



**U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District**

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Public Affairs

Corps Facts

Breckenridge, Minn.

Flood Reduction Project

July 29, 2004

FS-27

Project Background

The City of Breckenridge, Minn., experienced extreme levels of flooding in 1997 and 2001, resulting in renewed interest in expediting construction of the Breckenridge flood reduction project. In order for the federal government to become involved, a partnership was formed among the city, state and federal governments that combined and leveraged funding and expertise. This partnership resulted in the formulation of a permanent project that is in the interest of the federal government and the city and lead to the signing of a project cooperation agreement on Aug. 15, 2002.

The 1997 flood nearly devastated Breckenridge. Only heroic flood fighting kept the city from sustaining significant damages. Breckenridge is located in Wilkin County, approximately 200 miles north and west of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The Red River of the North and the Bois de Sioux River bound the city on the west. The Ottetail River flows from the east, bisecting the city. The confluence of the Ottetail River with the Red River of the North is located at Breckenridge. Wahpeton, N.D., lies across the Red River from Breckenridge and is concurrently working with the Corps of Engineers on its own flood control project.

Project Description

The project feasibility study identified a feasible flood reduction plan that consists of a high-flow diversion channel located to the north of the Ottetail River and entering into the Red River and two separable permanent levee reaches that would protect all of Breckenridge. The estimated cost for the levees and diversion plan is \$22.2 million. Congress authorized the project consistent with the plans identified in the feasibility report and appropriated construction funding in 2001.

The project is divided into two stages: Stage 1: the Diversion Channel and Stage 2: the Levee work in town. The plans and specifications began in the spring of 2001. The Stage 1 Construction Contract was awarded in May 2003. Stage 2 plans and specifications were initiated in August 2002, as well as the enactment of the project cooperation agreement.

Authority

Section 205 of the 1948 Flood Control Act, as amended, authorizes construction of small projects for flood control and related purposes not specifically authorized by Congress. Projects recommended for construction under Section 205 must be economically justified and limited to a federal cost of \$7 million. However, WRDA 2000 specifically authorized this project, and it transitioned from a small project to a specific project in fiscal year 2001-02.