



MRBI grant approved for Cedar River Watershed District

Full funding request for 2011 approved by federal government conservation work

AUSTIN, Minn. – Tuesday, Nov. 30 – Cedar River Watershed District officials will get fully funded for their 2011 request under the federal government's Mississippi River Basin Initiative program for conservation projects.

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service announced \$43 million in funding for 41 watersheds in 12 states aimed at controlling nutrient runoff from agricultural land.

Ten projects in Minnesota will get a share of the funding, including the Cedar River Watershed District, which partnered with the Mower County Soil & Water Conservation District to get \$335,000 in federal grants for 2011 work.

The CRWD work is focused on a small priority subwatershed north of Austin and will include cost-sharing conservation projects as well as wetland restoration.

Both types of projects will help with the CRWD's top priorities of flood reduction and water quality improvement.

In June, the CRWD and Mower SWCD received approval of their joint request for \$1.7 million in federal funding over five years for the MRBI program. The \$335,000 grant in 2011 is part of that amount but just was verified for its funding level on Monday by federal officials.

The CRWD's project area is 66,058 acres that includes the Cedar River Watershed District's upper end that encompasses Mower, Steele, Freeborn and Dodge counties.

MRBI funding will help landowners and producers in the Cedar River basin to voluntarily implement conservation and management practices that prevent, control and trap nutrient runoff from farm land.

Total project costs in the CRWD program's five-year period is a little more than \$2.6 million, with \$1.7 million of that coming from the USDA. The program started in July.

Who: Cedar River Watershed District.

What: Had its federal grant request for 2011 – \$335,000 – fully funded under the Mississippi River Basin Initiative program through the USDA.

Where: For a small subwatershed in the Cedar River watershed's upper area.

When: For conservation work in 2011.

Why: To control nutrient runoff from agricultural land, improving water quality and aiding in flood reduction.

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