



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

April 21, 2009

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Steve Lee	Dan Money
Ron Osowski	Daniel Wilkens
Robert Wright	Jerome Deal

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR*CS
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Roger Hanson, Sand Hill River WD
- Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
- Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering, Inc.
- Keith Mykleseth, The Nature Conservancy
- Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Joe Spaeth, Wild Rice WD
- Duane Erickson, Wild Rice WD
- Danny Omdahl, Engineering Technician, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Marijo Vik, Recording Secretary, Citizens for Farmland Preservation (CFFP)

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

Public Information Initiative

Mark Meister discussed the public information monthly report. A feature article titled "*River Watch Forum Vital to Watershed Education*" was developed and appeared in several local newspapers and also *News & Views*.

Meister stated that he was invited by the editor of the *Fargo Forum* to attend staff meetings for reporters to serve as a resource relative to recent flood coverage by the media.

Meister discussed the video project coordinated by Henry VanOffelen of the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). He indicated that Harnack requested his participation on a conference call with the MCEA and the videographer contracted by MCEA regarding the development of a video depicting the flood damage from recent spring flooding in the basin. Some managers expressed concern regarding the RRWMB partnering with an environmental group for a video project since it could depict a strong environmental perspective rather than emphasizing the goals of flood damage reduction. Following discussion, the Board of Managers directed Meister to further investigate the credentials of the videographer as well as identify other qualified individuals in the basin who could provide similar services and use his discretion in the selection thereof prior to authorizing funds toward the project.

Manager Wilkens inquired about the possibility of hiring an intern to assist Mr. Meister regarding the public information initiative. He noted his concern about the lack of reporting by the media regarding the accomplishments of regional water management organizations such as the RRWMB and the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC).

Meister indicated that he provides consulting services to the board on a part-time basis, however, should the board desire to retain the services of a full-time public relations firm he would be willing to assist with the transition. He suggested scheduling a meeting of the Public Information Committee prior to the next board meeting in order to discuss future public information initiatives. The board directed Meister to schedule a meeting of the Public Information Committee including himself, Dan Wilkens, Jerome Deal, Dan Money, and Naomi Erickson.

Project Coordinator Report

In the absence of R. Harnack, the Project Coordinator Report was distributed. A draft letter was distributed requesting assistance from the federal delegation in securing funding for farmstead ring dikes. Due to the limited availability of state funding, federal funds are needed to leverage state and

local cost-share. The board requested N. Erickson to finalize the letter for distribution to the federal delegation and legislators in the Red River Basin.

The bonding bills in both the Senate and the House have passed and are in conference committee. The Senate bill includes \$26M for flood damage reduction, while the House bill includes \$12.7M. The recent flooding in the Red River Basin has resulted in discussions for additional funding to assist in aggressively pursuing the prevention of flood damages.

Red River Basin Commission

Lance Yohe, Executive Director – RRBC, reported on the mainstem modeling effort. He noted that the model has been recalibrated and tested, however, there remain some issues with the correct flows at the border that are being explored and also the overflows near Drayton. Upon completion of stabilizing the model, the tributary goal of percentage flow reductions will continue.

Yohe reported that Houston Engineering, Inc. contacted the RRBC regarding funding for a stream gaging effort during recent flooding that would gather flow information in areas where no U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) gaging was being conducted. The proposal is ~ \$30,000 with proposed cost share funding as follows: RRBC \$10,000; Red River Joint Water Resource Board \$10,000; and RRWMB \$10,000. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to authorize \$10,000 for the stream gaging effort proposed by Houston Engineering, Inc., **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Red River Valley Authority

An archived article from the *Fargo Forum* published on April 07, 2009 was distributed. N. Erickson reported that discussions are occurring between Minnesota and North Dakota regarding the development of a Red River Valley Authority. The suggestion of an *authority* developed from discussions among several officials who noted that floodwater retention should be included in the comprehensive plan for the Fargo-Moorhead area being developed in conjunction with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

In the absence of Wayne Goeken, the project monitoring monthly report was distributed. Goeken attended a Senate Environment Finance Sub-committee meeting in St. Paul on March 23rd to provide testimony for the River Watch bill along with a contingent of advocates from the Red River Basin including Chuck Fritz of the International Water Institute (IWI), Garry Kotts, Stephen-Argyle River Watch teacher and two students from Stephen-Argyle who provided testimony. Additional information has been developed regarding various options should full funding for the effort not be received.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul distributed the TAC recommendation regarding the Wild Rice WD's Step I & II submittals for the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project. He explained that the RRWMB's cost per Star Value for

the project is currently \$16.13 in 2009 dollars which results in a ranking score of 16. Therefore, the TAC supports both Step I & II approval for the project.

Thul discussed the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). He was contacted by Aaron Snyder, Project Manager – USACE to discuss the Project Management Plan (PMP) of the study. The PMP is the central guiding document that outlines the entire project scope and deliverables sought by the local sponsors.

The RRWMB and the North Dakota Red River Joint Water Resource Board have each executed contracts with the USACE to undertake a Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). The local commitments to the Red River Basin WFS include only work in kind tasks (no cash transfers to the USACE). Each work in kind task (paid for by the non-federal partners) is eligible for a 1:1 federal match. Mr. Snyder stated that additional USACE funding of ~ \$278,000 has become available for the study and inquired whether any additional work in kind tasks would be available from the non-federal partners for the federal match. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize amending the PMP of the USACE study to include funding utilized for the development of the RRBC's MIKE 11 model as a match for the additional available USACE funding, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Thul referred to a study following the flood of 1997 conducted by the International Joint Commission (IJC) that developed recommendations for achieving economic long-term solutions for flooding in the Red River Basin. He suggested that the TAC review the report to determine whether the board could endorse the study and work toward implementation of the study recommendations. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize the TAC to review the IJC study, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Administrator Report

A) Audit

N. Erickson reported that the information for the 2008 annual audit has been forwarded to the auditor at Brady, Martz & Associates of Grand Forks, ND.

B) Joint Annual Meeting

N. Erickson stated that she was contacted by Ben Varnson, Red River Joint Water Resource Board (RRJWRB), who inquired about scheduling the 2009 Joint Annual Meeting of the RRJWRB and the RRWMB. Following discussion, the board agreed to host the annual meeting on Tuesday, July 21, 2009 in East Grand Forks, MN. Potential touring sites discussed included recently constructed projects in the Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD and the Red Lake WD.

C) March Conference

The Eleventh Annual Joint Conference of the RRWMB and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group scheduled for March 31, 2009 was cancelled due to the ongoing flood fight and winter storm warning issued by the National Weather Service. N. Erickson inquired whether the Board of Managers would be interested in rescheduling the conference prior to the Work Group's fiscal year end of June 30th. The board agreed not to reschedule the conference due to upcoming field work.

D) Five Year Plan

N. Erickson distributed a draft five year plan spreadsheet of projects of member districts progressing through the step process. She explained that once the completed worksheets have been received from member districts, a master worksheet would be compiled to assist the board with planning efforts.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Commission**, Board Meeting and Devils Lake Tour, June 03-04, 2009 (Board meeting in Grand Forks, ND).
2. **2009 MAWD Summer Tour**, TBD, June 25, 2009, Albert Lee, MN?
3. **July Board Meeting**, Tuesday, July 21, 2009, Meeting with the Red River Joint Water Resources Board, TBD.

District Reports

- The Two Rivers WD reported on the Ross No. 7 Impoundment Project. The gate was closed on March 23, 2009 and the impoundment was operated for the first time ever. Due to the nature of this year's flood, the gate remains closed as areas at Drayton and Pembina are not showing low enough water elevations. The impoundment was filled and is flowing about a half foot over the top of the principal spillway. At its current level, the impoundment is storing 3,100 acre-feet. Most of the local runoff is on the downswing, however, if needed the impoundment has storage for another 260 acre-feet before water would flow over the emergency spillway.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the North Ottawa Impoundment Project. The project held 5,700 acre-feet from 19 square miles of drainage area this spring. The District delayed any discharge from the site until after the crest in Fargo-Moorhead on April 16, 2009. On April 17th the gates were opened to begin discharging. The gates were adjusted throughout the day to ensure that the channels would run full but not cause flooding on any neighboring lands. At one point, all six structures were open and operating as intended. The project should be fully operational for next spring's runoff.

District's Funding Requests

1. Wild Rice WD / Step I Submittal / Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project

The information required for both Step I & II submittals was distributed to the board for review at the February board meeting. A tour of the proposed project was conducted following lunch.

The project involves raising the existing Upper Becker Dam ~ 16 feet and replacing the existing two-stage outlet with a two-stage gated outlet structure. The impoundment can store 10,410 acre-feet of floodwater, which is 5.1 inches of runoff from the 38.4 square mile drainage area. Of the 10,410 total acre-feet of storage, 7,940 acre-feet is gated and 2,470 acre-feet is ungated. The project will be able to store water indefinitely to avoid discharging into a downstream flood condition. The flood control goals for this project are designed to work in concert with other proposed measures identified in the Project No. 42, South Branch Storage Project.

Motion by Manager Wright to authorize the Step I submittal of the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Following discussion, the board agreed to table action on the Step II submittal until the following board meeting.

The next meeting will be on May 19, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator