



2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The **Mission** of the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) is to institute, coordinate, and finance projects and programs to alleviate flooding and assure the beneficial use of water in the watershed of the Red River of the North and its tributaries.

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FEBRUARY 18, 2020

1. Bonding: The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) will pursue a \$75 million statewide bonding bill with partners including the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD). These funds will be used for city flood damage reduction projects and for flood impoundments in rural areas. **Goals** for these funds in the Red River Basin are to:

- Protect public and private infrastructure in cities and to increase resiliency related to changes in weather patterns.
- Protect public and private infrastructure such as transportation systems, and drainage systems in rural areas.
- Reduce flood impacts to farmland and other agricultural lands.
- Increase water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.
- Enhance economic vitality locally and regionally.
- Leverage local funds from the RRWMB and member watershed districts with bonding dollars.

2. Ring Dikes: The RRWMB will work to secure \$300,000 for farmstead and rural ring dikes statewide. **Goals** for these funds in the Red River Basin are to:

- Protect on-farm infrastructure within farmsteads from reoccurring flooding.
- Protect rural housing developments from continued flood impacts.
- Reduce stress and mental health issues associated with flooding.
- Increase economic vitality locally and regionally.
- Leverage local funds from the RRWMB and member watershed districts with bonding dollars.

3. RRWMB Relation to MAWD 2020 Legislative Priorities: The RRWMB will work collectively with MAWD and other partners when appropriate. The table on the next page indicates how the RRWMB will interact with MAWD on specific issues for the 2020 legislative session.

Investing in and Managing the Watershed of the Red River Basin

RRWMB Relation to MAWD 2020 Legislative Priorities

ITEM	MAWD PRIORITY	RRWMB** PRIORITY/ACTION
Increase the \$250,000 general fund levy limit.	A	Monitor
Secure a strong bonding allocation for flood hazard mitigation projects.	A	Support and Carry Bill
Permit temporary storage of water on DNR land during major flood events.	A	Support
Provide limited liability protection to certified commercial salt applicators.	B (When Led by Others)	No RRWMB Involvement
Clarify the responsibility of counties to finance public drainage system projects upon request of a watershed district and/or provide authorization to watershed districts to do their own general obligation bonding.	B (When Led by Others)	No RRWMB Involvement
Support efforts of the Minnesota River Congress to increase water storage in the MN River Basin.	B (When Led by Others)	Support
Obtain stable and reliable funding for an ongoing flood damage reduction program.	B (When Led by Others)	Monitor
Work with the Clean Water Council to get a recommendation to the legislature in 2021 that would increase Clean Water Fund allocations for programs and projects identified in comprehensive watershed management plans such as those written under the One Watershed One Plan Program or MN Statute 103B.201 Metropolitan Surface Water Management Program.	Issues to Handle Administratively	Monitor
Allow artificial water courses that serve as public drainage systems to be classified as a Class 7 Limited Resource Value Water rather than a Class 2 Aquatic Life and Recreation Water when implementing the MN Pollution Control Agency's Tiered Aquatic Life Uses (TALU) standard.	Issues to Handle Administratively	Active Support
Continue to work with the DNR to make sure they do not unduly impede a drainage authority's ability to maintain and repair public drainage systems or re-establish drainage system records.	Issues to Handle Administratively	Active Support
Ensure watershed organizations are given opportunities by the MN Department of Health to provide input on stormwater reuse standards.	Issues to Handle Administratively	Monitor
HF 1887 / SF 1766 – Watershed district provisions modified (a.k.a “Developer’s Bill of Rights”).	Issues to Watch and Play Defense	Active Support
HF 2314 / SF 2372 – Rice Creek watershed district spending and reporting requirements.	Issues to Watch and Play Defense	Monitor
HF 2995 – Appointment and distribution of watershed district managers.	Opposed	Opposed

****RRWMB Priority/Action Definitions:**

Support and Carry Bill: The RRWMB will be the lead on legislative effort.

Support: The RRWMB will coordinate on legislative effort but will not lead.

Active Support: The RRWMB will monitor and be involved as warranted but will not lead.

Monitor: The RRWMB will monitor legislation and may become involved if warranted.

No RRWMB Involvement: The RRWMB will not be involved in legislative efforts.