

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

June 17, 2003

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, June 17, 2003, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President, Farrell Erickson-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were: 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
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
Dennis Nikolayson, Red Lake WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Donald Ogaard, Ada, MN
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator

Additional items were added to the agenda. Manager Erickson requested adding the six month review of the Associate Director position to the agenda. Manager Wilkens requested that the beaver control program be added to the agenda.

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

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

Governing Documents

Manager Deal suggested that the Transition Team that was appointed to address the revisions needed to the Governing Documents publication meet prior to the next board meeting to review comments received from the individual watershed districts and the TAC. Following discussion, the board agreed that the committee should schedule a meeting prior to the next board meeting. Naomi Erickson stated that she would contact committee members and forward a notice regarding the meeting time, date and location.

Financial Coordinator Report

D. Nelson reported that the special session ended on May 30th with the following allocations approved for the Red River Basin: \$210,000 for the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group and \$125,000 for the ring dike program. Items approved in the bonding bill for the Red River Basin included \$1,000,000 for the Warren PL566 Project, \$405,000 for the Hay Creek Project, and \$2,000,000 to replenish some of the funding that was allocated to Roseau in the previous bonding bill which will now be used towards North Ottawa. Currently, the Ross No. 7 Project, Warren PL566 Project, Agassiz Valley Water Management Project, and the Hay Creek Project are totally funded. The North Ottawa Project will need additional funding to be completed.

D. Nelson stated that he has solicited funding requests from the individual watershed districts for projects for next year's bonding bill. These requests have been submitted to the DNR for consideration in their budget request. The requests included over \$10,000,000 for the Red Lake WD, the Roseau River WD, the Wild Rice WD, and the Bois de Sioux WD. Since the Governor's recommendation is for a \$15 million dollar budget, it could be quite difficult to obtain the full amount of funding requested.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet prior to the board meeting. He noted that the committee would meet as scheduled immediately preceding the next monthly meeting.

Red River Basin Commission Report – Lance Yohe

Yohe reported that the RRBC is almost one year old. A new board of directors was established in January 2003. The financial management system for the Canadian and American offices is in the process of being streamlined.

Yohe stated that the mainstem modeling project which is jointly funded by the RRWMB, the Red River Joint Water Resources Board, the North Dakota State Water Commission, Manitoba Conservation, and the Red River Basin Institute will produce a Mike 11 Hydrology Model for the Red River mainstem from Lake Traverse to Lake Winnipeg and a HEC/RAS Hydrology Model from Fargo/Moorhead to the Canadian border.

Yohe noted that a tour will be conducted on August 6, 2003 of the Roseau River WD prior to the next Red River Basin Commission meeting scheduled for August 7, 2003. He inquired whether the RRWMB would be interested in participating in the tour and possibly sharing in the costs associated with the tour. Following discussion, the board agreed to discuss this issue at the next monthly meeting.

Associate Director Report

A) International Red River Board Questionnaire

Erickson reported that in its November 2000 report, *Living with the Red*, the International Joint Commission made a number of recommendations to governments aimed at reducing, mitigating, and preventing harm from future flooding in the Red River basin. A questionnaire was developed to assess the achievements made since 1997. Responses will be provided to the International Red River Board and the International Joint Commission to assist them in evaluating the status and success of the IJC recommendations. The results of this work will be made available to the public later this year.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize Dick Nelson and Naomi Erickson to complete the questionnaire on behalf of the RRWMB, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

B) Governing Documents Review

Erickson stated that the Roseau River Watershed District Board of Managers discussed the RRWMB Governing Documents at their May 2003 meeting. It was the consensus of the RRWD that, at this time, the only change needed to the Governing Documents be an addition of a section concerning the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group.

The BRRWD has conducted two special meetings to review the RRWMB Governing Documents. The next meeting of the Board of Managers was scheduled for June 9, at which time the comments would be discussed. The BRRWD response will be forwarded to the RRWMB as soon as possible.

C) Annual Audit

The accounting firm of Dahl, Hatton, Muir & Reese of Hallock was approved to provide the professional services relative to the financial information included in the Annual Report. Mark Hatton completed the audit of financial information for the RRWMB on June 11-13, 2003 at the Sand Hill River WD. After receiving the completed financial information, the Annual Report will be forwarded to the printer.

D) Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

Erickson stated that she attended the RRBFDWRWG meeting conducted on June 6, 2003. Discussion included the Badger Creek project of the Red Lake WD. The Work Group agreed that the cleaning of Badger Creek should be permitted as long as it reasonable and practical from a positive flow standpoint. A letter will be drafted from the Work Group to the DNR Commissioner and Kent Lokkesmoe requesting a determination be made regarding the reasonable flow for Badger Creek.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

The 2003 MAWD Summer Tour is scheduled for June 19-21, 2003, and hosted by the Clearwater River WD, St. Cloud, MN. The next meeting of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, 2003, Holiday Inn Lakeside, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed the project monitoring monthly report. He stated that Danni Halvorson is continuing to monitor several sites associated with flood damage reduction projects in the northern basin including the Hay Creek Project, Ross No. 7 Project, and the Agassiz Valley Water Management Project. Project teams are still developing monitoring plans for possible projects in the southern basin. Projects at various stages of

consideration include: Dalen Coulee and Marsh Creek in the Wild Rice WD; North Ottawa and Moonshine Lakebed in the Bois de Sioux WD; and Whisky Creek and Manston Slough in the Buffalo-Red River WD.

Manager Wilkens explained that the Water Quality Project Monitoring initiative has been funded the previous two years in the amount of ~ \$150,000 per year through legislative funds administered through the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group. He further noted that due to the increased difficulty in obtaining legislative funds, the RRBFDROWG does not have funds budgeted for the initiative for the next fiscal year which begins on July 1st. He inquired whether the RRWMB would consider funding the initiative until alternative funding sources could be secured.

Following discussion, the board agreed to continue funding the initiative in the interim through October 2003.

Motion by Manager Johnson to continue funding the Water Quality Project Monitoring initiative through October 2003, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the Board of Managers has completed the natural resource enhancement and flood damage reduction sections of the overall plan update and is awaiting a rough draft of the plan from the local plan writer. The Board of Managers has requested an extension from the Board of Water and Soil Resources until December 2003 to complete the plan. The Project Team has been involved in the overall plan update and has made changes to the plan as needed.
- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the status of the Public Law 566 (Snake River Watershed) Project. Work on the structure on County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 15 is scheduled to begin on August 4, 2003. The District is in the process of advertising for bids on what has been designated as Phase 3(A). This phase involves the next reach of the Floodway and consists of approximately 1 mile of channel. Bids are scheduled to be opened on June 26th. Work on Phase 2 is progressing which includes the impoundment portion of the project.
- The Red Lake WD reported that general maintenance on State Ditch No. 83 is near completion. Sloughing has been repaired and side inlet pipes have been installed. The cleaning on Red Lake WD Ditch No. 1, Laterals A and B, has now been completed. The spoil will be leveled in the fall following crop removal, along with the re-seeding of CRP.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that the District has received numerous calls regarding beaver problems. The District has participated in a beaver bounty program with the townships since 1994. The program requires the landowner experiencing beaver problems to contact the respective township who then designates a trapper to trap the problem beaver. The township board compensates the trapper \$30.00 for each beaver tail presented. The township board then bills the District \$20.00 per beaver. The program has been very effective and substantially reduced the overall costs of beaver dam blasting and removal.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the status of the Marsh Creek Site No. 6 (Mahnommen County) Project. The issue surrounding the pursuit of a favorable permit decision from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was the topic of a joint meeting between Congressman Collin Peterson, Minnesota DNR Commissioner Gene Merriam, Wild Rice WD Board of Managers and members of the Concerned Citizens of the Wild Rice WD this past month. Congressman Peterson called the meeting to assist the District's efforts to see the permit application to the DNR approved as part of an ongoing effort to move flood damage reduction projects forward in the Wild Rice WD. While the DNR has not formally denied the permit, the

agency is not looking favorably on the application request. The agency is contending that the project is not the most environmentally sound alternative to reduce flood damages.

The District has tried to address the DNR's concerns related to mitigation following the public review of the permit application. With the end of the legislative session, the opportunity is lost for seeking funding assistance for the \$2.5 million project in the state bonding bill. A formal decision on the permit is still pending.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the first in a series of public hearings required in conjunction with the final phases of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project was conducted. The hearing was regarding the realignment of Judicial Ditch No. 12, Laterals 1, 2, and 3. The township board has been receiving pressure from local landowners regarding the agreement to place the township roads on top of the dikes. An agreement is currently in place between the township and the District, however, potential exists for appeals to be filed.

District's Funding Requests

1. Red Lake WD / Project 60 Area Project / Step I Submittal

The information required for a Step I submittal was distributed to the board for consideration. Manager Deal noted that the proposed project site must be inspected (toured) by the Board before a decision on approval is acted upon. The Board discussed meeting at the Red Lake WD for the next monthly meeting and conduct a tour of the project area. Myron Jesme, Administrator, suggested that the tour be conducted at the August board meeting in order for additional information to be completed.

2. Red Lake WD / Flood Storage Easement Project / Step II Submittal

Myron Jesme, Administrator, distributed the Step II submittal funding request to the board for consideration. He noted that at the previous monthly meeting, cost estimates for Site 1 and Site 2 were listed as \$50,000 for each site. He explained that the figures stated were actually the estimates for the RRWMB cost share, not total project cost estimates. **Motion** by Manager Deal to amend the May 2003 minutes to reflect the correct RRWMB cost share estimate, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Motion by Manager Johnson to authorize the Step II submittal of the Flood Storage Easement Project, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

3. Two Rivers WD / Ross No. 7 / Step II Submittal

A Step II submittal funding request was presented to the board for consideration. The estimated total project cost is \$1,997,352.00 with the following proposed breakdown of project costs: State of Minnesota \$1,000,000; RRWMB \$625,000; and Two Rivers WD \$375,000. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize the Step II submittal of the Ross No. 7 Project with the RRWMB cost share of \$625,000, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

4. Bois de Sioux WD / Overall Plan Update

Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, distributed a summary of the expenditures to date for the overall plan update. The original budget for the plan update was estimated at \$240,800 with the proposed cost share as follows: State 50%, RRWMB 25%, and BdSWD 25%. Currently, the cost overruns are ~ \$50,000, however, additional costs are expected to be incurred. Following discussion, the

board agreed that when all the costs have been incurred for the overall plan update, a final funding request for cost overruns should be submitted to the RRWMB for consideration.

Beaver Control Program

Manager Wilkens stated that the Problem Beaver Grant Program was not funded this year through the legislature. Manager Deal reported that the BdSWD charges the respective legal ditch system for beaver control. Dick Nelson noted that the RRMWB may want to consider funding a portion of this program in the future.

Associate Director Performance Review

Manager Erickson stated that at the November 20, 2002 board meeting, the board agreed on the following: 1. The Associate Director will be responsible for preparing the agenda and be an alternate to the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG). 2. The positions on the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) and the RRBFDRWG currently held by the Executive Director shall be appointed from the RRWMB. The board agreed that a performance review of the aforementioned recommendations would be conducted in six months.

Following discussion, the board agreed that the Human Resources Committee consisting of Jerome Deal, Farrell Erickson, and John Finney should meet prior to the next monthly board meeting to conduct a review of the previous recommendations.

Establishment of New Watershed District

Manager Deal stated that at the June 25th board meeting, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources voted in favor of approving the final order to establish the Shell Rock River Watershed District.

After a subcommittee of the BWSR board heard testimony at a meeting May 13, 2003, from officials representing Freeborn County, the City of Albert Lea, the Freeborn Soil and Water Conservation District, the petitioners, and others, it decided to move forward with establishing the new watershed district. The final recommendation was presented at this month's BWSR board meeting.

The territory to be included in the Shell Rock River Watershed District encompasses a total area of approximately 319 square miles.

The next meeting will be on July 15, 2003, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District office, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Associate Director