



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

December 20, 2011

Badger Community Center, Badger, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, December 20, 2011, at the Badger Community Center, Badger, 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
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Jeff Nyquist, Public Information Officer
- Randy Prachar, MDNR (Tour guide)
- Floyd Haugen, Roseau River WD
- LaVerne Voll, Roseau River WD
- Cody Schmalz, Roseau River WD
- Ed Walsh, Two Rivers WD Advisory Committee
- Dan Fabian, House of Representatives (R), District: 01A
- Farrell Erickson
- Steve Lee

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

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

Manager Deal reported that the RRRA is pursuing a lease for office space at Pioneer Crossing located on the corner of 9th Street and 13th Avenue in West Fargo, ND. The International Water Institute (IWI) has expressed an interest in leasing office space from the RRRA, however, the details have not yet been finalized.

Manager Finney inquired about the board's position regarding the RRRA retaining an Executive Director. Manager Money questioned whether the RRRA has appointed a Personnel or Human Resources Committee. Manager Finney responded that a conference is planned for tomorrow (December 21, 2011) for individuals associated with the RRRA to finalize the job description.

Manager Holmvik questioned whether the RRRA can be assured of receiving federal funds. Manager Deal responded that the Minnesota federal delegation has indicated that funds will be included in the Farm Bill for the RRRA, however, the amount of funding is uncertain at this time.

Manager Finney stated that he's discussed the issue of retaining an Executive Director for the RRRA with Jim Lyons, Chair of the Red River Joint Water Resource District. Mr. Lyons indicated that due to the untimely death of Senator Tom Fischer, discussions have occurred in North Dakota about the possibility for a shared position between the RRRA and various water resource districts in North Dakota.

N. Erickson noted that a response has not yet been received regarding a letter sent to NRCS requesting board participation on the Minnesota NRCS State Technical Committee. Following discussion, the board decided not to appoint representatives to the State Technical Committee until a response is received from NRCS.

D. Thul reported that the Project Prioritization Committee met following the RRRA meeting last week. Managers D. Wilkens and G. Holmvik attended the meeting. The committee agreed that projects should be prioritized using the following two classes: 1. Large, PL566-type projects, and 2. Small, Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)-type projects. The Red River Basin Commission's Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) comprehensive report could be used as a basis for prioritizing.

Public Information Initiative

J. Nyquist reviewed the public information monthly report. Activities for the month of November included finalizing the 2012 calendar, preparing content for the monthly newsletter, and attending a planning/communication event at the Sand Hill River WD.

J. Nyquist referred to an article in the Fargo Forum regarding a recent study in the Red River basin. He stated that the RRRA was referenced in the article and explained that as a new entity the media is defining the RRRA and suggested it would be worthwhile to influence public perception by developing a marketing approach. N. Erickson added that the RRRA discussed developing an exhibit display and materials and Scott Stofferahn of Senator Conrad's office offered the RRRA a display board that was no longer in use.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize J. Nyquist to assist Keith Weston to develop marketing information for the RRRA, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Representative Fabian (R), District: 01A

Rep. Dan Fabian stated that he was elected to District 01A in 2010 and since then he's had an opportunity to discuss watershed concerns with some local administrators. He participates on several legislative committees including Redistricting, Capital Investment, Education Finance and Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Policy and Finance.

Stream Gaging Cost-Share Program

D. Thul distributed information regarding the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Red River of the North Basin Cooperative Streamflow Monitoring Program for 2011-2012. The cost share payments for USGS Stream Gages for the 2011-2012 contracts have been calculated with the individual cost share responsibilities listed below.

	<u>Amount Due</u> <u>2011-2012</u>
Red Lake	\$10,400.00
Wild Rice	\$11,308.00
Middle-Snake-Tamarac	\$ 8,000.00
Two Rivers	\$ 1,945.00
Sand Hill River	\$ 2,800.00
Roseau River	\$14,150.00

N. Erickson stated that she discussed the RRWMB funding commitment for FY12 with James Fallon, USGS prior to today's meeting and he indicated that the RRWMB USGS contract amount for FY12 is \$115,864 which is 1.97% greater than in FY11 (\$113,631).

N. Erickson further noted that Mr. Fallon requested the board's consideration relative to prioritizing the following gages should additional funding become available through the National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) which is used to provide funding assistance to the Streamflow Monitoring Program: Marsh River near Shelly, Snake River above Warren, Middle River at Argyle, Roseau River at Ross, and Roseau River below State Ditch No. 51 near Caribou. The Board of Managers requested the TAC to further discuss this issue and report at the next monthly meeting.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He stated that requests were forwarded to individual watershed districts to submit billings to N. Erickson for any remaining costs incurred relative to the farmstead ring dike program. The grant agreement with BWSR terminates at year-end and since its anticipated there will be some remaining funding, discussion has occurred regarding allocating the fund balance proportionately to watershed districts who've incurred engineering costs for ring dikes that were eligible for funding but never constructed.

R. Harnack reported that he attended a meeting conducted by Brian Dwight - BWSR, regarding the next generation watershed district overall plan updates. Discussion occurred regarding scheduling a cooperative effort between the BWSR overall plan updates and MPCA's TMDL water quality plan updates for respective watershed districts. Including strategies to meet the 20% flow reduction allocations for watershed districts in the updated plans was discussed as well.

R. Harnack stated that he's requested updated five-year plans from member watershed districts. Of the plans received, few changes are needed. He noted the importance of the board developing formal expectations in order for projects to keep progressing in the planning, acquisition, design and construction phases each year.

Administrator Report

A) Long Range Planning / Sand Hill River WD

N. Erickson stated that she participated as a panelist to discuss long range planning for the Sand Hill River WD on Wednesday, December 14, 2011. Other panelists included Jerome Deal (Red River Retention Authority) and Jon Evert (Red River Basin Commission). The meeting was facilitated by Jody Horntvedt, University of Minnesota - Extension, to begin discussion regarding how to proceed pending future retirements.

B) BWSR Ring Dike Grant Reporting

N. Erickson reported that Pete Waller - BWSR developed a spreadsheet to be used to compile data in conjunction with the farmstead ring dikes installed utilizing funding with the Red River Valley Flood Recovery Grant of \$250,000. Mr. Waller requested that completed spreadsheets be forwarded to himself, as well as copied to the RRWMB office, by Friday, January 13, 2012.

C) RRBFDROWG / Funding Committee

N. Erickson stated that she participated on a Funding Committee conference call November 29, 2011. The following items were discussed: the Project Acceleration Grant Form, Project Readiness Form, 50/50 Match Requirements, Budget Line Items, Legislative Budget Request, and Coordinator Expenses.

Two categories of budget line items were discussed in detail including Project Monitoring and River Watch. The need to better document pre and post project monitoring conditions was discussed. The committee agreed that WD's could apply for funds to assist with project monitoring as long as a monitoring plan has been developed. P. Wannarka explained that K.

Lokkesmoe is concerned about the Work Group continuing to fund the River Watch program as this initiative relates to water quality goals rather than flood damage reduction efforts.

D) Committee Meetings

N. Erickson added that meeting dates should be scheduled for both the Public Information Committee and the Finance Committee. Following discussion, the board requested N. Erickson to coordinate the dates with committee members.

E) Vacation Accrual

N. Erickson explained that her unused vacation days for calendar year 2011 were calculated. She elected to be paid for unused vacation days rather than carry them over to 2012.

F) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, January 5, 2012, Minnesota State Community & Technical College, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, January 10, 2012.
3. **Red River Basin Commission's 29th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference**, *Water, Water! Finding Solutions to Our Challenges*, January 24-26, 2012, Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, MB.

District Reports

- The Red Lake Watershed District reported that the District was informed that Gene Tiedemann of West Polk County was re-appointed to another three-year term on their Board of Managers; Clearwater County representative Kelly Nordlund will not be seeking another term on the RLWD board.

HDR Engineering will be providing bids and specification to the board at their next meeting for the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction/Improvement to Pennington County Ditch No. 1 project.

- The Wild Rice WD reported that the District ordered an Environmental Assessment Worksheet completed in relation to a landowner submitted permit that requested a diversion around land owned by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Mayor Curt Johannsen of Hendrum, MN has begun his tenure as a board manager for the WRWD.

- The Two Rivers WD reported that draft plans for the Springbrook PL 566 Project No. 10 from the Natural Resource Conservation Service will be provided to the District in December 2011. Following receipt of the plans, the District staff will be meeting with affected landowners to review plans and secure the necessary right-of-way for the project. In addition, the District will be applying for all necessary permits to the appropriate agencies. If all goes as anticipated, the project will be bid in the spring with construction in 2012. Funding of \$370,000 from Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) has been secured for the project under the Red River Valley RIM made available in 2008 through the Minnesota Board of Water and Resources (BWSR).

District's Funding Requests

1. Roseau River WD / Step 1 Submittal / Roseau River Wildlife Management Area Project

The information required for a Step I submittal was distributed at the November 15, 2011 board meeting.

N. Dalager stated that the District and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) are proposing to develop a cooperative project to improve water management capabilities on the Roseau River Wildlife Management Area (RRWMA). The project area is located in the northwest corner of Roseau County, MN. It covers an area of over 74,000 acres including about 10,600 acres of shallow water in four pools. Its managed to provide both wildlife benefits and flood control. The proposed project will include two new water control structures and a new outlet channel to the Roseau River. The anticipated benefits include reduced flooding along the Roseau River and improved water level control for wildlife management on the RRWMA pools.

The proposed project includes the following solutions to meet the stated purpose and needs:

- Improve timing of water storage and release from the RRWMA.
- Improve water transfer between pools 2 and 3 by replacing and improving the control structures between pools 2 and 3.
- Provide an option to move outflows to the river downstream of the Big Swamp.
- Improve the water control on pool 3 by constructing a new outlet from pool 3.
- Develop an operating plan.

A tour of the project was conducted following lunch. N. Dalager further discussed the project and explained that previously, a 75/25 Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) grant had been approved for the project but expired prior to the funds being expended. A joint letter of support was distributed dated October 13, 2011, that was developed and signed by the District and the MDNR – Wildlife to substantiate Project Team consensus in order to pursue the original 75/25 grant request.

The estimated total project cost is currently \$2 million. Although the District is pursuing the original 75/25 grant request, the local cost-share breakdown of a 50/50 grant request is as follows: State FDR commitment of \$1,000,000, 50% RRWMB commitment of \$500,000, and 50% RRWD commitment of \$500,000. D. Thul noted that the TAC recommends Step I approval.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to approve the Step I submittal for the RRWMA Project, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**.

R. Sando distributed a letter from the District to the RRWMB requesting an advance of funds for the RRWMA Project. The District requested \$70,000 to assist in funding the engineering feasibility study. To date, the District has been approved for an acceleration grant from the

FDRWG in the amount of \$10,000 with matching funds provided by the District. A verbal commitment was received from the MDNR for \$50,000 to assist with the study.

N. Erickson distributed a *Resolution to Approve a Funding Advance for the RRWMA Project*. Manager Finney stated that with regard to the resolution, the board must consider whether the project is feasible, will provide significant local and regional flood control benefits, and has a great potential for basin-wide benefits beyond the local District.

N. Dalager noted that additional engineering is required in order for the TAC to develop a STAR value for the project. D. Thul added that with the information currently available, the TAC agrees the project has potential for significant downstream benefits.

Manager Miller distributed correspondence received from Paul Telander, MDNR which stated that the MDNR Wildlife plans to contribute the *last* \$50,000 of the \$150,000 needed by the District to complete the preliminary engineering for Pool 3 of the project. Manager Wilkens inquired about the condition received from the MDNR regarding the "last" \$50,000 needed for the study. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed to table discussion regarding the resolution to approve a funding advance of \$70,000 until clarification is received from MDNR regarding their contribution.

The next meeting will be on January 17, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, MN.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator