

## 1995 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 1997

This project was supported by the MN Future Resources Fund (MS xxx)

**Title:** Local River Planning  
**Program Manager:** Steven P. Johnson  
**Organization:** DNR Division of Waters  
**Address:** 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4032  
**Web Site Address:** <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us>  
**Legal Citation:** ML 95, Chp. 220, Sec. 19, Subd: 5(a)  
**Appropriation Amount:** \$140,000 (plus carryover from previous biennium of \$62,075.79, for a total appropriation of \$202,075.79)

### Statement of Objectives

This program provided to local governments, or groups of local governments acting pursuant to a joint powers agreement, grants for up to two-thirds of the cost of developing comprehensive plans for the management and protection of rivers. Local governments and citizen steering committees identified the individual management needs for each river through a scoping process that involved all stakeholders along the river. This process involved a series of locally driven, facilitated meetings in which all stakeholders were partners in the identification of problems, issues and opportunities and the development of alternative solutions. From this process, a plan incorporating a series of recommended management actions was developed. Each planning process was tailored to a specific river and to specific local needs. This program was a continuation of a program begun two bienniums earlier, but in this biennium the program had a state-wide scope; it has previously been limited to northern Minnesota.

### Overall Project Results

Management plans have been completed for the Littlefork, Rat Root, Vermilion, Middle, Roseau, Snake, Long Prairie and Zumbro rivers and Minneopa Creek. Plans begun and completed in this biennium included the Long Prairie, Zumbro and Minneopa projects.

### Project Results Use and Dissemination

Copies of completed plans have been widely distributed in local river areas, as well as to LCMR and the DNR Library. With the assistance of DNR and the Rivers Council of Minnesota, local river managers have begun a series of statewide meetings to compare notes and share techniques. The Snake River Watershed Management Board has received an appropriation in the coming biennium to begin implementation of plan recommendations. The citizen-based steering committee for the Long Prairie River has obtained other grants, begun a riparian tree-planting program and developed high school science curricula aimed at continuing citizen stewardship for the river. The local steering committee that developed the Minneopa Creek plan has begun implementation activities and is working with citizen and school groups to enhance public awareness of the creek's values. The Zumbro River steering committee has begun implementation activities and is working with Wabasha County in development of the county's first comprehensive plan.

**Date of Report:** ~~January 1, 1997.~~ July 1, 1997

**LCMR Final Work Program Update Report 1996**

**I. Project Title and Project Number:** Local River Planning (Continuation) F12

**Program Manager:** Steven P. Johnson

**Agency Affiliation:** DNR Division of Waters

**Mail Address:** 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4032

**Phone:** (612) 296-4802

**Fax:** (612) 296-0445

**A. Legal Citation:** ML 95, Chp. 220, Sec. 19, Subd: 5(a)

**Total biennial LCMR appropriation:** \$140,000

**Approved funds carried over from previous biennium:** \$62,075.79

**Total Appropriation:** \$202,075.79

**Balance:** ~~\$11,576.76~~ 0

**Appropriation Language:** This appropriation is from the future resources fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the third biennium of a three-biennium project to assist counties statewide in developing comprehensive plans for the management and protection of rivers through grants for up to two-thirds of the cost that address locally identified issues while maintaining consistency with state floodplain and shoreland laws and local water plans. For the purpose of this paragraph, the nonstate portion includes contributions either cash or in-kind. The appropriation in Laws 1993, chapter 172, section 14, subdivision 11, paragraph (b), is available until June 30, 1997.

**B. Status of Match Requirement:**

**Match required:** \$72,500

**Amount committed to date:** \$72,500

**Match spent to date:** ~~\$37,500~~ 72,500

**II. Project Summary:**

This program affords counties, or groups of counties acting pursuant to a joint powers agreement, grants for up to two-thirds of the cost of developing comprehensive plans for the management and protection of rivers. Counties will identify the individual management needs for each river through a scoping process that involves all stakeholders along the river. This process involves a series of locally driven, facilitated meetings in which all stakeholders are partners in the identification of problems, issues and opportunities and the development of alternative solutions. From this process, a plan incorporating land use controls will be developed to guide activities along the river in order to meet these needs. Such local river plans are best able to serve the management needs for each river since each planning process

is tailored to a specific river rather than to all rivers lying within a large geographical area that may be one or more counties in size.

### **III. Six Month Work Program Update Summary:**

January 1, 1997. July 1, 1997

The Middle and Roseau plans have been completed. A preliminary draft of the Snake plan has been completed and we are awaiting the final copy of the plan as well as documentation of the completion of certain items of their work plan. Data collection and analysis for the Long Prairie project is nearly complete and a first draft of the plan is expected by the end of April 1997. Plan development is progressing for the Zumbro and Minneopa projects with about two-thirds of the data collection and analysis either totally or partially completed. Planning processes have been completed for the Middle, Roseau, Snake, Long Prairie and Zumbro rivers and Minneopa Creek. The Snake River Watershed Management Board has received an appropriation in the coming biennium to begin implementation of the plan. The citizen-based steering committee for the Long Prairie River has obtained other grants, begun a riparian tree-planting program and developed high school science curricula aimed at continuing citizen stewardship for the river. The local steering committee that developed the Minneopa Creek plan has begun implementation activities and is working with citizen and school groups to enhance public awareness of the creek's values. The Zumbro River steering committee has begun implementation activities and is working with Wabasha County in development of the county's first comprehensive plan. Copies of all completed plans have been provided to LCMR and are available in the DNR Library.

### **IV. Statement of Objectives:**

- A. Select rivers to be planned. Rivers will be selected based on standard criteria which consider values and issues for each river.
- B. Design and organize river planning processes through program development grants. For the selected rivers, grants not to exceed \$5,000 will be made to facilitate organization of individual work programs.
- C. Issue river planning grants. Several individual river planning processes will be undertaken through this initiative, each taking 18 to 24 months for completion. These processes will begin near the beginning of the biennium, ensuring completion by June 30, 1997.
- D. Provide administration and technical assistance. Experienced DNR staff will serve as Department contacts for each river planning effort.

**A.1.a. Context within the project:** This process will allow local units of government and their river constituencies, where there is local interest in river protection and management, to nominate rivers for planning grants.

**A.1.b. Methods:** 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 are included, Outstanding Rivers Inventory rating, National Outstanding Rivers Inventory, proposed shoreland classification(s), significant resources such as endangered species or historic and archaeologic sites (using DNR Natural Heritage and Minnesota Historical Society databases), and others.

**A.1.c. Materials:** None

### A.1.d. Budget

**Total Biennial LCMR Budget: \$0**

**LCMR Balance: \$0**

**Cutoff Date:** June 30, 1997

**A.1.e. Timeline:**

7/95      1/96      6/96      1/97      6/97

Candidate River      xxxx

**A.1.f. Workprogram Update:** ~~January 1, 1997.~~ July 1, 1997. This objective has been completed for all rivers in the project.

**B. Title of Objective/Outcome:** Design and organize river planning processes through program development grants.

**B.1. Activity:** For the selected rivers, program development grants not to exceed \$5,000 will be made to facilitate formation of local steering committees, to identify river management issues, to develop a river planning organizational structure and work program, and conduct public meetings to ensure support for river planning.

**B.1.a. Context within the project:** This objective will ensure 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. Program development grants will require a one-third local match, which may be in-kind.

**B.1.b. Methods:** Program development grants will be made to counties or groups of counties 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 to enable submission for funding of plan development through the local river planning program;
- g. Assist in conducting steering committee and joint powers board meetings.

**B.1.c. Materials:** None

**B.1.d. Budget:** \$7,500  
**Total Biennial LCMR Budget:** \$5,000  
**LCMR Balance:** \$0

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**MATCH:** \$2,500  
**MATCH BALANCE:** \$0  
**Cutoff Date:** June 30, 1997

**B.1.e. Timeline:**

	7/95	1/96	6/96	1/97	6/97
Zumbro			XXXXXXXXXXXXXX		

**B.1.f. Workprogram Update:** ~~January 1, 1997~~ July 1, 1997. This objective, i.e. "The Design and Organization of the River Planning Processes" has been completed for all rivers in the project.

**C. Title of Objective/Outcome:** Issue River Planning Grants

**C.1. Activity:** For the selected rivers, grant agreements based on the Workprogram developed pursuant to Objective B will be executed with the planning authority for each river planning project. The agreements will specify the geographic scope of the project, the range of issues to be addressed, and the public participation process.

**C.1.a. Context within the project:** Plans for individual rivers will be developed which address issues and problems that pose threats to the river resource. A logical planning process will be followed within a local planning framework that has a proven track record for success. A planning grant request was received in July 1995 from the Long Prairie River as a result of an Objective B grant made during the prior biennium. This will ensure completion during the current biennium. An Objective C grant was issued to the Roseau River Management Board in May 1995, with completion by June 30, 1997. An Objective C grant was issued to the Middle River Management Board in June 1995, with completion by June 30, 1997. Planning grant requests were received in April 1996 from Blue Earth County for Minneopa Creek and from the Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board for the Zumbro River. These two projects will be completed by June 30, 1997.

**C.1.b. Methods:** The following general process will be 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;



**C.1.f. Workprogram Update:** ~~January 1, 1997. The Roseau and Middle River plans are completed. For the Long Prairie project, the water quality and hydrologic data has been collected and an ecological inventory of the river has been completed. Historical and archaeological data collection is mostly complete. Considerable work still needs to be done concerning the identification of recreational opportunities in the watershed. For the Zumbro project, water quality monitoring is ongoing, resource data is being collected, and recommendations for management of the river corridor are being generated. In the Minneopa project, new water quality and hydrologic data has been collected and the collection of land use, biological and ecological data is on-going. In the case of the Snake project a preliminary draft of the plan has been written. This draft was reviewed by the steering committee and Snake River Management Board and sent back for revision. This project is behind schedule, but the project coordinator expects to complete the project by May 1, 1997.~~ July 1, 1997. Management plans have been completed for the Long Prairie, Snake and Zumbro rivers and Minneopa Creek. With local grassroots leadership, community groups and local governments are now moving to the implementation phase.

**D. Title of Objective/Outcome:** Provide administrative and technical assistance.

**D.1. Activity:** Employees of the DNR Division of Waters within the classified service, who possess unique experience and skills relevant to this project, will perform a significant portion of the work on this project. Other duties will be performed by an unclassified position hired for this project. LCMR funds will be used to support the work, and detailed cost-coding of timesheets will be the basis for payments from LCMR funds. The DNR Division of Waters' general fund activities will be maintained or increased through temporary employee hires, etc., for backfill from the general fund.

**D.1.a. Context within the project:** The State of Minnesota 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.

**D.1.b. Methods:** Experienced DNR staff will be assigned as Department contacts for each local planning effort. These employees attend meetings of the governing board and advisory committee on an ongoing basis to provide coordination, technical assistance, and assure consistency with other DNR and other resource management programs. Other Department personnel representing specific resource management expertise will be called upon as necessary.



**D.1.c. Materials:** One personal computer (purchase is cheaper than renting or leasing) at an estimated cost of \$1,500. After the end of the biennium, it will be retained in use by Division of Waters for continued assistance to local river planning activities.

### D.1.d. Budget

**Total Biennial LCMR Budget: \$57,275.79**

**LCMR Balance: \$~~11,576.76~~ 0**

**Cutoff Date:** June 30, 1997

### D.1.e. Timeline:

**7/95            1/96            6/96            1/97            6/97**

Assist river planning xxx

**D.1.f. Workprogram Update: January 1, 1997** An unclassified staff position has been created and filled to work on this project. That individual is working with area hydrologists to assist with ongoing river projects and with Blue Earth County and the Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board to assist with the Minneopa Creek and Zumbro River projects. Area hydrologists worked closely with steering committees for the Long Prairie, Minneopa and Zumbro projects. In an effort to maximize funding provided to local planning efforts, insufficient funds were scheduled to retain the unclassified staff position until the end of the project; the position was eliminated in March 1997 and permanent, classified central office staff managed the conclusion of the project.

**VI. Evaluation:** Public participation is a necessary and significant component of the planning processes. Citizen advisory committees, public meetings and hearings, media relations, and newsletters will be utilized to ensure the developed plans have a broad base of public support while providing protection to river resources. Implementation of the developed plan is expected to be considerably enhanced as a result. The local river planning concept is predicated on the active grassroots involvement of 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. The program grants incorporate performance requisites to ensure that these strategies will be fulfilled.

Individual plans will be reviewed by DNR and other state and local agencies for consistency and compliance with established management programs. The various state and federal management agencies will be invited to review and comment on draft plans. All plans will have to meet the minimum standards of the state shoreland and floodplain management programs. The overall results of the project will be evaluated as to the degree to which the plans protect the rivers as well as meet local objectives regarding the appropriate development/protection mix. Through ongoing participation, this review by the Department

(and necessarily by other state and federal agencies) will be provided throughout the planning process thereby avoiding disagreements upon project completion.

**VII. Context within field:** In organizing the stakeholders along a river to identify the issues and management strategies that will comprise a local river plan, the specific management needs for each river will be addressed in greater detail than is generally possible under the state floodplain and shoreland management programs.

**VIII. Budget context:** (a) LCMR funds for FY94-95 currently being spent on ongoing river planning projects (Laws 1993, chapter 172, section 14, subdivision 11, paragraph (b)):

Littlefork & Rat Root Rivers:

LCMR Funds: \$106,600      Local Match: \$53,300      Total: \$159,900  
(This plan is complete and approved.)

Vermilion River:

LCMR Funds: \$57,900      Local Match: \$28,950      Total: \$86,850  
(This plan is complete and approved.)

Snake River:

LCMR Funds: \$60,000      Local Match: \$30,000      Total: \$90,000  
(~~Plan completion is expected by May 1997~~ This plan is complete and approved.)

Long Prairie River:

LCMR Funds: \$5,000      Local Match: \$2,500      Total: \$7,500  
(~~Objective C planning is underway with completion expected just before June 1997~~ This plan is complete and approved.)

Roseau River:

LCMR Funds: \$76,200      Local Match: \$38,100      Total: \$114,300  
(~~Planning has been completed and a printed, bound copy has been delivered~~ This plan is complete and approved.)

Middle River:

LCMR Funds: \$62,400      Local Match: \$31,200      Total: \$93,600  
(~~Planning is complete with a printed, bound copy of the plan delivered~~ This plan is complete and approved.)

Local units of government are matching expenditures by providing their own staff time to these efforts.

(b) New local river planning projects expected for FY96-97 include a local match of \$40,000 from Todd County for the Long Prairie River, a local match of \$7,500 from Blue Earth

County for Minneopa Creek, and a local match of \$25,000 from the Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board for the Zumbro River. In addition, planning assistance to local governments on river issues is an ongoing activity of the DNR Division of Waters, using rivers planning positions converted from LCMR funding in FY 84 and FY 90, and using the expertise of area hydrologist positions throughout the state.

- IX. Dissemination:** Local river plans are incorporated into local land use controls so that the management strategies of each plan may be implemented. However, these plans also become the tools for other river planning organizations throughout Minnesota, and even in other states, as evidenced by the expressions of interest and requests for information about the program that have been received from other management agencies.
- X. Time:** This program will fund five additional rivers for inclusion into the grant program. Each river planning process requires varying amounts of time to develop consensus among stakeholders. This project will end on June 30, 1997. Future funding of this program will be defined in future agency biennial budget requests.
- XI. Cooperation:** Todd, Roseau, Blue Earth, and Marshall counties, the Snake River Watershed Management Board and the Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board are local government sponsors for the river planning initiatives.
- XII. Reporting requirements:** Semiannual six-month work program update reports will be submitted no later than January 1, 1996, July 1, 1996, January 1, 1997, and a final six-month work program update and final report by June 30, 1997.

### **XIII. REQUIRED ATTACHMENT:**

- 1. Qualifications:** (See attached)
- 2. Project Staffing Summary:** (See attached)