

Red River Watershed Management Board

705 Fifth Street West Ada, MN 56510 Phone: (218)784-4156, Fax: (218)784-2015

Board of Managers

John Finney, Vice Pres.-Humboldt Farrell Erickson, Secretary-Badger Harlan Solberg-Greenbush Ron Osowski, President-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

October 22, 2002

City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, October 22, 2002, at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota.

Chairman Ron Osowski called the meeting to order.

Members present were: John Finney Farrell Erickson
Harlan Solberg Vernon Johnson
Daniel Wilkens Robert Wright
Jerome Deal

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Dick Nelson, Financial Coordinator
Naomi Erickson, Associate Director
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Harry Farris, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Dennis Nikolayson, Red Lake WD
Curt Nelson, Buffalo-Red River WD
Rick St. Germain, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
Julie Goehring, Communication Specialist, RRBC
Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator, RRBC
Brian Dwight, BWSR

Additional items were added to the agenda in the *Executive Director Report* section by Don Ogaard.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to approve the minutes as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Finney to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be

approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Erickson, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Report on Red River Basin Commission

Lance Yohe, Executive Director-RRBC, stated that the Roseau River International Watershed (RRIW) continues to meet, however, problems have occurred relative to Manitoba's participation. An effort is being made to encourage the four rural municipalities to assist in the plan development.

Yohe reported that a request was received from the DNR for the RRBC to facilitate the Marsh Creek Site No. 6 project between the DNR and the Wild Rice WD. The DNR suggested that a series of meetings be conducted to analyze information and determine whether or not a permit will be issued from the DNR for the project. The meetings were initially to be conducted prior to December 1st, however, due to time delays it appears unlikely this will happen.

Yohe added that the RRBC has been working on the development of a basin plan which includes identifying the roles of the individual watershed districts. He noted that the RRBC will also work in conjunction with the RRWMB regarding the CREP proposal submitted by the RRBC to the States of Minnesota and North Dakota and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Red Lake WD / Long Range Planning

Brain Dwight, BWSR, discussed the long range planning initiative of the Red Lake WD. The plan will define an implementation strategy for the priority flood damage reduction (FDR) and natural resource enhancement (NRE) issues by obtaining public involvement and participation from all interested parties, developing a hydrologic-hydraulic model, assessing the water and land resources related to the priority concerns within the watershed, and defining the roles and responsibilities for all agencies and individuals concerned. The financial breakdown is as follows: \$200,000 BWSR, \$100,000 RRWMB, and \$100,000 RLWD.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to approve the comprehensive watershed management plan as presented and authorize 25% funding from the RRWMB not to exceed \$100,000, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Red River Basin "CREP" Proposal – Kevin Scheidecker, RRBC

Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator-RRBC, discussed the Red River Basin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Over a 5 to 7-year period, the Red River Basin CREP will target 200,000 acres for treatment to reduce flood damages, improve water quality, and expand/enhance wildlife and fisheries habitat. The total number of acres to be contracted includes 100,000 in Minnesota and 100,000 in North Dakota. The estimated cost of the project is approximately \$132 million in each state over 15 years with \$99 million from the Federal Government and \$33 million from the State.

Wild Rice WD / 2002 MAWD Resolution

Jerry Bennett, Administrator-WRWD, distributed a handout regarding a proposed 2002 Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) Red River Basin CREP resolution. The proposed resolution requested MAWD to support language that would include flood storage/flood control measures to be a part of any legislative funded Red River Basin CREP.

Motion by Manager Deal to approve a resolution supporting the Red River Basin CREP resolution submitted by the Wild Rice WD, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Financial Coordinator Report

D. Nelson reported that a special session Flood Relief bill was passed on September 19, 2002 after a very contentious House Floor session. A budget sheet outlining the bill was distributed. There were no opportunities for any alterations to the bill from the agreed upon version, therefore, no additional ring dike funds were obtained.

D. Nelson discussed the DNR budget reduction planning effort. A meeting was conducted on September 24, 2002 to present information on possible budget cuts for the FY04 and FY05 fiscal budget. The proposed cuts could include reductions in the following areas: FDRWG, ring dikes, and stream flow monitoring. Additional impacts could also include delayed permitting and a reduction for the development of geologic atlases for regions and counties.

D. Nelson reported that as of December 31st of this year, the unexpended portion of the 1998 ring dike contracts must be returned to the DNR general fund. No contract extensions will be allowed per directive from the Department of Finance. Although there are several reasons the funds have not been expended, defending the current allocation of ring dike funds becomes very difficult when unused funds are returned to the DNR.

Human Resource Committee Report

Manager Finney stated that at the previous monthly meeting the board authorized President Osowski to appoint a committee (not to exceed four members) to address the human resources issues of the RRWMB relative to Don Ogaard's retirement. Manager Osowski appointed the following board members to the committee: John Finney-chair, Farrell Erickson, and Jerome Deal.

Finney stated that the committee met on September 27, 2002 in Hallock, MN and discussed various alternatives regarding Ogaard's retirement. The alternatives included expanding the duties of the current personnel, advertising for an Executive Director, or expanding the responsibilities of the board members. The committee agreed to recommend that the board advertise for the position of Executive Director.

Motion by Manager Solberg to authorize the Human Resource Committee to develop a job description and advertise for the position of Executive Director, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed a proposal distributed by the RRBC to obtain an engineering firm to develop a hydraulic model that accounts for the total volume of runoff. The model could be a valuable tool for evaluating FDR projects and developing strategies. The RRBC designated a committee to review the proposals submitted. The committee narrowed down the proposals received to two engineering firms. The primary difference between the two engineering firms was the type of model endorsed. One firm advocated using the MIKE 11 model, while the other firm endorsed the HEC-RAS model. The committee will forward a recommendation to the RRBC once a firm has been selected.

Thul reported that local interests have inquired about expanding a USACE model located between Grand Forks and Drayton. Discussions have occurred whether a UNET model would do a better job of evaluating impacts of ag levees. The levees in North Dakota are one foot lower than those in Minnesota, therefore, equity across the border has been a major concern. An application was submitted from Marshall County to the DNR for flood

damage reduction funds to expand the UNET model at an estimated cost of \$140,000. The DNR has committed funds to this effort and will work with Marshall County to finalize the cost share.

Executive Director Report – Don Ogaard

A) Report on Administrator’s Meeting

Ogaard stated that he attended a meeting conducted on October 21st in Fertile, MN which included discussion on the function of project teams. He explained that although the process was designed with watershed managers in charge, few project teams function this way. He added that although the participants are committed to the fact that the process needs to work, few potential projects are progressing through the project teams. He suggested that more watershed managers participate in project team meetings in order to take an active role in the process.

B) Model

Ogaard explained that the RRBC is developing a model and is in need of additional funding to complete the project. The Red River Basin Institute has committed \$50,000 for the project. The North Dakota Joint Water Resources Board has committed to fund 50% of the balance remaining on the project. Ogaard inquired whether the board would consider funding the remaining 50% balance needed to complete the project.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to authorize funding 50% of the remaining balance of the project, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

C) Need for November “Mini-Conference” on Mediation Issues

Ogaard stated that the project team process should be evaluated by the participants in order for improvements to be made. He suggested that a joint conference be conducted among watershed managers and project team members in order to address issues that seem to hinder the function of project teams. Following discussion, the board agreed to discuss this issue at the next FDRWG meeting scheduled for October 30th in Detroit Lakes, MN.

D) Mediation Funding Contract

Ogaard reviewed the contracts received by the state relative to the receipt of mediation funds and explained that the contracts require a board resolution. **Motion** by Manager Finney for the RRWMB to enter into these agreements with the state regarding mediation funds and authorize the President and Vice President to sign the contracts, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

Associate Director Report

N. Erickson reported that she prepared bills that were approved for payment at the September board meeting and forwarded them to the President and Treasurer for signatures. The September issue of the News & Views newsletter was prepared and distributed and the monthly minutes were recorded and published in conjunction with the September board meeting.

N. Erickson stated that she prepared the quarterly reports associated with the Minnesota State Withholding tax, and also Form 941 which is the Employer’s Quarterly Federal Tax Return. An upgrade was installed of the current accounting program, QuickBooks Professional 2001, to QuickBooks Professional 2002. The newer version offers enhanced reporting features from the previous version.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

The project monitoring monthly report prepared by Wayne Goeken was distributed. During the months of September and October, project monitoring staff assisted with Water Festivals conducted throughout the region. Over 600 4th graders attended two days of educational activities at the Old Mill State Park and Rydell National Wildlife Refuge. Nearly 1,400 students attended the Water Festival conducted at the National Guard Armory in Moorhead during which staff also assisted by leading small group sessions.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on its overall planning process. The process continues with renewed county-wide focus inspired by the flood of 2002. With this renewed focus, the watershed has been thoroughly involved at the forefront of water issues. Following the flood, a new mitigation committee formed with former Secretary of Agriculture, Bob Berglund, as chairman. This committee meets weekly and is focused on flood damage reduction related issues that need to be addressed.
- The Two Rivers WD reported on the status of Skull Lake. The District has been meeting with the DNR regarding the Skull Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The WMA was built in the 1960s by the District, Kittson Soil & Water Conservation District, and the DNR. The WMA's benefit to natural resources in the area has been questioned, therefore, the District is proposing that it be made into a dry impoundment for flood control. The District met with the DNR and some of the local landowners and all were in favor of the proposal. This District will continue to coordinate its efforts with the DNR to make the dry impoundment a reality.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported on the status of the Agassiz Valley Water Management Project (Helgeland Site). The Findings and Order setting the damages were filed on October 10, 2002. A copy of the order has been filed with the appropriate state agencies and mailed to all those being paid damages and those requesting a copy. The appeal period concerning this order is 30 days from the date the order was filed.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Parnell Impoundment Operating Plan. HDR Engineering will present the Final Engineers Report to the Board of Managers on October 24th. The District anticipates acceptance of the report and the Dam Safety Permit process to commence at that time. Construction is planned for early spring.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the comprehensive watershed management plan update. A revised draft of the plan update which incorporated the changes from the previous month's meeting is scheduled for November 1st. It is anticipated that this will be the final review of the plan and a recommendation for approval to the Board of Managers will result. The review process will then begin with the Board of Water and Soil Resources. A time extension may be needed in order to allow for publishing the plan and completing the model.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / Moonshine Lakebed Project

The preliminary engineer's report was distributed for review. The primary purpose of the project is flood damage reduction along with wildlife habitat enhancement. The drained lakebed will be restored providing a 570 acre summer conservation pool. Gated flood control storage will be approximately 1,340 acre-feet in the spring and 790 acre-feet in the summer. The ungated flood storage will be approximately 330 acre-feet.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to authorize the Step I submittal of the Moonshine Lakebed Project, **Seconded** by Manager Finney, **Carried**.

2. **Middle River-Snake River WD / Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project**

Ron Adrian, Administrator, distributed a request for reimbursement of expenses, an advance payment for the damages for right of way, and a change in the cost share for the non-state portion of the project. Under the current grant agreement (75% state) with the state, the cost share is one third / two thirds cost share on the non-state portion of the project cost. Currently the cost share breakdown for the non-state portion of the project varies considerably depending on the state cost share agreement. The District requested that the RRWMB change the funding for the project to 2/3 of the non-state portion of the project from the original 16.67%. Following discussion, the board determined that funds received from the FDRWG are for a specified time period and funds expended prior to that date are not considered for reimbursement.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to authorize the funding request of \$396,080.93 which represents the RRWMB's original 16.67% cost share, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The Board of Managers discussed changing the next regular monthly meeting from the third Tuesday of the month to avoid a scheduling conflict. Motion by Manager Erickson to reschedule the regular monthly meeting of the RRWMB for Wednesday, November 20, 2002, at 9:30 a.m. in the Falk Lodge, Wheaton, Minnesota, Seconded by Manager Erickson, Carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Farrell Erickson
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Associate Director