

# Climate Resiliency: Water Storage and Treatment

## 2023 Proposed Funding

The Minnesota Legislature passed a law in 2021 requiring BWSR to develop a program to provide financial assistance to local government units (LGUs) to control water rates and/or volumes to protect infrastructure, improve water quality and related public benefits, and mitigate climate change impacts. The Legislature appropriated \$2 million in 2021 to develop this program as a pilot, which drew significant interest from LGUs. In 2023, BWSR is requesting an additional **\$17 million** from the general fund to expand our ability to make state funding available to more Minnesota landowners to improve water management across the state.

Last year, over \$800,000 was awarded to local partners for construction of water quality and storage projects. These projects will reduce peak rates in key tributaries and will remove sediment from runoff before it discharges into our lakes and rivers. Another \$1 million will be available through the next application window, which is planned for early 2023. Proposed projects will improve conditions in areas that have flooding, water quality issues, or climate change vulnerabilities.



*Left to right: A water and sediment control basin in crop field is empty in dry conditions but holds water temporarily after heavy rains; landowners pose by construction of storage basin in a Pope County ag field; grass back sediment control basin slows runoff.*

## What is water storage?

Water storage projects are designed and located to slow down or temporarily hold back water from reentering a stream or river. As defined in the statute for this developing program, water storage includes retention structures and basins, soil and substrate infiltration, wetland restoration, creation, or enhancement, channel restoration or enhancement, and floodplain restoration or enhancement.

## Challenges on the landscape

Minnesota is experiencing larger and more frequent and intense rainfall events, resulting in negative impacts to agriculture and infrastructure, significant erosion along riverbanks, and declining water quality.

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