

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 Robert Wright-Felton Curtis Nelson-Barnesville Jerome Deal-Wheaton Don Ogaard, Executive Director-Ada

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

May 18, 1999

Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, May 18, 1999, at the Red Lake Watershed District Office, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

Chairman Ron Osowski called the meeting to order.

Members present were: John Finney
Curtis Nelson
Jerome Deal
Farrell Erickson
Harley Younggren
Daniel Wilkens

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Naomi Jagol, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River WD
George Dailey, Red Lake WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Rick St. Germain, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Kathy Ross, Roseau River WD
Chuck Fritz, Red Lake WD
Rudee Anderson, Two Rivers WD
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Brent Johnson, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Brian Dwight, Board of Water & Soil Resources
Jim Lemmerman, Board of Water & Soil Resources

No additional items were added to the agenda.

The minutes of the April 20, 1999 meeting were read and approved with minor corrections. Manager Nelson referred to two items that were discussed at the April 20, 1999 board meeting which were not listed on the agenda. Nelson stated that these items included the discussion to obtain the services of a consultant to assist the RRWMB in fulfilling the mediation agreement and the reaffirmation of the original motion for the North Ottawa Project of the BdSWD. Nelson noted his concern relative to individual managers discussing the issue of obtaining a consultant with their respective watershed districts boards, prior to a decision being made by the RRWMB. Ogaard responded that the discussion to obtain the services of a consultant was added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting to be included in the Executive Director's report. Ogaard noted that the motion to reaffirm the original motion of the North Ottawa Project of the BdSWD was a result of reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting. **Motion** to approve the minutes as written by Manager Wilkens, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Nelson, **Seconded** by George Dailey, **Carried**. Manager Wilkens noted that a second meeting of the bookkeepers for the watershed districts within the RRWMB is scheduled for May 24, 1999, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River WD office. Ogaard reviewed the monthly bills received. A **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Finney, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Report on Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) Project Team Meetings

Ogaard stated that with regard to the FDR Project Teams for each of the watershed districts within the RRWMB, the environmental interest groups have suggested funding their participation with state funds. Ogaard noted that should the proposed state funding be used for this purpose, the actual funds remaining to construct projects would be greatly reduced.

Manager Wilkens noted his concern regarding the burden placed on the watershed districts to host the project team meetings. Ogaard stated that each watershed district would be expected to absorb the costs for the technical assistance obtained regarding the project teams, however, the remaining meeting expense should be covered by the state funds being sought in the legislature.

Report on BWSR Commitment to Mediation Process – Brian Dwight

Dwight referred to the implementation of the mediation agreement and noted that the Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) is committed to the effort by assisting watershed districts with a variety of services offered by BWSR. Dwight introduced the Stewardship Forester for BWSR, Jim Lemmerman, and noted that his services would be available to watershed districts on an as needed basis.

Lemmerman stated that after reviewing the mediation agreement, he determined that the natural resource goals listed could include riparian buffers and corridors of which he could offer assistance to the project teams. He added that the major problem with the Flood of 1997 was overland flow, which could have been reduced by the installation of proper buffer systems and living snowfences. He offered to attend the project team meetings to discuss the various state programs available.

Dwight stated that Lemmerman could possibly add the watershed districts' email addresses to his distribution list in order to keep them informed on cost-sharing opportunities that may develop. Lemmerman noted that he would add the watershed districts' email addresses to his list.

Ogaard inquired whether any programs were available for tree planting for FDR projects. Lemmerman responded that cost sharing programs are available for wildlife enhancement and aesthetics and these are usually administered through Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

Dwight requested that the BWSR office in Bemidji, MN be added to the mailing list for each watershed district project team in order to encourage BWSR participation. He noted that by doing so, BWSR could also keep the project teams informed about various state programs.

Red River Coordinator Contract Renewal

Ogaard reviewed a contract received from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. He explained that the contract with the State of Minnesota for a cost share with the RRWMB relating to Dan Thul's position of Red River Coordinator was up for renewal. The coordinator position is funded by the two agencies as follows: 70% DNR and 30% RRWMB. The RRWMB's 30% cost share is \$24,000. The contract is identical to the

previous year's contract. **Motion** to renew the Red River Coordinator position contract by Manager Younggren, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

District Reports

- The Joe River WD reported that the City of St. Vincent is scheduled to begin the reconstruction of its flood levee. The project involves moving three city blocks of levee back from the river channel several hundred feet. The re-alignment will not only increase the width of the main channel by the cities of St. Vincent and Pembina, but offers greater protection as well.

Along with the re-alignment, the city will reshape the entire length of its flood levee. The drainage through the levee on the western side of the city, closest to the main river channel, will be removed, and interior drainage will be constructed to other outlets. Brush removal, grass re-seeding, and tree planting are also part of the project.

The City Council will let bids for construction in June, with the project to commence shortly thereafter.

- The Roseau River WD reported that approximately 60 people attended the District's informational meeting on the Hay Creek Project. The Board was encouraged by the support the audience had for the concept of the project. The consensus of those attending was that the District is proceeding in the right direction.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that as a result of a meeting with a Kittson County commissioner, county highway department personnel, and area landowners, the possibility of Kittson County turning over the Judicial Ditch #10 system to the District has become a possibility. This system is downstream from Kittson County Ditch #10, which is already under the jurisdiction of the District. Judicial Ditch #10 in recent years has undergone some erosion problems related to high spoil banks, which places excess weight on the ditch banks and causes undercutting of the side slopes. The ditch also remains plugged with snow in the spring due to the high banks. By turning the ditch over, both drainage systems would be under the same ditch authority and some of the ditch problems could be addressed. Township officials and landowners will bring the issue to the Kittson County Board for further consideration.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported that the provisional Corps 404 permit and the 401 certification from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) have been received. The details of the "restrictive covenant" for the wetlands involved in the mitigation is being worked out with the Corps. In addition, the details for the mitigation for the Wetland Conservation Act permit is being worked out. On May 11th bids were received. Bids were submitted from nine contractors. The bids ranged from 99.8% of the estimate to 141% of the Engineers Estimate. The bid was let to the lowest bidder and the "Notice of Award" will be issued within one week. Work should begin prior to the middle of June and should be completed by about mid-summer next year.
- The Red Lake WD reported that a press tour was conducted by the District in cooperation with local Soil & Water Conservation Districts of the Clearwater Nonpoint Pollution Water Quality Study. Local press were invited to visit sites in each area of implementation. The water quality coordinator submitted a proposal for 319 Grant Funding to the MPCA. This included the Greenwood Section 27 in Clearwater County, Gully Section 6, and Equality Section 31. A water budget for the Good Lake and Cross/Turtle Lake Projects were completed using flow information collected in 1998. Sampling and analysis were done for quarterly district monitoring. Video of the Emardville project was taken due to extensive erosion on the new project.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that Nedra Hoberg, West Polk Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), conducted a presentation at the regular monthly board meeting which emphasized the severe erosion occurring along the banks of the Sand Hill River near Climax. Hoberg explained that the SWCD is

pursuing a grant to obtain federal funding to address the erosion problems. The Board of Managers passed a resolution to forward to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requesting a study to determine the feasibility of developing a fish and wildlife habitat restoration project located on the channelized portion of the Sand Hill River.

- The Wild Rice WD reported that construction on the Hendrum and Perley Community Levee Projects has been delayed due to the weather. A 12" Crisafuli pump was ordered for the City of Hendrum and should arrive later this month.

The required legal land acquisition documents are being finalized for the projects in Twin Valley, Shelly and Waubun. The plans and specifications are nearly complete and the projects will be advertised for bid as soon as the necessary land acquisitions are finalized.

The wetland issues have been cleared up on the Waubun Project. The District has negotiated the purchase of credits from Mahnomon County for \$1,079/ac.

- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported on the status of Turtle Lake. The lake is a 200-acre lake located at the eastern edge of the District. The lake does not have a natural outlet. The District declared an emergency project in accordance with Minnesota State Statutes. Soil borings will be done shortly along the alignment of the outlet. Hydraulic analysis is being conducted to determine the downstream impacts. Preliminary estimates are that 9 cfs would draw the lake down at a rate of 1 foot per month. This would depend on the weather conditions such as precipitation and temperature (evaporation) during the draw down. Biweekly meetings are being conducted with stakeholders (including downstream interests). The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 1999.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the Board of Managers has directed the engineer to conduct a modeling effort on a sub-watershed of the Twelve Mile Creek in Stevens county due to the need for a bridge replacement. This is a troublesome area as far as the contributions to flooding problems. It is important for the bridge replacement to be sized correctly and the modeling effort seemed to be the best way to determine that sizing. The model would be completed in such a way that it would be compatible with the total model developed for the entire District.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report – Dan Thul

Thul stated that the TAC discussed culvert sizing and added that Charlie Anderson would conduct a short presentation relative to this issue following the TAC report.

Thul noted that he is scheduling a meeting for members of the TAC to meet with representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the State of Minnesota in order to coordinate modeling efforts among state agencies. He explained that funds have been earmarked for BWSR in order to develop modeling efforts for the mainstem of the Red River. He added that the TAC plans to meet with various representatives in St. Paul prior to the next monthly meeting.

Thul added that the TAC discussed the problems experienced in the past with BWSR and SWCD's implementing the "wetland guidelines" developed by the TAC. He noted that the TAC determined that this issue should be pursued in the future.

Thul stated that the TAC had been assigned to evaluate the STAR value method and develop a valuation system regarding wetland restoration. He noted that there are various ways to provide funding for these projects such as CRP or flood storage easements.

Thul referred to projects approved by the RRWMB as Step 1 submittals, and inquired whether it would be appropriate for watershed districts to review these projects in order to determine if these projects could be constructed within the next 5-10 years. He noted that an update is prepared annually regarding the funding commitments of the RRWMB and added that he would distribute this at the next monthly meeting.

Ogaard inquired whether it would be beneficial for the watershed districts to review the list of projects that were identified in the EIS. Thul noted that should the watershed districts review the Step 1 submittals, the projects identified in the EIS could be reviewed as well. Ogaard stated the he would distribute a letter to all the watershed district offices requesting that such an evaluation be conducted.

Charlie Anderson conducted a modeling presentation relative to the culvert sizing discussion of the TAC. He referred to a new version of the HEC 1 model known as the HMS model. He explained that the HEC 1 model can be very cumbersome and is not very "user friendly." The HEC 1 model produces a hydrograph, however, it is difficult to determine how the end result is obtained. He noted that with the HMS model, the program is easy to operate since it utilizes a "windows" computer program and allows the user to identify the data that was input into the model.

A model was developed using a square-mile drainage area that sloped diagonally with a .1 percent gradient. The model was assumed to use an average section within the Red River valley, with the end point containing a culvert outlet. A run-off hydrograph was generated using the sub-basin model. The SCS Curve No. method shows how much rainfall soaked in and how much runs off using an average curve number of 75. The higher the curve number, the more water that runs off. The results of the model were used to calculate the results of a 10-year, 24-hour summer storm event.

Manager Wilkens inquired about the normal culvert size for a section. Anderson responded that 33" is a standard size and would be considered typical for a section of drainage in agricultural land.

Anderson noted that the results of the model could be compared using different culvert sizing philosophies. He explained that the highway engineer's philosophy believes that no conflict should exist with the existing road following the MnDOT drainage curve. The watershed district engineers use a more holistic approach which could involve using much smaller pipes.

Anderson stated that when reviewing a model, the impacts should be fairly distributed as far as not washing out the road, and minimizing upstream or downstream consequences. He added that culvert sizing would be a worthwhile program should the price be reasonable.

Brent Johnson noted his concern regarding culvert sizing with no plan to compensate the landowners for flood storage. Anderson responded that a storm water utility concept could be used to implement the program.

Brent Johnson stated that there is also a concern with road washouts. He added that he would be more comfortable with larger road height and sized inlet pipes, which would meter the water into the ditch.

Executive Director Report – Don Ogaard

Ogaard stated that the proposal to obtain 1.3 million in legislative funding was defeated. He noted that the current proposal includes \$1,950,000 for the first year and \$1,000,000 for the second year. He added that FDR projects could still be funded under the bonding bill, which would be considered in the year 2000.

Ogaard referred to a list of projects developed by the watershed districts prior to the mediation meeting conducted on May 7, 1999. He stated that the mediation group decided not to prioritize the list of projects for funding until the June meeting.

Osowski inquired whether the projects approved to move forward with state funds obtained in response to the mediation process would be able to progress as quickly as those that would not need to adhere to the mediation agreement. Ogaard responded that these projects would not be bogged down, but rather be eligible for funding.

Ogaard stated that an issue that was discussed at the May 7, 1999 meeting related to the values used to evaluate natural resource enhancements. He explained that at a recent conservation meeting conducted in the Red River valley, several interest groups had indicated that there is a tremendous amount of money available for natural resource enhancement initiatives. He noted that the challenge for the RRWMB would be to identify these sources in order to utilize the funds.

Ogaard stated that he had contacted Ron Nargang, retired Deputy Commissioner of the DNR, relative to obtaining his services for a liaison in order to implement the mediation agreement. He noted that Nargang was very interested in the position, however, he had just accepted a position with the Nature Conservancy.

A letter of interest from Houston Engineering, Inc. was distributed to the board for review regarding providing consulting services to implement the mediation agreement. Ogaard noted that the mediation group considers it essential that a coordinator position be developed to insure that the mediation agreement is fulfilled.

Manager Finney inquired whether the consulting services should include technical expertise, or whether political influence was of greater concern. Ogaard responded that obtaining the right contacts in the state legislature would be a top priority. Ogaard noted that other individuals within various state agencies have expressed an interest in providing consulting services.

Manager Deal noted the importance of obtaining a consultant to secure outside funding. Manager Finney added that securing the services of a grant writer could enable the RRWMB to obtain additional funding.

Ogaard stated that a determination would need to be made regarding the apportionment of the funds being sought in the state legislature. He noted that historically elsewhere in Minnesota, state funds are distributed on a 75% state, and 25% local matching basis. He added that environmental interest groups had indicated they would promote a 50/50 matching basis for state funds.

Manager Nelson added that the Buffalo-Red River WD board of managers discussed the administrative expenses incurred by the RRWMB. He stated that his board was concerned with the increasing administrative costs being incurred by the RRWMB each year. Ogaard explained that a significant portion of the administrative costs are due to the technical services provided by the TAC. Manager Osowski responded that obtaining the services of a consultant would be included in the administrative expenses. Manager Erickson noted that the increasing costs of administration are related to providing acceptable documentation for the various agencies the RRWMB is involved with.

Motion by Manager Deal to develop a job description for a consultant for the RRWMB to implement the mediation agreement, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**. Ogaard stated that he would develop and distribute a job description and present 4 or 5 proposals from interested individuals for consideration at the next monthly meeting.

Ogaard reported on the status of the Red River Basin Board's planning process. He noted that there are numerous agency representatives participating in the process.

The need for a watershed manager's retreat was discussed. Ogaard stated that since the format of the March Conference was changed to accommodate the requirements of the mediation agreement, another conference should be planned to conduct manager training. Ogaard noted that perhaps a training conference could be planned in collaboration with BWSR. After board discussion, it was agreed to schedule a training conference for the second Thursday and Friday in December.

Ogaard reported on International Joint Commission (IJC) meetings to be conducted in Winnipeg and Detroit Lakes. He explained that the IJC is becoming a key player in the whole process of flood damage reduction. He noted that the RRWMB should become acquainted with this group since their intent is to become a liaison to implement Red River basin initiatives. Osowski suggested that the RRWMB should designate a representative to attend the IJC meetings. **Motion** by Manager Nelson to designate John Finney as the RRWMB representative to attend the IJC meeting in Winnipeg, **Seconded** by Manager Younggren, **Carried**.

A proposal to continue funding the gaging stations administered by the U.S. Geological Survey was distributed. **Motion** by Manager Finney to continue funding the gaging stations, **Seconded** by Manager Younggren, **Carried**.

District's Funding Requests:

1. Dalen Coulee - Step I Submittal – Jerry Bennett

Motion by Manager Finney to authorize the Wild Rice WD to submit a Step I proposal to the RRWMB for consideration, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

Bennett distributed the Step I proposal to the Board for review. He explained that Dalen Coulee is a natural waterway located in Norman and Clay counties, within the WRWD. Land use within the Dalen Coulee drainage area consists primarily of cultivated land in agricultural production. Economically important agricultural crops are planted within the drainage area of the coulee. Landowners along Dalen Coulee believe the efficiency for transporting water through the coulee has decreased in recent years, because of sediment accumulation within the channel, the encroachment by vegetation into the channel, and decreasing hydraulic "efficiency." Landowners also believe this has caused an increase in the frequency and severity of ponding and agricultural crop loss. Possible reasons for increased sediment accumulation within the channel include greater sediment yield from the contributing drainage area as the land was developed for agricultural production, poor farming practices in select areas adjacent to and through the channel during dry periods, and a reduced ability of the channel to transport sediment.

Bennett reviewed the various alternatives considered for addressing the water management issues along the coulee. These included the following:

Alternative A – No Action.

Alternative B – Dalen Coulee drainage system Ordinary Improvement along alignment of existing waterway.

Alternative C – Dalen Coulee drainage system west alignment and/or east alignment.

Alternative D – Divert flows to the Red River of the North from one or all of County Ditch No. 6, County Ditch No. 14, and County Ditch No. 42.

Alternative E – Restoration of the coulee, selective removal of channel obstructions, set-aside along the coulee, upstream storage, and the reduction of overflow from County Ditch No. 6.

Alternative F – Restoration of the coulee, selective removal of channel obstruction, set-aside along the coulee, setback levees, and the reduction of overflow from County Ditch No. 6.

Alternative G – Present condition with selective removal of channel obstruction, set-aside, the reduction of overflow from County Ditch No. 6 and restoration of the coulee.

Alternative H – Set-aside lands subject to present and future flooding.

Bennett stated that the WRWD Board of Managers is requesting 50% cost share from the RRWMB for the construction of the preferred alternative, i.e. Alternative E. The following is a summary of the cost breakdown:

Cost to Date	\$ 64,446
Total Estimated Project Cost Alternative E	\$ 1,059,636
Total Project Cost	\$ 1,124,082
Deduct for Use of NRCS Funding of Set-Aside	\$ 392,000
Remaining Project Cost	\$ 732,082
WRWD Share of Cost (50%)	\$ 366,041
Request from RRWMB (50%)	\$ 366,041

Motion by Manager Nelson to authorize Step I approval, **Seconded** by Manager Younggren, **Carried**. (It should be recognized that according to the previously adopted Project Evaluation Manual, funding participation is determined in the Step II process.)

Middle River-Snake River WD

Manager Osowski stated that a Step I submittal is scheduled for presentation at the next monthly meeting for the Public Law 566 Project. He added that the project would include a diversion and impoundment area with gated storage. He noted that the diversion is eligible for federal funding, however, the District would be seeking financial assistance from the RRWMB regarding the impoundment.

Osowski stated that the City of Warren had indicated that they would pursue obtaining federal assistance for the diversion portion of the project. Adrian added that the Board of Managers believes that since the diversion portion of the project would provide a more local benefit, no funding assistance would be sought for this portion of the project from the RRWMB. Osowski noted that the Board of Managers of the MRSRWD has had some concerns over other districts within the RRWMB seeking funding assistance for projects that recognize only local benefits rather than mainstem benefits.

The next meeting will be on June 15, 1999, at 9:30 AM at the Bremer Bank, Warren, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Harley Younggren
Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol
Administrative Assistant