

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt Farrell Erickson, Vice Pres.-Badger Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
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Naomi Erickson, Associate Director-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

February 18, 2003

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, February 18, 2003, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Farrell Erickson Dan Money
Ron Osowski Vernon Johnson
Daniel Wilkens Robert Wright
Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Associate Director
Dick Nelson, Financial Coordinator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Dennis Nikolayson, Red Lake WD
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator, RRBC
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office

An additional item was added to the agenda. Manager Finney requested Naomi Erickson to develop an email address database of board members in order to enhance communication among board members and staff.

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

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Money 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 Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report. Manager Wilkens stated that at the previous monthly meeting, the issue of whether to reimburse the Two Rivers WD for Dan Money's participation on the RRWMB or pay Manager Money directly was discussed. Wilkens

explained that he contacted Don Ogaard and also Mark Hatton, Dahl, Hatton, Muir & Reese who informed him that the RRWMB should pay Manager Money directly for his services.

Financial Coordinator Report

D. Nelson reported that the Governor has been developing a plan to balance the budget for this fiscal year and the next biennium. The current fiscal year was balanced through unallotment by the Governor after failed negotiations between the two Houses. The end result was a reduction of \$25,000 to the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group from \$650,000 to \$625,000 and the loss of beaver control funds administered by the Department of Agriculture.

D. Nelson explained that several inquiries have been made during the past month regarding the RRWMB's position on the Devils Lake outlet. He stated that North Dakota Senators Dorgan and Conrad were trying to push funding through for the outlet in Washington, D.C. The resolution regarding the RRWMB's resolution on the Devils Lake Outlet passed on August 17, 1999 was distributed. The resolution states the board's support of the outlet providing that several conditions are met including that the outlet be regulated by gated controls.

D. Nelson noted that a meeting of the Transition Team has been scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN to discuss the RRWMB's position on transferring the responsibilities of the Work Group to the RRWMB.

D. Nelson stated that the Governor will release his budget plan for balancing the next two years sometime later today. It was suggested that the Board meet again prior to month end to discuss the effects of the proposed Governor's budget. The board agreed to meet on Thursday, February 20, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN prior to the Transition Team meeting.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet prior to the board meeting. He noted that previously the TAC had discussed the USGS wetlands study which is partially funded by the RRWMB. The TAC still has several questions about the modeling included in the study and it was agreed that the members would like to meet directly with the USGS regarding the details of the study. He added that Rick St. Germain agreed to contact Greg Wiche, USGS, to schedule a meeting.

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 focus of the CREP application is the mediation agreement developed by the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group. The mission of the agreement is to reach consensus on long-term solutions for reducing flood damage and for protection and enhancement of natural resources. Chronic flood-prone areas identified by watershed district project teams can utilize the CREP application to address flood damage reduction with natural resource enhancement goals.

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.

Associate Director Report

A) Annual Report

N. Erickson reported that she has been working with Mark Hatton with the accounting firm of Dahl, Hatton, Muir & Reese of Hallock. This firm provides the professional services relative to the financial information included in the Annual Report. A meeting will be scheduled at the Sand Hill River Watershed District with Mr. Hatton and Dan Wilkens to complete the necessary procedures.

B) Buffalo-Red River WD

N. Erickson stated that on January 31, 2003 she was notified from Bremer Bank that a check received from the Buffalo-Red River WD for levy funds was being returned to the RRWMB account since a stop payment had been placed on the check. Upon notification of this matter, John Finney discussed this issue with Dan Wilkens-Treasurer and Bruce Albright-Administrator of the Buffalo-Red River WD. Mr. Albright indicated that he was instructed to place a stop payment on the check by the Board of Managers since they were displeased that the RRWMB did not discuss the funding request they had submitted for the Whisky Creek Project prior to leaving for lunch at the previous board meeting. Mr. Albright stated that the Board of Managers had directed this matter to their attorney for review.

C) Devils Lake Outlet Resolution

N. Erickson noted that the Devils Lake Outlet Resolution passed by the RRWMB had been requested by several individuals during the past month. Legislators from North Dakota had referred to the RRWMB resolution in an attempt to get legislation passed. This issue is further discussed in the Financial Coordinator Report.

D) Microsoft PowerPoint 2002

N. Erickson attended the Level I class on Microsoft PowerPoint 2002 on February 7, 2003 offered through Detroit Lakes Community Education and Recreation. The cost of the class was \$35 and, in addition, an instruction manual was available for \$20.00. The Level II class is scheduled for February 21, 2003 at an additional cost of \$35.00.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize Naomi Erickson's attendance at these classes and also reimbursement for the costs incurred, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**.

E) March Conference

A handout was distributed of the draft agenda for the 5th Annual Joint Conference of the RRWMB and the RRBFDROWG. The conference is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on March 27, 2003 at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN. A retirement party for Don Ogaard following the conference will be conducted.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed the project monitoring monthly report. Goeken stated that he and Halvorson worked with MPCA Basin Monitoring Coordinator, Bruce Paakh to identify specific monitoring sites in each watershed that will be considered secondary sites to monitor as resources allow after FDR and primary sites are covered. Discussions are occurring with local SWCD and Watershed District personnel regarding which secondary sites are of particular importance to monitor.

The recent state budget cuts to SWCDs for local water planning will impact many counties' monitoring efforts, including sites that have been monitored by SWCDs and personnel to work with the schools as they are being asked to take on more autonomy in their monitoring programs. Sites which will be monitored will be reviewed again in light of changing local monitoring capacity of the SWCDs. Equipment to be used during the upcoming monitoring season is being inventoried with plans for distribution being made to provide coverage throughout the basin. Training options for local partners who will be involved in the upcoming 2003 monitoring program are being developed.

Board of Water & Soil Resources / Administrative Handbook

Manager Deal distributed a handout regarding the administrative procedures for meal reimbursement and per diem from the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) handbook. A committee was established consisting of Daniel Wilkens, Jerome Deal, and Naomi Erickson to review the procedures and develop a recommendation regarding which procedures should be adopted by the RRWMB.

District Reports

- The Two Rivers WD reported that the District has been working with staff from the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD (MSTRWD) regarding potential boundary changes along the southern boundary of the Two Rivers WD. Since the area to the south was added as part of the MSTRWD expansion last fall, several discrepancies have been identified in the drainage along the boundary that is shared between the two districts. The staff of the two watershed districts will discuss the details of the change, and a joint meeting between the District Boards will be conducted. A formal boundary change will then be submitted to BWSR.
- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported that the District continues to work on the development of the plans for Phase 3 of the Public Law 566 project. The plan for Phase 3 is expected to be completed in March. The District still anticipates completing the plans for the road crossings early this winter and letting bids early in the spring of 2003.
- The Red Lake WD reported that engineering staff has been updating year-end files for rain gages and impoundments. They have also been conducting field surveys for several permits received.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the status of the Marsh Creek Site No. 6 project. The board has been attempting to move forward on the DNR permit for the floodwater retention project. The District has contacted its legislative representatives about the potential for including this project in the State bonding bill. The District will need the USACE and DNR permits in hand to allow seeking state bonding funds. The DNR has a number of environmental concerns and issues related to the permit, including requirements for water quality monitoring which will have to be negotiated with the agency. Stakeholder meetings were held in December 2002 and January 2003 to discuss the DNR permit issues that resulted in an improved understanding of the permitting concerns. Subsequent to the meetings, the Board of Managers requested

Houston Engineering to prepare additional information to satisfy the anticipated permit requirements. The Board is generally concerned about the probable financial consequences of the additional mitigation and monitoring requirements. A meeting will be held on February 20, 2003 with DNR representatives to discuss the information being provided by the District for evaluation in the DNR permit decision.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the Draft Overall Plan of the District has been approved by the Board of Managers for public review. The plan may be accessed on the Internet at www.mnwatershed.org/bois.htm. (Click on “60 Day Review Draft Overall Plan.”)

District’s Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

An alternative meeting date was discussed in order to coincide with the Fifth Annual March Conference scheduled for March 27, 2003. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to reschedule the regular monthly meeting of the RRWMB for March 26, 2003, at 1:00 p.m. at the Northland Inn, Crookston, Minnesota, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Associate Director