



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

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Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

October 16, 2012

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, October 16, 2012, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President, Orville Knott-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Todd Miller Dan Money
 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
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, USDA-NRCS
Pat Downs, Executive Director, RRRRA
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
Julie Blackburn, Minnesota Area Manager - RESPEC Consulting & Services
Jason Love, VP, Water & Natural Res. - RESPEC Consulting & Services

Manager Money requested adding discussion regarding board procedures 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 Deal to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He reported that the consulting agreement between himself and the board will expire on December 31, 2012. He stated that he's discussed his interest in renewing the contract for another two-year term with Manager Finney. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the Human Resources Committee (Managers Finney, Knott, Deal and Wilkens) to review the contract and develop a recommendation for board consideration, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**.

Red River Basin Commission

L. Yohe, Executive Director - RRBC, reported that the board is currently advertising for the position of Assistant Executive Director.

The RRBC is currently working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the International Red River Board (IRRB) to discuss prospective projects to address drought conditions. Manager Wilkens inquired whether the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is involved with technical considerations of the projects. L. Yohe responded that the USACE has been part of the discussions. R. Harnack noted the importance of including the USACE regulatory branch and suggested that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) should be invited to participate as well.

L. Yohe stated that the RRBC was recently allocated \$500,000 from The Diversion Authority to assess and prioritize potential retention projects in the region. Manager Money inquired whether project locations have been identified and, if so, if the landowners have been contacted. L. Yohe responded that the project locations will be identified by working in conjunction with the local water resource districts in North Dakota and the project teams of the watershed districts in Minnesota. R. Harnack noted the importance of developing projects through the mediation process and referred to the commitment of the RRWMB to further develop modeling efforts through the International Water Institute (IWI) in the individual watershed districts. L. Yohe added that the goal is to get projects identified in the overall watershed management plans of the individual watershed districts.

Manager Wilkens referred to the potential of securing office space to co-locate the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRRA, and River Keepers. L. Yohe responded that he was supportive of co-locating with other water management organizations in the basin in order to reduce administrative costs.

L. Yohe noted that the 30th Annual Summit Conference is scheduled for January 22-24, 2013, at the Alerus Center, Grand Forks, ND.

The Diversion Authority / Project Planning Acceleration Project

N. Erickson distributed a handout regarding The Flood Diversion Authority. The handout stated that the Diversion Authority voted to allocate \$500,000 to the RRBC to be used towards efforts to assess and prioritize potential retention projects in the region.

C. Fritz explained that previously the RRWMB authorized himself along with R. Harnack, H. VanOffelen, and C. Anderson to meet with each RRWMB member watershed district to review the 20% flow reduction plan, and focus on the amount of reduction allocated to each respective district represented by peak and volume reduction and depicted by a modified hydrograph. The goal of this initiative known as the *Flood Damage Reduction Project Planning Acceleration Project* was to accelerate the development and deployment of data and tools needed to propose at least one FDR project in each Minnesota watershed district by the end of 2012.

As part of this outreach effort, a presentation was conducted for the Sand Hill River WD Board of Managers to emphasize how the tool could be utilized to assist in achieving the 20% goal of reducing the flood peaks on the Red River of the North. Since plans are to expand the tool for use in the entire Red River basin, C. Fritz stated that the RRWMB previously authorized utilizing the preliminary data developed for the Sand Hill River WD to develop a sub-watershed scale for the entire District with a cost estimate of ~ \$20,000.

C. Fritz noted that although plans are to expand the tool for use in the entire Red River basin, similar activities as those already in conducted in Minnesota have not received support in North Dakota. He explained that currently the water resource districts in North Dakota have retained Moore Engineering to assist with project development.

R. Harnack stated the importance of not only project development but prioritizing projects along with accelerating the process of project development. C. Fritz added that consistency is essential when developing a project prioritization process for the Red River basin. R. Harnack referred to the MOU between the RRRRA, NRCS, and the USACE and added that since The Diversion Authority has allocated \$500,000 to the RRBC to assess and prioritize potential retention projects, coordination among the various water management organizations will be necessary in order to achieve this goal.

Water Quality Project Monitoring

C. Fritz distributed a handout regarding flood damage reduction, condition, watershed, Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) projects and the River Watch program. He reported that the first regional River Watch kick-off event was held at the Best Western Inn - Thief River Falls, MN on October 9th. Nine River Watch teams attended the event. Participants were provided training in the use of the updated River Watch website for visually mapping their water quality data as part of their assignment for the 2013 River Watch Forum. A second kick-off event is being held today at the Rydell Refuge for River Watch schools in the middle and southern parts of the Red River basin.

Hydrologic Simulation Program-Fortran (HSPF) Model

Jason Love, RESPEC Consulting & Services, discussed the Hydrologic Simulation Program-Fortran (HSPF) Model. He introduced Julie Blackburn, Minnesota Area Manager - RESPEC Consulting & Services. Love stated that RESPEC is developing HSPF model applications for MPCA to assist in evaluating water-quality issues in Minnesota. The model applications will assist MPCA with Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) development, point source permit review and compliance, implementation priority management area identification, and restoration strategy evaluation. These model applications are being developed for all 81 eight-digit HUCs throughout the state to simulate current conditions, water-quality response to future changes in land use, and load reduction from implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP) scenarios. Modeled watersheds have numerous water-quality impairments in both lakes and streams. The projects involve representing and assessing the impacts of agricultural production, harvested forest, small to medium communities, multiple point sources (including Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems), and numerous lakes.

The HSPF models simulate hydrology and water-quality parameters. Specifically, the HSPF model applications simulate flow, water temperature, sediment, nutrients, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll-a, and biological oxygen demand. Based on the simulations of these parameters, the model applications can be used for source allocation of sediment and nutrients, generating TMDL tables and estimating needed reductions, estimating impacts to water quality from point sources, and evaluating potential implementation strategies.

Love reported that RESPEC is currently working in the Sand Hill River and Red Lake watershed districts developing modeling applications to assist MPCA. Manager Wilkens responded that he was unaware of the work being conducted. J. Ziegler noted that MPCA has contracted directly with RESPEC to develop HSPF models for some watershed districts in the basin. R. Harnack suggested that in the future MPCA should notify the watershed districts where the models are being developed in order to keep them involved in the process.

Administrator Report

A) Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

N. Erickson reported that the next Work Group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 17, 2012 at the Red Lake Watershed District office, Thief River Falls, MN. A topic of discussion at the meeting will include the reallocation of unexpended FY12 funds and review of the draft FY13 budget developed by the Funding Committee.

B) BWSR's New Assistant Director

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) announced the new Assistant Director for Programs and Policy Development is Sarah Strommen. Most recently, Sarah was the Associate Director of the Minnesota Land Trust, where she was responsible for developing conservation programs, easements and projects with landowners, local communities, and state agencies. Sarah will begin at BWSR on November 19th and her contact information will be:

Email: sarah.strommen@state.mn.us

Phone: [651-297-5617](tel:651-297-5617)

Cell: [651-308-8647](tel:651-308-8647)

C) Public Information Committee

N. Erickson stated that a meeting is scheduled following today's board meeting to discuss filling the vacant Public Information Specialist position. Members of the committee include: J. Deal - Chair, D. Money, D. Wilkens, and N. Erickson.

D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, Wednesday, October 17, 2012, 9:30 a.m., Red Lake WD office, Thief River Falls, MN.
2. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, November 13, 2012, 1405 Prairie Parkway, Suite 311, West Fargo, ND.
3. **MAWD Annual Meeting & Trade Show**, November 29 - December 1, 2012, Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN.
4. **Red River Basin Commission's 30th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference**, *Uniting the Red River Basin for 30 Years*, January 22-24, 2013, Alerus Center & Canad Inns, Grand Forks, ND.

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

P. Downs stated that he's met with several water resource districts in North Dakota to discuss their project planning process. He added that The Diversion Authority has indicated that rather than fund feasibility studies they would rather contribute funds to develop models to independently rank projects. He stated that he anticipates that the RRRA will receive a portion of the RRBC's \$500,000 allocation from The Diversion Authority to assist with project prioritization.

R. Harnack referred to the planning tool developed for the Bois de Sioux WD in conjunction with the RRBC's Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) plan. The tool is designed to be utilized to assist in achieving the 20% goal of reducing flood peaks on the Red River. He suggested that a similar process be conducted in watersheds that could implement projects that would benefit the Fargo-Moorhead area. P. Downs added that Pat Zavoral, Administrator - City of Fargo, plans to attend the November RRRA meeting and will further discuss The Diversion Authority allocation.

P. Downs distributed a draft 2013 budget. The preliminary budget for fiscal year 2013 is \$209,000. For 2012, the original budget included funding estimates of \$80,000 from each partner, along with additional funding received through the farm bill. Since the farm bill has not yet been approved, the funds received from NRCS for rental space are insufficient to cover the remaining expenses. Therefore, an additional \$15,000 is requested from each partner for fiscal year 2013. A **motion** was made by Manager Deal and **seconded** by Manager Wilkens to authorize an additional \$15,000 for fiscal year 2013 for a total annual contribution of \$95,000 from the RRWMB and, in addition, to continue the pursuit of co-locating the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRA, and River Keepers. **Carried with Managers Holmvik and Miller opposed.**

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

D. Thul reported that a meeting of the TAC was conducted on October 8, 2012 at Houston Engineering, Inc., Fargo, ND. Recommendations regarding tile drainage systems were discussed. At the meeting, J. Bents referred to the RRRA meeting during which Manager Wilkens presented a draft of the TAC recommendations regarding tile drainage. J. Bents explained that although the

managers from North Dakota did not express an interest in regulating tile drainage, the RRRRA did agree to consider requesting the BTSAC to further review the technical recommendations.

D. Thul added that during the TAC meeting, C .Fritz presented a scoping outline to develop applications to disseminate the following: 1) Hydrologic Conditioning Process Products, 2) USACE WFS HEC-HMS and HEC-RAS models, and 3) HEC-HMS and HEC-RAS model input data and results. The TAC discussed the need to store information within the basin on sites such as www.rrbdin.org rather than suggesting one or both states to provide this service.

The TAC reviewed draft work items to be included in the USACE WFS. J. Bents developed a one-page description of the *Red River Basin-Wide Standardized Event Analysis*. This work item includes adjusting timing within the HMS models and updating the mainstem RAS model to utilize the output, including incorporation of snowmelt lag from south to north. **Motion** by Manager Holmvik to authorize the WFS joint Minnesota/North Dakota Advisory Committee to forward this item to the USACE to be included in the PMP, **Seconded** by Manager Miller, **Carried**. D. Thul noted that he also requested TAC members to review the most recent draft PMP and forward comments by month-end.

D. Thul stated that the TAC also discussed the RRRRA Project Prioritization Process currently under development. Items to be considered for large impoundment projects were addressed.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on the status of the Hay Creek/Norland Project. Final construction is underway including removal of the ditch plug in the connection channel and installation of gates on the dike. The District is working with Roseau County on the property taxes and exemption status for land included in the project. A response from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the proposed adaptive management plan for wetland mitigation requirements on the project has not yet been received.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that the final engineer's report for the Springbrook PL566 Project No. 10 is expected to be submitted by October 31, 2012. After the report has been received, it will be submitted to the MDNR and BWSR for comments. Following a public hearing, plans are to let bids in either January for February 2013 with construction to be completed by year end.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Creek Cut Channel Stabilization Project. The contractors have completed the portion of the project that was included in the original plan. Due to the fact that construction and engineering costs were considerably lower than anticipated, plans are to expand the project to better address erosion areas that were omitted from the original design. The District is currently discussing these plans with the USACE to determine how to proceed.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project. The Board of Managers are discussing whether to pursue easements or fee title for the land needed to install a gated structure on the dam.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Other Issues

Manager Money referred to the email forwarded to the Board of Managers dated September 26, 2012 regarding the expiring public information service agreement. He inquired whether board procedures exist to provide for discontinuing a service agreement without obtaining board authorization.

Manager Wilkens responded that no procedures exist which maintains flexibility on these matters. N. Erickson noted that she discussed allowing the agreement to expire with President Finney and legal counsel, L. Smith. Smith and Finney were in agreement that the actions followed were consistent with standard administrative procedures.

The next meeting will be on November 20, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator