

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

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RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

July 20, 2004

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, July 20, 2004, 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, 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
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Don Buckhout, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Roger Hanson, Sand Hill River WD
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
Brian Dwight, BWSR
Ron Shelito, BWSR
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office

No additional items were added to the agenda.

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

Due to the cancellation of the June 2004 board meeting, the treasurer's reports for May 2004 and June 2004 were presented and approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Erickson, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **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 Johnson, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet prior to the board meeting, however, a meeting was conducted at Houston Engineering, Inc. on June 2, 2004 with Al Kean-BWSR and Dr. Gary Sands-University of Minnesota in order to address drainage issues. Technical issues such as sub-surface drainage and design criteria were discussed, as well as possible changes to the drainage law.

Thul explained that an interagency group was formed to address drainage issues. Two research sites, located in Crookston and Morris, have been selected to focus on sub-surface or tile drainage. The U of M Extension has indicated that although they support tile drainage in the Red River Basin, they are not necessarily promoting tile drainage.

The most significant water quality problem is related to nitrogen. The interagency group has studied hydrologic impacts of tile systems, specifically with regard to peak flow and runoff impacts and determined that sandy soils may increase runoff peaks whereas clay soils tend to decrease runoff peaks. Thul added that the TAC has concerns relating to watershed impacts relative to tile systems. The design criteria for these systems was developed elsewhere, but is being utilized in the Red River Basin.

Anderson noted that locally tile systems may reduce peak flows that leave a field, however, the actual total runoff volume should be considered. The Red River flood is a flood of volume. The amount of runoff that follows a storm is a key variable, with tile systems potentially increasing runoff peaks. Thul added that even if flows aren't increased, they may contribute to flooding because of timing.

Thul reported on the compliance survey that was conducted by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the ag dikes located along the river. He stated that there is a minor discrepancy between the DNR surveys and watershed district information in the Middle-Snake-Tamarac WD. Sections within four reaches appear to not be in compliance. Thul added that he would contact the District to resolve the discrepancies within the next week.

Thul added that a conference call between the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) and Canadian, North Dakota and South Dakota interests was conducted regarding the Red River mainstem model. Discussion regarding extending the tributary model up to a gaging site occurred. The group also addressed including 3 or 4 key bridges since significant head loss of bridges could impact storage.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC distributed handouts regarding current projects. The Red River of Expression is a project that was sponsored by Cargill and involved a photography, poetry and artwork contest for children in grades K-12 with entries focused on a watershed theme. Locations of billboards displaying contest winners was distributed.

The Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference is scheduled for January 12-14, 2005 at the Ramada Plaza, Fargo, ND. The purpose of the 22nd Annual Conference is to foster international cooperation in identifying watershed issues in the Red River Basin and to provide a public forum for education, training and information dissemination relating to natural resources in the Red River Basin.

Administrator Report

A) Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

N. Erickson reported that a funding request was submitted from the Buffalo-Red River WD for \$16,323.80 for project team expenses incurred in fiscal year 2004. The 2004 budget approved by the Work Group did not include a project team allocation for the Buffalo-Red River WD since they had withdrawn membership from the RRWMB. The Work Group must determine whether or not to approve the funding request.

B) Project Team Workshops

Project Team workshop meetings were conducted on June 7th at the Best Western Hotel, Thief River Falls, MN and June 8th at the Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN. The workshops were designed to provide an opportunity for project team members who are working regularly to implement flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement projects to learn from the authors of the RRBFDRWG Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) Technical Papers about specific tools and findings to support their mission. TSAC members presented findings from the Basin Framework study, the Wetland Storage study and the On-Channel Storage Assessment. Practical guidance in the use of these studies was discussed for project alternative evaluation and project design.

C) Data Policy

N. Erickson stated that a verbal information request was submitted from a citizen to the RRWMB regarding financial information and operating procedures. Upon further investigation, the issue was submitted by the RRWMB to attorney, Louis Smith, for review. Mr. Smith recommended that the board adopt a policy regarding data information requests. A draft of the proposed RRWMB Data Policy was distributed for board consideration. Issues regarding assigning an hourly fee for the time utilized by the designated authority to provide the information requested, as well as specific procedures for reviewing office files were discussed. The board directed N. Erickson to discuss these issues with Louis Smith for clarification.

D) North Ottawa Township Appeal

N. Erickson reported that the Board of Managers authorized a settlement agreement which was signed by the appellants. Several conditions were included in the mediated agreement which will be discussed further by the Bois de Sioux WD.

E) MAWD Summer Tour

The 2004 Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) Summer Tour was conducted on June 24-26, 2004 in Moorhead, MN and was hosted by the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD). A detailed report of the conference was featured in the June Issue of News & Views.

F) Proposed Buy-out/Relocation

N. Erickson stated that she was contacted by a landowner regarding a farmstead located in the Wild Rice WD. The landowner inquired about the possibility of obtaining funding assistance through the RRWMB for a proposed buy-out/relocation regarding the building site that is currently in foreclosure with another party. Following discussion, the board agreed that any such funding request would have to be formally submitted by the respective watershed district which, in this case, is the Wild Rice WD.

G) Red River Basin Institute

The Red River Basin Institute is hosting the Second International Water Conference "Research and Education in an International Watershed: Implications for Decision-Making" at the Ft. Garry Hotel in Winnipeg, Manitoba, April 6 -7, 2005. RRBI is seeking abstracts for oral presentation and poster presentations. Sessions will address issues of water management, flood damage reduction/mitigation, and

natural resources protections/development confronting policy makers, scientists, and citizens of the Red River Basin.

H) Future Conference

N. Erickson discussed the possibility of scheduling a conference regarding the procedures to be followed for project implementation. Following discussion, the board agreed that this issue should be addressed in concert with the Annual Conference to be conducted in February or March. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to form a planning committee consisting of Jerome Deal, Naomi Erickson, and Don Buckhout to address this issue, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Funding Committee, August 18, 2004, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Alexandria Airport Terminal, Alexandria, MN.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that they have been working with JOR Engineering, Inc. on the revised plan for the West Intercept project. The board of managers recently held a public hearing in May for the project. The design of the project was accepted at this hearing. The purchase of property along the proposed alignment of the intercept is now the primary focus. A protected waters permit has been submitted to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the outlet of the project. Rob Sando-Administrator has been working diligently with JOR Engineering to review the Joint Notification form for wetlands with the State, Local and Federal personnel.
- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported that the contract for the structure on Minnesota Trunk Highway No. 75 has been awarded to Midwest Contracting of Marshall, MN for the Public Law 566 (Snake River Watershed) project. Construction was scheduled to begin July 26, 2004 and should be completed in approximately one month. The construction of the BNSF Railroad bridge should be completed this fall. The District is in the process of awarding the contract for Phase 3B which is primarily the Floodway Channel upstream of MN Trunk Highway No. 75. The contract is being awarded to KGM Contractors Incorporated. Work continues with the Canadian Pacific (Soo Line) Railroad and MnDOT concerning the structure under Trunk Highway No. 1. It is expected that work on Phase 2 (Off Channel Floodwater Storage Site) and the work on Phase 3A will be completed this summer/fall.
- The Red Lake WD reported that the Parnell Impoundment received its first real test this spring when two rain events totaling approximately 8" fell within the beach ridge areas to the east of the impoundment site. Both outlets were closed with the water elevations of the west pool reaching 936.3 MSL (emergency spillway is 939.5), this amounts to approximately 11 feet of water being held at the western side of the west pool. There would have been, without a doubt, some serious flooding downstream without the operating plan in place.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported on the Union Lake Flood Control and Erosion project. The District engineer is developing plans and cost estimates, with work continuing on Alternative No. 3. This project is designed to eliminate erosion that goes directly into the lake. It is currently designed with two small dams for sedimentation and a cable concrete channel to bring water to the lake. The project team is also discussing upstream land treatment measures.

- The Wild Rice WD reported that the District held a kick off meeting in June for the South Branch Wild Rice River Flood Storage Investigation. The goal set by the board is to identify projects or groups of projects that would provide a 30-40% reduction in the 10-year discharge at the outlet of the South Branch of the Wild Rice River. Additional emphasis will be placed on projects located within or above the Beach Ridge of the South Branch Basin. It is anticipated that a maximum of 15 sites will be identified and analyzed. Work will be starting the end of July with an anticipated completion date planned for early 2005.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the District entered into a mediated agreement with appellants to the North Ottawa project, with the appeal to the project being withdrawn. Some land value appeals remain outstanding, however, these will not delay the District in advertising for bids and moving forward with construction. The first bid opening is scheduled for August 12, 2004 with construction to begin by September.

RRWMB Levy

The Board discussed the tax levy rate determination. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to maintain the levy at 100% for FY 2005, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

Hay Creek Project

Rob Sando-Administrator stated that the proposed timeline for the project is to begin construction in the fall of 2005 or spring of 2006. The District will begin discussions with the County Commissioners on the switching of control of segments of ditches within the project area. A draft technical review of the 2006 project has been distributed for agency review for comments.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / North Ottawa Project / Step III Submittal

The information required for a Step III submittal was distributed. The impoundment can store 18,210 (+1,010) acre-feet of floodwater which is 4.6 (+.3) inches of runoff from the 74 square mile drainage area. The 4.6 inches is between the 10-year and the 25-year spring runoff volume. Of the 18,210 total acre-feet of storage, 4,000 acre-feet is drawdown, 12,160 (+160) acre-feet is gated, and 2,050 (+850) acre-feet is ungated.

The proposed operating plan will store floodwaters until after downstream floodwaters have subsided. Inlet channels will divert 90% of all runoff into the impoundment and is considered off channel/gated drawdown. The project will be able to store the water for at least 30 days. The protected area includes the minor, primary, and Red River watersheds and has the potential to reduce the stage at Wahpeton/Breckenridge between 4 and 6 inches, depending on the runoff event. The project will provide flood storage, wildlife, water quality and water supply benefits.

The estimated total project cost has increased from Step I of \$11,000,000 to Step II of \$12,000,000 to Step III of \$17,000,000. The requested RRWMB cost share has remained at \$2,150,000. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the Step III submittal of the North Ottawa Project, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

2. **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 \$66,258.30 with the RRWMB share of underfunded expenditures of \$16,564.58. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the total RRWMB share of \$49,674.58 for the cost share of the overall plan update including overruns, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken- Monitoring Coordinator distributed the project monitoring monthly report. Goeken explained that there are currently 27 schools involved with River Watch in the Minnesota portion of the Red River Basin. He works with schools in the mid/south basin with assistance from staff at the Red River Basin Institute's Center for Watershed Education, with Danni Halvorson working with the schools in the northern basin. Equipment is shared among participants with MPCA providing YSI data sondes to several of the monitoring partners.

The Red Lake WD has hired a new water quality technician, Jim Blix, who will be working with the River Watch schools in the District. The RRWMB staff has coordinated with the RLWD in the development of a River Watch Quality Assurance Project Plan to further solidify standardization of monitoring protocols and hence validity of data. Training is ongoing to help schools become more independent in their monitoring efforts especially as several watershed districts have purchased equipment to allow schools to be more autonomous and responsive to rain events.

The next meeting will be on August 17, 2004, at 9:30 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator