

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

John Finney-Humboldt Farrell Erickson-Badger Harley Younggren, Secretary-Hallock Ron Osowski, Chairman-Oslo Vernon Johnson-Clearbrook Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Sanford Moen-Gary Curtis Nelson-Barnesville Jerome Deal-Wheaton Don Ogaard, Executive Director-Ada

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

November 18,1997

Sand Hill River Watershed District Office, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, November 18, 1997, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District Office, Fertile, Minnesota.

Chairman Ron Osowski called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Vernon Johnson	Curtis Nelson
Farrell Erickson	Sanford Moen
John Finney	Daniel Wilkens
Harley Younggren	

Others present were:

Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Naomi Jagol, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River WD
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Rick St. Germain, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Lowell Enerson, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Brent Johnson, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Jeff Lewis, MPCA
Nolan Baratono, MPCA-Basin Coordinator
David Loeks, Bois de Sioux WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD

Minutes of the October 21, 1997, meeting were read and approved with minor corrections. **Motion** to approve the minutes by Manager Erickson, **Seconded** by Manager Moen, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented by Manager Wilkens and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Nelson, **Seconded** by Manager Younggren, **Carried**.

A **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Johnson, **Seconded** by Manager Finney, **Carried**. For further reference, a copy of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Ogaard Report - Don Ogaard

The first phase of the mediation process was discussed. A tour was conducted for the mediators on November 10-11, 1997. A handout was distributed outlining the itinerary. Don noted that in addition to representatives from the DNR and the RRWMB being interviewed for the mediation process, three individuals representing environmental groups were interviewed as well. Don stated that Commissioner Sando has indicated that he will not support environmental groups being interviewed as a mediation participant. Don further explained that the State of Minnesota is paying the costs associated with interviewing the environmental groups and stated the importance of including these groups in the mediation process. The final interview relative to the first phase of the mediation process will be conducted sometime in mid December with a recommendation on whether to proceed to the second phase to follow 45 days after. Lowell Enerson, Administrator-RLWD, commended the mediators on the excellent job they did on the interview process. Enerson explained that the mediators were very interested in the operating functions of watershed districts and the questions they asked were designed to help them understand all the issues involved.

A trip to the Netherlands in March of 1998 was discussed. Don stated that a tour is being conducted in the Netherlands that highlights situations for highland drainage and, in particular, how governmental systems handle excess water. He felt this would be a very beneficial tour since the flooding problems they have faced there are very similar to the situations being addressed in the Red River Basin. The cost of the tour is approximately \$3,000 and will be held on March 7-14, 1998. This tour was presented as a point of interest to the RRWMB and any Manager who would be interested in attending would be encouraged to do so at their own expense.

Red River Coordinator Report - Dan Thul

Dan stated that the TAC was concerned that due to the fact of the time designated for their meetings, they were not present for the Executive Director's report. The Board determined that due to the important topics addressed in this report, that it would be beneficial to move the Executive Director's report further down on the agenda so that the TAC could be present.

Dan updated the Board on the decision last month to authorize one month's effort of the TAC to provide the data needed to prepare a proposed model to analyze the 1997 flood. Dan indicated that the TAC had been attempting to obtain gauge information from the U.S.G.S. but had encountered some difficulty. Brent Johnson stated that he will compile historic hydrograph data to demonstrate the progression of the 1997 flood. Don Ogaard stated his concern over the ungauged stations referred to in the McCombs-Knutson Report. Charlie Anderson responded that the ungauged stations cited in the report were actually a misnomer and, in fact, not really ungauged.

Dan indicated that another topic the TAC will be commenting on is the McCombs-Knutson Report. The TAC will comment on the report using the original format that addressed how projects could be designed to offer mainstem benefits. Rick St. Germain will begin by constructing a partial model in an effort to establish a basic understanding.

The Communications Committee consisting of Donald Ogaard-RRWMB, John Finney-RRWMB, Charlie Anderson-RRWMB, Kent Lokkesmoe-DNR, Roger Holmes-DNR, and Paul Swenson-DNR was discussed. Dan stated that he believed this committee was a key to developing better relationships between these agencies. Charlie Anderson stated the importance of identifying where the DNR stands on certain issues in an effort to determine whether to consider them an adversary or partner. Jeff Lewis, MPCA, added that he believed the

mediators were trying to get at the issue or whether or not the DNR and watershed districts shared common beliefs. Lewis stated that the same overriding concept seems to keep emerging and that being if both parties agree on flood control. A letter from the DNR commenting on the Red Lake Watershed District- Ditch #83 project was discussed. The letter stated that the DNR had some concerns relative to certain actions that had taken place regarding this project. Lewis stated that he believed the DNR was legitimate in stating their concerns. Lowell Enerson noted that he would be meeting with Kent Lokkesmoe, Director, Division of Waters- DNR, to discuss his dissatisfaction with the way this matter was publicized. Dan indicated that the DNR is particularly interested in this project due to the fact that it's on the Thief River which is a major waterway.

U.S.G.S. Proposal

The Mercury Study the RRWMB authorized to fund at the March meeting was discussed. The study included the original estimated costs as follows:

	<u>FY 1997</u>	<u>FY 1998</u>	<u>FY 1999</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cooperator share:	\$38,400	\$77,000	\$40,769	\$156,170
U.S.G.S. share:	38,400	77,000	40,769	156,170

The motion authorized the RRWMB to fund the Cooperator's share for the first year in the amount of \$38,400 based on the contingency that the RLWD, DNR, and MPCA would also bear funding responsibility for the remaining two years of the study. The U.S.G.S. has determined it would be beneficial to include zooplankton from each site in the samples, but that these additions would increase the cost of the study by \$18,000 primarily due to the extra personnel that would be needed to retrieve the samples. The U.S.G.S. has indicated that they will contribute funds to the study as they become available. Don Ogaard asked Jeff Lewis to comment on the additional sampling requested. Lewis indicated that MPCA would also be contributing funds, and that he believed the additional sampling would be very valuable. **Motion** to table discussion on approving the additional \$18,000 until the RRWMB determines the amount contributed by MPCA by Manager Finney, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

Annual Audit for 1997-1999

Don stated that he researched all certified public accountants in the RRWMB's geographic area and determined there was a total of 13 eligible firms. A letter was forwarded to these firms on October 31, 1997 requesting proposals for providing the annual financial audit for the RRWMB for the next three consecutive years. Three responses had been received thus far. Manager Wilkens stated he will forward additional information for their review.

District Reports:

- The Red Lake WD reported that construction continues on the Challenger Ditch Petition in Pennington County, Project No. 122 and on the ditch petition on the Winsor/Hangaard Clearwater County Petition Project No. 113. Ten ring dikes have been completed this fall. A total of twelve in all for the 1997 season hope to be completed.
- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported that the excavation for the construction of Lateral 1 of Clay County Ditch No. 41 (the diversion around Dilworth) is essentially complete. The boring of Trunk Highway 10 east of Dilworth (2 lines of 72" RCP) is complete. Several road crossing improvements will be completed this year. The diversion will not be operational this spring since the construction south of Highway 10 was not completed. This will minimize erosion potential on the new diversion channel. The District has completed two ring dikes and has started a third. This will likely be the last of the ring dikes this year due to the weather.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that discussions had taken place regarding the need for watershed districts and soil & water conservation districts to improve public relations. An individual from the Soil & Water Conservation District had invited the SHRWD to submit a topic of interest to them for publication in their quarterly newsletter. Cost sharing on a possible tree planting program was also discussed. The District is also in the process of revising the north boundary of the watershed district. Engineers have prepared a revised boundary line using topographic maps. Landowners along the proposed new boundary will be contacted this winter to obtain their input. Once these changes are agreed upon, a hearing will be scheduled by the Board of Water and Soil Resources to allow for public input. This project will be considered a priority item of the District, with work to begin this winter and finalize in the spring.
- The Roseau River WD reported that surveys have been completed on 11 sites and construction plans have been prepared for 9 ring dikes. Two of the 9 sites have been determined to be not feasible to construct and two have been unable or unwilling to pay the landowner's share. Contracts have been negotiated on 4 projects. One project has been completed and construction has begun on two dike projects. The District was asked to be the sponsoring agency for requesting assistance from the NRCS to restore stream bank erosion on the Roseau River. The area affected has 300 feet of severe bank sloughing and side hill seepage. Approximately 30 feet of bank has been lost and is working back toward the home of LeRoy Vistad.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that two ring dikes have been constructed under the DNR/RRWMB local cost share program. Seven more dikes have been slated for funding under the program, but cannot be built this year due to the onset of winter. A total of 32 requests have been received and further funding from the legislature will be sought in order to provide assistance for all landowners who applied.
- The Wild Rice WD reported that the District is continuing to assist local communities seeking funding assistance for flood protection projects. The environmental reviews on levee projects in Hendrum and Perley were due to be completed this week, and the bid opening on the projects has been set for November 19. An updated construction estimate on the levee project in Hendrum has increased the cost estimate of the project to just over \$400,000, due to increased costs related to land acquisition and a need to haul in 70% of the fill material needed for construction. The estimate for the levee project in Perley has also been increased to just over \$217,000. The District is working with the DNR and DTED in amending the original project grant agreement to reflect the increased project costs. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is currently reviewing flood protection projects in Shelly, along the White Earth River in Mahnomen County, and a long-range

protection project for the City of Ada. The District is expecting a recommendation from the COE related to these projects in the near future.

- The Joe River WD reported that the District has received 16 requests for ring dikes since the announcement of state funds available for flood damage reduction. Preliminary engineering is completed on three dikes, but due to the lack of contractors and the late date the projects have been put on hold until next construction season.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that representatives met with County Commissioners from Traverse, Stevens, and Big Stone Counties to discuss issues relating to flood problems on the Twelve Mile Creek system which is upstream from Lake Traverse. General consensus of Commissioners from those counties was that the Twelve Mile Creek has a problem. The possibility of doing a study of the area to determine what can be done to better manage the water and flows coming out of that system were discussed.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported that the applications received for the Ring Dike cost share program now total 123. At the present time, the District has substantially completed 6 ring dikes and has 3 others in various stages of construction. Three contractors are currently working. It appears that a total of nine ring dikes will be completed this fall.

Annual "March Conference"

Discussion was held authorizing the dates for the 1998 conference and forming the planning committee. The agreed upon dates were the third Thursday and Friday in March which are 3/19 & 3/20. The planning committee will consist of Don Ogaard, John Finney, and Vernon Johnson. The Board agreed to send invitations to Soil & Water Conservation Districts, County Commissioners, FEMA representatives, Mayors, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service along with the regular guest list. Suggestions for speakers this year included Mark Brigham-U.S.G.S. and Ray Bohn-MAWD.

Newsletter Editorials

Don inquired as to possible ideas for editorials for the monthly newsletter. A suggestion was made to highlight the legislation affecting FEMA. Don encouraged anyone who had ideas to submit them to himself or Susan Gilbert.

Federal Legislation Affecting FEMA

Don Ogaard requested Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice Watershed District, to update the Board on the status of the proposed legislation. Jerry indicated that if the proposed legislation were passed that watershed districts would no longer be eligible to receive funds from FEMA. Jerry added that he submitted documentation to Ray Bohn of MAWD informing him of this situation. The firm of Dorsey & Whitney was contacted, specifically inquiring to Becky Comstock for suggestions. Becky indicated that the firm has an office in Washington, D.C., and she would contact them to investigate where the bill was at. Becky stated that an

approximate cost to do the preliminary investigation costs would be \$500.00 to \$600.00. Jerry stated that if the bill, in fact, is moving forward in legislation, then the rationale behind initiating the bill would need to be determined. The need to have watershed districts maintain their eligibility for funding and pursue necessary measures if need be was stressed. **Motion** to engage the services of Dorsey & Whitney to do preliminary investigation by Manager Wilkens, **Seconded** by Manager Moen, **Carried**.

District's Fundine Requests:

1. Buffalo-Red River WD - Economic Development Administration (EPA) Grant (Moorhead, Dilworth, and Hawley Projects): 5th partial request. Allocation by breakdown as follows:

Project No. 32, Hawley Flood Control Diversion	\$ 2,605.29
Project No. 33, Clay County Ditch No. 50	23,928.85
Project No. 34, Clay County Ditch No. 41	3,478.94
Project No. 36, Clay County Ditch No. 41 - Lateral No. 2	1,972.27
Project No. 37, Clay County Ditch No. 41 - Lateral No. 1	<u>20,329.59</u>
Total:	<u>\$ 52,314.94</u>

Motion to approve the 5th partial request by Manager Nelson, **Seconded** by Manager Finney, **Carried**.

The next meeting will be held on December 16, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake WD office in Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Harley Younggren
Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol
Administrative Assistant