



## Red River Watershed Management Board

### *Board of Managers*

John Finney, President-Humboldt Todd Miller-Warroad Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo  
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Greg Holmvik-Ada Jerome Deal, Secretary-Wheaton  
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

## RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

May 17, 2011

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, May 17, 2011, 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             Greg Holmvik  
   Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator  
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator  
Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator  
Mark Meister, CR\*CS  
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD  
Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD  
Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator  
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.  
Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute  
Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD  
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.  
Charlie Anderson, WSN Engineering, Inc.  
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC  
Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.  
JoAnn Zutz, Congressman Peterson's office  
Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, NRCS  
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD  
Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA  
Blake Carlson, WSN Engineering, Inc.

**Motion** by Manager Deal to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written, **Seconded** by Manager Sando, **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 Holmvik, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

### **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**

Keith Weston, District Conservationist – NRCS and Red River Basin Coordinator, discussed the proposed USACE Regulatory Branch position for the Red River basin. A draft position description was distributed. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is under development between the USACE, NRCS and the RRRA regarding the proposed position.

Mr. Weston stated that both the RRRA and the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC), relative to the Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) plan, have identified permitting delays and the need for streamlining the permitting process.

Manager Money referred to the draft position description and noted that at a previous board meeting the Board of Managers confirmed that they were unwilling to financially support the position, however, should the RRRA decide to pursue the position the board would reconsider providing a local match for Work-in-Kind (WIK) developed in conjunction with the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS) for the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion. Manager Money forwarded comments on the draft job description to Mr. Weston for consideration.

Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed to send a letter to the RRRA to request scheduling a meeting with the USACE, NRCS, and congressional delegates or their staffs from the Red River basin to discuss the position description and obtain a commitment from the USACE for establishing the position. **Motion** by Manager Deal to direct N. Erickson to develop a letter to the RRRA requesting a meeting with the USACE, NRCS and congressional delegates regarding the proposed USACE position, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Mr. Weston discussed the \$10 million available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a special wetlands initiative in the Red River basin. An article was distributed that stated that Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that funding would be available to help eligible landowners in the three states to reduce flooding, restore wetlands and enhance wildlife habitat. Mr. Weston stated that USDA's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is the federal government's largest private lands wetlands restoration program.

Manager Deal reported that the RRRA continues considering leasing office space in the Fargo-Moorhead area which could also contain offices for representatives from the USACE and the NRCS. Mr. Weston added that the NRCS would be interested in sub-leasing office space from the RRRA should they retain a lease.

### **Public Information Initiative**

M. Meister reviewed the public information monthly report. Activities for the month of May included writing feature articles and developing recommendations for board consideration regarding the transition of the public information initiative. His new position of Chair of the NDSU Department of Communication and director of the School of Natural Resources Management will begin July 1, 2011 and as a result he is required to end his consulting work.

Manager Money inquired about the recommendations being developed by M. Meister and suggested that a Public Information Committee meeting be scheduled to further discuss the position requirements. M. Meister responded that he would schedule a committee meeting in the near future.

### **Project Coordinator Report**

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. The Governor currently has \$55M in the bonding bill for flood damage reduction in the current proposal. The Senate bonding bill currently includes no appropriation with only technical amendments included. The House bonding bill includes \$28M for flood damage reduction, \$17M for the Coon Rapids Dam, and technical amendments similar to those in the Senate bonding bill.

The General Fund includes \$264,000/yr. in both bills for the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, but eliminates funding (\$125,000/yr.) for farmstead ring dikes. Significant agency reductions are included which could result in reduced staffing and limited personnel to participate on project teams.

### **Administrator Report**

#### **A) Project Team Support**

For fiscal year 2011 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011), the Work Group allocated each project team \$15,000 for project team expenses. The following project team reimbursement requests have been disbursed to date: Bois de Sioux WD - \$15,000; Buffalo-Red River WD - \$15,000; Middle Snake Tamarac WD - \$15,000; Red Lake WD - \$13,139; Roseau River WD - \$5,768; Sand Hill River WD - \$10,289; Two Rivers WD - \$6,361; and Wild Rice WD - \$7,003.

#### **B) Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) Membership**

N. Erickson reported that at the April 20, 2011 meeting, the Work Group discussed the current membership of the Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) which represents a range of disciplines.

The RRWMB originally retained technical representation from JOR Engineering and Houston Engineering. Following the meeting, RRWMB Work Group members, along with John Finney, agreed that RRWMB technical representation on TSAC should be revised to include Charlie Anderson of WSN Engineering, and Nate Dalager of HDR Engineering as it would provide for greater efficiencies as these two engineers were appointed recently to represent the RRWMB on the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC). **Motion** by Manager Deal to appoint Charlie Anderson, WSN Engineering, Inc. and Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc. as technical representatives to TSAC, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

#### **C) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences**

1. **Red River Basin Commission Tour & Board Meeting**, Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> and Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Moorhead, MN.
2. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, Wednesday, June 8, 2011, Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, MN.
3. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, Tuesday, June 14, 2011, 9:30 a.m., Moore Engineering, Inc., West Fargo, ND.

4. **2011 MAWD Summer Tour**, June 16-18, 2011, Hosted by the Red Lake and Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers Watershed Districts, Best Western, Thief River Falls, MN.

#### **Water Quality Project Monitoring Report**

C. Fritz stated that a River Watch Youth Leadership Camp is scheduled for June 14-16<sup>th</sup> at the Sand Hill Lake Bible Camp. A tour and planning meeting was held at the Camp to further plan camp activities. The goal of the camp is for the student leaders to better understand watershed conditions and develop skills to engage other students and the public in becoming more actively involved in watershed education and protection.

C. Fritz discussed the Red River Basin Decision Information Network (RRBDIN) website. He explained the website was developed after the 1997 flood season to standardize available information and was originally designed by the USACE. The site is currently being updated to include a project development/planning tool which could be used to assess projects for permitting concerns, with one location to assess many different issues. The permit evaluation tools will provide a clear, consistent process from problem identification to site selection, clear documentation of planning and alternative analysis, and projects developed with consistency and transparency.

C. Fritz reported that the next meeting of the BTSAC of the RRRA is scheduled for June 2-3, 2011.

#### **Red River Basin Commission**

Lance Yohe, Executive Director – RRBC, reported that the RRBC is nearing completion of its two-year project to develop a basin plan to address flooding in the Red River basin. The Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) plan committee is currently obtaining feedback on the draft report.

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

D. Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project (Option D) of the Wild Rice WD. The revised project involves moving the dam approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile downstream of the existing Upper Becker Dam built as an un-gated structure which worked in conjunction with the Lower Becker Dam, also an un-gated structure. The impoundment is proposed to store 7,396 acre-feet of floodwater, which is 3.55 inches of runoff from the 39.1 square mile drainage area. Of the 7,396 total acre-feet of storage, 5,378 acre-feet is gated and 2,018 acre-feet is un-gated. The Star Value Method ranking score for this project is 16. The TAC supports Step I approval for this project.

C. Anderson reported that the MIKE 11 model has been updated and will be utilized to assist watershed districts in meeting their basin-wide 20 percent mainstem flow reduction targeted goal. The model was used in the LTFS report to develop criteria for water retention site selection, review of flood damage reduction goals, development of stage storage discharge relationships for potential sites, and the identification of potential storage sites.

D. Thul discussed the WIK of the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). He reported that when the USACE has finalized the local WIK funding, the Board of Managers could utilize these funds to provide a local match toward the proposed USACE Regulatory Branch position for the Red River basin until funding has been secured through the 2012 Farm Bill.

D. Thul stated that the updates for the HEC-HMS modeling products for the cities of Moorhead and Fargo have exceeded estimates by ~ \$150,000 - \$200,000. He is currently discussing this issue with the USACE to determine whether other federal funding can be identified to account for the overrun.

### **District Reports**

- The Red Lake WD reported that on April 27, 2011 a meeting was conducted in St. Paul with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to discuss the petition to amend the board's Ten-Year Overall Plan to establish a Water Management District for the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction Project. After considerable discussion, the BWSR board approved unanimously to amend the plan. A resolution from the Board was presented to the Board of Managers at the last board meeting conducted on May 12<sup>th</sup>. To date, the viewers are finalizing their report for the improvement to Pennington County Ditch No. 1 at which time upon filing their report, the Board will set a hearing on both the improvement of the legal drainage system and the initiation of the Water Management District.
- The Wild Rice WD reported that construction has begun on the community ring dikes in Hendrum and Perley. Some minor complications occurred by having to put emergency levees on top of the existing dikes to fight this year's flood.

Soil borings and additional surveying is needed in Shelly as the District continues in the project's conceptual phase.

An informational meeting was conducted with the Mayor of Ada and the city engineer with watershed district representatives including Greg Holmvik, Raymond Hanson, Kevin Ruud, and district engineer Jerry Bents to discuss their community levee project.

### **District's Funding Requests**

#### **1. Wild Rice WD / Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project (Option D) / Step I Submittal**

The information required for a Step I submittal was distributed at the previous monthly meeting. A tour of the project will be conducted at the conclusion of today's meeting.

The next meeting will be on June 21, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, 1000 Pennington Ave S, Thief River Falls, MN.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 12:10 p.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jerome Deal  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator