

# 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  
Vernon Johnson-Clearbrook Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Robert Wright, Secretary-Felton Jerome Deal-Wheaton  
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

## RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

October 19, 2004

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, October 19, 2004, 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, Administrator  
Dick Nelson, Financial Coordinator  
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator  
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC  
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD  
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office  
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD  
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD  
Larry Hauge

Additional items were added to the agenda. Mr. Hauge requested to be added to the agenda to discuss issues relative to the Wild Rice Watershed District. Manager Deal requested that the issue of the state applying for permits from local governments be added to the agenda.

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

### **Wild Rice Watershed District**

Larry Hauge stated that he is a resident of the Wild Rice WD. He referred to the groundbreaking of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project in the Bois de Sioux WD and noted that the Wild Rice WD had discussed implementing a similar project. He inquired about the procedures necessary to implement projects that would enhance natural resource benefits while retaining floodwater.

Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD board manager, responded that their district is discussing methods for improving communication between the watershed district and local citizens. She added that she is hopeful that other watershed districts could benefit from the process followed by the Bois de Sioux WD regarding project implementation.

D. Nelson noted that participation of the RRWMB in local watershed projects begins with the individual member districts authorizing projects that are then submitted to the RRWMB for funding assistance.

### **Financial Coordinator Report**

D. Nelson reported that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is considering reducing funding for the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group but maintaining the funding allocation for the Farmstead Ring Dike Program.

### **Red River Basin Commission**

Lance Yohe, Executive Director, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) discussed the funding needs of the RRBC. He explained that previously the RRWMB has contributed \$75,000 per year on behalf of the counties in Minnesota. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to authorize funding for calendar year 2005 for the RRBC in the amount of \$75,000, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**.

Yohe reported on the status of scheduling a legislative meeting in the Red River Basin for representatives from Minnesota, North Dakota, and Manitoba. A supper meeting has been scheduled at the Days Inn in Moorhead on November 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the upcoming Minnesota legislative session and the water resource needs in the Red River Basin.

Yohe inquired about obtaining funding assistance from the RRWMB to share in the cost of sponsoring the meeting. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the RRWMB to share in the cost of sponsoring the meeting with the RRBC, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Yohe reported on the Manitoba portion of the Roseau River Planning Project. A meeting has been scheduled with Brian Dwight-BWSR and Harold Taylor-RRBC to discuss working with rural municipalities.

### **Administrator Report**

#### **A) RRWMB Web Page**

N. Erickson stated that the independent contractor that updated the RRWMB website will conduct a presentation today reviewing the changes that were implemented. A section for the Governing Documents publication will be included on the website as soon as the revisions to the publication have been completed.

The following handouts were distributed: Board Member Expense Policy and Figure 1 depicting a map of the RRWMB and its member districts. Following discussion, the board agreed that the Board Member Expense Policy should be added as an appendix to Section 1 – Policy Manual. Revisions regarding the boundary change between the Two Rivers WD and the Middle-Snake-Tamarac WD also were discussed.

**B) Request to Inspect Public Data**

N. Erickson reported that on September 30<sup>th</sup>, she and Dan Wilkens met with citizens that had requested to inspect public data of the board. The citizens photocopied the information that was requested from the board.

**C) Digital Elevation Modeling**

N. Erickson stated that a meeting was conducted on October 6th on the North Dakota State University campus regarding a digital elevation modeling proposal. An email was forwarded from Chuck Fritz noting that although there have recently been some digital elevation models (DEMs) developed for selected areas of the Red River Basin (U.S.), the need (articulated by the IJC and the IFMI) for a seamless basin-wide digital elevation model remains. Recently, a private company has come forward and is considering making a capital investment to develop the DEM in the Red River Valley (13 counties adjacent to the Red River mainstem). The meeting included discussion relative to the emerging public and potential private alternatives for a basin-wide LIDAR collect and DEM development.

**D) Red River Basin Streamflow Monitoring**

N. Erickson noted that she attended the Red River Basin Streamflow Monitoring meeting conducted on October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Cass County Highway Department conference room in West Fargo, ND. Overviews of the Minnesota and North Dakota streamflow monitoring efforts were presented. Updates were also given on the Breckenridge Diversion and the Maple River Dam.

**E) Fargo-Moorhead and Upstream Feasibility Study**

N. Erickson explained that an initial coordination meeting for the Fargo-Moorhead and Upstream (FMUS) Feasibility Study was conducted on Thursday, September 16, 2004 at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN. The purpose of the meeting was to reach mutual expectations regarding the schedule and scope of the study. The Project Management Plan was reviewed and each partner's role in the study was discussed. A handout was distributed for review.

**F) Red River Joint Water Resource Board**

N. Erickson stated that she discussed reinstating the annual joint meeting between the RRWMB and the Red River Joint Water Resource Board (RRJWRB) with Tom Fischer, a Senator with the North Dakota Legislative Branch, who is currently working with the RRJWRB. The last meeting that occurred between the two boards was conducted on January 13, 1999 at the Doublewood Inn in Fargo, ND.

**G) Farmstead Ring Dike Program**

N. Erickson referred to the September board meeting during which Dick Nelson requested that member districts submit their ring dike funding requests at the next board meeting. The following information regarding the ring dike program was obtained from Ed Fick-DNR: Total state funding for FY04 - \$122,730 (\$125,000 less incidental cancelled contract costs of \$2,270). The FY04 funds were allocated as follows: RLWD \$15,000; MSTWD \$57,730; and WRWD \$50,000. Total state funding for FY05 - \$125,000. The FY05 funds are allocated as follows: RLWD \$15,000; MSTWD \$60,000; and WRWD \$50,000. Historically, the cost share has been 50% state, 25% RRWMB, and 25% local watershed district. Therefore, the RRWMB commitment for FY04 is \$61,365, and for FY05 \$62,500.

**E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences**

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, November 17, 2004, at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN.
2. Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD), December 2-4, 2004, Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center, Alexandria, MN.
3. 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference, “Shared Resources, Shared Responsibilities,” January 12-14, 2005, Ramada Plaza, Fargo, ND.
4. Red River Basin Institute, 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.

### **Red River Coordinator/TAC Report**

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed the digital elevation modeling proposal presented on October 6th at North Dakota State University. The TAC recommended that should the RRWMB consider participating in funding the proposal, the model should include the entire basin.

Thul reported that the TAC discussed drainage criteria for sub-drainage as a follow up to a meeting conducted in June with Al Kean-BWSR and Dr. Gary Sands-University of Minnesota. Issues addressed included the effects of different design criteria within tile systems, methods for modeling various drainage systems and how tile drainage systems differ from surface drainage systems. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the TAC to collaborate with the Extension Service regarding the implementation of tile drainage in the Red River Basin, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Myron Jesme, Red Lake WD Administrator, noted that their district is applying for a grant in the amount of \$35,000 from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation to conduct a tile drainage study.

Thul noted that the TAC discussed their future role relative to implementing the objectives of the RRWMB. The TAC suggested that a review should be conducted of the Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) papers to determine whether differences exist between the objectives of the RRWMB and the Work Group. Following discussion, the board agreed that additional discussion would be necessary between the RRWMB and the TAC to identify future tasks.

### **RRWMB Website**

Mike Love, an independent contractor from Fargo, ND, conducted a presentation regarding the updates to the RRWMB website. The updates included the following sections: Home, Board Information, Watersheds, Maps, Contact Information, and Related Links. The RRWMB website is located at [www.rrwmb.org](http://www.rrwmb.org).

Following discussion, N. Erickson noted that at a previous board meeting the board authorized funding for the creation of a webpage for each individual member watershed district.

### **District Reports**

- The Middle-Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the Public Law 566 (Snake River Watershed) Project. The construction of Phase 2 (Off Channel Floodwater Storage Site) has been essentially completed. The outlet controls and the fencing have been installed. Work that remains on Phase 2 essentially includes some seeding which is expected to be completed next summer.

The box culverts on Trunk Highway No. 75 over the floodway (Phase 3) have been installed. The installation of the Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railroad Bridge is scheduled for late October and early November. The construction of Phase 3b by KGM Construction has begun. Phase 3b is the portion of the floodway east of Trunk Highway No. 75. Construction of Phase 3b should be completed next summer. The District is working with the Canadian Pacific (Soo Line) Railroad and MnDOT concerning the structure under Trunk Highway No. 1.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is planning to start Phase 4 of the project this fall which involves mitigation features.

- The Red Lake WD reported that sub-committee meetings will be conducted on October 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss components that will be implemented in the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Some of the issues to be discussed include water quality, erosion and sedimentation, and natural resources. The plan is approximately 60% completed, with plans to have a final draft prepared by the summer of 2005.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on a cooperative effort with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to address the feasibility for funding assistance to implement flood control projects in the Wild Rice River Watershed. The cooperative effort with the USACE started in 2003 and is nearing completion of the first phase that will identify potential flood damage reduction solutions that could be supported for federal funding assistance.

Some of the measures currently being investigated by the USACE include providing for a percentage of flood waters to be diverted to the Red River through the construction of a floodway or diversion channel. Another concept being investigated includes providing setback levees along a portion of the Wild Rice River that is currently flooded. The USACE is considering a reach of river 27 miles long with setback levees from County Road 2 to the east and County Road No. 4 on the west. The setback levees would be approximately 1,500 to 2,500 feet wide and be used as a floodway to contain flows for a 10-year flood event. This proposal also is exploring restoration of the original channel to help improve the low-flow capability of the current channel.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that construction has started on the outlet structures for the North Ottawa Project. Comstock Construction began on Monday, October 18, 2004. Due to wetness problems, it does not appear that the dirt work will be completed yet this fall. This will delay the project about a half of a construction season as the perimeter ditch work must be completed and vegetated so that water can be diverted around the project area during construction.

### **Permitting Issue**

Manager Deal distributed a handout of an order from the Eighth Judicial District Court regarding a plaintiff (Lac Qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District) opposing the defendant's (State of Minnesota – Department of Natural Resources) construction of a water control structure without first obtaining a permit from the District. Based upon the arguments, the court made the following ruling: there is no law that requires that the DNR obtain a permit from a Watershed District for projects conducted on land where both the DNR and a Watershed District have authority.

Thul added that through the years the courts have consistently held that the state is not required to apply for local permits.

**District's Funding Requests**

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on November 16, 2004, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert Wright  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator