



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

August 16, 2011

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, August 16, 2011, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Todd Miller	John Nelson
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
- Roger Hanson, Sand Hill River WD
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
- Sharon Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office
- Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, NRCS
- Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD

Motion by Manager Deal to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Holmvik, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Knott 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 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)

Manager Finney stated that Ron Osowski has been unable to attend regular monthly meetings due to his wife's health issues. He suggested that an interim alternate be selected for the short-term to attend RRRA meetings. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize Manager Holmvik to attend RRRA meetings as an alternate for Ron Osowski in the interim, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

R. Harnack discussed the \$10 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a special wetlands initiative in the Red River basin. Only two projects are progressing in the Red River basin including one in the Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD (MSTRWD) and the other in the Buffalo-Red River WD (BRRWD). At a previous RRRA meeting, an NRCS representative indicated that should the funding not be expended it may have to be returned. The RRRA agreed to ask local watershed districts to review current landowner requests to determine whether potential exists to develop larger projects or to redesign the projects in order to achieve optimal storage capacity.

K. Weston, District Conservationist – NRCS, distributed a map of the Red River basin depicting the locations of Red River Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) applications received for fiscal 2011. He added that membership from the RRWMB and the RRRA on the NRCS State Technical Committees would be beneficial to assist with developing funding recommendations for proposed projects. R. Harnack suggested that the board consider appointing two administrators and two engineers from member watershed districts.

K. Weston referenced the MSTRWD's Brandt/Angus project and noted that the criteria for consideration is landowner and land eligibility. If these two requirements are met, NRCS funds could be used for purchasing easements and vegetative restoration, with state funding used for project construction. R. Harnack noted that he will meet with K. Lokkesmoe to discuss the limitations of utilizing general obligation bonds for project costs.

Public Information Initiative

N. Erickson reported that interviews were conducted for the Public Information Specialist position on August 12, 2011 at the Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN. The Human Resources and Public Information committees have selected a candidate to fill the position and plan to extend an offer in the near future following a conference call to finalize the terms of the contract. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize L. Smith to draft an agreement between the board and the selected candidate, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. The special session concluded with a \$50 million bonding bill for flood damage reduction (FDR), and \$20 million for the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program.

The RIM program is administered through the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and protects and improves water quality, reduces soil erosion, and enhances fish and wildlife habitat on

privately owned lands by retiring environmentally sensitive lands from agricultural production. Conservation practices are established by planting native vegetation, and restoring wetlands. Other benefits include flood control and groundwater recharge. R. Harnack stated that he plans to meet with BWSR staff to discuss the allocation of \$3 - \$5 million of RIM bonding funds for member watershed districts' mediation projects.

R. Harnack stated that bonding funds for FDR projects are tentatively allocated as follows: Hay Creek/Norland - \$1.5M, Brandt/Angus - \$2M, and North Ottawa - \$1M. He added that since the Redpath Project of the BdSWD is not progressing as quickly as anticipated, no additional funding has been allocated for this project. Other projects included in the bonding initiative included Springbrook of the TRWD, as well as small communities and buyouts in the WRWD and SHRWD.

R. Harnack reported that he's discussed upstream retention efforts relative to the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Red River Diversion Project with Mark Bittner, City of Fargo and Bob Zimmerman, City of Moorhead. The proposed diversion project for Fargo-Moorhead by the USACE would flood several small upstream communities and thousands of acres of farm land. The revised plan would also require hundreds of people to relocate to make room for a large area to hold water during a flood. The first diversion plan would have caused increased flooding downstream, affecting communities all the way to the Canadian border.

R. Harnack suggested that the RRRRA provide leadership to begin pursuing upstream retention projects. S. Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office, concurred and noted the importance of continued involvement of the committees of the RRRRA to further project development and prioritization to expedite project implementation once federal funding is secured.

Administrator Report

A) Stream Gaging Cost-Share Program

The cost share payments for USGS Stream Gages for the 2010-2011 contracts have been received. The individual cost share responsibilities are listed below.

	<u>Amount Due</u> <u>2010-2011</u>
Red Lake	\$ 10,152.50
Wild Rice	\$ 11,131.50
Middle-Snake-Tamarac	\$ 7,850.00
Two Rivers	\$ 1,910.00
Sand Hill River	\$ 2,745.00
Roseau River	<u>\$ 13,887.50</u>
Total	<u>\$ 47,676.50</u>

B) Buffalo-Red River WD (BRRWD)

A letter developed by N. Erickson to the BRRWD was distributed regarding the recent discussions facilitated by BWSR regarding the possibility of the BRRWD rejoining the RRWMB.

C) Photocopier

N. Erickson stated that the current photocopier utilized in the office was purchased in 2004. The Color Imagerunner C3200 was purchased for \$12,780. An additional cost to buy-out the previous photocopier of \$6,350 was also incurred.

She reported that she discussed replacing the current photocopier with Manager Finney who directed her to obtain a cost estimate for new equipment. Following discussion with Marco and also the board's accountant, it was suggested to lease the replacement equipment. An estimate of ~ \$3,000 for 36 months was obtained to lease an HP Color laser jet printer which would include parts, labor, and all toner cartridges needed to operate the printer. **Motion** by Manager Holmvik to authorize N. Erickson to lease a new laser jet printer for ~ \$3,000 for 36 months, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**

D) Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

N. Erickson stated that the next Work Group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 17, 2011. The budget for fiscal year 2012 will be discussed. The proposed budget of \$264,000 is currently allocated as follows: Project Team Support - \$120,000 (\$15,000 per team); Project Development Grants - \$20,000; Facilitation Grants - \$10,000; TSAC Coordination - \$25,000; River Watch (Monitoring) - \$75,000; Work Group Meetings & Conference - \$5,000; and Communications and Outreach - \$9,000.

N. Drees added that BWSR's Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) reviewed the Brandt/Angus Flood Control Project. The TEP provisions within the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) provide forums to discuss site-specific interpretations of laws. They also provide an opportunity for gaining consensus on a number of primarily technical issues in order to make a recommendation to the decision-maker. N. Drees noted that self-mitigation relative to WCA regarding the project was discussed by the panel. The panel included USACE representation who did not oppose self-mitigation for the project.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, August 17, 2011, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 10:00 a.m., Moore Engineering, Inc., West Fargo, ND.
3. **Red River Basin Commission Board Meeting**, September 22, 2011, 9:00 a.m., Fargo, ND.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) sampling continues with samples being collected monthly at 15 active water quality locations. The Red Lake WD Project 60 project was highlighted in the report distributed to include information for pre and post construction years referring to before and after the Brandt and Euclid East impoundments were in place. The compilation was done to determine whether a meaningful difference exists between pre and post construction data.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator – RRBC, discussed the Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) project. She stated that final report to the Minnesota and North Dakota legislatures are due by the end of September 2011.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

D. Thul reported that the TAC did not meet prior to the board meeting. He stated that he attended a planning committee meeting of the RRBC regarding the *Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) Project*. He commended the RRBC on the draft final report and encouraged its endorsement.

D. Thul referred to the RRRRA and stated that he co-chairs the Project Prioritization Committee with Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota State Water Commission. At the June board meeting, the Board of Managers authorized D. Wilkens and R. Osowski as representatives on the committee. He suggested that a committee meeting be scheduled in the near future. Manager Finney referenced R. Osowski's limited ability to participate in board activities and suggested that an interim alternate should be considered for this committee.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The Spruce Valley Corporation continues work on the Norland Impoundment. The Hay Creek setback and levees wetland replacement plan bid opening was conducted on August 3, 2011. Three bids were presented to the Board of Managers and are currently being reviewed by the engineer and attorney. Right-of-way markers were installed along the connection channel between Hay Creek and the Norland Impoundment and also along the property boundary from the west outlet to the southwest outlet
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction/Improvement to Pennington County Ditch No. 1. The viewer's report for the project was filed with the Board at their regularly scheduled meeting on July 28, 2011. The final hearing for the improvement to Pennington County Ditch No. 1/Red Lake WD Ditch No. 14 along with the hearing to establish a Water Management District (WMD) for the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction Project will be held at the Ralph Engelstad arena on September 13, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project (Option D). Eric Zurn conducted a presentation to the Board of Manager's at their last monthly meeting. Following the presentation, a motion was made by Manager Erickson to terminate Option D, however, the motion failed for lack of a second.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / North Ottawa Impoundment Project

J. Roeschlein distributed a site plan for Phase V of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project. He explained that their Project Team had discussed whether to proceed with a six-cell option for \$1.3 million, or an eight-cell option for \$4.9 million. Upon recommendation of the Project Team, the Board of Managers agreed to construct the eight-cell option in phases for \$4.9 million and complete the remainder of the project when additional funding becomes available. He added that the Board of Managers agreed to proceed without utilizing USACE funding.

M. Jesme inquired whether USACE funding was considered in the original cost estimate. J. Roeschlein responded that the USACE conducted an analysis which delayed the project and ultimately cost the BdSWD additional expense, however, no financial commitment was received from the USACE.

N. Erickson distributed a funding commitments worksheet and discussed the board's financial commitment to the project. In August of 2010, the board authorized the reallocation of \$1,000,000 previously authorized for the local share of natural resource enhancements for the project and also an additional \$750,000 to be used towards land acquisition for the Redpath Project for a total of \$1.75 million required to match state funding. J. Roeschlein added that the District decided to utilize the funds received from the RRWMB for land acquisition for the Redpath Project rather than state money. R. Harnack explained that using state general obligation bonds for land acquisition is disallowed as it effects the entire bond issue.

J. Roeschlein stated that an additional RRWMB commitment of ~ \$607,000 would be needed in order to proceed with the preferred eight-cell option. R. Harnack noted that the original funding commitment from the state was 75/25 which was conditional on including the eight-cell option and added that the DNR could reduce the funding percentage to 50/50 for the project should this option not be implemented.

Following discussion, the board agreed not to commit any additional funding to the project.

The next meeting will be on September 20, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, MN.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:55 a.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator