



## RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT SELECTED AS THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF WATERS' WATERSHED DISTRICT OF THE YEAR IN 2010

Each year the Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters awards one of the watershed districts in the state for their accomplishments towards water quality. Watershed Districts are nominated for the award by area and regional DNR hydrologists. Kent Lokkesmoe, Director of the DNR Division of Waters, presented this year's award to the Red Lake Watershed District (RLWD) at the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts' (MAWD) Annual Meeting & Trade Show in Alexandria, MN on December 3, 2010.

Lokkesmoe stated the importance of the DNR recognizing their partners in water management and noted that challenges will occur going forward. He referred to Steve Hirsch's presentation at the conference regarding invasive species who explained that working together is essential and also stressed the importance of partnerships. The next biennium's

budget forecast is not promising which makes strengthening partnerships that much more important.

The DNR has recently merged the divisions of Ecological Resources and the Division of Waters – to create the Division of Ecological and Water Resources. Staff in attendance at the meeting were introduced including Steve Hirsch, Dave Leuthe, Brian Stenquist, Pat Lynch, Paul Wannarka, and Julie West-erlund. Ms. West-erlund is an example of partnerships in that she worked for the DNR prior to transferring to the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and now just recently starting working with the DNR again.

This is the 22nd year of this award and the competition remains strong. Recommendations solicited from field staff within the DNR are evaluated by managers who make the selection which is not announced until the conference.



*Red Lake Watershed District Receives the Watershed District of the Year Award at the MAWD 2010 Annual Meeting & Trade Show. From left to right Myron Jesme – Administrator; Kent Lokkesmoe – DNR Director; Gene Tiedemann – Vice President; LeRoy Ose – Board Manager; and Lee Coe – Treasurer.*

The RLWD has made accomplishments in several areas including:

- Extensive long-term water quality monitoring programs.
- An informative and complete website is maintained.
- Several water storage and retention sites have been constructed and maintained which incorporate natural resource enhancement benefits.

- The District has co-operated with the DNR to update the county flood insurance rate maps.
- The District also provides assistance to the DNR by administering the water allocation program for water appropriation permits.

Congratulations to the Red Lake Watershed District as they are recognized as the DNR's Watershed District of the Year.

## RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At its regularly scheduled November meeting, the RRWMB:

- Distributed a report from Mark Meister, Public Information Officer and reviewed a draft of the annual calendar.
- Received a report from Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator.
- Appointed Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc. and Charlie Anderson, JOR Engineering, Inc. as technical representatives on the Basin Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee of the International Water Institute (IWI).
- Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.
- Discussed the progress of the task force committees established in conjunction with initiatives of the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA).
- Received a report from Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator.
- Reviewed a written report regarding water quality initiatives of the IWI.
- Received an update from Julie Goehring, South Basin Manager/Communications Coordinator, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC).

## EVENTS COMING UP

The next meeting of the RRWMB will be on Tuesday, December 21, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, 219 N Mill Street, Fertile, MN.

## NEW ORGANIZATION AIMS TO DEVELOP FLOOD RETENTION PROJECTS

A newly formed organization hopes to provide the Red River Valley with additional retention projects that will keep the region protected from disastrous flooding.

Created this fall, the Red River Retention Authority combines the levying power of both the Red River



**RED RIVER**  
RETENTION AUTHORITY

Watershed Management Board in Minnesota and the Red River Joint Water Resource District in North Dakota. The new organization will continue working to combat flooding by securing additional federal funding for water retention projects benefiting all citizens of the Red River Valley.

“This joint powers agreement is a major step in funding water retention projects in both Minnesota and North Dakota,” says John Finney, President of the Red River Watershed Management Board in Minnesota. North Dakota state Senator, Cass County Joint Water Resource District Chair, and Red River Joint Water Resource District Basin Coordinator Tom Fischer agrees,

“This partnership is about water retention efforts, and by working together we can significantly reduce flooding up and down the Red River valley.”

The goal of the newly-created Red River Retention Authority is to initiate appropriate protection measures, facilitate those measures,

and to assist local water boards with regulatory and permitting obstacles so they can implement effective water retention projects for the benefit of the entire Red River basin. The RRRA will focus on funding and executing tangible water retention projects.

The joint powers agreement between the two Joint Boards, which pools resources from both flood protection entities, marks an important milestone in the continued flood fight. Terms of the agreement dictate that each organization will retain tax levy authority, but the two Joint Boards will coordinate their retention efforts to create a more cohesive and basin-wide approach to retention in the Valley.

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Your comments and contributions are always welcome. If you are receiving this newsletter and are not currently a member of a governing unit in the Red River Basin, please notify us and provide the name of the appropriate person to be added to our mailing list. News & Views, c/o RRWMB, P.O. Box 763, Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-0763, Phone: (218) 844-6166; Fax: (218) 844-6167.