



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

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Chair Hansen, Rep. Brand and Committee Members

The Lower Minnesota River Watershed district writes this letter in support of the River Watch program (HF 2796) for the Minnesota River.

The Lower Minnesota has a valuable partnership with the Friends of the Minnesota Valley (FMV) in promoting water quality. This funding will allow the FMV to continue and expand the existing water quality and watershed monitoring river watch activities in schools in the Minnesota River Valley.

This River Watch works directly with teachers and students in the 13 major watershed districts that comprise the Minnesota River program works with high school science classes to collect water quality data across the Minnesota River Basin. The data collected by the students is submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The program not only gives these students the opportunity to get outside and monitor the environment but it offers valuable information to the MPCA by allowing them to monitor the health of less studied waterways.

This particular River Watch program has four goals:

- **Knowledge:** Develop an understanding of the factors affecting water quality, in general, and the Minnesota River Basin, in particular.
- **Practice:** Collect water quality data at field testing sites to assist the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in monitoring the health of understudied waterways in the Minnesota River Basin.
- **Investigation:** Reflect on what the data can tell us about the overall health/quality of the waterway, identifying issues facing the water; as well as solutions to reduce pollutants.
- **Stewardship/Community:** Foster a sense of responsibility towards improving the health of the local water resources we all rely on for our well-being and survival.

On behalf of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District, we appreciate this hearing and your support. Linda Loomis Executive Director

Linda Loomis
Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District