



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District

# Information Paper

## Flood Risk Management: Section 205, Red River of the North, Wahpeton, North Dakota



*Stage 1 construction for the Wahpeton project*

### Contact

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### Location/Description

Wahpeton, North Dakota, is in Richland County in eastern North Dakota, approximately 55 miles south of Fargo, North Dakota. The Red River of the North and the Bois de Sioux River bound the city on the east. The confluence of the Otter Tail River with the Red River of the North is located at Wahpeton. The city of Breckenridge, Minnesota, lies east across the Red River of the North from Wahpeton.

The 1997 flood nearly devastated Wahpeton. Only heroic flood fighting kept the city from sustaining significant damages. The 1997 flood generated a strong determination by all levels of government to implement permanent flood risk management projects for existing urban communities along the Red River of the North, including Wahpeton and its sister city, Breckenridge.

### Background

City, State, and Federal governments formed a partnership to leverage funding and expertise. This partnership became official on June 18, 1999, when the parties signed a feasibility cost share agreement and

continued with the signing of a project cooperation agreement.

The feasibility study recommended a permanent levee system to protect the city and a flood easement to keep breakout flood flows from being blocked in the future. Associated recreation features were included.

The Water Resource Development Act of 2007 increased the limit on Federal expenditures from \$7 million to \$12 million for the Wahpeton project.

### Status

Project construction began in 2003 with Stage 1 construction of interior flood control features, which is complete. Construction of Stage 2 started in 2008 and is complete. Construction of Stage 3a started in June 2009 and is scheduled to be complete in fall 2012. Construction on Stage 3b, the final in-town levee reach, started in August 2011, with completion scheduled for fall 2012. A seepage drain for Stage 3b is in design for construction contract award in fall 2012.

This project is closely tied to the Breckenridge specifically-authorized flood risk management project, which 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.

### Authority

Section 205 of the 1948 Flood Control Act, as amended

### Fiscal

Project design and construction costs are to be shared with the non-Federal sponsor; the non-Federal sponsor is responsible for operation and maintenance costs. The State of North Dakota is assisting the city with its financial obligations.

Federal cost	\$12,000,000
Non-Federal cost	\$9,098,000
Total estimated project cost	\$21,098,000
Total Federal funding to date	\$12,000,000