



## 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

March 19, 2008

University of Minnesota – Crookston campus, Crookston, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Wednesday, March 19, 2008, at the University of Minnesota – Crookston campus, Crookston, Minnesota.

President 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
- Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
- Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
- Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Mark Meister, CR\*CS
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Keith Mykelseth, The Nature Conservancy
- Bob Bezek, MNDNR Regional Hydrologist
- Paul Swenson, MDNR, Natural Resource Tribal Liaison
- Derek Crompton, University of Minnesota-Extension

No additional items were added to the agenda.

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

### **Public Information Initiative**

Mark Meister - CR\*CS distributed the final report to the Board of Managers regarding the public information initiative coordinated by CR\*CS and sponsored by the RRWMB. Manager Finney requested the Public Information Committee consisting of Jerome Deal, Naomi Erickson, Dan Money and Daniel Wilkens to meet prior to the next board meeting to discuss the Final Report and the implementation of communication initiatives. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to authorize the Public Information Committee to meet prior to the next board meeting and develop a recommendation for implementation of the public information initiative, **Seconded** by Manager Lee, **Carried**.

### **Project Coordinator Report**

Harnack stated that the Senate, House and Governor are negotiating the bonding bill. At least \$30 million is needed for flood damage reduction initiatives. He suggested the board should consider reviewing their funding capabilities over the next two years and establish a priority funding recommendation. Items for consideration include: Agassiz Valley, phased project ~ \$2 – \$2.5M; Hay Creek/Norland, phased project ~ \$1.5 - \$2M; North Ottawa, phased project ~ \$2.3M; and Becker Dam Storage Enhancement, phased project ~ \$1-2M.

Harnack reported on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Red River Basin Feasibility Study. Discussion has occurred regarding the USACE assisting with the implementation of the Digital Elevation Model (DEM) for the Red River Basin. Based on discussions, suggestions were to request the RRWMB to sponsor the *Project Management Plan Red River Basin Watershed Specifically Authorized Feasibility Study*.

Chuck Fritz reviewed the Project Management Plan of the feasibility study. Some of the objectives the study will focus on include: create a high-resolution digital elevation dataset for the entire U.S. portion of the basin, determine the flow regime in the basin that meets both human and ecosystem needs using modeling and stakeholder input, prepare a basin-wide watershed plan which will include consideration of flood damage reduction, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and water quality management in the basin, and the identification of effective management and restoration actions to be assisted by a decision support system.

Fritz added that Phase 1 of the study would consist of the acquisition of the digital elevation data for the entire U.S. portion of the Red River Basin. The total estimated project cost is \$4,110,508 which will be cost-shared 50/50 with the local sponsor. Since funding for the Red River Basin Mapping Initiative has already been secured (Minnesota's share is included in current legislative initiatives), there would be no cost liability to sponsor the study.

Following discussion, the board agreed to sponsor the feasibility study contingent that North Dakota provide similar sponsorship and Dan Thul is added to the Executive Committee. Fritz noted that he

has a meeting scheduled with the Red River Joint Water Resources Board of North Dakota to request their sponsorship.

**Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the board to sponsor the Project Management Plan (PMP) of the Red River Basin Watershed Specifically Authorized Feasibility Study conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, contingent that the Red River Joint Water Resources Board of North Dakota provide similar sponsoring and Dan Thul is added to the Executive Committee, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**.

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

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has not met recently. At one of their last meetings, a discussion paper regarding the RRWMB cost per Star Value was developed. Issues addressed in the paper included whether the current \$20/Star Value is reasonable, the advantages/disadvantages of having a conservative maximum limit, and whether the limit should be based on the value associated with a project or the RRWMB's ability to fund the project. Following discussion, the board agreed to review the discussion paper with the TAC at their April board meeting.

### **Red River Basin Commission**

Lance Yohe, Executive Director – RRBC, reported on the modeling effort currently under development by the RRBC. He stated that currently the Pembina River is being modeled from Pembina to Neche. He noted that upon its completion, the MIKE 11 model will be the most complete model from Lake Traverse to Lake Winnipeg.

### **Water Quality Staffing Position**

Manager Finney briefly addressed the Water Quality staffing position discussed at the previous monthly meeting by Jim Ziegler-MPCA. He explained that the committee that provides direction to staff members of the RRWMB associated with the Water Quality effort would be developing a job description for adding an additional staff person to conduct monitoring in the southern part of the Red River Basin.

### **Administrator Report**

#### **A) Annual Audit**

N. Erickson reported that the information for the 2006 Annual Report was forwarded to Kris Versdahl & Associates. She will prepare the report for printing and also post it on the website. Twenty-five copies were ordered from the printer last year. Following discussion, the board agreed to order twenty-five copies of the 2006 Annual Report.

#### **B) Funding Commitments Worksheet**

N. Erickson explained that the funding commitments worksheet has been revised to reflect the February disbursements. At the previous monthly meeting, December and January worksheets

were distributed. Discussion occurred whether Project No. 42 would be replacing the Felton Ditch Storage Project of the Wild Rice Watershed District. Following discussion, the board agreed that these were two separate projects. The worksheet has been revised to depict the two separate projects.

**C) Data Request**

A letter dated February 26, 2008 requesting data from the board was received from a citizen of the Wild Rice Watershed District. The letter was forwarded to RRWMB attorney, Louis Smith, for review. Mr. Smith has forwarded a draft response to the inquiry.

Other documents were forwarded from the same party dated March 7, 2008. Please refer to handouts.

**D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences**

1. May Board Meeting, Tuesday, May 20, 2008, Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, MN.
2. June Board Meeting, Tuesday, June 17, 2008, Bois de Sioux Watershed District, Wheaton, MN.
3. July Board Meeting, Tuesday, July 15, 2008, Meeting with the Red River Joint Water Resources Board, Fargo, ND.

**District Reports**

- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported that the District received the results of a two-year "review" by the Office of the State Auditor. This review was precipitated by concerns raised by an individual. The Auditor found four areas in which the District could improve operations. These issues were minor in nature and, in fact, had already been implemented. This was the second review by the Auditor's Office in the last three years at the urgings of this individual.

The District is anticipating funding for the construction of the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project. It is hoped that sufficient funding will be made available for the letting of a contract this spring. The District's lawsuit with one of the signer's of the Settlement Agreement for Breach of Contract is on going.

The Brandt/Angus Coulee Project continues to progress. The District has received the Preliminary Engineer's Report and the Project Team continues to meet regularly.

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Outlet Restoration Project No. 60F. The Preliminary Engineer's Report has been prepared. The Board of Managers have scheduled a joint informational meeting with the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD (MSTRWD) Board of Managers and landowners in the project area for April 2, 2008 at the community center in Alvarado, MN. The purpose of the meeting is to present the Preliminary Engineer's Report to landowners and the MSTRWD to allow them to comment on the design and development of the proposed project. If the project appears feasible, discussion will move towards the development of a possible Joint Powers Agreement between the MSTRWD and the Red Lake WD to provide for better project implementation.

**District's Funding Requests**

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

**Conservation Tillage Research to Improve Water Quality and Flow Control**

Derek Crompton, Local Extension Educator – University of Minnesota, discussed a research plan to determine crop response to tile drainage in the Red River Basin. He stated that the proposed plan would investigate the yield response of commonly grown crops in North Dakota and Minnesota under tilled and non-tiled conditions. He added that currently no funding is being sought for the initiative, but rather meetings are being conducted with potential stakeholders to determine whether there is an interest in implementing the proposed research plan. He offered to meet with the board in the near future to further discuss the initiative.

The next meeting will be on April 15, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert Wright  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator