

Memo

Date: 09/19/2022

To: Sandy Smith, Project Manager Analyst, Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

From: Dusty Van Thuyne, CREP Coordinator, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

RE: ML 2017 RIM Buffers Phase VII Extension Request

The Board of Water and Soil Resources is requesting a 2-year extension to the ML 2017 RIM Buffers Phase VII appropriation. The need for this extension is directly related to changes in CREP applications over the past year.

During the time of the October 2021 amendment, BWSR anticipated consistent CREP applications in 2022 compared with prior years. An extension request was not made at that time due to the expectation of utilizing the remaining landowner payments during the 2022 batching periods. Batching periods were held between April and August 2022. The type and number of applications received during 2022 were less than anticipated. Because of this, it is necessary to request a 2-year extension to continue funding CREP applications that provide expanded habitat along riparian buffer areas.

RIM Buffers leverages federal funds through the MN CREP partnership and pairs the Clean Water Fund and the Outdoor Heritage Fund to expand basic water quality buffers into high quality wildlife habitat. Outdoor Heritage Funds will double the size of Clean Water Fund easements to provide additional wildlife benefits, enhancing the easement's value by creating a multi-benefit habitat-oriented corridor from a from a water quality easement.

The 2-year extension is needed to accept CREP applications and have an executed easement agreement for funded applications in place by 6/30/2025.