

# 1998 Red River Basin Flood Mediation Agreement Overview

Minnesota House Environment and Natural  
Resources Finance and Policy Committee

March 16, 2021 – Presented Electronically

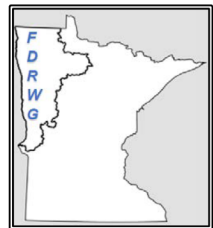


Robert L. Sip, Executive Director



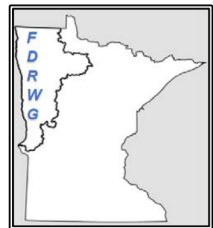
# What is the 1998 Flood Mediation Agreement?

- ▶ The Agreement is a result of court ordered mediation in the early 1990's between the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB), its member Watershed Districts (WD), US Army Corps of Engineers (COE), and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) related to flood control projects in the Red River Basin (RRB) of Minnesota.
- ▶ RRWMB is the fiscal agent for the Mediation Agreement – Funds Pass Through From DNR
- ▶ The Agreement was a **landmark milestone** for local units of government and state and federal agencies to develop consensus and working partnerships on:
  - Planning, Design, and Funding;
  - Enhanced Coordination of RRB Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) projects; and
  - Implementation of Natural Resource Enhancements (NRE).



# Mediation Structure

- ▶ Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG) oversees implementation of the Mediation Agreement and makes decisions about:
  - Annual Budget of \$264,000
  - State Funding Support for NREs
- ▶ Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC)
- ▶ Several Internal Committees and Teams
- ▶ Watershed-based Project Teams (PTs), Readiness Form and PT Handbook
- ▶ Advocate/promote/develop watershed-based approaches to water and natural resources management.



# Who is Involved in the Mediation Agreement?

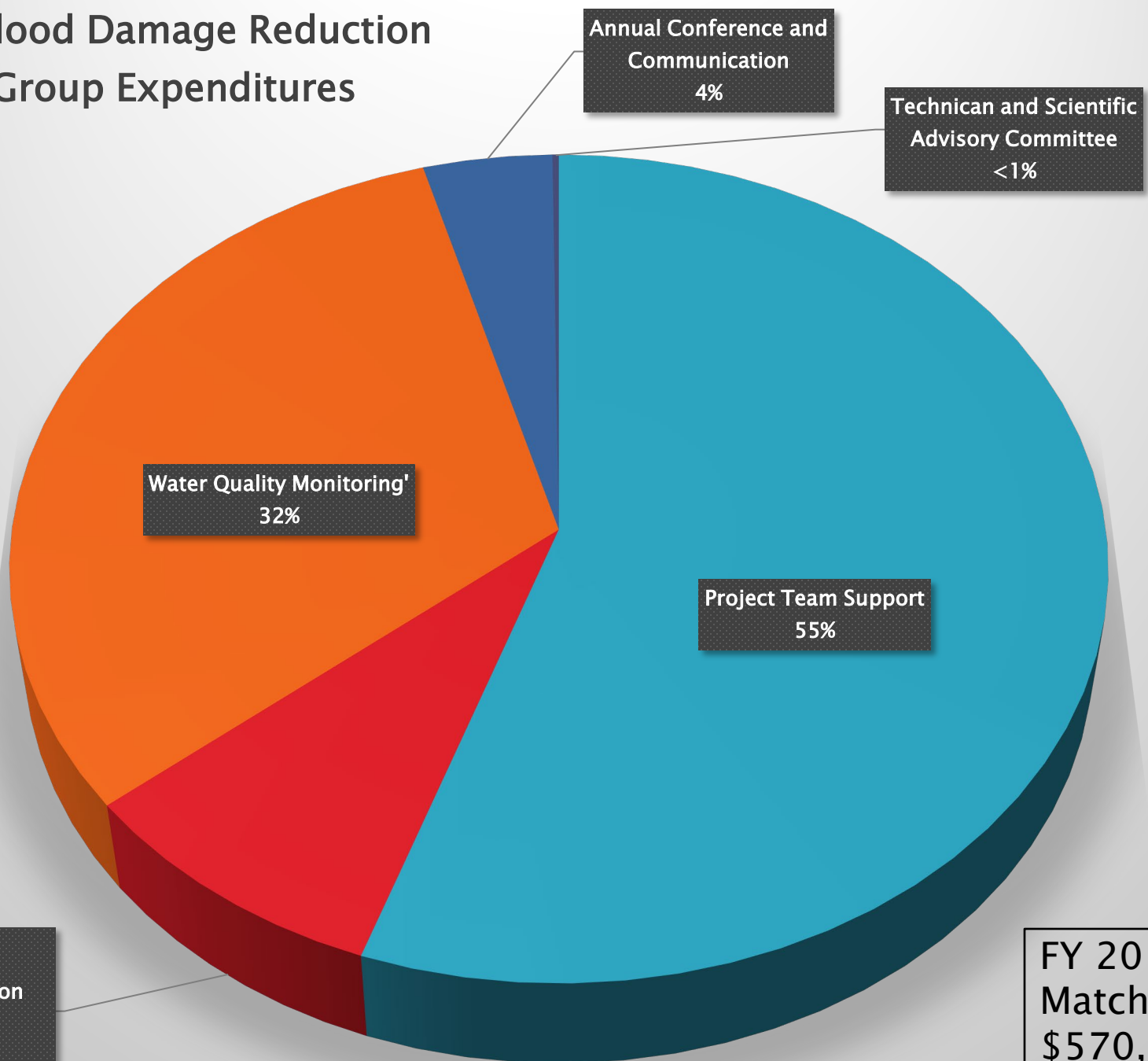
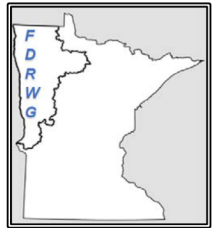
▶ Representatives From the Following Entities are Current Participants of the Mediation Agreement:

- RRWMB and Local Government (Counties and SWCD's)
- State Agencies – BWSR, DNR, MDA, MDH, and MPCA
- Federal Agencies – NRCS and US Army Corps of Engineers
- Red River Basin Citizens

▶ Notes on FDRWG Membership:

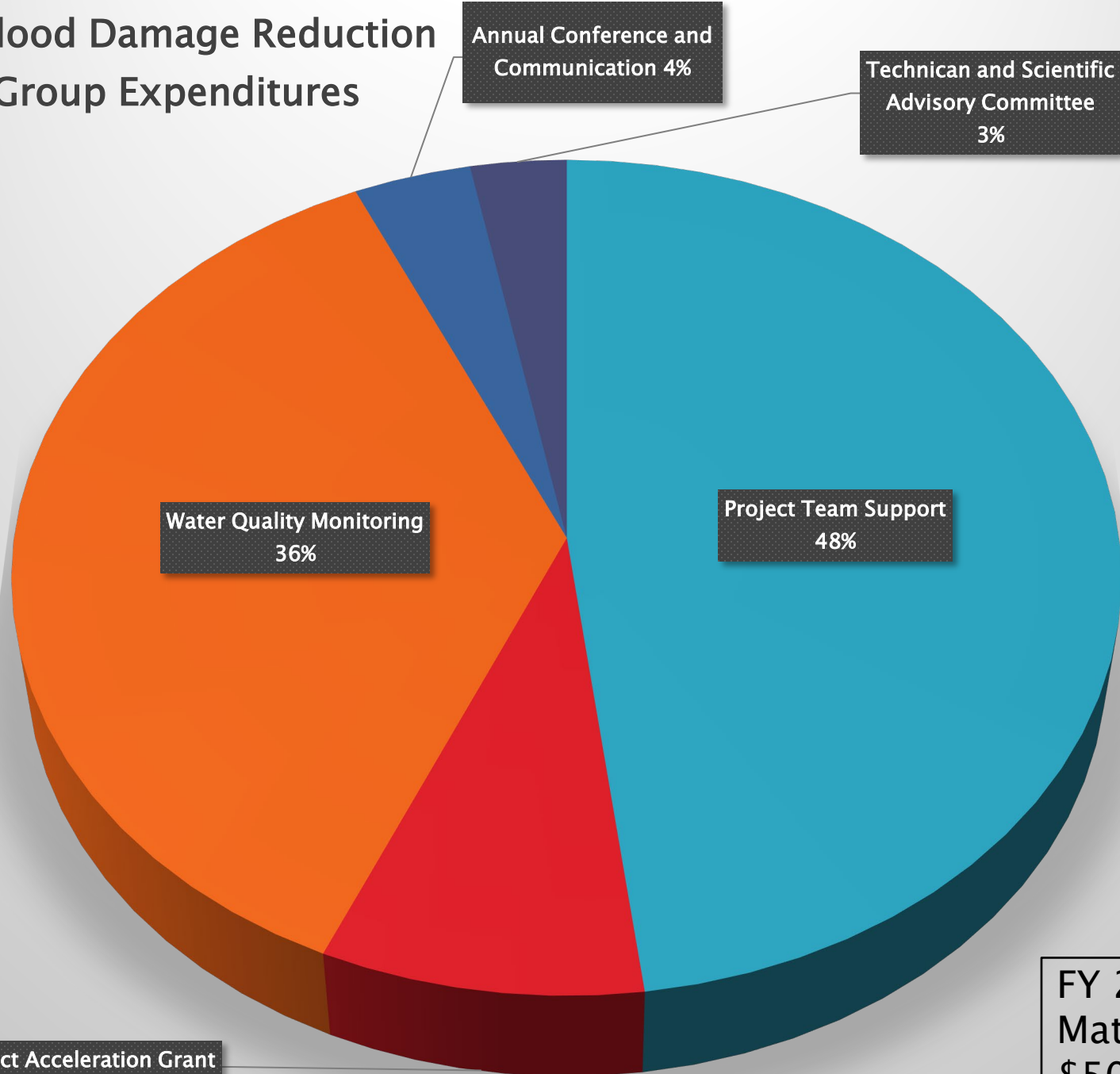
- 9 of 11 watershed districts in the RRB of Minnesota have received funding through the FDRWG regardless of RRWMB membership.
- Project funding and development is spread across RRB counties.

# 2018 FY Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Expenditures



FY 2018  
Match =  
\$570,375.04

# 2019 FY Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Expenditures



FY 2019  
Match =  
\$502,020.72

# Incorporation of NREs Into FDR Projects

- **Water Quality:** Better water quality by reducing nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment loading and erosion.
- **Wetlands:**
  - Protection and enhancement of naturally occurring wetlands.
  - Storage via restored wetlands to hold and retain water on the landscape for longer periods of time while providing agricultural drainage benefits.
- **Habitat:** Nesting, resting, feeding and brooding habitat areas for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds and fish.
- **Recreation:** Enhanced and increased bird and wildlife viewing opportunities.



Waterfowl at the North Ottawa FDR  
Project: Bois de Sioux Watershed District



# FDR Projects

- ▶ Numerous permitted, funded, and completed multipurpose projects throughout the basin:
  - 60 projects co-funded by RRWMB and built by member WD's since 1976.
  - 11 FDR projects currently underway.
  - 10 water quality projects currently underway.
- ▶ Several projects in various phases of planning, design, and construction.



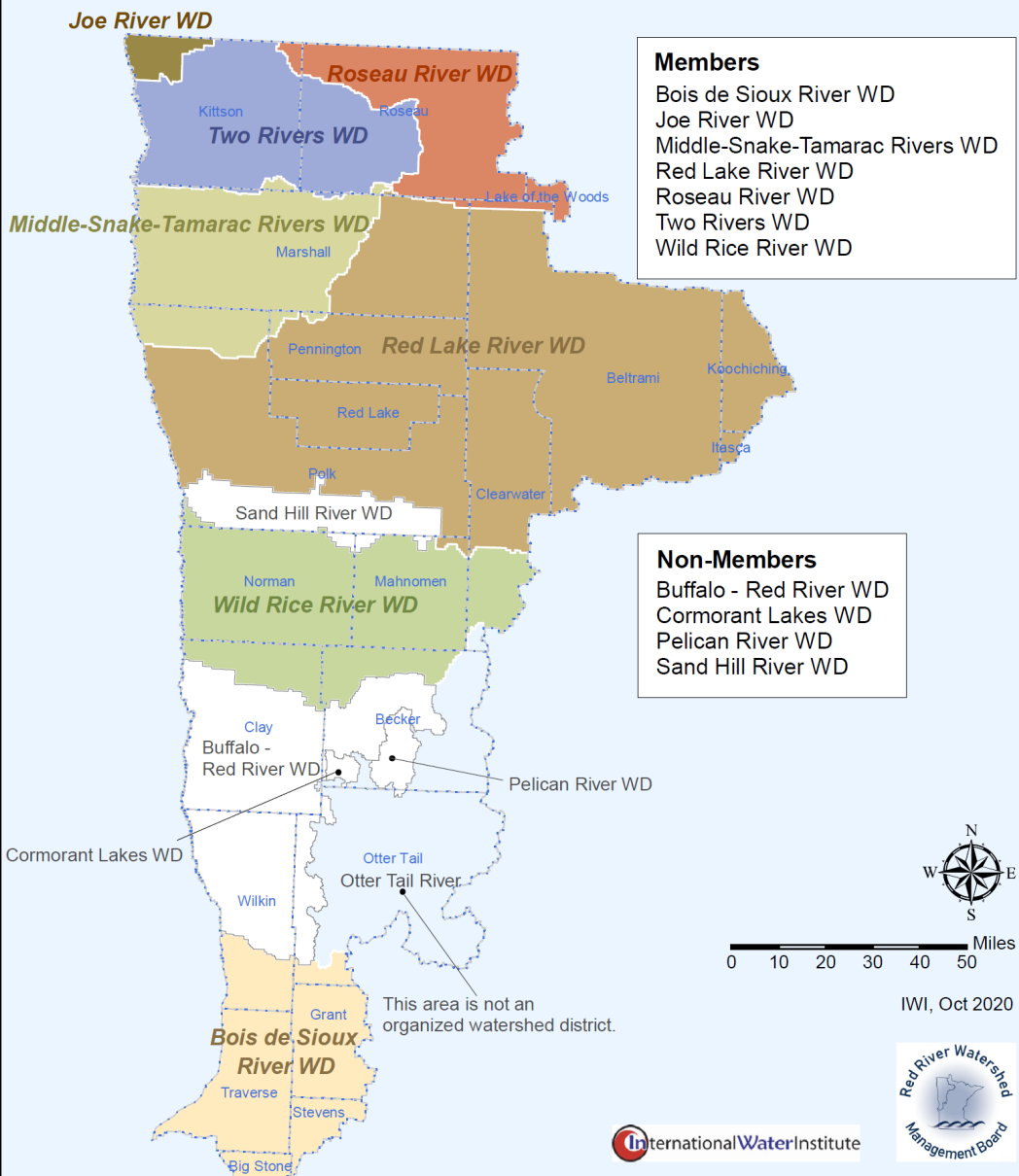
An FDR Project North of  
Crookston, MN - April 2019



# Red River Water Management Board

## Member Watershed Districts

# THANK YOU!



## CONTACT INFORMATION

Robert L. Sip  
 Executive Director  
 Red River Watershed  
 Management Board

Office Address:  
 11 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, Suite B  
 Ada, MN 56510

[rob.sip@rrwmb.org](mailto:rob.sip@rrwmb.org)  
[www.rrwmb.org](http://www.rrwmb.org)  
<https://www.facebook.com/RedRiverWatershedManagementBoard>

218-474-1084 (Cell)  
 218-784-9501 (Office)  
 218-784-9502 (Fax)



## Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

***“Working toward consensus agreements on long-term solutions for flood damage and for protection and enhancement of natural resources.”***

Contact: Andrew Graham, Red River Basin Coordinator, MN Department of Natural Resources, [andrew.graham@state.mn.us](mailto:andrew.graham@state.mn.us), 218-846-8406

### What is the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG)?

The FDRWG develops, promotes and supports collaborative processes to optimize planning, development and operation of Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) and Natural Resource Enhancement (NRE) projects to achieve the goals of the 1998 Red River Basin (RRB) Mediation Agreement.

### What is the 1998 Flood Mediation Agreement?

The Agreement is a result of court ordered mediation in the early 1990's between the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB), its member Watershed Districts (WD), US Army Corps of Engineers (COE), and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) related to flood control projects in Northwest Minnesota. The Agreement was a ***landmark milestone*** for local units of government and state and federal agencies to develop working partnerships on the planning, design, funding and implementation of flood damage reduction projects in the RRB.



*Common flooding in lower Wild Rice River area in NW Minnesota.*

#### **FDR Projects:**

- Prevent loss of life.
- Prevent damages to public infrastructure.
- Reduce damages to farmsteads, agricultural lands.
- Provide outlets for upstream agricultural lands.
- Manage impacts to downstream landowners.
- Protect local community and business investments.
- Reduce public costs for flood recovery.

### What is the FDRWG's Role in FDR Projects?

The FDRWG oversees implementation of the Mediation Agreement and makes funding decisions about:

- Project Team Support and Project Acceleration Grants
- Monitoring Initiatives
- Technical/Modelling Efforts
- State Funding Support for NREs

## Other FDR Project Benefits

### Leveraging other funds and plans:

State investments in the Red River Basin (RRB) of Minnesota are continually leveraged with local and federal resources to construct FDR projects. FDR projects can provide opportunities for WD's to partner with various stakeholders to meet state water retention, water quality and habitat goals and objectives of various local, state, regional, federal and international plans/initiatives.

### FDR projects in the RRB can also incorporate NREs, which provide:

- Better water quality by reducing nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment loading and erosion.
- Protection and enhancement of naturally occurring wetlands.
- Nesting, resting, feeding and brooding habitat areas for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds and fish.
- Storage via restored wetlands to hold and retain water on the landscape for longer periods of time while providing agricultural drainage benefits.
- Enhanced and increased bird and wildlife viewing opportunities.



*Constructed by local WDs in the RRB, FDR projects provide many societal benefits. Upper left: Lake Ida flood control weir dam in the Wild Rice WD. Upper right: water control structure at Little Pine Wildlife Management Area in Red Lake WD; lower left: dam structure forms at Roseau River Wildlife Management Area in Roseau River WD; lower right: Black Lake impoundment construction in the Red Lake WD.*