



MRCCA RESTORATION PRIORITIES

LOCAL PLANNING HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

MRCCA plans must identify areas that are priorities for restoration of natural vegetation, erosion prevention, bank and slope stabilization, or other restoration activities.

Restoration measures are often needed to maintain resource integrity and water quality. Development and redevelopment activities represent opportunities to restore natural vegetation, prevent erosion and stabilize slopes. Communities must identify areas that are priorities for:

- Restoration of natural vegetation, and
- Erosion prevention, bank and slope stabilization, or other restoration activities.

MINIMUM MRCCA PLAN REQUIREMENTS

1. Map and Describe

- Map and describe areas identified as priorities for natural vegetation restoration. A downloadable PDF and JPG are available on your community page to meet this requirement. If you want to do your own analysis to identify restoration priorities use the [Framework for identifying Vegetation Restoration Priorities](#). This same framework was used to develop the restoration priorities map on your community pages. All spatial data used in the framework is available through the Minnesota Geospatial Commons and from the link “Download your Community Shapefiles” on your community page.
- Describe areas identified as concerns for erosion prevention, bank and slope stabilization and other identified restoration activities that may be required as part of development. Refer to studies and reports completed by the community and other organizations (conservation districts, watershed districts, counties, etc.) and issues identified by citizens, and summarize priorities for action. If these areas have not been identified, state in your plan that they have not been identified.

2. Policies

A. Required Policies

These can be used verbatim or customized as appropriate:

- Protect native and existing vegetation during the development process, and require restoration if any is removed by development. Priorities for restoration shall include stabilization of erodible soils, riparian buffers and bluffs or steep slopes visible from the river.
- Seek opportunities to restore vegetation to protect and enhance PRCVs identified in this plan.
- Seek opportunities to restore vegetation in restoration priority areas identified in this plan through the CUP, variance, vegetation permit and subdivision/PUD processes.
- Sustain and enhance ecological functions (habitat value) during vegetation restorations.
- Evaluate proposed development sites for erosion prevention and bank and slope stabilization issues and require restoration as part of the development process.

B. Examples

The following example policies are from existing MRCCA plans, and are meant to provide ideas for developing policies related to restoration priorities (not all requirements identified above have a corresponding example):

- Encourage residents within the river corridor to replace diseased trees with new plantings and to use other vegetative plantings on the riverbanks and steep slopes to control erosion. (Fridley)
- Require increased native landscaping on all sides of developments located east of Concord Street, within the corridor, or adjacent to the Mississippi River Regional Trail (MRRT). (South St Paul)
- Encourage the restoration of degraded wetlands where practical. (Denmark Twp)

3. Implementation Actions

A. Required Implementation Actions

These can be used verbatim or customized as appropriate:

- Ensure that information on the location of natural vegetation restoration priorities is readily available to property owners to understand how relevant ordinance requirements apply to their property for project planning and permitting.
- Establish a vegetation permitting process that includes permit review procedures to ensure consideration of restoration priorities identified in this plan in permit issuance, as well as standard conditions requiring vegetation restoration for those priority areas. (**Note:** A vegetation permitting process will be a required element of MRCCA ordinance review and approval.)
- Establish process for evaluating priorities for natural vegetation restoration, erosion prevention and bank and slope stabilization, or other restoration priorities identified in this plan in CUP, variances and subdivision/PUD processes. (**Note:** A process for evaluating priorities will be a required element of MRCCA ordinance review and approval.)

B. Examples

None available from existing plans

MRCCA ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

Following are specific ordinance requirements that pertain to restoration priorities. Understanding these requirements will help guide development of the MRCCA plan for effective ordinance administration.

Variances and CUPs

1. Pre-identified vegetation restoration priorities can be used to guide development of conditions of approval for variances and CUPs to mitigate impacts, where relevant.

Vegetation Management

1. Any vegetation removed through a LGU vegetation permit must be restored with natural vegetation to the greatest extent practicable. Pre-identified vegetation restoration priorities, where relevant, can help guide development of conditions of approval for vegetation permits in addition to parcel specific restoration priorities identified at the time of project application.

Subdivision

1. If PCAs exist but do not have natural vegetation, then a vegetation assessment must be completed for the areas to be protected to determine whether vegetation restoration is needed at the time of development.
2. If PCAs don't exist on the development parcel, the LGU must determine whether any portions of the site have been identified as potential restoration areas in the plan. When such areas have been identified, vegetation must be restored consistent with the restoration plan standards and set aside as protected open space areas at the time of development.

MORE INFORMATION

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