



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 21, 2012

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, August 21, 2012, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, 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
- Mike Carroll, MNDNR Asst. Commissioner
- Charlie Anderson, Engineer, WSN Engineering, Inc.
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Mike Bakken, JMB Engineering, Inc.
- Blake Carlson, Engineer, WSN Engineering, Inc.
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, NRCS
- Pat Downs, Executive Director, RRRRA
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Rodger Hemphill, Emmons & Olivier
- Jeff Nyquist, Public Information Officer
- Sharon Josephson, Congressman Peterson's office
- Valerie Gravseth, Senator Franken's office
- George Read

Manager Finney requested adding discussion regarding the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC) conducting a surface water study to the agenda under *Other issues*.

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 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.

Public Information Initiative

J. Nyquist reviewed the public information monthly report. He reported that he attended the RRRR meeting on August 14, 2012 in West Fargo, ND.

J. Nyquist added that as a member of the Planning Committee for the Tiling and Conservation Drainage Field Tour and Workshop scheduled for August 28-29, 2012 in Hankinson, ND, he assisted with the following: coordinating KFGO radio promotions, sending notices to AgWeek and the Forum, and preparing a press release. A handout of the press release and informational flyer was distributed.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He discussed the USACE's proposal to issue a Regional General Permit (RGP) for certain activities on agricultural lands involving a discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. regulated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. He added that he attended a Drainage Work Group (DWG) meeting during which Tim Smith, USACE Regulatory Branch, discussed the proposed RGP. Mr. Smith stated at the meeting that the RGP would not expand USACE jurisdiction, but rather streamline the permitting process by reducing redundancy with Swampbuster and the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA).

At the previous monthly meeting, the board requested that a draft response letter be developed on behalf of the board prior to the next board meeting. N. Erickson stated that the comment period for the proposal originally expired on June 18, 2012, however, it was extended 60 days to August 18, 2012. Since that date was on a Saturday, the comment deadline was Monday, August 20, 2012. A copy of the letter developed by R. Harnack, N. Erickson and D. Thul and forwarded via email by N. Erickson by the deadline was distributed.

M. Carroll referred to the letter forwarded by the RRWMB and concurred with the board's suggestion to develop a stakeholder group to provide guidance to ensure that the objectives of the RGP are met. S. Josephson explained that the proposed RGP is for the State of Minnesota rather than a national general permit. She noted that the RGP was developed in response to tiling companies inquiring whether or not the USACE had jurisdiction and required a permit. R. Harnack added that the DWG could provide a forum for stakeholders to further discuss the proposed RGP.

R. Harnack reported that he attended meetings of the Bus Tour Planning Committee regarding the upcoming meeting and bus tour co-sponsored by the RRWMB and the Work Group scheduled for September 17-18, 2012. 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.

M. Carroll added that the next Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 24, 2012 at MnDOT in Detroit Lakes, MN. Following the Work Group meeting, the Bus Tour Planning Committee will meet to finalize the details of the meeting and bus tour. He noted that the upcoming two-day session is a tremendous opportunity for the co-sponsors to meet with federal and state agency officials as the officials have been invited to attend the September RRWMB meeting to discuss their plans to move forward with improving the current process, specifically with regard to permitting, for progressing flood damage reduction projects. He respectfully requested that the discussion with agency officials at the board meeting focus on the benefits of the mediation process in order to strengthen the relationships of the organizations involved in implementing the Mediation Agreement. He also extended his appreciation to N. Erickson for her efforts in assisting with the planning of the upcoming meeting and bus tour.

Administrator Report

A) 2011 Annual Audit

N. Erickson stated that the 2011 annual audit has been completed. Copies of the report were distributed to the Board of Managers.

B) Bus Tour Planning Committee

N. Erickson reported that she participated in two meetings conducted by the Planning Committee consisting of the following members: D. Wilkens - Chair, M. Carroll, R. Sip, L. Dowling, B. Dwight, J. Ziegler, R. Harnack, and herself.

She stated that the Planning Committee has selected the dates of **September 17-18, 2012** to conduct the two-day meeting. The meeting will be based from the Best Western Inn, Thief River Falls, MN and begin at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, September 17, 2012. Following introductions and a brief history of the mediation process and the Mediation Agreement, attendees will travel by bus to the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project in the Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD. Upon return to Thief River Falls and following dinner, a facilitated discussion of the attendees will occur with Don Buckhout, Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR). The second day of the tour, the attendees have been invited to join the RRWMB meeting. Presentations are scheduled from Lance Yohe-RRBC on the Long Term Flood Solutions plan, and Pat Downs-RRRA and Keith Weston-NRCS will discuss the MOU recently signed by the USACE, NRCS and the RRRA.

N. Erickson requested that, in order to accommodate the second day of the tour, the board consider scheduling the September board meeting at the Red Lake WD office. She noted that the Planning Committee has also requested beginning the RRWMB meeting one-hour earlier, at 8:30 a.m., in order to assist those traveling from a distance to briefly attend the meeting prior to

leaving for their return trip home. Following discussion, the board agreed to conduct the September board meeting at 8:30 a.m. in the Red Lake WD office, Thief River Falls, MN.

C) Red River Retention Authority

N. Erickson reported that she attended the RRRRA meeting conducted on August 14, 2012. Ann Simmons, Congressman Peterson's office, participated via teleconference and updated the attendees on the status of the Farm Bill. She stated that House leadership would ultimately like to bring the bill to the floor so the 2012 Farm Bill can be finished before the 2008 bill expires on September 30.

D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, Friday, August 24, 2012, 9:30 a.m., MnDOT, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. **Red River Basin Commission Ex-officio Board Meeting**, September 6, 2012, Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN.
3. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, September 11, 2012, 1405 Prairie Parkway, Suite 311, West Fargo, ND.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

C. Fritz reported on the Project Planning Acceleration project. He stated that to date meetings have been conducted in the following watershed districts: Sand Hill, Wild Rice, Middle Snake Tamarac, Two Rivers and Roseau. Along with pending visits to the Bois de Sioux and Red Lake WDs, C. Fritz inquired about scheduling a meeting with the Buffalo-Red River WD. R. Harnack stated that since the Buffalo-Red River WD is part of the solution to address flooding on the main stem of the Red River, they should be included in the discussion regarding the potential of the Project Planning and Permit Evaluation Tool. Manager Finney disagreed since the board authorized funding 50% of the cost of the proposed Project Planning Acceleration project, with an estimated project cost of \$50,000, and as such the initiative should only include member watershed districts.

C. Fritz distributed a handout regarding flood damage reduction, condition, watershed, and Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) projects. He stated that he has assisted in coordinating efforts to have River Watch participation at the August 29th Christine/Hickson dam retrofit ceremony on the Red River including a lake sturgeon release, River of Dreams canoe release, and kayak options.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

D. Thul reported that the TAC met on August 10, 2012 at Houston Engineering, Inc., Fargo, ND. The TAC discussed possible tile drain criteria/guidelines that the board may want to consider for adoption and promotion among member districts.

The recommendations for controlled systems include:

1. All tile systems should incorporate controls to allow closing off tile flows while flooding is occurring downstream. (To be considered controlled, the tile systems must be able to hold the water table to within one foot of the ground surface over at least 80% of the tiled area.)
2. Trigger points on the Red River main stem are recommended at the six 20% flow reduction gage sites identified in the Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) plan.
3. The TAC considered potential trigger levels (flood stages) that might be used.

4. Shut off tile flows in advance of the trigger level on the Red River at next downstream gage based on National Weather Service (NWS) forecast and lag time from field to trigger point. (TAC will develop lag time determinations.)
5. Keep tile flows shut down until after the crest level on the Red River at next downstream gage is met.
6. Require tile to flow unimpeded throughout the fall (post-harvest) and winter until the trigger level on the Red River at next downstream gage is reached (or until after crop has been planted, or require tile systems that close off flows through the fall and winter to keep tile flows closed off until floodwater recedes below NWS "flood stage" on the Red River at the next downstream gage.

For tile systems where controlled outlets are impractical, infeasible, or undesirable, various mitigation measures are recommended.

The recommendations for uncontrolled systems include:

1. "Early Water" to the Red River.
 - a. Within the Red River floodplain - No restrictions and no mitigation.
 - b. Outside of the Red River floodplain - No restrictions, but must mitigate the increase in annual runoff by contributing to the construction of floodwater impoundments @ \$100 dollars per acre tiled.
2. "Middle Water" and "Late Water" to the Red River.
 - a. 1/8" Drainage Coefficient for the tile system: or
 - b. 1/4" Drainage Coefficient for the tile system *and* a 1" Drainage Coefficient for the first downstream culvert
 - c. Mitigate the increase in annual runoff by contributing to the construction of floodwater impoundments @ \$100 dollars per acre tiled.

C. Anderson stated that in addition to the above recommendations, other factors should be considered, i.e. to not have groundwater flow come out early in the growing season. He added that one factor is not more important than another, however, criteria is necessary so tiling doesn't exacerbate flooding.

D. Thul stated that their work is a proposal and he requested feedback and input on the draft outline as work continues. Manager Deal suggested that the TAC further discuss the recommendations and following board approval, the guidelines can be forwarded to the RRRRA for consideration.

D. Thul distributed a handout depicting the MDNR Ecological and Water Resources Administrative Regions and areas.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the District is waiting to hear from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on their adaptive wetland mitigation plan proposal for the Hay Creek/Norland project. While completing the final "punch-list" of tasks for the project, monitoring still continues.

Individual assessments were done on each of the six dam sites in the Beltrami Island State Forest. Houston Engineering will compile the results from the project sub-committee and it is

anticipated that a project team will be organized in September or October to discuss the assessment. The district has submitted comments to the MDNR on the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) for the Beltrami area.

- The Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the status of the Brandt/Angus Impoundment construction:
 1. The entire embankment has black dirt placed, with approximately 3/4 seeded.
 2. Concrete work on the NW and SW outlets, as well as the east inlet structure is complete.
 3. The east inlet ditch has black dirt placed and is awaiting seeding.
 4. The coulee rehabilitation is complete.
 5. County Ditch No. 43 lateral outlet is complete to US Highway No. 75.
 6. Final documents from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have not yet been received.

The District is widening the embankment in the northwest corner of the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project to accommodate the increase in visitors, due to the efforts of the Agassiz Audubon Society.

A judge has ruled favorably for the District in an open meeting lawsuit challenge filed against the watershed district. Another separate open meeting lawsuit against the District was dismissed in summary judgment, again in favor of the MSTRWD.

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction/Red Lake WD Ditch No. 14 project. The contractor has left the site for two weeks, however, plans to return next week. The project is ~ 88% complete with the Thief River Falls FDR project, and 98% complete with the construction of the Red Lake Watershed District Ditch No. 14 (Improvement to Pennington County Ditch No. 1). The project must be completed by November 15, 2012.
- The Wild Rice WD reported that the District is waiting to complete additional acquisitions for the buyout of properties that were unable to have ring dikes built due to river instability issues.

The engineer's report for the City of Shelly community ring dike is proceeding with the intention of bringing this to a public hearing in late summer or early fall of 2012.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Other Issues

Manager Finney explained that the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC) is a research group established by the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA). The BTSAC has developed reports that address exploring ways to manage agricultural drainage systems with the goal of maximizing benefits to crops while minimizing impacts relative to flooding and water quality in downstream watercourses. The following reports have been prepared by BSTAC:

1. Briefing Paper #1: Impacts of Subsurface Agricultural Drainage on Watershed Peak Flows
2. Briefing Paper #2: Water Management Options for Subsurface Drainage

Manager Finney suggested that consideration should be given to requesting the RRRRA to direct another study to be conducted by BTSAC that would involve surface drainage. Following discussion, the board requested C. Fritz to develop a scope and cost estimate for the study.

The next meeting will be on September 18, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 12:20 p.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator