

Restoration and Enhancement
Delivery on Private Lands
Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council
Monday, January 26, 2009

Kevin Lines
Board of Water and Soil Resources

LOHC is recommending OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND appropriations to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife.

- Restore: to bring a habitat back to a former state of sustaining fish, game or wildlife.
- Protect: to maintain the ability of habitat to sustain fish, game or wildlife.
- Enhance: to increase the ability of habitat to sustain and improve fish, game or wildlife in an ecologically sound manner.

Conservation Delivery to Private Lands

- The landowner is the key-willing landowners
- Voluntary programs and funding available
- Professional/technical expertise coordinated.
- Delivered locally
- Conservation must be competitive with other land-use choices
- Common goals must be met for both landowner and conservation

USDA Federal Farm Programs

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Continuous CRP
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (state-local-federal partnership)
- State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

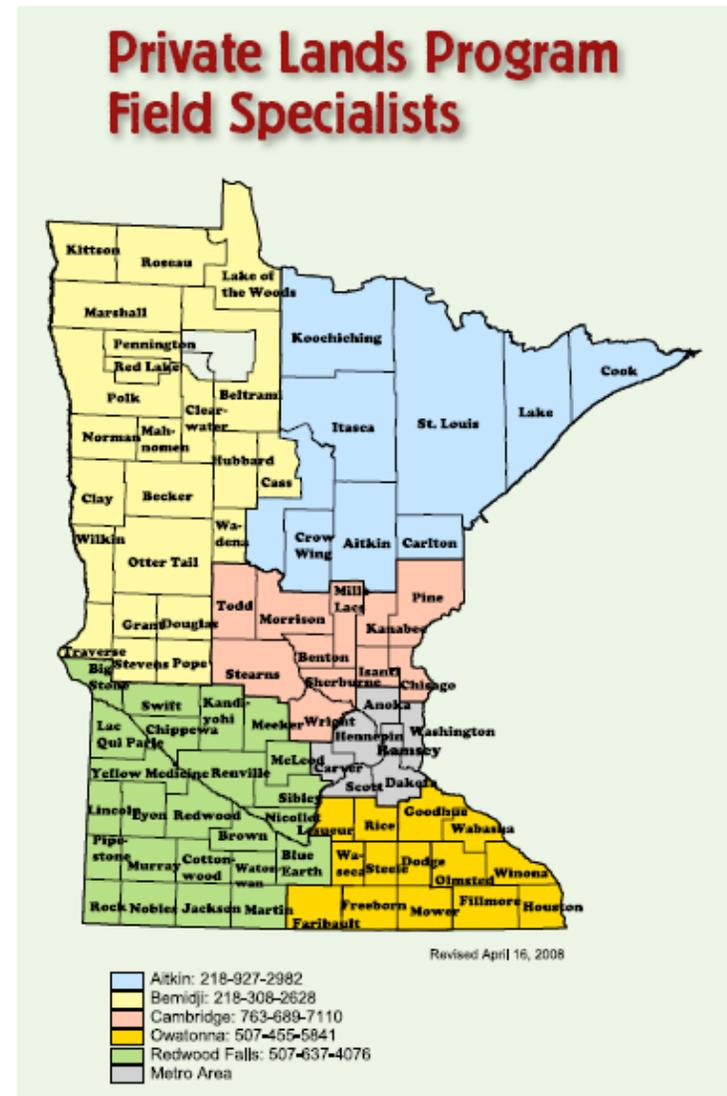
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFW)

- Provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners and tribes who are willing to work on a voluntary basis to help meet the habitat needs of Federal Trust Species.
- Participating landowners enroll in a 10-to-20-year easement
- 10 full-time staff in place to assist landowners with habitat restoration projects
- Average of 2,000 acres of wetland restorations per year and 5,000 acres of upland restoration per year

Minnesota DNR

- Private Lands Program
- Roadsides for Wildlife Program
- Forest Stewardship Program
- Working Lands Initiative Partnership



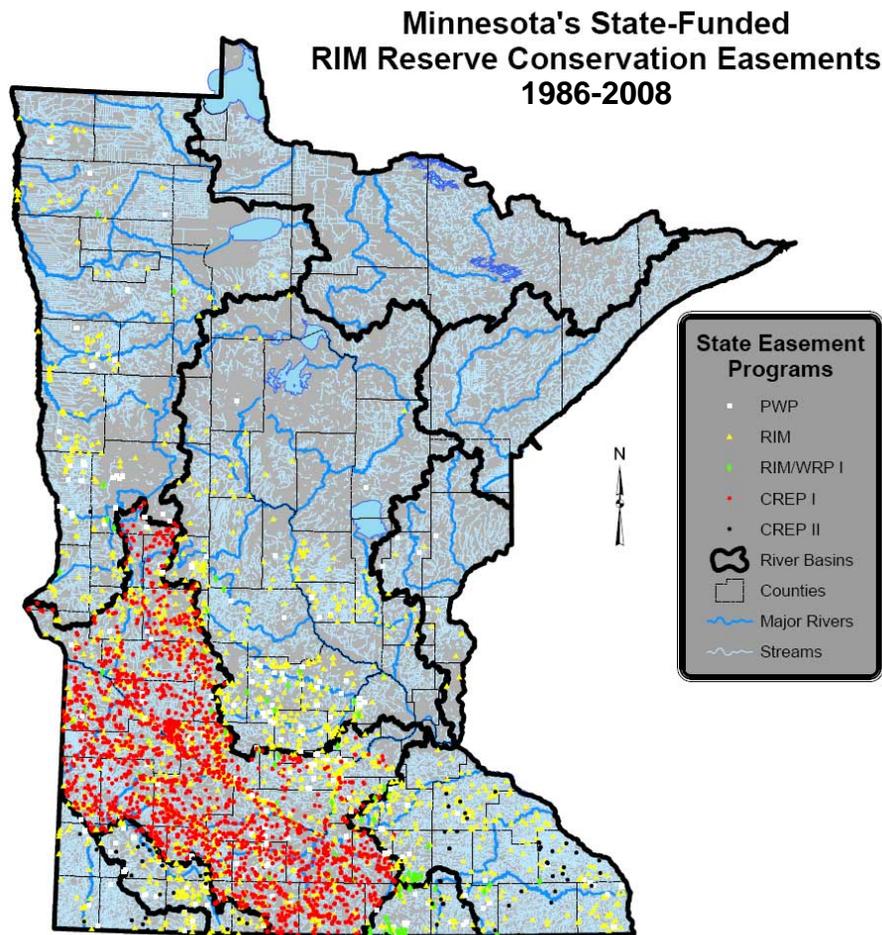
Board of Water and Soil Resources

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve, the state's largest private lands conservation easement program, is delivered locally by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).

The program provides the following benefits:

- Retires environmentally sensitive land
- Protects and improves water quality
- Reduces soil erosion
- Enhances fish and wildlife habitat
- Sequesters carbon
- Biofuel production potential
- Keeps lands on local tax rolls

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve = 23 years of success



203,000 acres enrolled
in 5,300 conservation
easements

\$250 million in federal
funds have been
leveraged in last 10
years

Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD's)

- 91 SWCD's located in all 87 counties.
- Usually co-located in USDA service centers with FSA and NRCS.
- Private lands focus, SWCD's provide soil and water conservation services to owners of private lands.
- SWCD's address local needs by servicing as an efficient and effective delivery provider of state programs.

BWSR's successful delivery system

State dollars to BWSR for RIM Reserve

**Grants to SWCDs =
"CONTRACTS FOR
SERVICES"**

SWCDs agree to:
Promote conservation programs to landowners,
provide technical services to install and maintain
best management practices

**Payments to
landowners:**

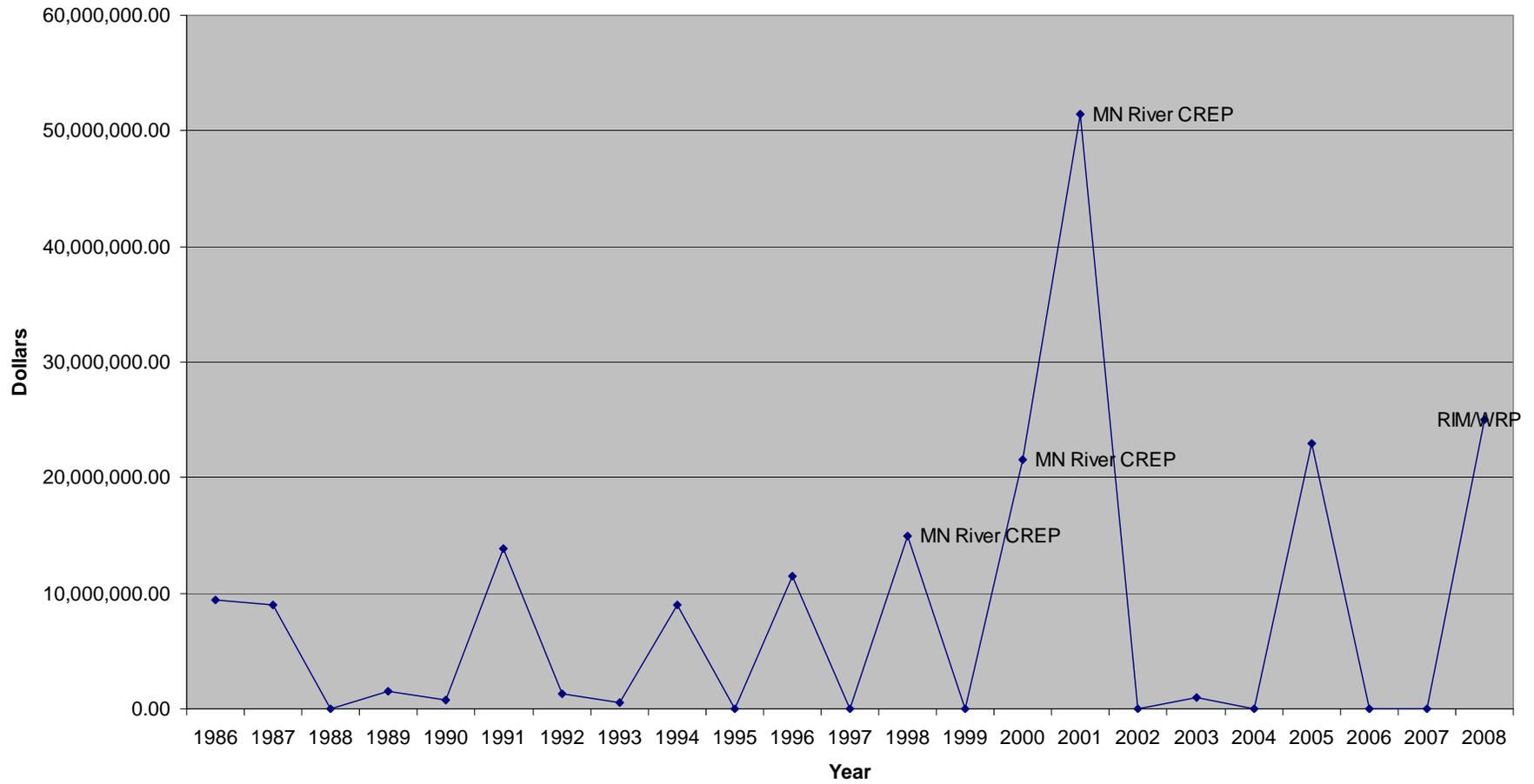
- Easement payment to retire land
- Cost-Share to establish native vegetation

**Additional RIM
dollars go to:**

- Project contractors
- Native seed vendors

Outcomes:
Improved water quality, carbon sequestration, flood damage reduction, enhanced wildlife habitat, and rural economic development

HISTORY OF RIM RESERVE BONDING FUNDING



Successful Partnership Examples

- Minnesota River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- RIM-WRP Wetland Restoration Partnership
- Farm Bill Assistance Partnership
- Working Lands Initiative

Restoration and Enhancement Delivery Capacity

- Present programs and existing delivery systems are at or near capacity at all levels.
- Partnerships have allowed us to continue to be successful.
- Private lands conservation is delivered locally, must increase local capacity for the next 25 years and beyond!
- Cooperative Agreements and grants with partners.
- Contracts with private vendors.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Use OHF to optimize/maximize Federal Farm Bill Conservation Provisions in Minnesota during the life of the Farm Bill.
- Use OHF to grow/leverage more dollars for conservation in MN.
- Inconsistent state funding.
- Target high priority expiring CRP contracts.
- Target high priority expiring RIM Reserve limited duration easements.

Private Lands = Public Benefits

Any Questions?

Thank you.