



Red River Watershed Management Board

Highlights – Week of March 18, 2019

1. Annual Conference Held – The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) held their annual conference with the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (FDRWG) on March 20 and 21, 2019 at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Moorhead, MN. Approximately 125 people registered for the conference and several other events were held in conjunction with the annual conference. The RRWMB and FDRWG thanks the planning committee, conference sponsors (HEI, HDR, Moore Engineering Inc., Red River Retention Authority, WSN), and conference attendees for another great conference. The RRWMB also thanks the Red River Basin Commission staff for their assistance in preparing for the event.

2. Drainage Conference Held: The RRWMB sponsored a drainage conference on March 19, 2019 at the Marriott Convention Center in Moorhead to start the week off. Approximately 80 people were in attendance for the drainage conference and several presentations were given regarding drainage law case updates, model drainage rules, information about public drainage processes and state law from Minnesota and North Dakota, practical implementation of drainage best management practices for public drainage systems, and an overview of multipurpose drainage water management.



A panel discussion wrapped up the event and the RRWMB recognized Al Kean, Chief Engineer of Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for his many accomplishments and contributions over his 40 + year career. Al Kean is shown in the photo above with the plaque presented to him by the RRWMB. From the left, LeRoy Ose (RRWMB Manager), Gerald Van Amburg (BWSR Chair), Al Kean, Linda Vavra (RRWMB Manager), and Robert Sip (RRWMB Executive Director) are pictured.

3. KFGO Radio Show – News and Views with Joel Heitkamp was broadcast live from the Marriott Convention Center on March 19, 2019 and several guests were interviewed including RRWMB Executive Director Robert Sip, Kevin Ruud (Wild Rice WD Administrator), Keith Weston (Red River Retention Authority Executive Director), Tracy Halstensgard (Roseau River WD Administrator), Myron Jesme (Red Lake WD Administrator), Jim Ziegler (Regional Manager of the MPCA), and Greg Gust (National Weather Service). In the photos on the next page, Joel Heitkamp is seen interviewing Keith Weston and Kevin Ruud, and Tracy Halstensgard and Myron Jesme.



4. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)** – The RRRA held a regular meeting at the Marriott Convention Center on March 20, 2019 prior to the RRWMB regular monthly board meeting. The RRRA discussed several matters and Troy Daniell, State Conservationist of the Minnesota USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service was in attendance to discuss several matters with the RRRA Board.

5. **Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)** – A meeting was held on March 20, 2019 at the Marriott with BWSR staff and several staff from local governmental units from the Minnesota portion of the Red River Basin to discuss 1W1P and buffers. About 45 local staff representing soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, county planning and zoning offices, and county highway engineers attended the event. The meeting provided an opportunity for these groups to discuss the 1W1P and buffer programs, share insights, and learn from each other.



6. **RRWMB Meeting** – The RRWMB was held on March 20, 2019 and several projects were discussed for funding. The RRWMB Managers authorized funding for a cold weather BMP workshop to be held in April 2019 and approved the final payment of the Roseau River WMA project to the Roseau River Watershed District. The RRWMB also heard about a proposal for a GIS tool related to watershed delineation presented by the International Water Institute. The Whitney Lake Project – Retention Area C was submitted to the RRWMB Managers as a STEP I Project and the Managers approved moving the project to the Technical Advisory Committee for review.

The RRWMB Managers approved criteria to expend the remaining funds for a ring dike grant from the State of Minnesota. RRWMB legal counsel was in attendance and spoke to the Managers about a previously approved levy reduction criteria and provided an update to the Managers about the North Ottawa flood impoundment project in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District (BdSWD). Staff from the Minnesota DNR were also in attendance and spoke about negotiations with the DNR and BdSWD about overall management of the project.

Jim Ziegler of the Detroit Lakes MPCA was in attendance and discussed a Red River water quality report that was recently released. Greg Gust of the National Weather Service provided a detailed flood forecast to the Managers along with Chris Laveau of the United States Geological Survey. Mr. Gust and Mr. Laveau discussed technology, equipment, flow monitoring conditions, and overall concerns with the potential flood this spring. Congressman Collin Peterson attended the RRWMB regular board meeting on March 20, 2019. Congressman Peterson spoke about the Farm Bill and several federal programs. The RRWMB Managers expressed the need for additional funds for the PL566 and RCPP programs. Photos of Congressman Peterson interacting with the RRWMB Managers can be seen on the next page.





Legislative Update – The RRWMB Managers heard about legislative bills related to River Watch program funding, increased annual allocations to the FDRWG, watershed district manager per diems, and proposed adjustments to levy limits for watershed districts. The Managers discussed the \$75 million bonding bill for flood damage reduction projects and various other bills that have been introduced during the Minnesota legislative session.

Next RRWMB Meeting – April 16, 2019 at 9:30 am at the Red Lake Watershed District office in Thief River Falls, MN.

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