

Subject Minnesota River Basin

Authors Torkelson

Analyst Janelle Taylor

Date February 28, 2020

## Overview

This bill establishes the Minnesota River Basin water quality and storage program to provide financial assistance to local units of government in the basin for projects that control water volume and rates and appropriates an unspecified amount of money for the program.

## Summary

Section	Description
---------	-------------

1	<b>Minnesota River Basin water quality and storage program.</b>
---	---

**Subd. 1. Definitions.** Defines “board” and “local units of government” for purposes of the program.

**Subd. 2. Establishment.** Requires the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to establish a program to provide financial assistance to local units of government in the Minnesota River Basin to control water volume and rates in order to protect infrastructure and improve water quality and other benefits.

**Subd. 3. Financial assistance.** Allows BWSR to provide financial assistance to cover the costs of water storage projects and other water quality practices consistent with certain approved water management plans. Allows BWSR to acquire conservation easements necessary to implement a project or practice under the program. Requires BWSR to enter into agreements with local units of government receiving financial assistance that specify the terms for state and local cooperation, financial arrangements for construction, and assurances for the maintenance of any structures.

**Subd. 4. Local match.** Requires a local match and allows the match to be adjusted if federal funds are available for the project.

**Subd. 5. Technical assistance.** Allows BWSR to employ or contract with an engineer or hydrologist to work on program implementation. Requires BWSR to provide assistance to local units of government, review and analyze the projects,

Section	Description
---------	-------------

and evaluate their effectiveness. Requires BWSR to cooperate with the commissioner of natural resources, the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and other agencies to analyze hydrological and engineering information of proposed sites.

**Subd. 6. Requirements.** Requires a local unit of government applying for assistance under the program to provide a copy of a resolution or other documentation of the local unit of government's support for the project and specifies the requirements for the resolution/documentation. Also requires the local unit of government to evaluate the benefits expected upon completion of the project and submit them to BWSR prior to the final project design.

**Subd. 7. Interstate cooperation.** Allows BWSR to enter into or approve interstate agreements to accomplish projects.

**Subd. 8. Federal aid availability.** Requires BWSR to regularly complete an analysis of federal funds and programs available to supplement or complement local and state efforts under the program.

**Subd. 9. Report.** Requires BWSR to submit a report to the legislature every two years, beginning January 15, 2023, evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

2 **Appropriation.**

Appropriates an unspecified amount in fiscal year 2021 from the general fund to BWSR for purposes of the Minnesota River Basin water quality and storage program.



*Minnesota House Research Department provides nonpartisan legislative, legal, and information services to the Minnesota House of Representatives. This document can be made available in alternative formats.*

[www.house.mn/hrd](http://www.house.mn/hrd) | 651-296-6753 | 600 State Office Building | St. Paul, MN 55155