

MULTI-BENEFIT CONSERVATION PRACTICES CAN SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE WATER QUALITY IN THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN



Multi-benefit conservation practices are a single conservation practice that provides more than one beneficial outcome. The outcomes may be any combination of agronomic, ecological, social, and financial. For example, a protected or restored wetland has the potential to provide wildlife habitat, improve water quality, reduce nutrient loss, improve soil health, and attenuate flooding. Multi-benefit conservation practices are important to ensure farmland is healthy and resilient for continued production.



The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) hosted two workshops and four webinars on how to support implementation of Multi-Benefit Conservation Practices. Conservation leaders in the webinars and workshops identified four ways to increase implementation of multi-benefit conservation practices:

- 1) Peer to peer learning networks
- 2) More administrative and technical support on the ground
- 3) More easily accessible financial resources
- 4) More streamlined grant procedures



The workshop series was funded through a cooperative agreement with the USEPA Office of Water.



A Logic Model Systems Map

A **systems thinking approach** can be used to identify **leverage points**, or places where small changes in administration, financial, and technical support can result in big improvements. Identifying leverage points can increase the implementation of multi-benefit conservation practices. The systems map below was used during the workshop series.

MBCP = Multi-Benefit Conservation Practice

From a landowner's perspective:

- 1) Problem(s) observed
- 2) Intent to act
- 3) Diagnosis of the problem
- 4) Selection of the MBCP
- 5) Funding for construction
- 6) Construction
- 7) Operation of the MBCP
- 8) Evaluation of the MBCP
- 9) Maintenance of the MBCP



The steps are influenced by a landowner's goals as well as policy and financial incentives



For more information:



UMRBA's
YouTube channel

Workshop materials

