

Buffalo River Restoration at Hawley, MN

Project Proponents: Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Clean Water Land & Legacy Act Amendment, City of Hawley

NRFP Goal(s): 9, 12, 6, 2, 13, 4, and 1

Project Summary: In the 1950s, the Minnesota Department of Transportation straightened parts of the Buffalo River in Hawley during the construction of T.H. No. 10. The straightening increased the channel gradient, causing erosion and bank stability issues in the straightened areas. The bank failures threatened the City's sanitary sewer and a nearby trailer court. In 2009, the DNR, BRRWD, and the City of Hawley came together to discuss options to address the ongoing problems. The solution was to restore the river channel to match its historic alignment, which would result in more channel length and decreased channel grade, reduced channel velocities, and less erosion. With a \$536,000 grant furnished by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council through the DNR Stream Habitat Group, Phase I (north of T.H. No. 10) was started in the fall of 2014 and finished in 2015. Phase I increased the channel length by 2,650 feet, installed 9 rock riffles, installed wood sod benches along all outside banks of the restored channel, and improved Rodeo Drive and a bridge over the River. With a 2015 DNR grant for \$310,000, Phase II (south of T.H. No. 10) is currently under construction with seeding and cleanup to do this spring. Phase II includes restoration of a historic meander, lengthening the channel by approximately 600 feet, six rock riffles, and toe wood sod mats on all outside bends. A future Phase III project will look at improving flood protection for the City of Hawley along the Buffalo River.



Further Information: www.brrwd.org

