



Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet



2012-2013 BIENNIAL BUDGET FACT SHEET Maintain Water Levels for Recreation Expenditures: \$500,000 FY 2012 / \$500,000 FY 2013 (Natural Resources Fund – Water Recreation Account)

It is needed because

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains a network of water level control structures, dams, lake gages, and stream flow gages and provides technical assistance to local units of government to improve the quality of Minnesota's lakes and rivers, which are critical to maintaining both high-quality habitat and recreational opportunities throughout the state.

Water level control structures and dams require periodic maintenance, such as structural repairs, to maintain lake levels and stream flows needed to support water-based recreation and protect habitat for fish and wildlife. Lake and stream flow monitoring provide data used for recreational purposes and resource management. Technical assistance to counties and communities is needed to protect aquatic habitat, water quality, and scenic values, which support high quality recreational experiences.

Major program elements

Funding from the water recreation account (WRA) would be used to increase efforts to maintain water level control structures, protect aquatic habitat, and provide technical support for local units of government on land use issues that affect water recreation.

- Maintain water level control structures on basins used for recreation;
- Support the lake level and stream flow monitoring networks and make near real time data available for recreational users and resource managers;
- Support habitat protection work; and
- Provide technical assistance to local units of government on land use issues that will protect and improve water recreation and scenic values on lakes and rivers.

Priority-setting

- An inventory of water level control structures that require maintenance will be used to determine priorities for maintenance work.
- Lake level and stream flow monitoring priorities are determined by resource management needs, flood risk, TMDL work plans, and interest from citizens that read lake gages and report the data.
- Priorities for technical support on habitat projects and land and water use issues are determined at the local level.

Project locations

Project locations are statewide.

Key measures and outcomes

- Complete inspections and maintenance work on 5-10 water level control structures each year;
- Maintain a network of 1,000 lake gages and 180 stream flow gages and make data available for recreational users and resource managers; and
- Provide technical assistance and review 20-25 habitat projects and 25-50 land use proposals annually.

Financial Implications (if appropriate)

This proposal would increase support from the water recreation account for water management programs:

- Providing \$200,000 for dam maintenance and water level monitoring; and
- Providing \$300,000 for habitat protection and technical assistance.

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