

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, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

February 17, 2004

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, February 17, 2004, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, 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, Administrator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Administrator, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
Danni Halvorson, Monitoring Specialist
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
Alvin Nybladh, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
James Fallon, USGS Supervisory Hydrologist
Jason Lambrecht, USGS Field Office Chief

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Motion by Manager Money to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the January 14, 2004 meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. **Motion** by Manager Deal to approve the minutes as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **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 Wright, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Johnson, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Financial Coordinator Report

In the absence of D. Nelson, a handout was distributed on his behalf. The report discussed the status of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in the legislature. The application is on hold in Washington, D.C. due to objection of the permanent easement portion included in the proposal. The initial proposal included a choice of permanent or 35-year easement for lands enrolled in the program. Some Congressmen and agricultural groups do not support landowners having a choice for the voluntary program. By including permanent easements in the proposal, landowners will benefit by having more choices. Easement options ranging from limited to permanent in length offer landowners flexibility in retiring marginal/environmentally sensitive land.

At the previous monthly meeting, the board authorized forwarding a letter of support to legislators regarding CREP. Maynard Pick explained that although the legislators are aware that the board supports the initiative, communication should occur which states specifically the practices that will be implemented (i.e. installation of filter strips) in conjunction with CREP. Following discussion, the board authorized a committee consisting of Dan Wilkens, Dick Nelson and Naomi Erickson to draft a revised letter of support for CREP. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the above-mentioned committee to draft a revised letter of support for CREP to forward to legislators, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

The proposed bill to dedicate 4/16 of a percent of the sales tax to the environment, which would include 30% for the impaired waters initiative, was discussed. D. Nelson noted in his report that the proposal should be in addition to the existing sales tax, otherwise \$170 million would be taken from somewhere else. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize D. Nelson to work in conjunction with the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) in support of the sales tax initiative, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

The MAWD Board of Directors has prioritized several legislative items this session including increasing the board manager per diem from \$55 to \$75. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize D. Nelson to work with MAWD in support of increasing board manager per diem up to \$75, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet prior to the board meeting. He noted that at the previous monthly meeting, the board requested that the TAC review information received from USGS regarding the potential for funding for fiscal year 2004 for the Red River Wetland Monitoring and Modeling Project. The estimated cost for a scaled-down version of the project for fiscal year 2004 is \$66,500, with all current cooperating agencies contributing \$7,000.00. The current non-federal cooperators include: North Dakota State Water Commission, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Red River Joint Water Resource Board, and the RRWMB. Following discussion, the TAC members agreed that although they supported monitoring wetlands they recommended discontinuing the funding commitment of the RRWMB due to the expensive nature of the project.

Motion by Manager Money to accept the TAC's recommendation to discontinue the funding commitment for the Red River Wetland Monitoring and Modeling Project, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

Thul added that he attended a training session sponsored by Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) relative to mainstem modeling in the Red River Basin. The consultants that conducted the session were from Canada and focused on the MIKE 11 model. The RRBC contracted modeling efforts for both the MIKE 11 model from the Canadian border to Lake Traverse, and also a HEC RAS model from Fargo to the Canadian border. The MIKE 11 model was strongly promoted by Canada, while the HEC RAS model is the model utilized by the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers (USACE). The TAC plans to discuss the merits of both modeling efforts and develop a recommendation to the RRBC.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken- Monitoring Coordinator, Danni Halvorson-Monitoring Specialist, and Bruce Paak-MPCA conducted a presentation on the State of the Red River based on the 2003 condition monitoring season. The report included a summary of the 2003 water quality monitoring results for the Red River of the North and its Minnesota tributaries.

Projects included in the 2003 monitoring season included River Watch, Flood Damage Reduction, and the Red River Basin Monitoring Network. Currently, 27 schools are conducting monitoring efforts with each school monitoring 5-14 sites per school. Monthly monitoring activities include sampling for pH, conductivity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, transparency, stage, photo and site observation.

Projects endorsed by the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group that involve flood damage reduction and/or natural resource enhancements are also monitored. Nine projects are currently being monitored which includes a total of 17 sites. Monitoring plans for these projects have been developed by local project teams.

Monitoring sites included in the Red River Basin Monitoring Network include 6 mainstem sites, with 18 sites located on the Minnesota tributaries. Sites have also been selected in North Dakota and Manitoba to be included in the network.

The goals of the Water Quality Monitoring effort are to provide the data needed to identify water quality trends over time, direct further monitoring efforts, and identify problem areas.

Administrator Report

A) 21st Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference

This conference was conducted on January 14-16, 2004 at the Moorhead Area Conference Center, Moorhead, Minnesota. A detailed report of the conference was featured in the January Issue of News & Views.

B) Sixth Annual Joint Conference

The Sixth Annual Joint Conference of the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group was conducted on February 5, 2004, at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN. The conference previously conducted in March was rescheduled to early February in order to accommodate the legislative session. Attendance was up slightly from the previous year, with many favorable comments received regarding the content of the conference.

C) Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

The RRBFDROWG conducted a meeting following the Sixth Annual Joint Conference on February 5, 2004 at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN. The Work Group reviewed the status of three recent TSAC Technical Papers including Technical Paper No. 11 (Basin Strategy), Technical Paper No. 12 (Wetland Hydrology and Biodiversity), and Technical Paper No. 10 (Basin Strategy: Hydrologic Analysis). Technical Paper No. 11 will require further review by authors (Al Kean and Charlie Anderson) and Ron Harnack and Mark Ten

Eyck. Draft reports of Technical Papers Nos. 12 and 10 were distributed for Work Group 30-day review. The next RRBFDROWG meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2004 in Detroit Lakes, MN.

D) Webpage Update

N. Erickson reported that the independent contractor continues work on updating the RRWMB website. She requested that member watershed districts email their logos or letterhead to the RRWMB office in order for it to be included on the website.

E) Computer Purchase

N. Erickson explained that relative to the discussion that occurred at the previous monthly board meeting, a revised estimate was obtained for purchasing a new desktop computer for the RRWMB office. The estimate obtained for a new Dell Dimension 4600 Series (Pentium 4 Processor with 3.4GHz.) is ~ \$2,235.09.

At the previous board meeting, N. Erickson indicated that the printer that was purchased two years ago was in good working order. Since that time it has significantly started to malfunction. The printer was brought to Laser Systems in Fargo to diagnose the problem and prepare an estimate for repair. An estimate for repair as well as pricing information for two new printers was distributed. The cost to repair the printer totaled \$831.00. The LJ3500 prints 12 pages per minute full color and costs ~\$829.00. The LJ3700 prints at speeds up to 16 per minute full color and costs ~\$1,329.00.

N. Erickson added that previously she had inquired with Tony Dorn, Inc. about the possibility of upgrading the current lease for the RRWMB photocopier to include printing options. At that time, N. Erickson was interested in saving desk space in her office and eliminating the costs associated with maintaining the laser printer.

Manager Wilkens inquired about the options included with the current photocopier leased to the RRWMB. N. Erickson responded that currently the photocopier includes a faxing option. Manager Wilkens stated that a representative from Tony Dorn was scheduled to deliver equipment to the Sand Hill River WD office later that day, and suggested that he would contact him and request that he attend the meeting to discuss the options available regarding upgrading the lease for the photocopier.

Manager Wilkens added that the Sand Hill River WD currently leases a color photocopier through Tony Dorn and noted that the District is very satisfied with the quality of the copies. Other District Administrators including Jon Roeschlein, Myron Jesme, Jerry Bennett, and Ron Adrian stated that their Districts also lease/own color photocopiers and noted that they were very pleased with their performance. Manager Money inquired about the necessity for the RRWMB office to produce color copies and suggested that either purchasing a black and white printer or adding a print board to the current photocopier might be sufficient.

Myron Jesme stated that he believed it was important for the RRWMB to be able to produce color copies. Jesme added that at times he has forwarded information to N. Erickson to be included in the mailings for the RRWMB managers and often times this information includes color maps or graphs. Ron Adrian concurred with Jesme and stated that due to technological advances, a significant portion of information exchanged between organizations is in color and for the RRWMB not to be able to produce color copies would be regressing. Manager Wilkens added that it is important for the information that is distributed on behalf of the RRWMB to possess a professional image, therefore, he recommended either purchasing or leasing equipment that has color capabilities.

N. Erickson stated that since the office currently does not have a functioning printer, it is imperative that a decision is made quickly in order for the equipment to be replaced. She requested that once information is

obtained regarding upgrading the lease for the current photocopier to include printing options, the estimates for either upgrading the photocopier or purchasing a new printer be referred to a committee for authorization. Manager Erickson requested volunteers for the committee. Managers Money and Wilkens volunteered. Manager Erickson also appointed John Finney to the committee.

Prior to the adjournment of the meeting, the representative from Tony Dorn arrived to discuss the options available to the board regarding upgrading the lease. He stated that many options are available including various stapling and/or binding, scanning, an electronic mail box function, and color printing. He noted that the maintenance agreement through Tony Dorn includes all parts, labor, drive time, drums and all toners at a per copy rate of .10 for color and .015 for black and white copies. He added that he would prepare a cost estimate for upgrading the lease and forward it to N. Erickson. N. Erickson stated that she would forward the information to the committee members once it is obtained.

U.S. Geological Survey Streamflow Monitoring Program

James Fallon, USGS Supervisory Hydrologist and Jason Lambrecht, USGS Field Office Chief discussed the Red River Basin Streamflow Monitoring Program. The RRWMB currently participates in the program by funding 15 gages in the basin.

Fallon explained that a meeting was conducted in October of 2003 which discussed the program with those agencies that assisted in funding the program as well as utilized the information. He stated that potential changes to the network were discussed with N. Erickson at that time relative to the Buffalo-Red River WD no longer being a member of the RRWMB and also the redistribution of funding sources.

Fallon stated that the USGS has three funding sources for the streamflow monitoring program which include cooperators, NSIP (National Streamflow Information Program), and AER (Army Engineer Replacement) funds. The AER funds are direct appropriations to USGS in addition to cooperative matching funds. The redistribution of funding sources involves combining AER funds with the NSIP program. The change will not involve a loss of funds, just a redistribution. Fallon noted that he would be in contact with Dan Thul and N. Erickson regarding the funding redistribution.

District Reports

- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported on amending the comprehensive water management plan. The District is proceeding with the process to amend the comprehensive water management plan. The current plan was adopted in 1994. The amendment will include the Tamarac Watershed Area in the Comprehensive Water Management Plan. The process should be completed by early summer. The rules of the District are also being updated. The proposed rules have been forwarded to the Board of Water & Soil Resources for their review.
- The Red Lake WD reported that the Board of Managers received a petition to repair State Ditch No. 83. The board appointed Houston Engineering to prepare the Preliminary Engineer's Report, which should be completed by the middle of March.

The District welcomed a new board member, Allan Carlson from Erskine, representing East Polk County. Mr. Carlson replaces Dennis Nikolayson on the board.

- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Marsh Creek Site No. 6 project. A news release was distributed which stated that the feasibility of the project does not look good. An analysis by the District's engineering staff indicated that the proposed project is not going to prove economically feasible. The board plans to continue their discussion about the future of the project at their February 18th meeting.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the final hearing for the North Ottawa Impoundment Project was conducted on January 22, 2004 in Wendell. The board recessed the hearing until February 3, 2004 in order to accommodate the North Ottawa Township Board. The Township Board wanted to confer with their attorney who was not able to attend the January meeting prior to closing the hearing to public comment. On February 3rd the board heard additional testimony from the public and proceeded to issue the order to construct. The order was filed as required by statute on February 5, 2004 which started the 30-day appeal period. Construction is slated for the summer of 2004.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on March 16, 2004, 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 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator