

# Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on September 9, 2025

## M.L. 2022 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2025

**Project Title:** Rural and Farmstead Ring Levees

**Project Manager:** Bethany Bethke

**Affiliation:** MN DNR - Ecological and Water Resources Division

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**Website:** <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ewr/index.html>

**Funding Source:**

**Fiscal Year:**

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 10g

**Appropriation Amount:** \$360,000

**Amount Spent:** \$241,746

**Amount Remaining:** \$118,254

### Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

Four rural ring levees were constructed in the Red River Basin, protecting homes and infrastructure from flooding. By preventing contaminants from entering water sources, the project helps safeguard Minnesota's water quality and natural ecosystems, enhancing resilience and preserving land, wildlife habitat, and rural drinking water supplies.

### Overall Project Outcome and Results

The Red River Valley contains prime agricultural land on a flat landscape that drains north to Canada. This productive area is vulnerable to recurring flood damages. Since the 1970s State, local, and federal agencies in the Red River Basin have funded projects to protect cities, towns, and public infrastructure. This effort has also included small-scale matching grants to protect privately owned farmsteads, rural homes, and businesses out in the countryside. These small-scale, site-by-site projects use ring levees.

Ring levees are earthen embankments with an impervious core, built up four to six feet above the ground surface with gently sloping sides. They surround the farmstead or other site identified for protection. These levees are fundamentally aimed at protecting the built environment, rather than natural resources. However, protecting rural infrastructure does have natural resource benefits.

By preventing floodwater from washing through farmsteads, we prevent the dissemination of potential contaminants, including fuels, fertilizers, agricultural chemicals, greases, solvents, and other substances needed for equipment maintenance. Protecting sites containing those substances from flooding reduces the risk of such materials from being mobilized by floodwaters and entering local streams, lakes, and wetlands.

This project built levees around four rural farmstead sites, protecting the built infrastructure from damage and the contamination of natural resources. Additionally, the levees were seeded with pollinator-friendly plants to create habitat, providing an additional natural resource enhancement. The levees are located in Agder, Rocksbury, Fairfax, and Terrebonne Townships. The levees enclose approximately 12.7, 4.7, 6, and 5.5 acres, respectively. The levees measure approximately 3,000, 1,930, 1,150, and 1,950 linear feet long, respectively. The properties had all experienced flood damage in the past and will not be protected from future floodwater.

### **Project Results Use and Dissemination**

A project flyer was created in 2023, as well as an MNDNR webpage, advertising the project and soliciting applications. The project was featured in a presentation at the 2024 Joint Annual Red River Watershed Management Board and Flood Damage Reduction Work Group conference. Finally, the completed ring dikes were featured in a 2024 article in the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group's newsletter, Currents. These levees will stand for decades to come and serve as an advertisement for what can be accomplished with funding through the ENTRF.



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Final Report

### General Information

**Date:** September 29, 2025

**ID Number:** 2022-301

**Staff Lead:** Tiffany Schaufler

**Project Title:** Rural and Farmstead Ring Levees

**Project Budget:** \$360,000

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Bethany Bethke

**Organization:** MN DNR - Ecological and Water Resources Division

**Office Telephone:** (218) 820-6977

**Email:** Bethany.Bethke@state.mn.us

**Web Address:** <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ewr/index.html>

### Project Reporting

**Final Report Approved:** September 9, 2025

**Reporting Status:** Project Completed

**Date of Last Action:** September 9, 2025

**Project Completion:** June 30, 2025

### Legal Information

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 10g

**Appropriation Language:** \$360,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for grants to assist in constructing rural and farmstead ring levees for flood protection in the Red River watershed. A grant may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of the project.

**Appropriation End Date:** June 30, 2025

## Narrative

**Project Summary:** Pass-through grants to watershed districts and/or other local governments for design and construction of rural and farmstead ring levees within the Red River watershed (a.k.a. Basin).

**Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.**

High-water conditions caused by floods in the Red River Basin can damage structures and equipment and disrupt operations at farms, rural businesses and residences. Following the devastating Red River flood in 1997, the Legislature appropriated funding to construct rural ring levees to address this problem in conjunction with other programs. Appropriations were made in most years from 1997 through 2015, enabling construction of nearly 300 farmstead ring levees in Minnesota's portion of the Red River Basin. DNR partnered with the Red River Watershed Management Board and local watershed districts in this effort. As a result many of the most vulnerable farmsteads have received assistance and now have ring levees in place. The latest funding was appropriated in 2015 and awarded through FY2020. The new \$360,000 appropriation approved in the 2022 legislative session is the first one since then. Landowners working with their watershed districts continue to identify one to three sites per year needing protection with ring levees.

**What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.**

Constructing low, earthen levees around rural homes, equipment sheds, grain storage bins and other structures can avoid damages and reduce flood costs borne by landowners and farmers. The project will award funds on a site-by-site basis to construct protective levees at individual sites. Levees are typically on the order of three to six feet tall, and individual projects are expected to protect areas on the order of 1 to 5 acres per site. At a 1:1 matching requirement with non-state funds, the ENRTF funding is expected to enable levee construction at approximately six to nine sites. The actual number of sites will depend on site-specific conditions at local project sites identified over the course of the grant period, and inflationary trends affecting the costs of design and construction over that period. The number of sites could increase if federal funding (e.g. USDA NRCS) becomes available as a matching source during the grant period.

**What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?**

This funding directed by Legislative action will reduce the impact of flooding on local farm owners, operators and residents at multiple sites across the Red River Basin. The primary benefit to natural resources is that ring levees prevent the uncontrolled mobilization of fuels and chemicals stored on farm properties during floods, keeping them from entering nearby wetlands, lakes and watercourses where they would degrade water quality and could harm fish, wildlife, macroinvertebrates or other aquatic organisms.

## Project Location

**What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?**

Watershed(s): Red Lake River, Red River of the North - Grand Marais Creek, Red River of the North - Marsh River, Red River of the North - Tamarac River, Red River of the North - Sandhill River, Otter Tail River, Mustinka River, Bois de Sioux River, Roseau River, Thief River, Two Rivers, Upper Red River of the North, Wild Rice River, Buffalo River, Snake River,

**What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?**

Watershed(s): Red Lake River, Red River of the North - Grand Marais Creek, Red River of the North - Marsh River, Red River of the North - Tamarac River, Red River of the North - Sandhill River, Bois de Sioux River, Buffalo River, Clearwater River, Mustinka River, Otter Tail River, Roseau River, Snake River, Thief River, Two Rivers, Upper Red River of the North, Wild Rice River,

**When will the work impact occur?**

In the Future

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Outreach from the DNR and RRWMB to local government partners. Outreach from local government partners to local landowners.

**Activity Budget:** \$1

**Activity Description:**

DNR and RRWMB staff will communicate with local governments and tribes across the Red River Basin regarding availability of funding for ring-levee projects at rural and farmstead properties. The primary focus will be communication with the nine watershed districts active in flood resiliency efforts across the basin, as they have good local networks as well as the appropriate administrative and technical expertise for ring-levee projects. DNR and RRWMB staff will also communicate with the 18 counties, 2 tribes and all soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) in the Red River Basin. This activity will be provided by the DNR and RRWMB as an in-kind contribution without using ENRTF funds.

Staff from the DNR and RRWMB will also request that the local partners mentioned above extend the outreach effort to landowners at the local level via established communication channels. Local partners participating in this activity can perform outreach in the course of their normal operations, and this is not expected to require ENRTF funds. DNR will request the watershed districts publish/release annual notices to their local publics over the three-year period of this project. The goal will be to identify at least 6 to 9 viable levee projects.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
CY 2023 Outreach - all WDs, SWCDs, counties, and tribes in Red River Basin contacted	April 30, 2023
CY 2024 Outreach (same as above)	March 31, 2024
CY 2025 Outreach (same as above)	February 28, 2025

### Activity 2: Evaluation of Project Applications, Contracting and Grant Administration

**Activity Budget:** \$1

**Activity Description:**

As local government partners identify candidate sites for ring levees within their jurisdictions, the DNR and RRWMB will evaluate the sites and select those suitable to receive grant awards. For each local government with at least one levee site selected, the DNR will prepare a grant agreement to fund design and construction at the selected site(s). The DNR will then administer the suite of grant agreements with the local governments through completion of the approved ring levees. The exact pace and number of grants and projects will depend on the number of eligible sites identified by the local government partners in each of the three years for this project. We anticipate at least six to nine applications will be evaluated with grants awarded. This activity will be performed with in-kind and/or matching funds and will not use ENRTF funds.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
CY 2023 Evaluations, Contracting and Grant Administration - at least 2 proposals evaluated/awarded	December 31, 2023
CY2024 Evaluations, Contracting and Grant Administration - 3 to 5 additional proposals evaluated/awarded	December 31, 2024
CY 2025 Evaluations, Contracting and Grant Administration - 1 to 2 additional proposals evaluated/awarded	June 30, 2025

### Activity 3: Ring Levee Design and Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$359,998

**Activity Description:**

Local partners will contract for design and construction of ring levees at sites approved under Activity 2. Ring levees are constructed from locally sourced, low permeability soil typically excavated from adjacent farmland that is compacted to be relatively impermeable to flood water. Ring levees are typically raised three to six feet above natural grade, are from 20 to 40 feet wide at the base with sloped sides, and fully enclose the protected area. Farm drives are raised to go over the levees. Permanent vegetation such as turf that can be mowed regularly is established on the levees to prevent erosion and structural deterioration while enabling visual inspection.

Local partners will develop and oversee contracts with landowners, engineering firms and construction contractors using a combination of in-kind services, local funds and ENRTF funding. For purposes of this work plan, it is assumed that the ENRTF funding will be disbursed in equal amounts over the three-year period for this project. Actual disbursements may be higher in some years than others, based on the pace of site-by-site identifications and approvals in each year. We anticipate at least six to nine levees can be constructed with the state funding plus matching funds.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
CY 2023 Design and Construction - at least 2 levees completed	December 31, 2023
CY 2024 Design and Construction - 3 to 5 additional levees completed	December 31, 2024
CY 2025 Design and Construction - 1 to 2 additional levees completed	June 30, 2025

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Rob Sip	Red River Watershed Management Board	Collaborate with the DNR in soliciting and evaluating applications from local governments for ring levee funding. This will include outreach to local governments and assigning the RRWMB Technical Advisory Committee to review site-specific applications for ring levee projects. Continues long history of successful collaboration on ring levees in the basin.	No
Administrators	Red River Basin Watershed Districts (9 WDs)	Outreach to landowners; receive and administer site-specific funding; contract for design and construction; oversee site-by-site construction of ring levees in their watersheds.	Yes
County engineers	Counties in Red River Basin	Outreach to landowners, receive and administer site-specific funding, contract for design and construction; oversee site-by-site construction of ring levees in their jurisdictions.	Yes
Managers & staff	Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the Red River Basin	Outreach to landowners. Facilitate services provided by the DNR and its partners.	No
TBD	White Earth Nation and Red Lakes Nation	Outreach to landowners, receive and administer site specific funding, contract for design and construction, oversee site-by-site construction of ring levees in its jurisdiction	Yes

## Dissemination

**Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.**

An overview of the ring levees funded by this grant will be provided at the annual joint conference sponsored by the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG) and the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB). The event is typically held in late winter each year. The FDRWG's newly developed newsletter (launched Fall 2022) will also be used to inform stakeholders and the public in the Red River Basin about ring levees completed.

The DNR, RRWMB and FDRWG will acknowledge the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) as the source of project funding at all formal presentations and in printed or on-line fact sheets, newsletters, reports or formal releases to the news media or social media covering project activities. This will include either use of the trust fund logo or standard attribution language provided, or both.

## Long-Term Implementation and Funding

**Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?**

The results of this project will derive entirely from construction of the ring levees. The design life of the levees will be on the order of fifty years. Upon completion of each ring levee, ongoing protection of property, structures, farm implements and commodities from flooding are anticipated to continue during that period, with the landowners having sole responsibility for post-construction maintenance and/or repair. Neither the DNR nor its local government partners will have any ongoing responsibilities after the levees have been constructed and approved.





## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
<b>Personnel</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
<b>Contracts and Services</b>										
Local government partners	Subaward	Design and construction of 6 to 9 ring levees at approved sites				0		\$360,000	\$241,746	\$118,254
							Sub Total	\$360,000	\$241,746	\$118,254
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>										
							Sub Total	-	-	-

Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	\$360,000	\$241,746	\$118,254

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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## Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
<b>State</b>						
In-Kind	Staff time, DNR EWR Division, Red River Basin Coordinator	Coordination of Activity 1; contracting & grant administration in Activity 2	Secured	\$15,000	\$15,000	-
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Non-State</b>						
In-Kind	Red River Watershed Management Board - Executive Director and Staff	Participation in outreach efforts. Participation in overall project coordination.	Secured	\$10,000	\$1,275	\$8,725
In-Kind	RRWMB - Technical Advisory Committee	Review of local-government proposals for ring-levee construction	Potential	\$15,000	-	\$15,000
In-Kind	Local governments	Local government participation in outreach. Direct activity in contracting, oversight of site-by-site construction.	Potential	\$30,000	\$2,160	\$27,840
Cash	Matching funds from landowners, local governments, RRWMB, tribal/federal and/or other non-state sources	Matching funds to pay for contracted design and construction of ring levees	Potential	\$360,000	\$241,746	\$118,254
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$415,000</b>	<b>\$245,181</b>	<b>\$169,819</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$430,000</b>	<b>\$260,181</b>	<b>\$169,819</b>

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [1942ff52-3d4.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Maps displaying the Red River Basin in Minnesota, with watershed district and county boundaries. Two photographs showing existing ring levees protecting farmsteads during a flood in the Red River Basin....

### Supplemental Attachments

#### *Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other*

Title	File
Background check certification	<a href="#">8c4def77-fea.pdf</a>
RRWMB Confirmation of Participation	<a href="#">fadebfa5-a91.pdf</a>
FHM Presentation, RRWMB/FDRWG Conference 3/2024	<a href="#">7f65428b-371.pptx</a>
Beich farmstead - pre-project photos	<a href="#">c18231cb-a99.pdf</a>
Beich farmstead - post-project photos	<a href="#">802de946-c08.docx</a>
Fladeland farmstead - post-project photos	<a href="#">57403a66-53c.docx</a>
Beich site application with maps etc.	<a href="#">c17f1ed3-39f.pdf</a>
Fladeland site application, with maps etc.	<a href="#">ef5ccf5b-4a3.pdf</a>
Cardinal site application, with maps, etc.	<a href="#">297908f9-e6b.pdf</a>
Payment site application, with maps, etc.	<a href="#">0afdb163-942.pdf</a>
Cardinal site - post project photos	<a href="#">9a051a21-b09.docx</a>
Payment site - post project photos	<a href="#">7f37a52c-568.docx</a>
Payment site - photo of restored field entry	<a href="#">e34efb61-aea.pdf</a>
FDRWG Currents Newsletter - Nov. 2024	<a href="#">07e8ea64-4b2.docx</a>
Table listing all ring levee sites & related information	<a href="#">8d3a7bb8-fd1.xlsx</a>
Map of Project Locations	<a href="#">d5148382-47e.pdf</a>
MNDNR Website Screenshot	<a href="#">6b406978-d4b.docx</a>

### Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

#### *Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage*

Not applicable. This grant was generated by a specific action by the Legislature and there was no prior proposal.

## Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

**Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?**

N/A

**Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?**

N/A

**Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?**

No

**Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?**

N/A

**Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?**

N/A

**Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?**

No

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**

No

**Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements**

N/A

## Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Explanation & justification for Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Andrew Graham (andrew.graham@state.mn.us) New Manager: Bethany Bethke (Bethany.Bethke@state.mn.us)	Previous project manager is retiring	May 13, 2025	Yes	May 15, 2025



# Status Update Reporting

## Final Status Update August 14, 2025

**Date Submitted:** July 17, 2025

**Date Approved:** August 12, 2025

### Overall Update

This grant funded the construction of four farmstead ring levees, which are achieving the expected outcomes of protecting the farmsteads from flooding while providing natural resource benefits by preventing floodwaters from mobilizing fuels and chemicals during flood events. In addition, all four ring levees included the planting of seed mixes designed to provide habitat for pollinators along the levee embankments as planned.

Since the March 2025 update, no new projects have been built. Local partners were unable to identify any additional sites where ring levees could be constructed by the grant's end date.

### Activity 1

This activity was previously marked as complete, and there is no new progress to report since the March 2025 update. Before the last update, many outreach activities were conducted to publicize the availability of funding for ring levee construction. A webpage was created on the MN DNR website, and the availability of the grant funds was shared with watershed district administrators through individual communication and announcements at monthly meetings of the Red River Watershed Management Board and quarterly meetings of the Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup. The grant was also publicized through the 2023 and 2024 annual joint meeting of the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, which draws over 90 attendees, including local government staff and landowners.

This activity was funded with in-kind and matching funds and did not use ENTRF funds.

*(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)*

### Activity 2

No new sites were submitted as candidates for ring levees since the March 2025 status update. No new grant agreements to fund design and construction at the selected sites were needed, and no evaluation or administration for this activity has been conducted since the last status report.

During the grant period, five sites were evaluated for the grant award. However, one site applicant withdrew from the process prior to funding. For the other four sites, the Department of Natural Resources and Red River Watershed Management Board successfully prepared and administered grant agreements with local governments through the completion of the ring levees. In-kind and matching funds supported this activity, and no ENTRF funds were used.

*(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)*

### Activity 3

No new ring levee sites were identified since the last status update in March 2025, and therefore, no new design and construction were contracted.

Six to nine levees were anticipated to be constructed with the state funding plus matching funds; however, a total of only four sites were identified by local partners during the grant period. A fifth site application was received but later withdrawn.

During the grant period, four ring levees were designed and constructed around farmsteads, with two completed in 2023 and two more completed in 2024. The completion of these levees has resulted in the prevention of flood damage and the distribution of pollutants such as fuel and chemicals during flood events at these four farmsteads. Additionally, the topsoil on the levees was planted with pollinator seed mixes to provide habitat for beneficial insects.

This activity was funded by ENTRF and used approximately 70% (\$241,746) of the total awarded grant for the project.

The remaining 30% (\$118,245) remains unspent.  
*(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)*

**Dissemination**

No new dissemination activities were conducted for this grant since the last update in March 2025. This was primarily because there would not be time to identify new sites and contract the design and construction of ring levees for newly initiated sites after March 2025.

During the grant period the levees funded by this grant were publicized, with credit to ENTRF. The projects were included in a presentations at the 2023 and 2024 annual joint conference of the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, and highlighted in an article in the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group's Currents newsletter.

# Status Update Reporting

## Status Update March 1, 2025

**Date Submitted:** March 20, 2025

**Date Approved:** April 29, 2025

### Overall Update

Since the September 2024 update, the two farmstead ring levees that were under construction at that time have been fully completed. Four ring levees have been completed since initiation of the project. Local partners have not identified any additional sites where ring levees could be constructed prior to the end date of the grant. Consequently, we consider the project to be complete at this time.

The four ring levees constructed are achieving the expected outcomes of protecting farmsteads from flooding, while providing natural resource benefits by preventing flood waters from mobilizing fuels and chemicals during flood events. In addition, all four of the ring levees included planting of seed mixes providing habitats for pollinators along the levee embankments as planned.

### Activity 1

As of the prior update, all outreach activities to publicize availability of funding for ring-levee construction had been completed. At that time there were indications that additional sites could potentially be identified; however those opportunities did not materialize. After conferring with local watershed districts about the limited construction window for new construction between the Spring flood season in April 2025 and the end of the grant period on June 30, 2025, further outreach was deemed impractical.

*(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)*

### Activity 2

No new applications for ring levees have been submitted since the prior progress report; therefore there have not been any further evaluations. It is unlikely that any new applications will be received prior to the end of the grant period on June 30, 2025. Hence further evaluations are not anticipated.

Final costs from the last two sites (Cardinal and Payment farmsteads) were received in December 2024 and were reviewed and submitted to DNR Accounts Payable for reimbursement. There are no open grant agreements for additional ring levees at this time.

### Activity 3

The Red Lake Watershed District completed construction of ring levees at the Cardinal and Payment farmsteads in fall 2024. Photographs of the two sites are included on the Attachments page.

### Dissemination

An announcement of completion of the latest two ring levees was included in the "FDRWG Currents" newsletter released in November 2024 (attached).

# Status Update Reporting

## Status Update September 1, 2024

**Date Submitted:** September 5, 2024

**Date Approved:** October 22, 2024

### Overall Update

The approved work plan calls for construction of six to nine ring levees, while noting that the actual number would depend on site-specific conditions and inflationary trends. Two ring levees were in 2023 and two additional ring levees are slated for completion by the end of the 2024 construction season. Once those have been completed, we estimate approximately 70% of the grant will have been expended, leaving capacity for one to two additional ring levees. The DNR's Red River Basin Coordinator has been actively communicating to local partners that time is running out to identify, contract and construct one to two additional ring levees prior to expiration of the funding appropriation on June 30, 2025. We are depending on the local partners to identify eligible sites that can use the remaining funding. The four ring levees constructed and pending construction are achieving the expected outcomes of protecting farmsteads from flooding, while providing natural resource benefits by preventing flood waters from mobilizing fuels and chemicals during flood events. In addition, all four of the ring levee designs have included planting of seed mixes that provide habitat for pollinators along the levee embankments.

### Activity 1

The DNR's Red River Basin Coordinator and Flood Hazard Mitigation Program Manager have continued to publicize the opportunity for ring levee funding at monthly meetings of the RRWMB; quarterly meetings of the FDRWG; and the RRWMB/FDRWG Joint Annual Conference held in March 2023. An announcement seeking applications was included in the Spring 2024 issue of the FDRWG newsletter. The Coordinator has also contacted watershed districts (WDs) that have mentioned potential projects, to prompt submittal of applications prior to expiration of program funds. Two WDs have been in contact during the past month with owners of prospective farmstead sites. Full utilization of the available grant funds will depend on whether additional, eligible sites can be identified, contracted and constructed by local project partners before June 30, 2025.

### Activity 2

Final costs from the two initial ring levee sites (Beich and Fladeland farmsteads) were received in July 2024 and have been reviewed and reimbursed.

Initial costs from two additional sites (Cardinal and Payment farmsteads) were received in August 2024, and have been reviewed and submitted to DNR Accounts Payable for reimbursement. (These are counted as "paid" in the budget section of the current progress report.) Due to the delayed construction season in 2024, the Red Lake Watershed District requested an extension of the two grant agreements for these sites, and extensions were prepared and submitted for signature in August 2024.

### Activity 3

The Red Lake Watershed District (RLWD) has refined the ring levee designs and field survey at two sites (Cardinal and Payment farmsteads) that were selected in 2023 and are pending for construction. Construction startup was delayed at the sites due to wet conditions; but the two ring levees are expected to be completed by the end of the 2024 construction season.

### Dissemination

The DNR's Flood Hazard Mitigation Project Manager included a slide on the ring levee funding in a presentation given to

approximately 90 attendees at the Annual Joint Conference of the RRWMB and FDRWG, held in Moorhead in March 2024. A copy of the presentation is attached - Slide No. 8 covers the ring levee funding.

# Status Update Reporting

## Status Update March 1, 2024

**Date Submitted:** March 1, 2024

**Date Approved:** June 18, 2024

### Overall Update

Ring levees were constructed at two farmsteads in summer 2023 in the Red Lake Watershed District. The RRWMB is waiting for final costs from the District before processing a reimbursement request per the grant agreement. Two additional farmstead ring levees, in the same watershed district, have been designed and approved for construction. The construction work is expected to be done during the 2024 field season.

### Activity 1

Since the prior report, the Project Manager has continued alerting watershed districts of the remaining funds available for farmstead ring levees, primarily through announcements at meetings of the RRWMB and FDRWG. This included a meeting co-located with the Prairie Grains Conference in Grand Forks, ND on December 13, 2023.

### Activity 2

Since the prior report, three additional ring levee proposals were reviewed and approved and grant agreements were prepared. Two of them are scheduled for construction during the 2024 field season. The third was withdrawn by the applicant and is not expected to proceed.

### Activity 3

Since the prior report, the first two ring levees have been fully constructed and seeded with pollinator-friendly vegetation. The Project Manager visited both sites in September 2023 to verify completion.

### Dissemination

No activity since the prior update.

Constructed projects will be highlighted at an UPCOMING conference hosted by the RRWMG and FDRWG in mid-March 2024.

# Status Update Reporting

## Status Update September 1, 2023

**Date Submitted:** August 21, 2023

**Date Approved:** October 24, 2023

### Overall Update

Since March 1, 2023 we have received and approved two applications for funds to construct farmstead ring levees. Grant agreements were prepared for both of them, and the grant recipient is nearing completion of constructing these two levees. We have continued to promote the program at regional meetings and we are responding to multiple inquiries that may lead to additional applications.

### Activity 1

Since March 1, 2023 we have continued to communicate about the ring levee funding opportunity with local governments at regional meetings, focusing on watershed districts as planned. Watershed districts, in turn, have been alerting local landowners to the opportunity in the course of their normal communications within their watersheds. Watershed districts have reported they are receiving landowner inquiries, and some of these may lead to site-specific applications for the available funding.

### Activity 2

We developed a scoring rubric to support consistent evaluations of ring levee funding applications. We also established an evaluation panel and held a conference call to review the specifications listed in our previously developed Request for Proposals.

After receiving applications for funding of two ring levees, the evaluation panel held a conference call and scored both of them. Both applications met the program requirements and were approved for funding.

Grant agreements were then prepared and executed for the two ring levee projects. The grant recipient solicited bids and selected contractors for the two projects. As of August 18, 2023, one invoice for one of the two projects has been received and processed.

### Activity 3

One of our local partners (Red Lake Watershed District) has prepared engineering design documents and hired contractors to construct ring levees at two farmstead sites. Progress at the two sites to date includes:

Fladeland site:

- The ring levee core has been constructed and topsoil has been placed over it.
- Culverts have been installed.
- Upcoming activity will include establishing turf to cover the levee,

Beich site:

- The ring levee core has been constructed. The construction contractor is currently working on interior ditching and placing topsoil.
- Culverts have been installed.
- Upcoming activities will include graveling the driveway and establishing turf to cover the levee.

### Dissemination

No activity to date.

# Status Update Reporting

## Status Update March 1, 2023

**Date Submitted:** March 1, 2023

**Date Approved:** March 20, 2023

### Overall Update

After receiving LCCMR approval on 1/24/23, the team produced and released a Request for Proposals together with an application form and a grant contract template. We are currently fielding receive inquiries about the available funding from potential grantees. Further activity will be triggered whenever we receive applications from potential grantees who with to construct rural ring levees.

### Activity 1

Outreach materials have been provided to the nine watershed districts; two tribal nations; and 18 counties (via a single point of contact for NW counties) in the Red River Basin. The Project manager gave a presentation on the available funding at the annual conference of the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG) on Feb. 22, 2023. There were approximately 90 conference attendees present, representing many different organizations active in flood risk management in the Red River Basin and adjoining areas. The Project Manager has requested that watershed districts use their local outreach materials to further alert local landowners of the funding available for rural ring levees.

### Activity 2

A scoring matrix has been developed to evaluate incoming applications, and an evaluation team has been established with representatives from the the MnDNR, Mn Dept. of Agriculture and RRWMB. Further activities (evaluation of applications and contracting with successful applicants) will be triggered when one or more applications for rural ring levee funding are received.

### Activity 3

No activity to date.

### Dissemination

The Project Manager gave a presentation on the available funding at the annual conference of the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG) on Feb. 22, 2023. There were approximately 90 conference attendees present, representing many different organizations active in flood risk management in the Red River Basin and adjoining areas.