



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt Todd Miller-Warroad Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
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Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

June 18, 2013

Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, June 18, 2013 at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

LeRoy Carriere	Dan Money
Ben Kleinwachter	Orville Knott
Daniel Wilkens	Greg Holmvik
Jerome Deal	

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR*CS
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Pat Downs, Executive Director, RRRRA
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Joe Courneya, Assistant Executive Director/Program, RRBC
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Tracy Halstensgard, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Julie Blackburn, Minnesota Area Manager - RESPEC Consulting & Services
- Brian Dwight, Clean Water Specialist, BWSR
- Rob Sip, MDA - Environmental Policy Specialist
- Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Inc.
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Henry VanOffelen, MDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- John E. Hanson, Buffalo-Red River WD

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 Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Public Information Initiative

M. Meister reviewed the public information monthly report. He stated that he consulted with H2O Videos regarding a request submitted from the Bois de Sioux WD to the board to cost-share on producing a video to promote a watershed district perspective. The recommendation regarding the video proposal was distributed. M. Meister stated that following review of the proposal and talking with H2O representatives, his recommendation to the board is to not provide funding for the project based on the following reasons:

1. The video project does not constitute a basin-wide perspective which is a guiding principle of all RRWMB projects.
2. Since a video won't necessarily bolster public engagement, producing a documentary-style video should be reconsidered.
3. The "shelf life" of video content tends to be short.
4. As positive relations may not always be the norm between the BdSWD and watershed district citizens, the video could be used against the District and by association, the RRWMB.
5. Funding such a project invites critical attention and possible citizen disengagement.

Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed not to provide funding for the initiative based on the reasons stated by M. Meister.

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

P. Downs distributed a monthly report of activities. He reported that funding options and commitments have been discussed regarding office location site visits. The potential co-location for the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRA, and River Keepers will be discussed at the July 9, 2013 RRRA meeting. Official board action is necessary as a six-month notice is required in order to terminate the current lease.

P. Downs stated that the farm bill legislation has passed in the Senate. The House will vote on whether or not to pass the bill this week.

Water Quality Project Monitoring

C. Fritz distributed the IWI Monitoring and Education Activity Report. Field work for all water quality projects is in full swing. Staff are monitoring 118 sites scattered around the basin associated with seven different projects. The projects and number of sites per project monitored are: Buffalo-Red River Watershed Monitoring (40 sites), Snake River and Two River Assessment (12 sites), FDR (17 sites), Red Lake WD swag (5 sites), Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) Pesticide (5 sites), Event Based Monitoring (29 sites), and Major Watershed Load (10 sites).

C. Fritz reviewed a handout regarding the FDR Project Planning Acceleration Effort, the Project Planning Tool (PPT) and the Expanded Distributed Detention Strategy. A meeting was conducted with WSN staff and others to discuss the PPT and following discussion it was agreed that hydrology calculations need improvement.

C. Fritz explained that the original estimated cost to expand the PPT to the entire Minnesota side of the Red River basin was ~ \$190,000.00. After discussion with several engineers, it was determined that the output of the PPT should be further developed so it's as close to the HMS models as possible which would require an additional expenditure of ~ \$160,000.00.

H. VanOffelen suggested discussing revising the PPT with the TAC. He added that other potential interested entities could be identified in order to share the cost of further developing the tool. The Board of Managers directed the TAC to address this issue.

C. Fritz added that the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (BTSAC) met on May 22, 2013. A revised scope of work to address surface drainage was discussed. A draft handout was distributed for review. Board representatives on BTSAC include D. Thul, N. Dalager, and C. Anderson.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. Legislation passed during this year's session relative to Red River basin initiatives includes:

1. **Bonding**: HF1070 bonding bill included \$20,000,000 for FDR. The following member watershed district projects are included in the bill: Quick Project (Two Rivers WD), Roseau River Wildlife Management Area (RRWMA) Project (Roseau River WD), and the North Ottawa and Redpath Projects (Bois de Sioux WD).
2. **River Watch**: This initiative was funded at \$100,000/year from the Clean Water Legacy funds in MPCA.
3. **Red River Mediation**: Includes base funding of \$264,000/year.
4. **Red River Basin Commission**: Includes base funding of \$100,000/year.
5. **Taxes**: HF677 Did not exempt watershed districts from sales taxes.

R. Harnack reported that he met with L. Smith, J. Jaschke, and R. Bohn to review policy and/or legislative related issues regarding the board's upcoming committee meetings to review the Governing Document publication and possible updates to watershed district rules and regulations. Further discussion with committee members will likely occur prior to adopting any revisions.

Administrator Report

A) RRB Flood Damage Reduction Work Group / Fund Reallocation

N. Erickson reported that at a meeting conducted on May 22, 2013, the Work Group discussed the reallocation of unexpended funds for fiscal year 2013 (July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013). Following discussion, the Work Group authorized the Funding Committee to meet and determine how the unexpended funds should be disbursed.

N. Erickson stated that after several conference calls, a recommendation was developed by the committee. A handout was distributed outlining the proposed reallocation of unexpended funds. The Funding Committee agreed to request watershed districts to submit their project team expenses incurred through June 30, 2013, no later than **July 12, 2013** to the RRWMB by either email or regular mail. N. Erickson noted the importance of receiving all reimbursement requests **prior** to this date, as on July 12, 2013 all requests received will be considered for reallocation with disbursements to be approved at the July 16, 2013 board meeting.

B) Governing Documents / Rules & Regulations Committee Meetings

N. Erickson stated that at the May board meeting, the Board of Managers requested that the above-mentioned committee meetings be scheduled with legal counsel in conjunction with the July RRRRA meeting.

N. Erickson noted that the Governing Documents Committee will meet following the July 9, 2013 meeting (~ 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) at the Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead, MN. Members of the Governing Documents Committee include: J. Deal, D. Money, G. Holmvik, R. Osowski, and N. Erickson. The Board of Managers have directed the TAC to review Sections 5 & 9 of the Governing Documents publication prior to the July 9th meeting.

N. Erickson stated that the Rules and Regulations Committee meeting has been scheduled on Wednesday, July 10, 2013 at the RRRRA office. Members of the Rules and Regulations Committee include: J. Finney, D. Wilkens, R. Osowski, R. Harnack, and D. Thul. An invitation was also extended to watershed district administrators to attend this meeting by Committee Chair D. Wilkens. Due to several conflicts, the Board of Managers agreed to reschedule the committee meeting originally scheduled for Wednesday, July 10, 2013 to **Monday, July 8, 2013 at the RRRRA office.**

C) Stream Gaging Cost-Share Program

N. Erickson reported that the joint funding agreement between the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the RRWMB for the period October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013 has been received. The amount of \$115,519 shall be contributed to cover all of the costs of the necessary field and analytical work directly related to the program. **Motion** by Manager Knott to approve the joint funding agreement between USGS and the RRWMB for the stream gaging cost-share program for the period of October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013 in the amount of \$115,519, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried.**

D) Red River Watershed Coordinator Contract

N. Erickson stated that the State of Minnesota Income Contract between the MDNR and the RRWMB to jointly fund the Red River Watershed Coordinator position (Dan Thul) for the State to provide ~ 25% of the full time equivalent to assist the RRWMB to coordinate activities between the MDNR and the RRWMB was received. The total obligation for all compensation and reimbursements to the State under this contract is \$24,000 each year for a two-year period (07/01/13 - 06/30/15). **Motion** by Manager Holmvik to approve the State of Minnesota Income Contract between the MDNR and the RRWMB to jointly fund the Red River Watershed Coordinator position for \$24,000 each year for a two-year period (07/01/13 - 06/30/15), **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried.**

E) Letter of Support / L-SOHC

N. Erickson distributed a letter of support that was developed regarding a proposal submitted to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (L-SOHC) for the Mustinka River Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridor Rehabilitation project of the Bois de Sioux Watershed District.

F) Border Township Associative Group (BTAG)

N. Erickson reported that a letter was received from the aforementioned group comprised of townships surrounding the Oslo area. The group has formed a border township association of the Red River to develop a working partnership on both sides of the river. A handout was distributed.

G) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **2013 MAWD Summer Water Resources Tour**, Thursday, June 20 & Friday, June 21, 2013, Minnesota River - New Ulm Area. Hosted by MAWD, Minnesota River Board, Minnesota River History Center, and the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River.
2. **Rules & Regulations Committee**, July 8, 2013, 1405 Prairie Parkway, Suite 311, West Fargo, ND (RRRA office).
3. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, July 9, 2013, 1405 Prairie Parkway, Suite 311, West Fargo, ND.
4. **Governing Documents Committee**, July 9, 2013, Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead, MN following the RRRA meeting.
5. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, August 21, 2013, MnDOT, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Red River of the North Rural Nonstructural Flood Damage Reduction Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment

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. The purpose of meeting with the Board of Managers was to brief potential study sponsors on the status of the Corps' study, discuss what other nonstructural programs are available, discuss the Corps' proposal, identify likely sponsors for the implementation phases, and discuss a schedule for completing the feasibility report.

Opsahl explained that the purpose of the study is to reduce flood damages, and emergency costs related to flooding of rural homes and farmsteads along the main stem of the Red River of the North and the Bois de Sioux River. The study is being performed as a task under the Basin-wide Feasibility Study. The objective of the study is to identify a Federally-justified nonstructural project for the Red River basin.

Manager Money inquired whether constructing a ring dike under this program would allow it to be removed from the FEMA floodplain. Opsahl responded that this program would not provide for the structure to be excluded from the FEMA floodplain, nor would funding be provided for repairs following an event.

Manager Money inquired whether projects constructed under this program would require an encumbrance on the title. Bischoff responded that nearly all USACE projects require permanent easements. R. Harnack requested clarification on this issue.

Bischoff stated that sponsors must be identified in order to proceed with the project. The proposed non-federal sponsors for the study at a 50/50 cost share are the Minnesota Red River Watershed Management Board, and the North Dakota Red River Joint Water Resources District (RRJWRD). The proposed cost-share for the design and construction phases of the project are 65/35.

R. Harnack inquired whether the RRWMB or the individual watershed districts would be responsible for entering into a partnership with the USACE should the project proceed to the design and construction phases. D. Thul responded that assuming the board would 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.

Manager Money suggested that the local watershed districts should be contacted to determine their level of interest in participating in the program. Opsahl added that the study area and design criteria continues to be refined with a revised report developed for internal review in August of this year. Manager Money requested that following the development of the revised report, the information be forwarded from the USACE to N. Erickson for distribution to the individual watershed districts for review.

Motion by Manager Money to authorize N. Erickson to distribute the revised USACE information to the individual watershed districts for review prior to the board determining whether to sponsor the nonstructural feasibility study at a cost-share of 50/50 with an estimated cost of \$35,000, **Seconded** by Manager Holmvik, **Carried**.

Red River Basin Commission

J. Courneya, Assistant Executive Director/Program - RRBC, distributed information from the RRBC. An update on the Stream Gaging and Precipitation Network Project was presented. In conjunction with the Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) Report, recommendations directed toward gaging and precipitation needs were developed. These recommendations will address national, basin, regional, and local watershed current activities and projected needs.

J. Courneya also discussed nutrient capture through water management and biomass harvesting. This project will evaluate the potential for capturing nutrient runoff from mostly nonpoint sources by utilizing cattails or other vegetation within existing shallow flood storage reservoirs. Three pilot sites within the Red River basin will be analyzed including the North Ottawa Project in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District.

J. Courneya addressed the potential for co-locating the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRRA, and River Keepers. He stated that he is unsure whether or not the board is supportive of this proposal. R. Harnack responded that the offices interested in co-locating were instructed to develop various alternatives for consideration by the board.

Manager Deal noted that he was a member of the RRRRA committee that was involved in the search to secure an office for the RRRRA and has also toured some of the proposed new office sites being considered for co-locating the aforementioned offices. He reported that the proposed sites need extensive remodeling in order accommodate the various occupants.

P. Downs added that the current landlord requires a six-month notice to terminate the lease which would require that notice be given by October 1, 2013. He noted that the NRCS currently contributes 20% of the cost of office occupancy in order to support the efforts of the RRRRA which may not be available should the RRRRA co-locate with other organizations.

Manager Wilkens responded that he was concerned with the cost of leasing the RRRRA offices and noted that in addition to recognizing a cost-savings should the interested organizations co-locate, it should be more efficient as well.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

D. Thul reported that during the two-day TAC meeting on May 14-15, 2013, proposed revisions to the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS) Project Management Plan (PMP) were discussed. A draft PMP was distributed for review. **Motion** by Manager Deal to approve the proposed changes in the draft PMP, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

D. Thul also distributed a draft of the recommendations developed for Tile Drainage Systems. Following discussion, the Board of Managers requested the member watershed districts to review the recommendations prior to board approval.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the District is working with the Audubon Society on signage and public outreach/education for the Hay Creek/Norland project.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration Project. Bids were opened for the project on June 13, 2013 with the low bid awarded to Davidson Construction in the amount of \$3,944,226.50. The next lowest bid was \$4,132,119.92 and was received from the Spruce Valley Corporation. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$3,994,248.75. Plans are to begin construction on the project in August of this year.
- The Wild Rice WD reported that the City of Felton has requested a meeting with representatives of the District to investigate options for a ring dike to protect their community.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on July 16, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. at the Roseau River Watershed District, Roseau, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator