



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Flood Risk Management: Red River of the North, Breckenridge, Minnesota



Stage 1 diversion channel – inlet near city of Breckenridge, 11th Street Bridge over the Otter Tail River, looking north.

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Location/Description

Breckenridge is in Wilkin County in western Minnesota, approximately 200 miles northwest of the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, metropolitan area and 55 miles south of Fargo, North Dakota/Moorhead, Minnesota. The Red River of the North and the Bois de Sioux River bound the city on the west. The Otter Tail River flows from the east, bisecting the city. Wahpeton, North Dakota, is located west across the Red River from Breckenridge.

The devastating flood of 1997 in the Red River basin generated a strong determination by all levels of government to implement permanent flood risk management projects for urban communities along the Red River of the North.

Background

Section 205 of the 1948 Flood Control Act, as amended, authorizes construction of small projects for flood risk management; Federal cost is limited to \$7 million. The project at Breckenridge was started under this authority;

however, the Federal portion of the estimated costs significantly exceeded the Federal limit. The project became a specifically authorized project in 2001.

A 2001 Corps feasibility study recommended a high-flow diversion channel north of the Otter Tail River to the Red River and two separable permanent levee reaches that would protect all of Breckenridge. Congress authorized the project in 2001. The project cooperation agreement was executed in August 2002. The Office of Management and Budget cleared the report in April 2007. The project was reauthorized at a higher cost (from \$21 million to \$39.36 million) in the fiscal year 2010 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriation Act.

Status

The project includes a diversion channel and levee work. The diversion channel was completed in June 2005; it is operational and was used for the first time in summer 2005. It has prevented \$133 million in combined damages (Breckenridge and Wahpeton) through 2011. The diversion channel sustained damages in 2011. Design for diversion channel repair began winter 2012 for construction contract award in late 2012.

Construction on Stages 2b1 and 2b2 levees started in 2009 and is complete. Stage 2b3 levee construction began in spring 2010, and is nearly complete. Construction on Stage 2a, the final levee stage, started in late 2010 with completion scheduled for fall 2012.

Authority

The Water Resource Development Act of 2000, as amended

Fiscal

Project costs are shared with the non-Federal sponsor.

Estimated Federal cost	\$29,224,000
Estimated non-Federal cost	\$15,750,000
Total estimated cost	\$44,974,000
Total Federal funding to date	\$29,224,000