



OCTOBER 2010

VOLUME 16 · ISSUE 10

NEWS & VIEWS

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD

BEYOND POLITICS: RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD'S MEMBER WATERSHED DISTRICTS MOVE DIRT

During the recent elections, we all heard many politicians and candidates talking about supporting flood retention efforts. Several of those recently elected have pledged their cooperation to make flood protection “happen” throughout the Red River Valley. In some cases, some politicians and agencies have not only pledged support, but have taken undue recognition for funding and sponsoring flood control efforts.

Beyond the political promises and pledges, one fact about flood protection remains: the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) funds projects of member districts that move dirt. According to RRWMB President John Finney of Humboldt, “the unofficial slogan of the RRWMB is ‘we move dirt.’ We don’t simply talk about the need or speculate about water

politics and policies, we fund projects to get things done.”

Since its inception by the Minnesota legislature in 1976, the RRWMB has worked cooperatively with a myriad of water agencies and professionals, as well as local, state, and federal elected officials, to reduce the impacts of flooding up and down the valley.

And although politicians may come and go, the work of the RRWMB continues as mandated.

The RRWMB believes that the key to long-term flood protection is planning and cooperation rather than promises and pledges. By working with local watershed districts, the RRWMB has provided cost-share funding for an impressive list of flood protection projects already completed. The Grand Marais Project in the Red Lake Watershed District provides protection to the

city of Euclid and other rural properties, while the Horseshoe Lake Impoundment located in Kittson County, the North Ottawa Impoundment in Wilkin County and the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project are examples of completed flood retention projects funded by and in cooperation with local watershed districts.

The work of the RRWMB affiliated watershed districts from the Joe River, Two Rivers, Roseau River, Red Lake, Middle-Snake-Tamarac, Wild Rice, Sand Hill, and Bois de Sioux all benefit from the cost-sharing made available from the state to the RRWMB. By working together, local watershed districts and the RRWMB, guarantee that the mission of flood protection and reduction remains a real priority and not simply a political promise.

Certainly, the RRWMB partners with key politicians in its mission to move dirt. “We depend on our local, state, and federal delegations to support our work, so we are happy to be part of the promises they make,” says Finney.

In all, “our work funds flood control projects that benefit landowners, producers, and all citizens of the basin,” says Finney. So as elections come and go, and candidates become politicians, and politicians become citizens, the RRWMB’s work progresses by funding and sponsoring flood control projects – by moving dirt.



WWW.RRWMB.ORG

WATERSHED DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

ROSEAU RIVER WD

The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The Spruce Valley Corporation continues work on the impoundment and inlet structures. The District recently signed a settlement agreement with Wagner Construction allowing Spruce Valley to finish work that Wagner Construction was contracted to finish.

The District is working on two new ring dikes through EQIP and the rural ring dike programs with construction anticipated to be completed by November 15, 2010. LaValla Construction from Baudette started the week of September 27th and Olson Construction from Thief River Falls started the week of October 11th. Both are progressing although wet soil conditions are hindering the compaction and moisture of the dike materials.

Monitoring of the Palmville Project began in the spring of this year and will continue through 2012. Monthly measurements are taken with data loggers. The equipment will be removed for the winter at the end of October. The District recently conducted an Operation and Maintenance meeting on October 15th to discuss beaver problems along the ditch system, the specifics of signing the agreement and local land-owner concerns of the project.

EVENTS COMING UP

The next meeting of the RRWMB will be on Tuesday, November 16, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, 11 5th Avenue East, Ada, MN.

RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At its regularly scheduled October meeting, the RRWMB:

- Received a report from Mark Meister, Public Information Officer.
- Received a report from Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator.
- Reappointed Daniel Wilkens and John Finney as delegates, and Ron Osowski and Todd Miller as alternates to the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC).
- Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.
- Discussed the various task force committees established in conjunction with initiatives of the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) with Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator-NRCS.
- Received a report from Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator.
- Discussed the water quality initiatives of the International Water Institute (IWI) with Wayne Goeken, Director-Center for Watershed Education.
- Received an update from Julie Goehring, South Basin Manager/Communications Coordinator, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC).
- Rescinded the step application approvals of the Wild Rice WD's Felton Ditch Storage Project and Project No. 42 Project.

PERMITTED NO. 317
Grand Forks, ND
PAID
U.S. POSTAGE
STANDARD
PRESORTED

Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-0763
P.O. Box 763
c/o RRWMB
NEWS & VIEWS

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.