



Mississippi Headwaters Board

Crow Wing County Land Service Bldg. - 322 Laurel St. Ste. 34- Brainerd, MN 56401

Web Site: www.mississippiheadwaters.org

2/25/22

Northern Township
445 Town Hall Rd. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

Chairman Jess Frenzel,

The **Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB)** is an eight-county (Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, and Morrison) joint-powers board which was united in 1980 with the signing of the Joint-Powers Agreement (Appendix 5). In 1981, the Minnesota legislature duly authorized MHB to preserve and protect the outstanding and unique natural, scientific, historical, recreational, and cultural values of the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River. (See Minn. Stat. § 103F.361, Subd. (1) and (2); Minn. Stat. § 103F.361-377, Appendix 6.). The MHB's mission is to enhance and protect outstanding and unique natural, scientific, historical, recreational, and cultural values 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. To learn more about our formation and history, please go to <https://www.mississippiheadwaters.org/> and click on the Living History video.

The MHB has learned that Northern Township intends to install sewer lines in a section of Northern Township located near Lake Bemidji. The MHB realizes that this meets a regional planning goal of the communities in the area, and that it will help preserve and protect a Headwaters Lake of the MHB. Beltrami county will show support for this project in a formal resolution, and the Mississippi Headwaters Board voted at their 2/25/22 board meeting to provide this letter of support for the project.

Thank you for your work on this legislation and helping protect a vital Headwaters Lake in the Miss. Headwaters Board jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

Ted Van Kempen
Chairman of the Board

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BELTRAMI COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

DATE: January 7, 2025

RESOLUTION # 25-01-01

MOTION OF COMMISSIONER: Carlson

SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER: Gould

**THE BOARD, BY ADOPTION OF ITS REGULAR AGENDA, APPROVED A REVISED RESOLUTION OF
SUPOORT FOR NORTHERN TOWNSHIP INFRASTRUCTURE**

WHEREAS, Lake Bemidji is a historic and spiritual water body which serves as an important cultural and recreational resource to Beltrami County; and

WHEREAS, the combination of a high-water table and many aging residential and commercial septic systems on the Northwest and North end of Lake Bemidji pose a potential health risk and threaten the water quality of Lake Bemidji; and

WHEREAS, Ruttger's Resort, the MN DNR Regional Headquarters and Lake Bemidji State Park, which are located on the Northwest and North end of Lake Bemidji, all need to replace their aging septic systems; and

WHEREAS, Ruttger's Resort, the MN DNR Regional Headquarters and Lake Bemidji State Park have expressed their support for a proposed sanitary sewer project extending along Birchmont Beach Road to serve their facilities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed sanitary sewer project will help maintain water quality of a shared natural resource of great importance to our region and improve resident's land usability; and

WHEREAS, Combining the proposed sanitary sewer project with the planned Beltrami County CSAH20 roadway improvement project will greatly reduce costs and be less disruptive to businesses, residents and tourists; and

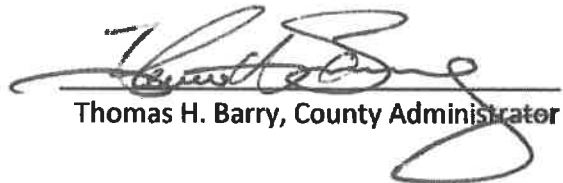
WHEREAS, the extension of sanitary sewer services in this area has been a regional planning goal for over 50 years;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Beltrami County Board of Commissioners do hereby offer written support for the Northern Township Sewer Extension Project and further support and encourage allocation of any State or Federal funding that may help fund this important water quality project and the CSAH 20 Reconstruction Project.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Gaasvig	X	
Gould	X	
Winger	X	
Sumner	X	
Carlson	X	

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF BELTRAMI)

I, Thomas H. Barry, County Administrator, Beltrami County, State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of a resolution with the original minutes of the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners, Beltrami County, Minnesota, at their regular session held on January 7, 2025, now on file in my office and have found the same to be a true and correct copy thereof.


Thomas H. Barry, County Administrator



Protecting, restoring and enhancing the metro
Mississippi River and its watershed since 1993.

106 W. Water St., Ste. 600 | St. Paul MN 55107-2032
(651) 222-2193 | fmr.org | info@fmr.org

January 9th, 2025

Chris Lahn
Administrator - Northern Township
445 Town Hall Rd NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Subject: Letter of Support for Northern Township Wastewater Project

Dear Mr. Lahn,

On behalf of Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR), I am pleased to express our strong support for the Northern Township Wastewater Project. This initiative represents a significant investment in protecting water quality, public health, and community resilience.

At FMR, our mission is to protect, restore, and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities region through education, advocacy, and hands-on conservation efforts. The Northern Township Wastewater Project aligns with these goals in several key ways:

- **Protecting Downstream Water Quality:** By replacing outdated septic systems, the project will help reduce phosphorus, nitrogen, and other pollutants from entering Lake Bemidji and downstream waterways, including those that flow into the Mississippi River.
- **Enhancing Ecosystem Health:** Improved wastewater treatment prevents harmful algae blooms and ensures healthier aquatic habitats for fish, wildlife, and native plants.
- **Strengthening Community Resilience:** Modern, centralized wastewater infrastructure supports sustainable land use and community development practices that protect water resources and prevent environmental degradation.

The benefits of this project will extend far beyond township borders, positively impacting water resources throughout the region, including the Mississippi River. This project demonstrates thoughtful environmental stewardship and a commitment to long-term regional water quality goals.

Please feel free to contact us if there are further opportunities for FMR to assist in advancing this critical project.

Sincerely,

Trevor Russell
Water Program Director
Friends of the Mississippi River



January 31, 2025

Chris Lahn
Township Administrator
Northern Township
Bemidji, MN

Dear Chris:

Please accept this letter as an expression of Greater Bemidji's support for Northern Township's efforts to install necessary infrastructure on the north side of Lake Bemidji.

The protection of Lake Bemidji is critical to the economic development of the region. Not only is it clearly important for tourism, but our ability to attract and recruit workers, families, and companies are all tied to our lake.

This is a very rare opportunity where agencies are aligning and working together and we feel like now is the time to act and to ensure that Lake Bemidji is protected for our generation and for generations to come. We encourage the legislature to do everything they can to assist Northern Township to help ensure this project is funded and can begin planning and construction as soon as possible.

This project has been a priority in the region for many decades, without successful implementation. Great projects have the right time, and this is the right time for this priority to move forward.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding Greater Bemidji's support.

Sincerely,

David Hengel
Executive Director



February 13th, 2024

Jess Frenzel
Northern Township
445 Town Hall Rd NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Chairman Frenzel-

Lake Bemidji is one our community's greatest assets and we are very supportive of any efforts to create infrastructure that will protect its water quality for future generations.

The tourism industry is very vital to our economy and Lake Bemidji is at the core of our community. The iconic statues of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox have stood on the shores of Lake Bemidji for almost 90 years. Many Resorts, hotels and businesses depend on a clean Lake Bemidji to survive.

This project has been a community priority for many years, but we have not had the right opportunity or resources to make it happen. We encourage the legislature to do all they can to help ensure the project is funded and can begin planning and construction as soon as possible.

Please reach out if you have any questions regarding our support.

Sincerely,

Scott Turn
President
Bemidji Area Chamber of Commerce
scott@bemidji.org
218-444-3541

January 1, 2025

Friends Of Lake Bemidji, established in 1990 to promote good lake management practices and maintain and improve the environment, economics, and recreational qualities of Lake Bemidji is in support of Northern Township and the infrastructure proposed for the north side of Lake Bemidji.

A bonding request from the State of Minnesota for Northern Township's wastewater project to install a sewer system around the north and east side of Lake Bemidji is a high priority for our association.

The infrastructure along the lakeshore is necessary to protect Lake Bemidji from further pollution and ensure that it continues to be protected for generations to come. It is long overdue. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to provide a substantial impact to Lake Bemidji and the community as a whole.

The alignment at the township, city, county and state level is unprecedented and the momentum is moving forward. Please lets get this done while we can.

We ask that the legislature to do everything they can to assist Northern Township to help ensure this project is funded.

Karrie Nelson

Friends Of Lake Bemidji

January 4, 2025

As the owner of Gold Coast of Bemidji and Lake Bemidji Resort dba Ruttgers Birchmont Lodge, I am writing in support of the Northern Township Infrastructure Bonding Request.

The infrastructure installation along Lake Bemidji is a very high priority not only for our business, but for the entire community.

Lake Bemidji has a huge impact for Northern Township and the City of Bemidji, as well as for all the surrounding townships of Beltrami County. It is a natural resource that has been neglected, and needs to be protected for generations to come.

This project is long overdue, and I have heard from many property owners that it is a project that has been on again off again since the late 1960's. It is imperative that the Township, County and State work together on this project to ensure that it can be completed.

The time to act is now. The leadership in the agencies involved have come together to find a solution to this project and protect our natural resource. It is a high priority, necessary project that aligns with our local leaders, the timing of roadway construction, and community support that we may never see again. I hope the legislature will do everything they can to assist Northern Township to ensure this project is funded.

Respectfully,

Karrie Nelson
Ruttgers Birchmont Lodge
7598 Bemidji Rd
Bemidji, MN 56601