



## 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

July 19, 2011

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, July 19, 2011, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| Todd Miller    | Dan Money     |
| Ron Osowski    | Orville Knott |
| Daniel Wilkens | Greg Holmvik  |
| Jerome Deal    |               |

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Sharon Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office
- Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, NRCS
- Henry VanOffelen, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
- Wayne Goeken, Director – Center for Watershed Education
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD

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

### **Tax Levy Rate Determination**

The Board discussed the tax levy rate determination. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to maintain the levy at 100% for FY 2012, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

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

N. Erickson stated that the board's legal counsel reviewed the proposed by-laws of the RRRA and endorsed their approval. The by-laws of the RRRA were officially adopted at their July 12, 2011 meeting. The Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) provided the necessary signatures and at today's meeting the remaining signatures will be attained from the RRWMB following board approval. **Motion** by Manager Deal to approve the RRRA by-laws adopted on July 12, 2011, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Manager Finney referred to the \$10 million available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a special wetlands initiative in the Red River basin and suggested RRRA participation with the administration of the program. K. Weston, District Conservationist – NRCS, reported that the NRCS has a Minnesota State Technical Committee that develops funding recommendations for proposed projects and suggested that the RRWMB and RRRA inquire about membership on the committee. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize N. Erickson to send a letter to the NRCS requesting membership on the Minnesota State Technical Committee, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. Manager Deal suggested that the RRRA discuss sending a similar letter of request to the NRCS at their upcoming meeting on August 9, 2011.

S. Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office, stated that the RRRA was influential in securing \$10 million dollars from the USDA/NRCS and noted the importance of continued involvement of the committees of the RRRA to further project development and prioritization. She added that Dave White, Chief of the USDA-NRCS, is planning to travel to the Red River basin in the near future and encouraged the RRWMB to continue the development of a process through the RRRA to expedite project implementation once federal funding is secured.

### **Public Information Initiative**

N. Erickson reported that she discussed the Public Information Specialist position with M. Meister who suggested scheduling a conference call with both the Human Resources and Public Information committees to review the applications received for the Public Information Specialist position. Following discussion, the board agreed to direct N. Erickson to schedule a conference call with both committees to select the candidates to interview for the open position.

### **Project Planning and Permit Evaluation Tool**

Henry VanOffelen, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) in cooperation with the International Water Institute (IWI), conducted a presentation on Phase 6 - Project Planning and Permit Evaluation Tool (PPPET). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Red River Watershed Management Board and the North Dakota Red River Joint Water Resources Board

signed a federal watershed feasibility study cost share agreement on June 4, 2008. The study goal is to develop a basin-wide watershed management plan that incorporates improved water quality, ecosystem restoration, flood damage reduction and water supply. The agreement identified a number of phases including the collection of basin-wide Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data (Phase 1), refining hydrologic and hydraulic for project planning and flood forecasting (Phase 2), and developing a decision support system (Phase 3). The information from the first three phases will be used to develop a watershed management plan (Phase 4).

The IWI is charged with developing the decision support system and plans to upgrade the existing the Red River Basin Decision Information Network (RRBDIN) website. The RRBDIN was developed after the 1997 Red River of the North flood by the International Joint Commission and the USACE ([www.rrbdin.org](http://www.rrbdin.org)). The RRBDIN was envisioned as an online decision support system that would facilitate information exchange and better inform and prepare residents of the RRB.

The Institute plans to update the RRBDIN website and develop a series of online decision support tools for the public and local land and water managers. One of the decision support tools envisioned is the PPPET. The PPPET is funded by the Red River Basin Commission and uses the LiDAR data to assist managers with planning and implementation of flood damage reduction projects. PPPET project outcomes include:

- Clear and consistent process for problem identification and site selection.
- Online decision support including a mapping tool, permit evaluation tool, watershed support, and new pre-processed data (LiDAR-derived projects, permit complexity).
- Standardized documentation of project planning and alternatives analysis consistent with permit requirements.
- Opportunity to develop projects with a high level of consistency and transparency for review by the public, legislators/funders, board members, local officials, etc.

The Institute is working with local managers in Moccasin Creek (Wild Rice WD) - MN and North Branch Park River (Walsh County Water Resource District) - North Dakota to ensure the tool meets the needs of local managers and addresses the necessary steps for project development.

### **Project Coordinator Report**

In the absence of R. Harnack, the Project Coordinator Report was distributed. He attended a meeting along with Manager Deal between the RRWMB and the Buffalo-Red River WD (BRRWD) facilitated by BWSR to discuss the possibility of the BRRWD rejoining the RRWMB. The discussions were productive and focused on recent developments within the Red River basin that magnified the importance of uniting efforts to maximize efficiencies and effectiveness to best serve the citizens of the basin. N. Erickson distributed a letter she was requested to develop addressed to the BRRWD regarding the recent meeting. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to authorize sending the letter to the BRRWD, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried**.

The bonding requests of member watershed districts were discussed. The Special Session is scheduled to begin later today with a proposed \$500 million bonding bill that includes significant funding for flood damage reduction projects.

## **Administrator Report**

### **A) IRS Standard Mileage Rate**

Effective July 1, 2011 the IRS has increased the standard business mileage rate to 55.5 cents per mile.

### **B) Reallocation of Surplus FY11 Funds by Funding Committee**

For fiscal year 2011, the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (the "Work Group") allocated \$15,000 to each project team for project team expenses.

N. Erickson reported that the Funding Committee of the Work Group requested that watershed district administrators forward a summary of **all** project team expenses incurred during FY11, including those already submitted for reimbursement as it appeared that a surplus of funds would be available to potentially reimburse watershed districts for project team expenses in addition to the original FY11 allocation of \$15,000.

The Work Group authorized the Funding Committee to reallocate the surplus of mediation funds for FY11. The surplus of funding ( $\$264,000 - \$202,218.05 = \$61,781.95$ ,  $\$61,781.95 + \$711.74$  (FY10 transfer) =  $\$62,493.69$ ) was reallocated to the individual Project Teams as follows:

| <b>Watershed District</b> | <b>Support</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| BdSWD                     | \$1,705.85     | \$1,705.85    |
| BRRWD                     | \$4,257.78     | \$5,963.63    |
| MSTRWD                    | \$47,499.62    | \$53,463.25   |
| RRWD                      | \$2,640.92     | \$56,104.17   |
| WRWD                      | \$6,389.52     | \$62,493.69   |

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

N. Erickson distributed a letter she was requested to draft to the RRRA at the previous monthly meeting regarding 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 proposed USACE regulatory staff position in the Red River Basin position. A copy of the letter was distributed.

### **D) Computer Purchase**

N. Erickson stated that at the June board meeting, approval was obtained to purchase a new laptop computer, monitor and other required components, not to exceed \$3,000. The previous desktop and laptop computers were purchased in 2004 and 2007 respectively. An HP – Pavillion laptop, LG Series Monitor and other required components were purchased for \$1,874.42.

### **E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences**

1. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, Tuesday, August 9, 2011, 10:00 a.m., Moore Engineering, Inc., West Fargo, ND.
2. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, August 17, 2011, Detroit Lakes, MN.
3. **Red River Basin Commission Board Meeting**, September 22, 2011, 9:00 a.m., Fargo, ND.

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

W. Goeken stated that after originally receiving notice from the MPCA on June 10th that all grant and contract work would be suspended due to the pending state shutdown, another notice was received on June 28th that stated that grant work could continue which reversed the previous notification. Therefore, work for Sand Hill Watershed Intensive Monitoring and Loadstudy project is continuing as scheduled.

The strategic leadership team for the River Watch program is being restructured and methods developed to provide for more effective engagement opportunities, especially for increased North Dakota and Manitoba participation.

### **Red River Basin Commission**

Manager Wilkens distributed a draft final report on the Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) project. He stated that two variations of the report are available including the hard copies distributed at today's meeting, and also an electronic version posted on the RRBC's website.

### **TAC**

D. Thul reported that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet prior to the board meeting as he was laid off due to the state shutdown. As reported previously, the Special Session is scheduled to begin later today to begin discussions about resolving the budget dispute.

### **District Reports**

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The Spruce Valley Corporation continues work on Phase 2 of the project. The Hay Creek setback and levees replacement plan is currently being reviewed before letting bids. The date scheduled to open the bids is August 3, 2011. Monitoring of the fen in the project area continues. Right-of-way markers will be installed along the connection channel between Hay Creek and the Norland Impoundment.
- The Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the status of their Overall Plan Update. The District received approval of the plan update from the Board of Water and Soil Resources.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Creek Cut Channel Project. Due to continued high waters on the Red River of the North, surveys which need to be conducted prior to completing the final engineer's report have been delayed. Plans are to have the survey completed yet this summer with construction to begin this fall.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on this year's flood damages. The District is compiling information on damages that occurred during this year's flood event. Norman County as a whole has incurred over \$1,000,000 in damages this year which includes all political entities in the county.

## **District's Funding Requests**

### **1. Wild Rice WD / Loan Advance / City of Hendrum and City of Perley Flood Control Levee Improvement Projects**

The following motion was authorized at the June 21, 2011 board meeting:

**Motion** by Manager Money, **Seconded** by Manager Knott to approve a loan to the Wild Rice Watershed District to meet cash flow needs for the City of Hendrum and City of Perley Flood Control Levee Improvement Projects, based on the following findings and conditions:

1. there is a hardship and urgent need for this assistance, given that these projects are currently under construction and dependent upon state grant funding which will be suspended in the event of a state government shutdown, and delay in completion of these projects during such a shutdown could leave Hendrum and Perley in a compromised and vulnerable position during next Spring's flood season;
2. In the event that there is no state government shutdown on July 1, or it is resolved quickly and state government grant funding is promptly restored, then no loan from the RRWMB to the Wild Rice Watershed District will be necessary;
3. an engineering report was prepared that demonstrated that the projects are in conformity with the District's watershed management plan and the projects have great potential for basin-wide benefits beyond the local District;
4. Wild Rice Watershed District will confirm by formal action of its board of managers on or before July 15 the amount of funding that it needs from the RRWMB to continue construction activity for these projects through August 31; any funding required beyond that date will require an additional request from the District and approval by the RRWMB;
5. The RRWMB attorney is directed to prepare the necessary loan agreement for consideration by the District at its July 13 meeting, and consideration by the RRWMB at its July 19 meeting; any loan funding will be contingent upon approval of this loan agreement by the District and the RRWMB. The agreement will provide that the RRWMB will be promptly repaid upon restoration of the state grant payments to the District. **Motion carried.**

Since the June board meeting additional information was provided that responds to the board's funding procedures. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to reconsider the decision made at the June 21, 2011 board meeting to authorize a funding advance agreement with the Wild Rice WD for the Hendrum and Perley Levee Projects, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried.**

### **Resolution to Confirm Funding Advance for Hendrum and Perley Levee Projects**

**WHEREAS**, on June 21, 2011, the Wild Rice Watershed District (District) requested a funding advance from the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) for the Hendrum and Perley Levee Projects (Projects);

**WHEREAS**, the Projects were approved by the District's Board of Managers based on an Engineer's Report that describes the projects as follows:

Perley

The project will involve construction of an earthen flood control levee around all four sides of the City of Perley. This project will provide a higher level of permanent flood protection for the City of Perley to minimize future flooding impacts. In addition to the earthen flood control levees, the project will also include internal drainage and storage improvements, storm water lift station, closure structures, bypass channel, emergency closures, and necessary land acquisition.

Hendrum

The project will involve construction of an earthen flood control levee around all four sides of the City of Hendrum. This project will provide a higher level of permanent flood protection for the City of Hendrum to minimize future flooding impacts. In addition to the earthen flood control levees, the project will also include internal drainage and storage improvements, storm water lift station, closure structures, ditch realignment, emergency closures, and necessary land acquisition.

**WHEREAS**, the District's watershed management plan provides that flood damage reduction is a priority goal for the District's projects;

**WHEREAS**, the District explained to the RRWMB that with the impending shutdown of state government on July 1, 2011, the state grant funding from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Projects would be interrupted, the Projects would be halted in the middle of construction, and their completion within this year's construction season could be in doubt, and delay in completion of these projects during such a shutdown could leave Hendrum and Perley in a compromised and vulnerable position during next Spring's flood season;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Red River Watershed Management Board hereby finds that the District has demonstrated a unique hardship case and urgent need for an interim funding advance in light of the current shutdown of state government; has provided an engineer's report that indicates that the Projects are in conformity with the District's watershed management plan; and the Projects have great potential for basin-wide benefits in the watershed of the Red River of the North;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the RRWMB approves a funding advance to the District in an amount not to exceed \$2,800,000 to facilitate the timely completion of construction of the Projects, subject to the following conditions:

1. On or before August 31, 2011, RRWMB will disburse \$1,500,000 to the District;
2. Upon receiving a request from the District on or before September 14, 2011, RRWMB will disburse an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 to the District on or before September 30, 2011;

3. Upon receiving a request from the District on or before October 12, 2011, RRWMB will disburse an amount not to exceed \$300,000 to the District on or before October 31, 2011;
4. Any obligation of RRWMB to disburse funds to the District will cease upon the reinstatement of operations of state government;
5. The District will agree to repay this funding advance to RRWMB in full within sixty (60) days from the date on which state government has resumed operations.
6. The District will execute an agreement to document these obligations with the RRWMB pursuant to the RRWMB's Application Procedures for Funding Flood Damage Reduction Projects and Related Programs, and the President of the RRWMB is hereby authorized to execute that agreement.

The question was on the adoption of the resolution and there were 7 yeas and 0 nays as follows:

|         | <u>Yea</u> | <u>Nay</u> | <u>Abstain</u> |
|---------|------------|------------|----------------|
| DEAL    | X          |            |                |
| FINNEY  |            |            | X              |
| HOLMVIK | X          |            |                |
| KNOTT   | X          |            |                |
| MILLER  | X          |            |                |
| MONEY   | X          |            |                |
| OSOWSKI | X          |            |                |
| WILKENS | X          |            |                |

Upon vote, the President declared the Resolution adopted.

The next meeting will be on August 16, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Fertile, MN.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:45 a.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jerome Deal  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator