



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

April 17, 2012

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 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
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Charlie Anderson, Engineer, WSN & Assoc., Inc.
- Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, NRCS
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Wayne Goeken, Director – Center for Watershed Education, IWI
- Danni Halvorson, Monitoring Coordinator, IWI
- Jeff Nyquist, Public Information Officer
- Sharon Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office
- Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner

Motion by Manager Osowski 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 Miller 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 Money, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Manager Wilkens referred to board member eligible expenses. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed that board members may seek reimbursement from the RRWMB for expenses incurred attending meetings pertaining to RRWMB issues. For expenses incurred for meetings that relate to local watershed district issues, the respective individual watershed district would be responsible for reimbursement.

Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Project Team Acceleration and Agency Review

Manager Wilkens discussed the need to expedite projects progressing through the project team process. He explained that revisions are needed to improve the efficiency of agency review and permitting of projects. He stated that he and Mike Carroll - MDNR Assistant Commissioner, discussed the possibility of the RRWMB and the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group co-sponsoring a meeting this summer with regulatory officials to include a bus tour of site specific projects.

Manager Wilkens further stated that in order to facilitate efficient planning, permitting and construction of flood damage reduction projects, a clear message must be disseminated from the top-down throughout regulatory agencies that participate on project teams. The goal of the meeting and bus tour is to provide first-hand exposure to project sites and their flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement benefits in order to develop a renewed cooperative effort from all organizations involved in the implementation of the Mediation Agreement.

Motion by Manager Knott to authorize the RRWMB to co-sponsor a bus tour and meeting with the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group for state and federal regulatory agency officials, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Public Information Initiative

J. Nyquist reviewed the public information monthly report. He prepared a draft for J. Roeschlein regarding a strategy to renew their advisory committee process. He added that after the strategy has been finalized, the process could be used as a template for other watershed districts.

J. Nyquist reported on the progress of the communications audit with watershed district administrators. He recently interviewed N. Drees, R. Sando, and D. Money. He added that following the interviews, an effective communication plan will be developed for the RRWMB.

J. Nyquist stated that he prepared a press release regarding the RRRRA hiring an Executive Director. A handout was distributed.

USACE Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study

D. Thul discussed the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). He explained that he and N. Erickson met with Nan Bischoff, St. Paul District USACE / Project Manager for the WFS in February to review the work-in-kind (WIK) expenditures that can be credited towards the Project Management Plan (PMP). The previously approved budget for the PMP is \$8,756,254 of which expenses of \$3,821,573 have been documented to date. D. Thul noted that following further discussions with N. Bischoff, she inquired whether the board would consider increasing the PMP budget to \$9 million based on revised estimated WIK expenditures. D. Thul explained that the revised total would provide for additional federal funds to be expended towards the study. **Motion** by Manager Miller to increase the approved budget of the PMP to \$9 million dollars, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

D. Thul stated that R. Gjestvang, North Dakota State Water Commission (NDSWC) and N. Bischoff have been working with the Roseau River WD to determine the feasibility of whether the Roseau River Wildlife Management Area (RRWMA) project could be used as a pilot in relation to the WFS for the USACE to conduct the geotechnical work, including soil borings, in order to reduce local project costs. The costs incurred by the USACE would not require a match by the local sponsor, but would be calculated as WIK to be used to match other initiatives. The proposal is progressing but requires endorsement by the joint Minnesota/North Dakota Advisory Committee that was formed relative to the USACE WFS prior to being included as WIK.

C. Fritz, International Water Institute (IWI), referred to the Phase 6 - Project Planning and Permit Evaluation Tool (PPPET) regarding the USACE WFS. He explained that 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). 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 RRBC and uses the LiDAR data to assist managers with planning and implementation of flood damage reduction projects.

The IWI has been 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.

C. Fritz discussed a proposal for a flood damage reduction project planning acceleration initiative to develop the geospatial products needed in order to identify at least one project in each RRWMB member watershed district by the end of 2012. He noted that a draft work plan and budget has been discussed with C. Anderson - WSN & Assoc. and H. VanOffelen - Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed that IWI should continue to finalize the draft work plan and proposed budget.

Devils Lake Update

Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner, reported on the status of Devils Lake. A map of the Devils Lake Basin was displayed. The Devils Lake basin is a 3,810 square-mile sub-basin of the Red River of the North. At current water levels, the lake itself has no natural outlet.

On June 27, 2011, Devils Lake crept to a new record level of 1,454.4 feet above mean sea level (amsl), surpassing the previous record of 1,452.05 feet set on June 27, 2010.

Devils Lake naturally spills into Stump Lake at 1,446.5 feet. Since water began trickling into Stump Lake from Devils Lake in 1999, Stump Lake has now been filled and has become part of Devils Lake - rising over 46 feet in the process.

In March 1993, Devils Lake had a surface area of 44,230 acres. At its June 2011 record elevation, Devils Lake covered about 211,300 acres - an increase of 167,070 inundated acres, or about 261 square miles. During that same time period, the volume of water in Devils Lake had grown by more than seven times.

The State of North Dakota completed construction of an outlet from the west end of Devils Lake to the Sheyenne River in the summer of 2005. The state is also moving forward with an outlet from East Devils Lake. This outlet will have a maximum operating capacity of 350 cfs, and is expected to be completed by spring 2012. In addition, an emergency water transfer channel from Stump Lake that will flow via gravity is being explored.

Red River Retention Authority

C. Fritz, Chair of the Drainage Committee/Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC) of the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA), reviewed the Red River Basin Tile Drainage Study, *Briefing Paper No. 2: Water Management Options for Subsurface Drainage*. The RRRA directed the International Water Institute (IWI) to establish an objective process through BTSAC to indentify the impacts of agricultural drainage on peak watershed flows, and how agricultural drainage systems should be designed to maximize benefits while minimizing adverse impacts.

The goals of the study were to understand subsurface drainage systems' impacts on watershed and basin hydrology and develop management recommendations to maximize benefits and minimize impacts. Two types of water storage were discussed including retention and detention. Retention stores water for extended periods of time for alternate uses while detention stores water for a limited period of time (hours or days).

The conclusions of Briefing Paper No. 2 include:

- Situations do exist where adding uncontrolled subsurface drainage to areas of the landscape has the potential to increase flooding. This risk must be considered and evaluated in water management decision making.
- The inclusion and appropriate operation of control structures on existing and proposed subsurface drainage systems can maximize water storage potential and reduce flood flows.

Water management options for permitting or management of tile drainage developed through the study are as follows: field outlet control (preferred), water storage trading (preferred), on or off site storage, culvert sizing, and drainage coefficient (DC) limitations. The Early, Middle and Late water concepts were addressed for each option.

The next steps of BTSAC include reviewing the Gridded Surface Subsurface Hydrologic Analysis (GSSHA) modeling results. The GSSHA is a grid-based two-dimensional hydrologic model utilized

by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The concept for developing a water storage trading/credit program is also being discussed.

Following discussion, it was suggested that a joint meeting of the District Administrators and the TAC be scheduled in the near future to further discuss developing a policy for tile drainage as it relates to Briefing Paper No. 2. **Motion** by Manager Deal to direct D. Wilkens to schedule the a meeting to develop recommendations for consideration by the Board of Managers for adopting a policy for tile drainage in the Red River basin, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He reported that the legislature reconvened on Monday, April 16th, and plans to adjourn by April 30th. The next two weeks will involve conference committee meetings to resolve the various differences in the bills. The bills remaining to be finalized include bonding, environment, agriculture, and taxes.

The Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) conducted a northern committee meeting on April 11, 2012, in Bemidji, MN to discuss the petition for enlargement and to increase the number of managers of the Buffalo-Red River WD (BRRWD). Board members and staff in attendance were committee members Brian Napstad, Keith Mykleseth, Gene Tiedemann, Quentin Fairbanks, Robert Sip and Mike Carroll and board staff Ron Shelito and Pete Waller. After discussion, the committee voted 5 to 1 to recommend approval of the enlargement and to increase in the number of managers of the BRRWD. R. Harnack noted that the single dissenting vote was by M. Carroll and also that BWSR only addressed the petition to adjoin the Lower Otter Tail Watershed within the BRRWD while the second petition to establish the Upper Red Lower Otter Tail Watershed District was not discussed.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

W. Goeken reported that Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) project monitoring began the week of March 5th around the basin. Monitoring will continue with monthly samples collected throughout the ice free months. The International Water Institute (IWI) staff participated in discussion on April 3rd with MPCA, DNR, and Red Lake WD staff on monitoring the Grand Marais Creek Restoration project. Site selection and costs are being explored at this time.

The Red River Monitoring Advisory Committee has a meeting scheduled on April 20th at the Sand Hill River WD. Agenda items include: Grand Marais Creek monitoring; Event-based real time flow stations; Red Lake and Grand Marais Creek Assessment Project, and Calibration Documentation.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator – RRBC, distributed a summary on the Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) plan. She added that the RRBC board has a meeting and tour scheduled for June 6-7, 2012, in Winnipeg, MB.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

D. Thul reported that at the February RRRRA meeting, Aaron Snyder - USACE discussed a proposed Red River Basin Non-structural Assessment. As part of the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Feasibility Study,

a non-structural analysis was completed to determine if and where non-structural measures would be feasible for counties downstream of Fargo-Moorhead. In order to initiate the study, a non-Federal sponsor needed to be identified. The feasibility costs would be shared 50/50 between the Federal Government and non-Federal sponsor with the cost of the anticipated study estimated at \$800,000.00.

D. Thul explained that the USACE proposed to provide \$400,000 for the study with the 50% remaining cost-share divided equally between Minnesota (RRWMB) and North Dakota (Red River Joint Water Resource District). At the February RRWMB meeting, the board agreed *not* to cost-share in the study since as a result of the farmstead ring dike program the majority of structures have already been protected on the Minnesota side of the Red River basin. D. Thul noted that the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) agreed to fund \$100,000 of the study.

D. Thul added that the DNR has filled the position of Area Hydrologist in Thief River Falls, MN with Stephanie Klamm, a Thief River Falls native. Emily Siira has accepted the position of Area Hydrologist in Detroit Lakes, MN and Heidi Lindgren has accepted the position of Southern District Hydrologist 2 also located in Detroit Lakes, MN.

Administrator Report

A) RRB Flood Damage Reduction Work Group / Project Team Support

N. Erickson stated that for fiscal year 2012 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012), the Work Group originally allocated each project team \$15,000 for project team expenses. Eligible expenses are reimbursed at 50%.

Please note that following the establishment of a new category titled *Monitoring - Other*, and the authorization of a reallocation of \$25,000 to the new category, project team funds were reduced by \$25,000. The revised project team allocation for FY12 is \$11,875 per project team. The following table depicts the project team reimbursement requests submitted to date:

Project Team	Total Funds Available this Fiscal Year	Expenditures	Amount Remaining to Allocate
Bois de Sioux WD	\$11,875.00	\$0	\$11,875.00
Buffalo-Red River WD	\$11,875.00	\$10,781.23	\$1,093.77
Middle Snake Tamarac WD	\$11,875.00	\$0	\$11,875.00
Red Lake WD	\$11,875.00	\$5,299.63	\$6,575.37
Roseau River WD	\$11,875.00	\$0	\$11,875.00
Sand Hill River WD	\$11,875.00	\$2,475.50	\$9,399.50
Two Rivers WD	\$11,875.00	\$2,422.90	\$9,452.10
Wild Rice WD	\$11,875.00	\$0	\$11,875.00

At the March board meeting, N. Erickson explained that she requested each project team that received funding for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 to submit a short narrative for each year explaining the specific activities that utilized these funds. For those WD's that haven't done so already, she requested the reports be submitted to both herself and Pat Lynch as soon as possible.

B) Minnesota Legislative Clean Water Fund Grant

N. Erickson stated that at the previous monthly meeting, W. Goeken discussed the Minnesota Legislative Clean Water Fund grant of \$200,000 that the RRWMB agreed to sponsor with lead coordination and project management provided by the International Water Institute (IWI). Following discussion, Mr. Goeken requested that the Board of Managers authorize N. Erickson to act as the agent to sign the grant agreement. N. Erickson stated that the agreement has been executed.

C) Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

N. Erickson reported that she attended the RRRA meeting conducted on April 10, 2012. The Prioritization Committee has been discussing the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). K. Weston stated that the three Assistant State Conservationists for Minnesota (Carolyn Krick), North Dakota (Eva Weisenburger) and South Dakota (Kathy Irving) have indicated that the following WRP applications have been received: MN - 5 or 6, ND - 9, and SD - 3. The sites will be visited by NRCS to determine the potential for retention. The NRCS has hired a WRP Specialist located in the Fergus Falls office who will meet with landowners in MN and ND to inquire about interest in participating in the program. The following watershed districts have potential WRP projects: BdSWD, BRRWD, RRWD, and TRWD. The federal funds must be obligated by June 1st.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the RRRA, USACE and NRCS has been finalized. K. Weston noted that he and Sharon Josephson of Rep. Collin Peterson's office have discussed scheduling a signing ceremony. The RRRA agreed that the congressional delegations from Minnesota and North Dakota should be invited. Plans are to schedule the ceremony in conjunction with the May meeting.

N. Erickson added that C. Fritz conducted a presentation on Briefing Paper No. 2, Water Management Options for Subsurface Drainage, developed by the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC).

D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 9:30 a.m., MnDOT, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, Tuesday, May 08, 2012, Moore Engineering, Inc., West Fargo, ND.

District Reports

- The Two Rivers WD reported that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has provided draft project plans to the District and has authorized \$1.4 million for construction of Springbrook PL566 Project No. 10. An additional \$425,000 was appropriated through the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program to help secure the right of way. A local share will also

be necessary, perhaps available through the State of Minnesota bonding bill. The District plans to prepare a Step I submittal soon. Permit applications have been submitted to the various agencies for the project; when secured along with necessary right of way, bids will be let with construction to follow as early as July.

- The Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported that construction has started on the Brandt/Angus Flood Control Project. With a favorable construction season and adequate funding, it is hoped that the entire \$3.35 million dollar project can be completed in one construction season. RJ Zavoral and Sons, Inc. of East Grand Forks is the building contractor.
- The Red Lake WD reported that construction has started on the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction / Ditch No. 14 project. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has recommended permit approval for the project.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that the project team met recently to work on upgrading the Bear Park Project and review the Winger Dam. In addition, the group prepared and sent the Purpose and Needs statement to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Polk County, along with the Lake Improvement District (LID), have petitioned the District to take over the Union Lake Flood Control and Erosion Project.

- The Wild Rice WD reported that in April, the project team plans to discuss the operating and maintenance plan for Moccasin Creek and the potential of extending the spring opening procedure. Another topic will be the opportunity for a second dam to be added, which has been requested by landowners.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on May 15, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, MN.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator