

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

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Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

October 21, 2003

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, October 21, 2003, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, 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, Administrator
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
Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator, RRBC
April North, Basin Biologist, RRBC
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
Brian Dwight, BWSR
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD

An additional item was added to the agenda. Manager Finney requested adding an update on the Badger Creek permit issue under item no. 12.

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

Financial Coordinator Report

D. Nelson reported on the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The Governor announced that the Red River Basin has been selected to receive 42,500 acres in the CREP application to the Federal government. At the present, CREP is the only item included in the proposed bonding bill.

D. Nelson stated that he was selected as a member of the G-40 review board regarding the Minnesota Environmental Initiative (MEI). The initiative includes the assessment of the status of the State's waters, and implementation of corrective actions. The proposal includes a \$100 million dollar annual budget with the funds to be raised primarily through fee increases.

D. Nelson noted that he attended a meeting on October 9, 2003 in St. Paul at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) with Jerome Deal, Lisa Thorvig, and Jim Ziegler. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss additional funding assistance for the calendar year 2004 for the River Watch Program and the water quality monitoring network. MPCA agreed to provide an additional \$75,000 in funding for these initiatives. This one-time funding is in addition to the MPCA's annual allocation of funds to support laboratory analysis in the Red River Basin.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting. He stated that the TAC reviewed the report "Simulation of Runoff and Wetland Storage in the Hamden and Lonetree Watershed Sites within the Red River of the North Basin." The USGS wetland study concluded that wetland restorations don't have a significant impact on large floods. The TAC determined that although the general conclusion of study is correct, it did not offer any new information or guidance. Following discussion, the board agreed to forward a letter to USGS stating that the RRWMB has no problem with the report proceeding to publication.

Thul distributed copies of the revised Star Value Method in accordance with the Governing Documents review. He requested that comments or questions about the revisions be forwarded to him prior to the next monthly meeting.

Red River Basin Commission

Lance Yohe, Executive Director-RRBC, introduced April North who was recently hired as a Basin Biologist. He stated that her initial duties will focus on completing the basin plan. He added that the 21st Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference will be held on January 14-16, 2004 at the Courtyard Marriot Moorhead Area Conference Center. The theme of the conference is "Watershed Issues: Bridging the Past, Present and the Future."

Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator-RRBC, distributed copies of the Minnesota CREP application. He noted that some opposition has occurred with regard to the permanent easement provision included in the program. He added that meetings will be scheduled throughout the basin to discuss the program. He noted the importance of obtaining support from the RRWMB for the program since the individual watershed district project teams will be involved in implementing the program.

Maynard Pick added that Rep. Peterson is opposed to permanent easements. The Minnesota Corn Growers Association and the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation are of the same opinion.

Administrator Report

A) Governing Documents Review

The *Transition Team* met on October 10, 2003 at the Sand Hill River Watershed District office to review the Governing Documents publication. A summary of the suggested revisions was distributed to the board for consideration. Following discussion, the board agreed that any comments on the suggested revisions should be forwarded to N. Erickson prior to the November board meeting.

B) Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

N. Erickson stated that she visited a project site located in Baker on Monday, October 13, 2003 where Governor Pawlenty announced his endorsement of the CREP program in Minnesota. CREP is a voluntary federal-state-local program that works with farmers to set aside marginal agricultural lands along waterways to enhance wildlife habitats, improve water quality, reduce erosion and sedimentation and reduce the impacts of recurrent flooding.

C) USGS Streamflow Monitoring

A meeting was conducted on October 14, 2003 in Fargo, ND to discuss the Red River Basin Cooperative Streamflow Monitoring Program with those agencies that assist in funding the program as well as utilize the information. An explanation of the current monitoring network, data availability (published information, Internet access, etc.) and potential changes to the network were discussed.

D) Funding Committee

The Funding Committee of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group met on Wednesday, October 15, 2003 in Alexandria, MN. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the following: 1. Status of funds available for reallocation; reallocation recommendations; 2. Potential projects for engineering grant awards; and 3. Further discussion of recommendations for WD invoice procedures.

The committee discussed engineering grants that had been approved in the FY03 budget but not yet fully disbursed. The approved engineering grants are as follows:

	<u>Preliminary</u>	<u>Final</u>
1. North Ottawa		20,000
2. Whisky Creek		20,000
3. Ross No. 7		20,000
4. Project No. 60	20,000	

In order to determine the status of funds available for reallocation, the committee agreed that a status report regarding the approved engineering grants should be forwarded to the office of the RRWMB by Wednesday, October 22, 2003. The amount of funding that has been received to date, as well as whether the awarded grant is expected to be fully utilized should be included in the update.

E) Financial Coordinator / ACH Proposal

N. Erickson explained that Dick Nelson had inquired about receiving his monthly contract payment as a direct deposit, similar to the ACH services currently provided to the employees of the RRWMB (Erickson, Goeken, and Halvorson). Bremer Bank indicated that an additional payroll file would need to be established since Nelson would be paid on a monthly basis rather than bi-monthly as do the RRWMB employees. The cost of establishing an additional payroll file would be ~ \$1.00 per month. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize D. Nelson's monthly contract payment as an ACH direct deposit, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed handouts regarding the Red River Basin Monitoring Network. The data distributed was from sample events beginning April 1st through August 20, 2003. Graphs depicting turbidity and total suspended solids (TSS) showed that the highest of both occurred at the Pembina site on the Red River. As with turbidity and TSS, Total Phosphorus was also high at the Pembina site.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that a preliminary engineer's report for the proposed West Intercept project was presented to the Board of Managers at the October board meeting. The board voted to officially accept the preliminary report. A special public informational meeting was conducted on September 24th to discuss the components of the project.
- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported that work on the structure on County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 15 has been completed regarding the Public Law 566 (Snake River Watershed) Project. Work on Phase 3A has been halted for this construction season. The excavation is essentially completed with seeding and other minor work remaining. Work on Phase 2 (Off Channel Floodwater Store Site) is still underway. In terms of the value of the work completed, the project is approximately 70% completed. The placement of fill is still expected to be completed this fall with the seeding and other finishing work completed next summer.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on flood storage sites regarding the analysis to be completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). A special meeting was held by the District on September 23, 2003 to identify candidate flood storage locations that would have the greatest impact for reducing flood damages along the Lower Wild Rice River. From the technical data provided at the meeting, the Board of Managers decided to select three sites on the South Branch and one site on the Wild Rice River for the analysis being done by the USACE.

In going through the selection process, the board looked at the goals set by the Systems Approach Planning Process (SAPP). A goal of the SAPP process included reducing damages by 75% to farmland through reduction in acres flooded as a result of the June 19-20 flood event equivalent. Representatives from Houston Engineering explained that the South Branch and Felton Ditch provided 40% of the flow at Hendrum during the 2000 summer flood event. Brian Dwight, BWSR, also suggested looking at an on-channel site on the Wild Rice River for the analysis, with the Faith area chosen as a good candidate for the study.

Houston Engineering will be assisting the USACE with data from previous studies in efforts to refine the site locations for further investigation.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the status of the North Ottawa Project. Negotiations with landowners for right-of-way (ROW) in and around the project are complete. The landowners that have accepted offers by the board for ROW along their property are proceeding with updating abstracts and deed signing. A total of six parcels of land have been paid for by the District to date. The parcels where the landowners did not accept the District's offer for ROW have been viewed and appraised with the District proceeding through the process of eminent domain. The viewer's report will be presented to the board at the November board meeting with a hearing to be held in December in conjunction with the Final Project Hearing.

Red Lake Watershed District / Badger Creek Permit

At the previous monthly meeting, the board authorized forwarding a letter to Congressman Collin Peterson to request his assistance in resolving the permit issue. A draft of the letter was distributed for review. Manager Finney stated that Paul Swenson is on the agenda of the next Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting to discuss this issue. Following discussion, the board agreed that the letter should not be forwarded to Congressman Peterson. **Motion** by Manager Johnson to rescind the motion authorized at the September 16th board meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

District's Funding Requests

1. Red Lake WD / Seeger Dam

A funding request was submitted to cost share for the repairs to a dam which was turned over to the Red Lake WD in 1977 by NRCS. The dam has encountered several slope failures since construction. In 2002, the Red Lake WD repaired a slough back to its original design; the cost of that repair including engineering was approximately \$27,760. In 2003, due to the magnitude of the slough repaired in 2002, the district determined that the downstream slope should be improved to a 3:1. The estimated cost of this repair, including engineering is \$59,000, for a combined total cost of repairs of \$86,760. The Red Lake WD requested funding cost share for the repairs to the dam in the amount of \$20,000.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to authorize cost share funding assistance for the Seeger Dam repairs not to exceed \$20,000, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

Heiberg Dam / Marsh Creek Flood Detention Site No. 6

Jerry Bennett, Wild Rice WD Administrator, distributed handouts outlining the Heiberg Dam and Marsh Creek projects. The Heiberg Dam is located on Trunk Highway No. 32, north of Twin Valley. The north embankment of the dam was breached during the 2002 flood. Estimated cost for the repairs are in the range of \$300,000. The district is currently working with agencies to address concerns in formulation of an acceptable repair for the dam.

The Marsh Creek project is located on County Road No. 136 between Sections 19 and 30 of Marsh Creek Township, Mahnomen County. The objective of this project is to reduce flood damages by decreasing peak discharge and stage downstream along Marsh Creek, Wild Rice River and Red River of the North. An initial petition was filed with the district and signed by approximately 88 individuals in 1981. Due to constraints, in 1991 the Board of Managers of the district voted to revise the project. The proposed revision consists of constructing Site No. 6 and changing it from a nongated facility to a gated dry dam facility.

A tour of the project areas will be conducted following adjourning the meeting.

The next meeting will be on November 18, 2003, at 9:30 a.m. at the Roseau River Watershed District office, Roseau, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator