Hydrologist, Region II
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
1201 E. Highway 2
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

DNR Regional Hydrologist for 19 years; total of 22 years with the Department.
B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering, post-graduate work in Civil Engineering.

2. Cooperators

Plans will be developed through Joint Powers Boards or other existing planning authority by qualified planners or consultants with the assistance of technical and citizens advisory committees.

VII. Reporting Requirements

Semi-annual status reports will be submitted not later than January 1, 1992, July 1, 1992, January 1, 1993, and a final status report by June 30, 1993.