



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt Steve Lee-Badger Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Robert Wright, Secretary-Felton Jerome Deal-Wheaton
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

May 15, 2007

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Steve Lee | Dan Money |
| Ron Osowski | Orville Knott |
| Daniel Wilkens | Robert Wright |
| Jerome Deal | |

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
- Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
- Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Warren Seykora, Wild Rice WD
- Steve Dalen, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- John Jaschke, Executive Director, BWSR
- Brian Dwight, Watershed Specialist, BWSR

No additional items were added to the agenda.

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

N. Erickson reported that at the September 19, 2006 board meeting, the board authorized a cap of \$2,000 for Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) members sponsored by the RRWMB that participate in Coordination meetings for FY07. Two funding requests have been submitted for reimbursement from consultants which, if authorized, would exceed the previously authorized cap.

Motion by Manager Knott to rescind the previously authorized cap of \$2,000 for TSAC committee members for Coordination meetings due to the increased workload, and authorize funding up to five meetings per year with one consultant designated each from Houston Engineering, Inc. and JOR Engineering, Inc., **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Project Coordinator Report

Ron Harnack distributed the Project Coordinator Report and discussed various policy issues passed by the legislature. He reported that all elected or appointed officials under MS 2006, Section 10A, Subdivision 35 must complete annual reporting requirements. Public officials now include Watershed Managers and Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors.

Relative to the legislative audit, legislation passed allowing the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) to reduce, withhold, or redirect grants and other funding if the local water management entity has not corrected deficiencies as prescribed by BWSR within one year. Additional legislation passed allowing BWSR to defer termination of a watershed district for one year to evaluate their performance and communicate the results to the petitioners and local and state agencies.

Harnack reported on the Red River Water Resources Council. He stated that Dick Nelson had previously represented the RRWMB on this committee and inquired whether the board was still interested in having representation. N. Erickson stated that she would obtain additional information about this committee for further discussion at a future board meeting.

Basin-wide Digital Elevation Model

Charles Fritz, Director-International Water Institute (IWI), provided an update regarding the basin-wide Digital Elevation Model (DEM) initiative. He explained that the non-federal commitment for the Red River Basin Mapping Initiative has been secured with the exception of the Minnesota portion. He thanked Ron Harnack for his assistance in trying to secure legislative funding from the Minnesota Legislature, and urged board members to stay in contact with their legislators to ensure this project obtains future funding. The project is anticipated to begin sometime in June.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed the Digital Elevation Model initiative with Chuck Fritz. Fritz requested assistance from the TAC with regard to reviewing proposals received from contractors to perform the data collect.

Thul reported on the Farm to Stream Project of the Red Lake WD. The two-year study investigated how water quality affected by agricultural drainage and best management practices relates to drainage in several different locations in the Red Lake WD. A draft report of the study was reviewed by the TAC and determined that although water quality aspects were derived from the study, monitoring tile systems within the watershed district to measure flows were unable to be accomplished due to the lack of flow present. Following the review of flow data collected later this summer, the TAC will develop conclusions of the study.

Thul stated that at the previous monthly meeting, the board authorized the TAC to review the Thief River Sedimentation Project of the Red Lake WD. The TAC reviewed the project which will be conducted as a joint effort with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Myron Jesme requested the board to consider a \$10,000 cost share for the project. **Motion** by Manager Deal to fund \$10,000 for the Thief River Sedimentation Project of the Red Lake WD, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Thul noted that the TAC discussed the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for discharge to impaired waters. John Jaschke, BWSR, indicated that a fact sheet regarding this issue is being prepared cooperatively by BWSR, the Department of Agriculture, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The Clean Water Act prohibits any facility from discharging "pollutants" through a "point source" into a "water of the United States" unless they have an NPDES permit. The permit contains limits on what can be discharged, monitoring and reporting requirements, and other provisions to ensure that the discharge does not hurt water quality or people's health.

Thul added that a new regional hydrologist has been hired to fill the vacated position of Larry Kramka. Bob Bezek has been hired to serve in Bemidji as the DNR's regional hydrologist for northwestern Minnesota, managing all aspects of DNR Waters Division regional operations for 23 counties, including legislative relations, policy establishment and implementation, program implementation, personnel, and budget management.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

In the absence of Wayne Goeken, the project monitoring monthly report was distributed. Condition monitoring has continued on a weekly basis with many southern basin sites being monitored twice weekly on occasion due to heavy rains and significant runoff in this portion of the basin. As of May 14, 2007, water levels in the southern basin were still approximately at bankfull levels. Watersheds in the central and northern basin are now generally well below median values for this time of year with some experiencing record low water levels on several dates.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator – RRBC, distributed an invitation to attend the 2007 Red River Basin Commission Summer Tour scheduled for Wednesday, June 6, 2007 in Grand Forks, ND. The tour will leave Grand Forks and visit a tile drainage research project at the University of Minnesota Crookston, an award winning flood reduction/water quality and wetland enhancement project, and a riparian riverbank enhancement project. RSVPs are requested by June 1st.

Administrator Report

A) Public Information Initial Interviews

At the April 17, 2007 board meeting, I was authorized by the board to offer the position of Public Information Consulting Services to Holly Johnson of TeamWorks International, Inc. and Rick Foy of LaBreche Murray and proceed with finalizing a contract.

Motion by Manager Deal to retain the services of the above-mentioned public relations firms to assist the board with developing a public information communication strategy, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

The process will begin with individual member WD Administrator interviews to gather district perspectives, history and key strategic themes. The combined findings will be used as groundwork for a workshop in conjunction with the July board meeting to clarify strategic directions and key messages for the RRWMB.

Interviews will run about an hour and will be one-on-one with strategy consultant Holly Johnson. Most interviews will be conducted by phone, however, if there are opportunities where Administrators plan to be in the Twin Cities area, please contact Holly and she will try to arrange for an in-person session. You will soon be receiving a call from Holly to arrange an interview time in May or June.

B) U.S. Geological Survey

An educational poster depicting the flood history of the Red River currently under development by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) was discussed at the previous monthly meeting. The board authorized \$2,500 to assist with the development costs of the poster, contingent that similar funding is obtained from North Dakota. A Joint Funding Agreement was forwarded from USGS regarding the design and printing costs of the poster. The funding is listed in the following table.

| Agency | Contribution | USGS Match | Total |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| NDSWC | \$2,500 | \$1,000 | \$ 3,500 |
| RRWMB | \$2,500 | \$1,000 | \$ 3,500 |
| RRJWRB | \$2,500 | \$ 800 | \$ 2,800 |
| Upper Sheyenne River | \$ 500 | \$ 200 | <u>\$ 700</u> |
| Total | | | <u>\$10,500</u> |

C) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, Thursday, May 24, 2007, The Lodge on Lake Detroit, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. Red River Basin Commission Tour and Board Meeting, June 6-7, 2007, Grand Forks area.

3. Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Summer Tour, June 29-30, 2007, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District, Little Canada, MN.

District Reports

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Brandt Channel Outlet Restoration Project. The District has started advertising for bids for the construction of the project. The project involves a channel restoration to the coulee downstream of the Brandt Impoundment which includes a realignment of the original channel which was filled in approximately 40 years ago. This will be the District's first attempt to implement a CREP II sign-up as part of the project, which will allow the project to recognize a savings in land acquisition costs. A requirement of CREP II calls for a federal environmental review which will determine whether the project will adversely affect existing wetlands. It is anticipated that the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will complete the review in June or early July. Bids are scheduled to be opened at the May 24, 2007 board meeting.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that bids were opened at the May 1, 2007 board meeting for Project No. 20 – Polk County Ditch No. 46. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$1,161,280, with the low bid of \$1,020,355.90 from R.J. Zavoral of East Grand Forks, MN. The District is in the process of paying for permanent and temporary easements.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / North Ottawa Impoundment Project

Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, distributed a spreadsheet outlining the status of the funding commitments required to complete the above-mentioned project. He explained that the Project Team conducted several meetings discussing various alternatives prior to selecting Option H, which maximizes flood damage reduction (FDR) benefits as well as incorporates natural resource enhancement (NRE) components. The NRE components of the project were originally to be constructed utilizing funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) through the Continuing Authorities Program No. 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration. Prior to completing the study to determine the qualifications of the project for the USACE program, the funding source was exhausted.

Following discussions between the Project Team and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the Bois de Sioux WD (BdSWD) agreed to pursue other funding sources to implement the NRE components of the project. The State of Minnesota committed 75% funding, with the BdSWD responsible for securing the remaining portion of the local share.

Roeschlein noted that a local commitment of \$1,000,000 is required in order to qualify for the \$3,000,000 of state funding that has been committed and requested the total local commitment from the RRWMB. He further stated that should other local funding sources be secured, the amount committed from the RRWMB would be reduced.

Motion by Manager Osowski to authorize a \$1 million funding request from the Bois de Sioux Watershed District to provide for the local share of the natural resource enhancement components of the North Ottawa Impoundment project, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

The next meeting will be on June 19, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator