



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 Diane Ista-Ada Jerome Deal, Secretary-Wheaton
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING November 17, 2009 Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Todd Miller	Dan Money
Ron Osowski	Orville Knott
Daniel Wilkens	Diane Ista
Jerome Deal	

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR*CS
- Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
- Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
- Danni Halvorson, Monitoring Specialist
- Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering, Inc.
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Keith Mykleseth, The Nature Conservancy
- Paul Swenson, MNDNR, Natural Resource Tribal Liaison
- Mike Carroll, MNDNR Regional Director

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

Public Information Initiative

Mark Meister reported on the public information initiative. The final editing is occurring with the video project and plans are to release the video by the end of November.

The development of the annual calendar continues. Following final review by the Public Information Committee, distribution of the calendar is scheduled prior to year end.

Meister notified the Board of Managers that he was selected to chair the Department of Communication at North Dakota State University (NDSU). He added that he will keep the board informed relative to potential impacts with his duties for the RRWMB.

Project Coordinator Report

Ron Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. A meeting facilitated by the Department of Administration was conducted regarding the possible merger within the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) of the two divisions of Waters and Ecological Resources. Those attending discussed concerns that the merger was initiated for cost-savings due to the continued state budget deficit. The DNR responded that they would consider the input received from stakeholders and develop a plan for proceeding regarding the impending merger.

The Drainage Work Group met and reviewed last year's proposed changes to the drainage law and agreed to proceed this year without requesting funding for drainage inventories. A presentation on the Drainage Systems Management Education and Stakeholder Feedback Project was conducted by Ann Lewandowski of the University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center and Mark Dittrich of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Ms. Lewandowski and Mr. Dittrich have been invited to attend the December board meeting to discuss the project.

The Agricultural Tile Drainage Study conducted by Dr. Gary Sands of the University of Minnesota was discussed. Harnack reported that Charlie Anderson has been reviewing the model with Dr. Sands who agreed to incorporate a winter component for frozen ground prior to finalizing the report. Harnack further noted that Dr. Sands would like to conduct additional soil borings in southern Minnesota and the Red River basin which would cost an additional \$80,000 and suggested that the RRWMB, and possibly the Work Group, consider funding a portion of the additional soil borings in an effort to leverage the remaining funds.

Manager Finney requested Paul Swenson to address the additional funding needed for the tile drainage study at the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting scheduled following today's board meeting. Mr. Swenson indicated that the Work Group budget was on the agenda for this afternoon and responded that he would suggest that the Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) work collaboratively with the RRWMB's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to develop a plan to finalize the study.

Harnack reported that applications for habitat funding were submitted to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) for the North Ottawa and Redpath projects of the BdSWD and the Grand Marais project of the RLWD. Unfortunately, these projects were not selected for further consideration. Following discussion, the board agreed that a letter should be forwarded jointly from the RRWMB and the Work Group addressing concerns relative to the appropriations. **Motion** by Manager Deal to forward a letter in conjunction with the Work Group addressing the LSOHC appropriations, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried**.

Red River Basin Commission

Lance Yohe, Executive Director – RRBC, reported on the mainstem modeling effort. The model will be run for the 1997 flood with a target percent reduction goal for each of the seven mainstem points used as a basis for the effort. This percent reduction will be determined based on the experience and guidance of the RRBC Red River Basin Hydrology Team (RRBHT). At this time, a 20% reduction at each mainstem location is being explored as a starting goal. Several goals for the project include tributary reductions, floodway benefits and watershed strategies.

Yohe discussed the legislative mandate to develop Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS). The RRBC is gathering information from entities in the Red River Basin on the recent and past flood issues. This information will assist in the development of a regional flood damage reduction strategy. The Minnesota and North Dakota legislatures recently each appropriated \$500,000 to the RRBC to develop, in consultation and cooperation with boards and commissions involved in water management and flood prevention and control in the Red River Basin, a recommendation for a plan of action to address, mitigate, and respond to flooding issues in the Red River watershed. A draft report will be ready January 15, 2010.

Yohe inquired about the possibility of the RRBC working in collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on the LTFS project and the Watershed Feasibility Study. Manager Finney directed the TAC to coordinate with the RRBC regarding USACE participation for the effort.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken reported that work continues with the International Water Institute (IWI) and RRWMB personnel and attorneys from both Tri-College University (TCU) and RRWMB to coordinate the transition of River Watch and the overall monitoring program from the RRWMB to IWI. Since the current River Watch legislation specifically directed the funding go to the RRWMB, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has determined that the RRWMB cannot assign the grant to IWI for management but will have to work with IWI as a sub-contractor to complete the project.

Chuck Fritz stated that a presentation about the River Watch program was presented to the TCU board on November 13, 2009 but the board tabled the decision to transfer until all legal documentation for the transfer is in place. The TCU has scheduled a special meeting on December 15, 2009 to address this issue.

The General Fund contract for the River Watch legislative appropriation of \$200,000 has been signed and was effective as of October 28, 2009. The contract for the Clean Water Fund portion of the legislative appropriation has not been released yet as the revenue stream is tied to the additional

sales tax that was effective July 1st. State revenues are below expected forecasts thus it is unknown when these funds will be made available.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul suggested that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) schedule a meeting of the sub-committee of the two sponsoring boards of the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study to discuss the possible work items for use of the additional federal cost-share dollars. An additional \$750,000 of federal cost-share money was recently awarded to the USACE to be used towards the study. With the recent additional appropriation, nearly \$2 million of USACE cost-share funding is available for the study.

Administrator Report

A) Funding Commitments Worksheet

A revised funding commitments worksheet as of October 31st was distributed.

B) Red River Joint Water Resource Board / Reschedule Meeting

The Board of Managers had previously scheduled a meeting of a sub-committee with members of the Red River Joint Water Resource Board (RRJWRB) to discuss drainage issues following the October 27, 2009 board meeting in Ada, MN. The meeting was canceled since several attendees were unable to attend. The following dates were discussed as possible dates to reschedule the meeting: December 14, 2009 – The Blue Moose, East Grand Forks, MN; December 15, 2009 – Sand Hill River WD office (following the RRWMB meeting); or January 18 or 19, 2010 – in conjunction with the regular monthly meeting and/or the RRBC annual conference. Following discussion, the board requested N. Erickson to coordinate the rescheduled meeting with the RRJWRB.

C) Project Team Expense Reimbursement Guidelines

At the October 29, 2009 Work Group meeting conducted in Detroit Lakes, criteria regarding reimbursement for administrative project team expenses was discussed. N. Erickson explained that the issue was discussed with the auditor of the RRWMB who reiterated that documentation of *actual* administrative expenses incurred should be included with pay requests for reimbursement of project team expenses. This item is on the agenda for the Work Group meeting following today's board meeting.

D) Financial Projections

N. Erickson distributed draft financial projections for upcoming years. She stated that she and R. Harnack have been developing projections to be utilized for distribution during the upcoming legislative session as well as for financial planning purposes. The projections provide a comprehensive outline of future income as well as expenses with regard to board commitments.

D. Thul stated that since the board is scheduled to conduct a review of the Governing Documents publication perhaps the TAC could evaluate the project prioritization worksheet to be used to assist with designating high priority projects. R. Harnack concurred with D. Thul and suggested that modifications to the Star Value Method should also be addressed by the TAC.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, November 17, 2009, Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, MN.
2. **MAWD Annual Meeting & Trade Show**, December 3-5, 2009, Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN. Register online at www.mnwatershed.org by November 20, 2009.
3. **Red River Basin Commission's 27th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference**, January 19-21, 2010, Alerus Center, Grand Forks, ND. An online registration form and pre-conference brochure are available at www.redriverbasincommission.org.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. After waiting for over two years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit has finally been received. Phases 1 and 3 of the project are nearing completion. Outlet structures for Phase 2 have been started and should be completed by July of 2010 or sooner.

The construction of one ring dike has been completed. The District is currently working on two new ring dike requests through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and rural ring dike program with construction slated to begin next summer.

The District, Roseau County, and the DNR are currently working on an operation and maintenance plan for the Palmville Project. The DNR has forwarded the District and County a Joint Powers Agreement for the structures and operation which are currently under review by the DNR.

- The Two Rivers WD reported on the Kennedy Project No. 6. This two-mile long ditch was petitioned by the City of Kennedy under watershed law as a flood control project. Construction was completed on the project this past fall and the project is now operational. The project consisted of linking the upstream ditch, Kittson County Ditch No. 4 with a downstream ditch, Kittson County Ditch No. 27.

The District was awarded over \$78,000 in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding to repair various projects that were damaged by the 2009 spring flooding. Repairs were made to the following: Dewey Project No. 5, Roseau County Ditch No. 4, Judicial Ditch No. 10, Ross No. 7, and Springbrook / County Road No. 61.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / Step II Submittal / Redpath Project

The information required for a Step II submittal was distributed. The Redpath Project includes three separate but interrelated projects. These projects can be funded and constructed independently. However, they will function at their best, and be most economical to build, if they

are constructed concurrently or in the most logical order. The projects are briefly described below in a preferred order of construction.

Mustinka River Restoration: Construct a 7.3 mile long by 400 feet wide riparian corridor including a sinuous channel with an interactive floodway replacing an existing straight ditch. Restore flow to an 8.8 mile reach of natural channel isolated by the Mustinka River Cutoff.

Impoundment: Construct a multi-purpose, five pool impoundment complex on three square miles of existing farmland to store water from 193 square miles of drainage area from the Upper Mustinka River and create wetland habitat.

Collection Channel: Construct a six mile long collection channel to collect runoff from 16 square miles and carry it to the impoundment.

Anderson reported that although a funding package has not yet been secured, the project is designed to provide substantial natural resource enhancement (NRE) benefits estimated to be roughly equivalent to flood damage reduction (FDR) benefits. In evaluating the project's feasibility, based on funding breakdowns for similar projects with significant NRE benefits the following cost-share is proposed: \$21,000,000 - State of Minnesota (75%); and \$5,000,000 – RRWMB and \$2,000,000 – BdSWD/local split for the remaining 25%.

Red River Diversion

Manager Ista reported on the diversion plan to save the cities of Fargo-Moorhead from chronic flooding. She stated that the Norman County Commission passed a resolution requesting the USACE to complete a downstream study as soon as possible. Residents within the Wild Rice WD are organizing an opposition group called the Red River Downstream Impact Work Group.

The next meeting will be on December 15, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator