



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Red River of the North Basin: Basin-Wide Feasibility Study



The Red River of the North is an international watershed.

Contact

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Location/Description

The Red River of the North basin covers 45,000 square miles and occupies substantial portions of North Dakota, northwestern Minnesota, southern Manitoba and a small portion of northeastern South Dakota. The river flows to the north, bringing water and nutrients to Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba. Flooding and loss of native habitat are significant issues in the Red River basin.

Land use in the basin is primarily agricultural, but several urban centers are located along the Red River main stem and tributaries. While extensive drainage systems have resulted in an extremely rich agricultural area, portions of the basin still support the ecologically abundant prairie-pothole region. Flooding is a major concern for residents in the basin; frequent floods have impacts on urban and rural infrastructure and agricultural production.

The Basin-Wide Watershed Management Planning study integrates several ongoing planning efforts. Study efforts are guided by and build upon International Red River Board and Red River Basin Commission initiatives. Study tasks include collecting basin-wide LiDAR mapping data, refining hydrologic and hydraulic models to be used for project planning and flood forecasting, developing a basin-wide flood storage strategy, and assessing the potential for restoring aquatic ecosystems and improving water quality throughout the basin. Technical assistance is being provided for small communities to investigate flood solutions. The study supports local officials' efforts to set reasonable and attainable flood storage and natural resource enhancement goals that provide both local and regional benefits.

Status

The feasibility cost share agreement was executed on June 4, 2008, with the Minnesota Red River Watershed Management Board and the North Dakota Red River Joint Water Resource District. Phase I LiDAR data collection was completed in 2010. Phase II hydraulic and hydrologic modeling began in 2009. Phase III, involving updating the Red River Basin Decision Information Network (RRBDIN), began in January 2011. The RRBDIN provides floodplain information and management tools to local water resource managers and the public. The Long-Term Flood Solutions Report, part of Phase IV, was completed in December 2011. Additional studies will be used to complete a comprehensive watershed management plan. Phase V will use the information developed in Phases I through IV to identify further Federal feasibility studies.

Authority

The study is authorized by a resolution of the Senate Committee on Public Works, September 30, 1974.

Fiscal

Total study cost is estimated to be \$19 million. Costs are to be shared 50-50 between the Federal Government and non-Federal sponsors, with the sponsors providing their share as work-in-kind.

Federal allocation through 2012 \$5,315,000