

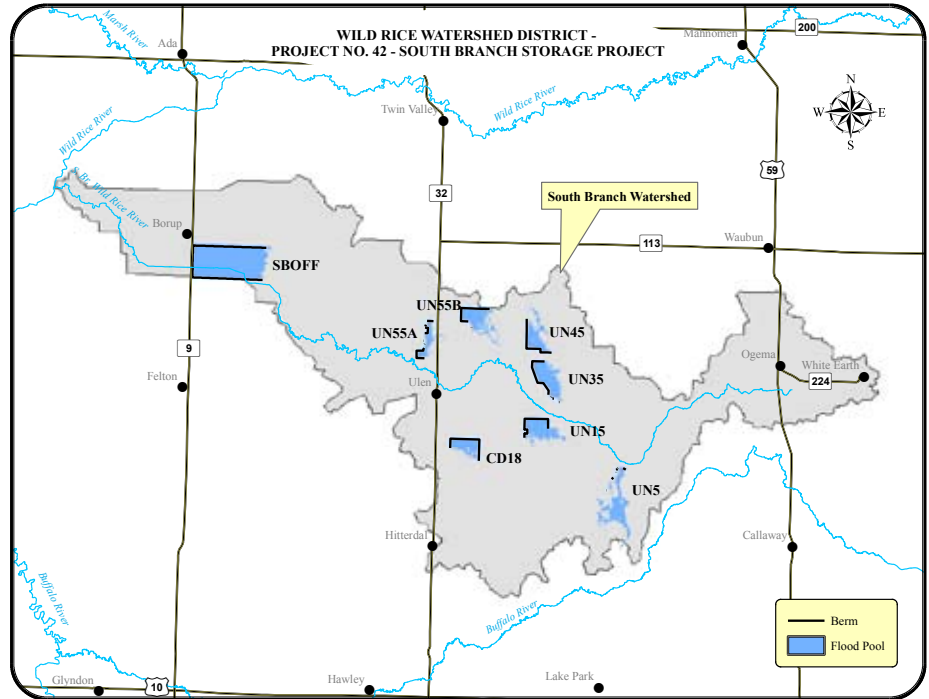


WILD RICE WATERSHED DISTRICT PROJECT NO. 42 UPDATE

Back in 2002, Wild Rice Watershed District (WRWD) managers realized the need to focus attention on areas other than just the mainstem of the Wild Rice River in seeking overall flood damage reduction in the District. At that time, areas with flooding problems were prioritized as high, medium or other by the managers, with a high priority placed on the lower Wild Rice River area, where flood damages to farmers in the District have been significant over the years.

In June of 2005, the District completed a storage evaluation as part of the overall water management plan of the South Branch of the Wild Rice River. This evaluation was completed as a joint effort between the WRWD and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The main goal of evaluation was to identify groups of projects which would provide a 30-40% reduction in the 10-year discharge at the outlet of the South Branch of the Wild Rice River, reduce erosion through the beach ridge, could be funded, and would also be acceptable to the permitting agencies.

What developed is the initiation of the current South Branch Flood Reduction Project (Project No. 42). The proposed project would consist of the development of five or six flood water storage sites in the upper basin in combination with one large off-channel storage site in the lower basin. The upper basin sites would provide a total of 6,500-7,800 acre feet of storage, while the lower off-channel storage facility would provide



approximately 15,000-18,000 acre feet of storage. The project would control floodwater from an approximate 250 square mile drainage area. As proposed, the planned sites would provide an approximate 40% reduction in flow of the South Branch at the confluence of the Wild Rice River during a 10-year flood event.

At this point, the project is in the preliminary design stage with the District working to identify preferred sites for upstream and downstream water retention. In November, the managers selected a proposed off-channel water

retention site for additional analysis below the historic Lake Agassiz beach ridge. The area includes about 3,000 tillable acres, mainly in Winchester Township of Norman County.

With the selection of a lower off-channel site for further study, focus now moves to gathering information on seven potential upstream tributary water retention sites. Initially, 14 upper basin tributary sites were identified in 2005. That list of sites was reduced to seven with the assistance and input of the WRWD Project Team. The next step will be a meeting with land owners to discuss what was found from soil surveys conducted at the seven potential flood water retention sites.

The planning process has been assisted with the availability and accuracy of LIDAR information compiled over the entire watershed district in 2006 through the efforts of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) with funding assistance from the Wild Rice Watershed District and counties in the District.

According to the current project schedule, it is hoped that Project No. 42 be ready for a public hearing early in 2008. The Board has also set aside a 9:00 a.m. time slot at each regular meeting to provide public updates on Project No. 42 as the planning progresses.

RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At its regularly scheduled November meeting, the RRWMB:

- Received a report from Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator.
- Authorized Year Three of the Red River Basin Turbidity Impairment Project.
- Received an update on activities of the Red River Basin Commission from Lance Yohe-Executive Director.
- Authorized Daniel Wilkens and John Finney as directors, and Ron Osowski and Robert Wright as alternates to the Red River Basin Commission for the term 2007-2009.
- Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.
- Authorized the Step I submittal for the Roseau River WD's revised Hay Creek project.
- Authorized sponsoring a legislative briefing on Red River Basin issues in conjunction with the upcoming Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting.

BOIS DE SIOUX WD

The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the construction pace has picked up over the last month on the North Ottawa project. Conditions have been drier than recognized previously.

The contract with Comstock Construction has been finalized and closed. Final payment was made on November 16, 2006 after the final hearing on the contract was held.

Midwest Construction, Inc. is continuing with earthwork. Borrow material is still a little too wet to get good compaction and with the drying time taking longer at this time of year, the dike core construction has slowed down. The good news is the project is still progressing. A major part of the contract was completed with the installation of large double-box culverts under Grant County Road No. 40 to accommodate the flows in the inlet channel. The inlet channel excavation is mostly complete. Two more weeks of construction weather would probably complete all of the work in the Midwest contract other than permanent seeding in the spring.

Topsoil removal in the area of the diversion ditch has been completed. Payments to local landowners are being made promptly.



MIDDLE-SNAKE-TAMARAC RIVERS WD

The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project. The appeal period for the non-appealing landowners has expired. All lands required for the project have been acquired.

The necessary requirements for permits has begun and the District anticipates construction to begin early in 2007.

RED LAKE WD

The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Outlet Restoration. The District has scheduled an informational landowner meeting for November 27, 2006 in Alvarado, Minnesota. This is the second meeting scheduled to gather input from the public for a project in Esther Township of Polk County, which among many things, would restore portions of the Grand Marais Creek Channel close to its original flows. This project was identified as part of the Governor's Clean Water Legacy.

WILD RICE WD

The Wild Rice WD reported on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) sedimentation analysis. Houston Engineering, Inc. is conducting cross-section work on the main-

stem of the Wild Rice River which will allow the first phase of the sedimentation analysis to proceed toward a spring of 2007 completion. Real time data will be collected for the next 5 years to enhance the sediment movement documented in phase 1. This data will be crucial in the detention site location as well as final design of the structure to reduce flood damages.

The next scheduled meeting of the RRWMB will be held at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, MN, on December 19th, starting at 9:30 a.m.

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