



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

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RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

September 16, 2008

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, September 16, 2008, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President, Orville Knott-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Rob Sando Dan Money
Daniel Wilkens Robert Wright
Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator
Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
Arnold Stanley, Red Lake WD
Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
Roger Hanson, Sand Hill River WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Warren Seykora, Wild Rice WD
Joe Spaeth, Wild Rice WD
Steve Dalen, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
Brian Borgen

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Motion by Manager Money to approve the minutes as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **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 Wright, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Public Information Initiative

In the absence of Mark Meister, the public information monthly report was distributed. In his report, Meister requested the board to consider entertaining a motion authorizing the proposed internship program. Approval of the program would allow advertising for the internship in October, with application reviews in November/December. The internship would begin in February and extend through August 2009.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize the proposed internship program for the public information initiative, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**. The Public Information Committee consisting of Jerome Deal, Naomi Erickson, Dan Money and Daniel Wilkens agreed to schedule a conference call with Mark Meister to discuss the internship program further.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study

Chuck Fritz, Director of the International Water Institute (IWI), discussed the Red River Basin Mapping Initiative (RRBMI) and USACE Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study. The various phases of the study include Phase 1 – Digital Elevation Data Collection (LiDAR), Phase 2 – Red River Basin Modeling effort, and Phase 3 – Decision Support System.

Fritz requested that the Board of Managers consider authorizing a revision to the current Project Management Plan (PMP) for Phase 1 of the study to include the addition of a web-based application as a deliverable. The application would include an interactive map to generate contours and a data extraction portal. The revision would not involve additional funding, however, in order for the funds expended on the additional application to be eligible for a cost-share match it must be included in the PMP.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to authorize the addition of a web-based application to generate contours and a data extraction portal to the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study PMP, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Project Coordinator Report

In the absence of Ron Harnack, the Project Coordinator Report was distributed. The next phase of revisions to the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) rules is underway. In general, the revisions are resulting in streamlined rules. However, new language has been added that could result in interpretations that could negatively impact projects in the Red River Basin should some of the language not be modified or deleted. The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has been very receptive to issues and concerns discussed. Additional meetings will be scheduled to refine the proposed revisions.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring distributed a background sheet regarding the Red River modeling strategies for flood damage reduction of the RRBC. An unsteady flow model is being developed as a planning tool to evaluate and optimize flood flow modification strategies for flood damage reduction in the Red River Basin. The mainstem modeling effort has been underway for several years and has moved back and forth from development and calibration to use and more calibration. This effort will be especially

important in addressing the goals in the Natural Resource Framework Plan (NRFP) related to flood damage reduction mitigation activities.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

In the absence of Wayne Goeken, the project monitoring monthly report was distributed. Monitoring associated with the Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) continues. Sampling frequency will drop off significantly after September. Many sites are also experiencing low or no flow conditions at this time of year though significant rains in various parts of the basin have resulted in rather high flows for this time of year in some areas.

Administrator Report

A) Funding Commitments Worksheet

N. Erickson distributed a revised funding commitments worksheet.

B) Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

A letter is being drafted in conjunction with Ron Harnack to forward to BWSR regarding the Level III Performance Review of the Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD.

C) Congressman Collin Peterson

Maynard Pick notified the board that Congressman Peterson's mother, Della Jane Peterson, age 85 of Moorhead, MN, passed away unexpectedly at home on Monday, September 08, 2008. A sympathy card was circulated for signatures.

D) Requests for Public Data

N. Erickson reported that a request for an estimate to provide copies of public data dated August 4, 2008 was received. The request was forwarded to legal counsel for review. In discussions with legal counsel, revisions to the board's Data Practices Act policy were suggested. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize revisions to the Data Practices Act policy subject to review by legal counsel, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

E) 2008 MAWD Awards Program

N. Erickson discussed the MAWD Awards Program that recognizes watershed districts throughout Minnesota for their achievements. The program has two award categories – Capital Improvement Project of the Year and Watershed Program of the Year. Suggestions for the board to consider regarding selecting a project or program from member watershed districts for nomination were discussed. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed to nominate the River Watch program. Chuck Fritz (IWI) and Jon Roeschlein (BdSWD) offered to forward letters of support regarding the nomination. The Board of Managers directed N. Erickson to contact Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator, to inquire about submitting the nomination.

F) Supplemental Project Team Funding

At the August 19, 2008 board meeting, the board authorized supplemental funding of an additional \$5,000 for FY 08 for member watershed district project teams. Member watershed districts eligible for supplemental funding include: Roseau River WD, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD, Wild Rice WD, and Bois de Sioux WD. N. Erickson reported that to date, the Roseau River WD,

Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD, and Wild Rice WD have submitted funding requests for the supplemental funding.

N. Erickson explained that following the 2008 fiscal year-end, a funding request was submitted by the BdSWD for costs incurred throughout 2008 for project team alternatives analysis and support. She inquired about the eligibility for supplemental project team funding for the BdSWD from the board, as the project team funding appropriated to the BdSWD by the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group had not been utilized. Roeschlein noted that he had been working with the District's accountant and did not have the information prepared to forward by fiscal year end. The issue will be addressed by members of the Funding Committee of the Work Group. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed that the supplemental project team funding should be forwarded to the BdSWD.

G) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, scheduled in conjunction with the October 21, 2008 RRWMB regular monthly meeting.
2. MAWD Annual Meeting & Trade Show, December 4-6, 2008, Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN.
3. Red River Basin Commission's 26th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference, January 20-22, 2009, Hotel Fort Garry, Winnipeg, MB.

District Reports

- The Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project. Work has been progressing well on the embankment, with the outlet structure to be completed by the end of September. Intermittent rains have caused some delays, however, with a pleasant fall the majority of the embankment should be completed.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the North Ottawa Impoundment Project. The contractor working on Phase III (a) of the project has completed the east dike and is preparing to begin construction on the emergency spillway. The work remaining to complete the contract includes permanent seeding on the east dike and the installation of side inlet culverts in the diversion channel. Seeding will be completed as conditions allow. When the pools are drained down into the diversion channel, the side inlets will be completed.

The contractor working on Phase III (b) is also nearly completed with their portion of hauling the excavation for the south dike construction. The work remaining for this contract includes finish grading and permanent seeding.

The contractor awarded the bid for Phase IV is from Marshall, MN and constructed Phase II of the project as well. Their bid came in at \$455,000 below the engineer's estimate. This contract consists of finishing the dike work and installing all the connecting culverts in the diversion channel. Essentially, when this contract is completed, the project will be fully functional for flood damage reduction.

This winter the District plans to work with local resource managers to develop plans for completing Phase V, which includes implementing natural resource enhancements. A funding strategy for this phase will be developed in conjunction with the State of Minnesota.

Consolidated Conservation (Con-Con) Lands

Arnold Stanley, Grygla, MN, discussed the Con-Con land issue. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) is currently discussing a process to develop criteria to determine how a functioning ditch system impacts management objectives.

Manager Wilkens stated that he has met with Mike Carroll, MNDNR-Regional Director, to discuss the proposed rules governing drainage projects impacting state-owned lands in Con-Con areas. He explained that natural resource benefits from drainage using a pilot project in Beltrami County are currently being determined with the results to be communicated to an advisory team. This advisory team will develop an outreach and media plan and solicit input from external groups resulting in recommendations of the proposed updates to be presented to the MDNR Commissioner.

Mr. Stanley noted his concern regarding the lack of citizen representation within the MDNR's internal advisory team.

Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed that noting the State of Minnesota's interest in involving all stakeholders to resolve contentious issues, implementing such a concept could only improve the credibility of the resulting recommendations. Especially since the area of the pilot project involves an area of the State which has a history of resentment towards the MDNR.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize a letter stating the board supports the concept of including stakeholders from the region to help formulate impartial recommendations regarding the proposed updates to the criteria to manage Con-Con lands, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on October 21, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota. Following the board meeting, the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group will meet at 1:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 12:00 p.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator