

Executive Summary

The upper Mississippi Headwaters River corridor is located in the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River in North Central Minnesota. It is characterized by the presence of surface water, associated drainage basins and groundwater aquifers, a complex vegetative system and freshwater, wetland and terrestrial wildlife habitat. These abundant resources are strongly influenced by human culture.

In 1980, the eight counties signed a joint-powers agreement to uphold the MHB Management Plan. In 1981 the legislature enabled the Plan with zoning authority through MN Stat. 103F. 361-103.F. 377.

The Plan has been updated in order to comply with the provisions of the Plan as referenced by statute and to address the annexation by municipalities, new technologies, and the increased needs of the region.

The 2002 Plan essentially maintains the same restrictions as the previous plans. Revisions have been subject to meetings of the Citizens Taskforce, Advisory Committee, written comment from the public, e-mail, phone calls, technical advisors, and at least two public hearings in each of the eight counties throughout the years 1998 to 2002.

The MHB endorsed goals to implement the Plan. They are to complement existing water protection efforts in the Upper Mississippi River watershed; to provide a format for partnerships working together for the common good and toward common goals; to encourage stewardship in practices affecting water quality; to provide opportunities for education to diverse peoples and increased information regarding the protection and enhancement of the five MHB values.

MHB's mission is to enhance and protect outstanding and unique natural, scientific, historical, recreational, and cultural values. This applies in the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River from its source at Lake Itasca in Clearwater County to the southerly boundary of Morrison County, Minnesota.

The 2002 MHB Comprehensive Plan is divided into three parts including Administration and Authority, Management Objectives, and Standards. Maps of the MHB Corridor are included in the Appendices.

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