



Extension Weather Ready Program

Increasing the capacity of Minnesota communities to prepare for and respond to changing climate extremes.

Minnesota is already experiencing the costs and consequences of heavy precipitation, more frequent swings between floods and droughts, and rapidly warming winters. Effective management of these climate-related risks is essential to the well-being of Minnesota's residents, industries, landscapes, cultures, and economy. The **Extension Weather Ready Program** (HF1853/SF2547) will expand the ability of Extension to provide needed **education, research, and technical assistance** to the state's land and resource managers, agricultural sector, and communities to effectively plan for, manage, and adapt to changing weather and climate extremes.

Leveraging Existing Infrastructure to Enhance Weather & Climate Preparedness and Resilience

University of Minnesota Extension's mission is to **discover science-based solutions, deliver practical education, and engage Minnesotans to build a better future**. Working in close partnership with communities, land and natural resource managers, agriculturalists, planners and the public and private sectors, Extension is uniquely positioned to provide **trusted, durable and localized capacity, data and tools, and technical assistance** to communities across the state. From urban to rural and city to township, Extension has a reach and impact in every county in Minnesota.

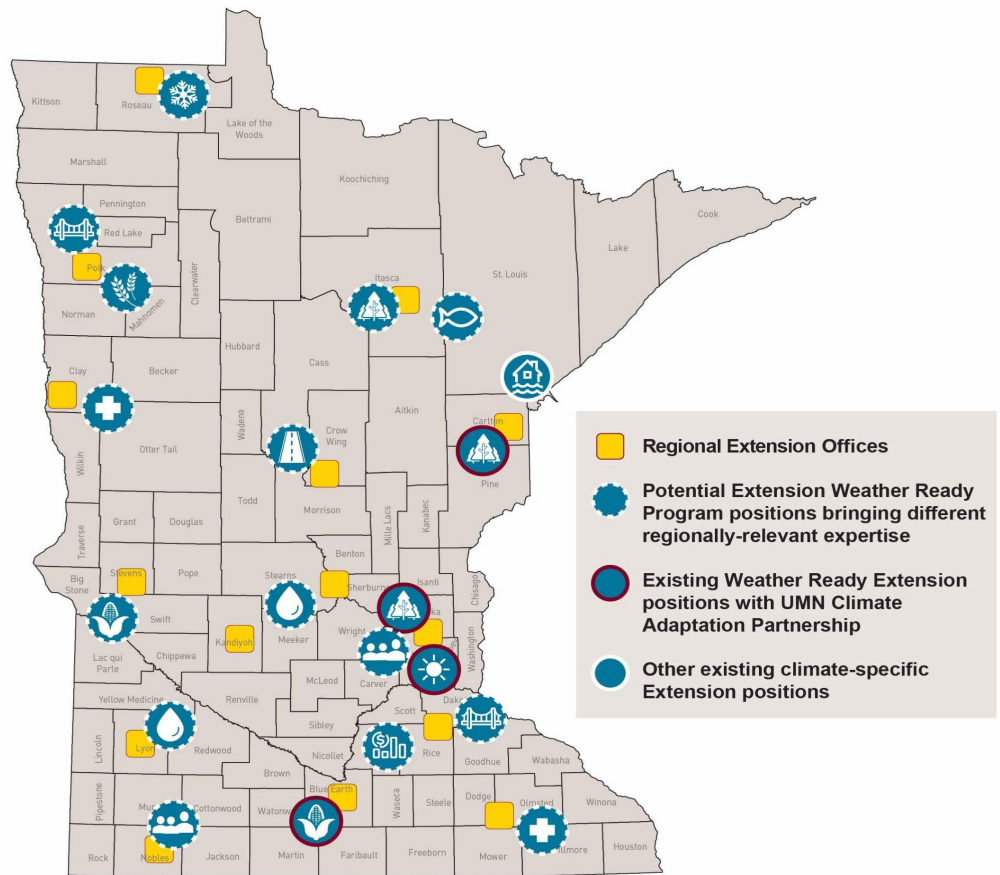
This **dedicated weather and climate Extension program** will leverage Extension's existing statewide organizational structure and resources to help ensure Minnesotans are not only prepared to 'weather the storm', but that the state is **uniquely positioned to take advantage of historic federal funding opportunities** that would improve critical physical infrastructure like roads and bridges, accelerate adoption of climate-smart agricultural and natural resource management practices, protect vital habitat, and improve health outcomes for Minnesotans.

What Will This Bill Do?

The Extension Weather Ready Program will enhance the State's climate resilience by adding critical capacity, providing essential localized data and planning tools, and offering technical assistance and education to help prepare for and respond to our changing climate.

Expanding Extension's Current Impact

This program will support an **integrated network of up to 20 existing and new Extension positions** with diverse climate-related expertise to develop and deploy effective strategies in weather and climate preparedness, planning and infrastructure design, water resource management, climate-smart agriculture, forestry, architecture and engineering, economics, emergency management, and public health.



The expansion of the Extension Weather Ready Program will:

- **Add capacity and expertise** by placing climate-focused Extension positions across MN.
- **Bring research to practice** through dedicated Extension staff able to assist in the interpretation and application of localized climate data and research.
- **Accelerate the timeline between planning and implementation** by offering timely support that will make it easier to apply for and increase competitiveness of grant applications to federal and state programs making historic investments in climate-smart practices – from farms and forests to roads and riverways.
- **Improve understanding of Minnesota's climate risks and effective responses** by advancing research and evaluation of climate resilience strategies.
- **Demonstrate national leadership** by expanding a dedicated climate program that is unique in its scale and structure across Extension nationally.

Investing in Extension's capacity to support communities to prepare and build resilience to changing climate extremes will help ensure Minnesota has thriving and resilient residents, natural and built environments, and economies.