



## Red River Watershed Management Board

### *Board of Managers*

John Finney, President-Humboldt LeRoy Carriere-Roseau 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 20, 2013

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, August 20, 2013 at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

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

Members present were:

LeRoy Carriere	Dan Money
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
- Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Pat Downs, Executive Director, RRRRA
- Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator, USDA-NRCS
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Jeff Lewis, Assistant Executive Director/Policy, RRBC
- Joe Courneya, Assistant Executive Director/Program, RRBC
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Jim Zeigler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Tracy Halstensgard, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Brian Dwight, Clean Water Specialist, BWSR
- Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Inc.
- Henry VanOffelen, MDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Diane Ista

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

### **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**

P. Downs distributed a monthly report of activities. The Maple River Water Resource District has been notified by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) that the permit for the Upper Maple River Dam project should be received by December 1, 2013. Plans are to proceed with the project regardless of USACE participation.

P. Downs reported that he attended the August Diversion Authority meeting. Meetings continue with the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) regarding the \$500,000 allocated from the Diversion Authority to the RRBC to assess and prioritize potential retention projects.

P. Downs stated that although the status of Farm Bill 2014 is still unknown, conference committees are being established. The Senate has selected their conference committee members, however, the House has not.

### **Water Quality Project Monitoring**

C. Fritz distributed the IWI Monitoring and Education Activity Report. The Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) water quality results will be presented to the Work Group on August 21, 2013 in Detroit Lakes, MN. The presentation will include pre and post project data comparisons, inlet and outlet comparisons, and downstream data results. Projects included in the analysis are Project No. 60, North Ottawa, Agassiz Valley, Ross No. 7, and Palmville Fen.

C. Fritz added that the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC) conducted a two-day meeting in July. Plans are to continue with the Surface Drainage Study.

C. Fritz distributed a proposal to revise the current hydrology within the Project Planning Tool (PPT). The estimated cost is not to exceed \$25,000 to modify the strategies report, develop early, middle and late functionality and testing. A TAC recommendation regarding the proposal will be forthcoming in the Red River Coordinator Report.

### **Project Coordinator Report**

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He explained that during a previous Rules and Regulations committee meeting, discussion occurred regarding potential amendments to the BdSWD's Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Although some legislative and Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) policy issues are still under discussion, most of the District attorney's concerns can be addressed through the plan amendment process.

R. Harnack reported that he reviewed the status of project funding with K. Lokkesmoe - MDNR. The funding allocations for member watershed districts are as follows: Bois de Sioux, North Ottawa - remaining state funds available to complete project with \$1 million remaining from the RRWMB; Redpath - \$500,000/state; Big Lake - \$400,000/state; Western - \$100,000/state; Brandrup - \$100,000/state, Two Rivers, Quick - \$200,000/state, Roseau River, RRWMA project is pending, Sand Hill, City of Climax - \$700,000 to \$1,600,000. Funding needs for the next couple of years were also

discussed. He added that individual watershed districts were requested to forward updated existing project summaries as well as new information for anticipated future projects.

R. Harnack stated that at the previous Drainage Work Group (DWG) meeting a presentation was conducted by Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI) regarding a drainage application tool. The information developed by HEI was reviewed by Al Kean of BWSR. Discussion occurred regarding the environmental criteria required in the engineer's report. Some legislators are concerned about the lack of accountability regarding environmental issues. It was suggested that an update of the drainage manual may be appropriate that would include legislative clarification and certification options. Alternatives to the traditional damages and benefits processes were discussed including the use of hydrologic models with GIS capabilities that could provide a more efficient, transparent approach.

R. Harnack noted that he attended a recent BdSWD board meeting to address the issue of renting and leasing of property purchased by the District with FDR funds. The guidelines developed by the IRS and the office of Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB) regarding renting and leasing of property indicate that the District has complied with current rules. Following discussion, the board of managers decided to delay noticing additional property for rent/lease in order to determine whether or not a more formal process should be followed.

## **Administrator Report**

### **A) Minnesota River Board**

N. Erickson reported that at the May 21, 2013 board meeting, Manager Finney distributed a handout regarding a proposal for the Minnesota River Board to develop a program to train professional ditch viewers. She further noted that she was contacted by John Schueller, Chair of the Minnesota River Board, regarding the board's interest in developing the course. The cost to develop the program is \$18,000 and currently 16 counties have each committed \$1,000 toward the effort. Mr. Schueller offered to meet with the board to further discuss this proposal.

Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed to invite Mr. Schueller to a future board meeting. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize N. Erickson to invite Mr. Schueller to attend a future board meeting to further discuss the proposal, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

### **B) Red River of the North Rural Nonstructural Flood Damage Reduction Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment**

N. Erickson explained that at the June board meeting, Katie Opsahl and Nan Bischoff, St. Paul District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provided an update on the status of the Corps' nonstructural feasibility study. Discussion during that meeting assumed that should the board agree to sponsor the study at a cost-share of 50/50 (with an estimated cost of \$35,000 to each sponsor, RRWMB/RRJWRD), the likely sponsors for the implementation phases of the project would be the local watershed districts.

N. Erickson added that at the June board meeting, the board agreed that the local watershed districts should be contacted to determine their level of interest in participating in the program. Additional information was received from the USACE by the board on Monday, July 8, 2013 and forwarded to member watershed districts for review. The individual watershed districts were requested to discuss this information with their respective boards so the RRWMB could make a determination whether or not to sponsor the study at the August board meeting.

R. Harnack noted that he discussed the progress of the study with Ms. Bischoff who indicated that currently the USACE is conducting an internal review process of the study feasibility which should be completed by October or November. He suggested that the board should invite Ms. Bischoff to attend a future board meeting when the internal review process has been completed.

**C) 16th Joint Annual Conference (March Conference)**

N. Erickson stated that the 15th Joint Annual Conference was conducted on Tuesday, March 26, 2013 - Wednesday, March 27, 2013, at the Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN. As the conference was rescheduled this year in order to avoid other scheduling conflicts, she suggested conducting next year's conference during the last week in March as was done this year. The proposed dates would be Tuesday, March 25, 2014 - Wednesday, March 26, 2014.

**Motion** by Manager Holmvik to schedule the 16th Joint Annual Conference on Tuesday, March 25, 2014 - Wednesday, March 26, 2014 at the Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

**D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences**

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, August 21, 2013, MnDOT, Detroit Lakes, MN.
2. **Governing Documents Committee**, Thursday, September 12, 2013, 10:00 a.m., RRRR office, West Fargo, ND.
3. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, November 12, 2013, 1405 Prairie Parkway, Suite 311, West Fargo, ND.

**Red River Basin Commission**

J. Lewis, Assistant Executive Director/Policy, RRBC, provided an update on the project details of the Halstad Upstream Retention (HUR) Project. Site identification has occurred and plans are to complete the project by September or October. The RRBC anticipates that the Diversion Authority will endorse this effort and provide funding assistance toward the Maple River Project in North Dakota and the Redpath Project in Minnesota.

J. Lewis discussed a proposal for co-locating various water management organizations in the Red River basin. Originally, the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRR, River Keepers and potentially others were being considered. However, currently only the offices of the RRBC, IWI and River Keepers have expressed an interest in co-locating.

J. Lewis stated that the RRBC is still considering leasing the office space in Moorhead that was previously occupied by Vogel Law Office. He added that the RRBC has also discussed a long-range plan of building a new structure close to the river and lease office space to other interested organizations.

N. Erickson noted that at the July board meeting, the board authorized Managers Deal, Holmvik and Osowski to tour the proposed office space relative to co-locating the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRR, River Keepers and potentially others and present a board recommendation at the August board meeting. Manager Holmvik reported that he toured the proposed office location and it seems to meet the needs of the RRRR in terms of parking, meeting room and office space.

Manager Holmvik stated that at the previous monthly meeting, the RRBC requested an additional \$15,000 from the RRWMB per year, in addition to the current annual commitment of \$75,000, for a 5-year period to secure the lease. He further noted that he would only support a one-year rental commitment contingent that the RRRRA would occupy the proposed co-location space.

Manager Wilkens inquired whether there was discussion regarding the RRRRA not participating in the co-location proposal. J. Lewis responded that NRCS indicated they are associated with the RRRRA and would co-locate wherever that organization chooses to do so, however, the RRRRA indicated that the proposed location in Moorhead was not preferred.

Manager Holmvik inquired whether the RRRRA endorsed the decision to co-locate with the other aforementioned organizations. P. Downs responded that although he attended the tour of the proposed office co-location, as well as some North Dakota RRRRA representatives, an official decision has not been made by the full board on whether or not the RRRRA plans to participate in the proposed co-location office space or remain in their current location.

Manager Holmvik asked whether the RRRRA would be concerned if the proposed co-location facility was located in Minnesota or North Dakota. P. Downs responded that discussion has occurred regarding the North Dakota State Water Commission (NDSWC) residing in the proposed co-location facility, however, some have suggested that for that organization office space located in Minnesota could be problematic.

C. Fritz added that he attended a meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) where a motion was made to contribute toward a one-year rental obligation for the RRBC, IWI and River Keepers to co-locate. The RRJWRD full board will consider at their next meeting. Manager Money suggested that the RRRRA should make a determination at their next meeting on whether or not they want to participate in the co-location proposal. Manager Knott inquired whether the RRRRA meets in September. P. Downs responded that the next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for November, however, a conference call could possibly be conducted in the near future to make that decision.

Manager Deal inquired whether any issues exist with relocating the office of the RRRRA from North Dakota to Minnesota. P. Downs noted that being a North Dakota resident wouldn't be an issue with being employed by an organization located in Minnesota, however, currently he is considered a North Dakota employee and his payroll benefits are associated with the RRJWRD.

**Motion** by Manager Money to accept the recommendation of Manager Holmvik as part of the committee that toured the proposed office space to pursue the Vogel Law Office building and contribute \$15,000 annually toward rent for a one-year term, contingent that the co-location proposal is endorsed by the RRRRA, **Seconded** by Manager Carriere, **Carried**.

### **Red River Coordinator/TAC Report**

D. Thul distributed a report of the TAC meeting conducted on August 9, 2013 at HEI in Fargo, ND. The TAC reviewed a proposal from IWI to upgrade the current hydrology within the PPT. The current hydrology utilizes travel time only to route flows downstream which doesn't take into consideration floodplain, wetland, lake or other flood water storage along the stream. In this case (a worst case scenario), all storage is removed from the watershed. The TAC concluded that this "worst case scenario" should be included in the PPT which would improve the accuracy of assessing downstream impacts to flood hydrographs from proposed projects.

D. Thul further noted that since the use of the PPT has been limited by Project Teams, the usefulness of the tool with the existing hydrology has not been adequately documented. As such, the original IWI proposal to upgrade the hydrology at an estimated cost of \$160,000 would *not* be recommended at this time. The TAC does, however, endorse the modified proposal of \$25,000 with the following recommendations:

- Add a volume assessment to the model that would allow the user to estimate how a proposed project upstream within a watershed would impact downstream flood volume (% change) of a selected damage site based on the early, middle, late concept.
- Provide safeguards when using the existing hydrology to assure that users understand that this hydrology is based on travel time only and represents the watershed condition with no storage from adjacent flood plains, wetlands, and/or lakes (the worst case scenario).
- Utilize the recently updated HMS watershed models to represent the existing condition scenario.
- Document potential upgrades to the hydrology that would make the PPT more accurate and useable in the future.
- The TAC recommends that Nate Dalager and Blake Carlson coordinate with Mark Deutschman on the *Strategies Report* layout and format for the PPT.

**Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the proposal to revise the current hydrology within the PPT at a cost not to exceed \$25,000, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

D. Thul stated that at the TAC meeting, C. Fritz discussed the need to develop a long-term maintenance plan for the Red River Basin Decision Information Network (RRBDIN). C. Fritz noted that expenses ranging from \$14,000 - \$20,000 annually are associated with maintaining the LiDAR portal feature on the RRBDIN website. Discussion occurred relative to transferring this service to the State of Minnesota and also the possibility of various cost-share options among users including charging fees.

D. Thul added that an update on the Distributed Detention Strategy was presented by J. Bents at the TAC meeting. The dates for completing the initiative are as follows: Buffalo-Red River WD, completed; Wild Rice WD, 95% complete; Sand Hill River WD, completed; Roseau River WD (HEI), 95% complete; Roseau River WD (HDR), end of October; Red Lake WD, end of October; Bois de Sioux WD, 3rd week in August; Two Rivers WD, October 15th; and, Middle Snake Tamarac River WD, October 31st.

D. Thul reported that the TAC reviewed a funding request submitted by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). He explained that a request was submitted for the two joint boards (RRWMB and RRJWRD) to consider funding two stream gage sites on the Red River that are currently slated to be discontinued due to lack of federal funding. The sites include the Red River gage at Hickson @ \$4,270 per year from the RRWMB and the Red River gage at Pembina @ \$4,270 per year from the RRJWRD. The TAC recommended that the board consider funding for the Red River gage at Hickson @ \$4,270 per year. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize funding for the Red River gage at Hickson @ \$4,270 per year, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

D. Thul noted that the TAC also conducted a review of Sections 4, 5 and 9 of the Governing Documents publication. Final recommendations will be submitted to the committee for review prior to their meeting scheduled on September 12, 2013.

**District Reports**

- The Roseau River WD reported on the status of the Hay Creek/Norland Project. Mowing and haying of the project area are ongoing. The District is waiting for a response from the USACE regarding the revised mitigation plan.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Brandt Channel Ditch Establishment/Ditch No. 15. A final public hearing was conducted on July 25, 2013 for a petition requesting a new 14.0 mile ditch to be constructed downstream of the Brandt Impoundment. Following discussion, the Board of Managers approved the project which includes constructing a ditch with a 10-year design frequency.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Lower Wild Rice River Project. The Board of Managers approved applying for a grant from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC). The Project Team members agreed to submit the project as a stand-alone project instead of including the entire reach of the lower Wild Rice River.

**District's Funding Requests**

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on September 17, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Jerome Deal  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator