

Red River Watershed Management Board

1298 South Shore Drive Detroit Lakes, MN 56501 Phone: (218)844-6166, Fax: (218)844-6167

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RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

December 16, 2003

Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, December 16, 2003, at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Dan Money Ron Osowski
Vernon Johnson Daniel Wilkens
Jerome Deal

Others present were: Dick Nelson, Financial Coordinator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator, RRBC
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Dennis Nikolayson, Red Lake WD
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Alvin Nybladh, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Motion by Manager Money 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 Johnson 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 Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Financial Coordinator Report

D. Nelson stated that he attended the Minnesota Association of Floodplain Managers meeting representing the City of Warren. He was a participant in a panel discussion on mitigation of flood damages and recovery from disasters. His attendance was as the Mayor of Warren with the city paying for all expenses incurred.

D. Nelson reported on the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) 33rd Annual Meeting and Trade Show. He stated that there were a large number of attendees which offered a good opportunity to network with others. Some pre-legislative planning also occurred at the conference.

D. Nelson explained that he has been invited to participate in facilitated meetings being held on St. Paul regarding the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The purpose of the meetings is to try to reach agreement between the parties (agricultural, environmental, and those involved with implementation) in order for the application to receive approval in Washington, D.C. He is currently working with Ray Bohn to insure the viability of the program for watershed districts in their future planning.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet prior to the board meeting. He reported that in the future he will be attending the Sand Hill River WD project team meetings rather than Chad Konnickson. Konnickson will be replacing his position on the Red Lake WD project team due to the close proximity of the DNR office to the Red Lake WD.

Red River Basin Commission

Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Kevin Scheidecker, Basin Coordinator-RRBC, distributed the minutes of the CREP Advisory Team meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to determine how a Red River CREP will be allocated, targeted and implemented.

Based on an allocation of 42,500 acres of CREP to the Red River Basin, targeting will be crucial to having the largest impact on flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement. The CREP acres for the Red River Basin will be allocated on a watershed basis with an allocation based on the amount of cropland as a percentage of total cropland in the Red River Basin. Each watershed district will target its CREP acres using the Red River mediation agreement through their project teams.

Scheidecker noted the importance of obtaining support from the RRWMB for the CREP program since the individual watershed district project teams will be involved in implementing the program. He requested a letter of support from the board. **Motion** by Manager Deal to draft a letter of support from the RRWMB for the CREP program, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Funding Support

Kevin Scheidecker discussed the future funding needs of the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC). He explained that previously the RRWMB has contributed \$75,000 per year on behalf of the counties in Minnesota. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize funding for the year 2004 for the RRBC in the amount of \$75,000, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Administrator Report

A) Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD)

The MAWD 33rd Annual Meeting and Trade Show was conducted on December 4-6, 2003, at the Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center, Alexandria, MN. The conference was featured in the current issue of *News & Views*.

B) Farmstead Ring Dike Program

A funding request was submitted at the November board meeting by the Buffalo-Red River WD for reimbursement for 25% cost share under the farmstead ring dike program. The time period for the request was from 5/27/03 to 10/14/03. Since the BRRWD was not a member district at the time of the request, the board discussed whether or not the RRWMB would be obligated to approve the request. N. Erickson discussed this issue with representatives from DNR who indicated that under this program, the state provides 50% funding to the watershed districts with the remaining costs split between the watershed districts and the landowners. The historic cost share percentage is State 50% - RRWMB 25% - Watershed District 25%. **Motion** by Manager Deal to not authorize the funding request submitted by the Buffalo-Red River WD, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

C) Annual Reports

The 2002 Annual Report has been prepared and will be distributed at today's meeting.

D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, January 7, 2004, Holiday Inn Lakeside, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. 21st Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference, January 14-16, 2004, Moorhead Area Conference Center, Moorhead, MN.
3. Sixth Annual Joint Conference of the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, February 5, 2004, Northland Inn, Crookston, MN.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

The project monitoring monthly report prepared by Wayne Goeken was distributed. The primary activity over the past month was related to data management review and coordination of grant proposals for a variety of water quality initiatives in the Red River Basin.

Red Lake Watershed District / Badger Creek Permit

The Badger Creek permit issue was discussed. A meeting scheduled by the DNR for December 12th to discuss the delay in issuing the permit for Badger Creek was postponed until December 19, 2003.

Internet Access / Webpage

Manager Finney inquired whether all board members had access to the Internet. All members, except Vernon Johnson, responded that they had Internet access. Manager Finney suggested that all members should consider obtaining Internet access as this could be an excellent communication tool between RRWMB members and staff. Jerry Bennett and Dick Nelson expressed concern with this idea relative to violating open meeting laws if

not used properly. Following discussion, the board agreed that as long as the information distributed via email did not involve board member interaction it would be acceptable.

Manager Money inquired about updating the RRWMB webpage. Manager Wilkens responded that the board approved updating the webpage at a previous monthly meeting and he would inquire with N. Erickson regarding the status of the update.

District Reports

- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the status of the Public Law 566 (Snake River Watershed) Project. Work on the project has been halted for this year and is expected to resume next summer. Final payment for the work on the CSAH No. 15 crossing has been made. The excavation is essentially completed with seeding and other minor work remaining on Phase 3a of the project. On Phase 2, up to the last pay estimate is over 85% completed in terms of the value of the contract. The District is preparing the contract documents for the crossings on Trunk Highway No. 1, Trunk Highway No. 75 and for the remaining portion of Phase 3 yet this fall and early winter. The contracts should be let this winter.
- The Red Lake WD reported on Project No. 60. The appraisals for properties within the proposed impoundments have been completed. The District has started discussing land prices with the landowners. HDR Engineering, Inc. updated the board on the status of the project at the December 11th meeting. The preliminary engineer's report should be completed by middle to late January.

This project has been selected as one of the pilot projects for the Governor's Clean Water Cabinet initiative. Doug Thomas, Board of Water & Soil Resources, reviewed this initiative with members of the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group.

- The Wild Rice WD recently held a joint meeting with the City of Ada for the purpose of making a "go" or "no go" decision on whether or not to include the City of Ada protection as an additional goal in the remainder of the Phase 1 Feasibility Study. The outcome of the meeting with city officials was a "no go" decision on including protection for the city as part of the Feasibility Study. The City of Ada will be providing a written request to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to restart the Section 205 study for levee protection pending approval of a revised budget and a written commitment from the DNR on funding commitment. The decision to leave protection for the City of Ada out of the Feasibility Study reaffirms the primary goal of the study to reduce agricultural flood damages along the Lower Wild Rice River.

The District is in the process of completing the LIDAR mapping and will be updating the hydrology model for the proposed projects in the coming months. The first phase of the storage analysis is being conducted for the on-channel storage sites on the Wild Rice River and South Branch rivers. Plans are to meet with the project team this week to begin work in preparing the on-channel assessment worksheet for the sites currently identified by the Board for investigation.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the status of the Moonshine Lakebed Project. The Board has discussed this project with Ken Finch of the Audubon Society and has been advised of the urgency to get this project moving forward due to the timeframe of the NAWCA Grant (\$400,000). Out of that discussion came direction to the staff to have the appraisals updated on the lands that still need to be acquired and forward another offer to those landowners. If these offers are rejected, the Board has agreed to consider using eminent domain.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Alternative meeting dates were discussed in order to schedule the meeting in conjunction with the 21st Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference in Moorhead, MN on January 14-16, 2004.

Motion by Manager Deal to reschedule the regular monthly meeting of the RRWMB for January 14, 2004, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Moorhead Area Conference Center, Moorhead, MN, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize board members and staff to attend the 21st Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference in Moorhead, MN on January 14-16, 2004, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator