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NEWS & VIEWS

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD

ELECTED OFFICIALS SPONSOR FLOOD PREPAREDNESS FORUMS

FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION EFFORTS SAVE MONEY

If the month of March is for flood fighting, the month of February is for informing the public who, what, and how the fight will occur. In recent weeks, U.S. Senator Al Franken and Governor Mark Dayton held flood preparedness forums in both Crookston and Moorhead. A week later U.S. Senator John Hoeven – North Dakota and U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar – Minnesota held similar forums in both Moorhead and Fargo. The message at each of the forums - we are prepared to fight this year's flood and future flood damage reduction efforts save money.

The forum hosted by Senator Franken and Governor Dayton included representatives from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the MN Na-



Senator Franken along with Governor Dayton and other forum members recently visited Moorhead and Crookston to meet with public officials and talk about flood preparation.



Senators Klobuchar and Hoeven meet Moorhead city council members Greg Lemke and Mark Altenburg to look over flood preparation projects in Moorhead.

tional Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. All agency officials promised support in the upcoming flood fight.

Kris Eide of the Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and

Emergency Management not only offered support for the upcoming flood fight, but also commented extensively on the significance of flood reduction efforts in future fights.

Eide commented on the importance of flood reduction efforts up and

down the Red River Valley, noting that “for every \$1 spent for flood mitigation efforts, \$4 is saved in damages, or a total of \$10 is saved in the total cost of fighting the flood including volunteer hours.” The investment in flood reduction projects now and in the near future, will save Minnesotans money in the future.

The role of the Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, of which Eid leads, is to coordinate, manage, and prioritize state efforts in preparing for natural disasters and emergencies. With regards to flooding, Eid's comments at the Moorhead forum provided direct justification for the objectives of the Red River Watershed Management Board. “Those efforts to reduce flooding and its damages now mean that future floods may be nuisances rather than disasters.”

Jerome Deal, Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) member attended the forum in Moorhead. He was impressed with the level of preparedness at the local, state, and federal levels. “I was particularly struck by the comments related to economics and flood reduction. To hear these officials publicly state that flood reduction efforts save money. This is a vital part of what we do.”

EVENTS COMING UP

The next meeting of the RRWMB will be at the Sand Hill River WD, 219 North Mill Street, Fertile, MN on Tuesday, April 19, 2011 starting at 9:30 a.m.



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WATERSHED DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

ROSEAU RIVER WD

The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The Spruce Valley Corporation continues work on Phase 2 of the project. Work is discontinued when the temperature falls below -10 degrees.

A meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2011 regarding the Palmville Flood Damage Reduction & Fen Restoration Project. Plans are to finalize the remaining details included in the operation and maintenance agreement between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Roseau County and the District.

RED LAKE WD

The Red Lake WD reported on a petition submitted to the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) to amend the District's existing 10-year Comprehensive Overall Plan approved in May 2006. The petition is intended to allow the District the authority to establish a Water Management District (WMD). If the amendment is approved, the District would establish a WMD for the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction Project which would pay for 30% of the proposed project. The District has scheduled a hearing for the plan amendment on March 10, 2011 at the Engelstad Arena located in Thief River Falls. Upon approval of the amendment, the District will conduct a hearing to establish the WMD sometime in June or July.

WILD RICE WD

The Wild Rice WD reported on the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project. Following board approval at their previous monthly meeting, an informational meeting has been scheduled for February 23, 2011 in Ogema for landowners impacted by the footprint of the project as well as other members of the public. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be discussed with effected landowners regarding the amount of acres to be purchased or those requiring a flowage easement.

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD CALLS FOR COOPERATION FOR UPCOMING FLOOD FIGHT

Once again, the Red River valley is facing a record spring flood and once again the hard working people of the valley will again work cooperatively and enthusiastically to save land and property from rising waters. The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) asks that all citizens do their part in volunteering with sandbagging and dike construction in the coming weeks. It is the hope of the RRWMB and its affiliated watershed districts that through retention, levee construction, and other flood damage reduction efforts that future flood fights will be minimized. As you work cooperatively, know that the RRWMB is working on behalf of all valley citizens to reduce the damages of flooding by providing funding assistance for the design of water retention projects of their member watershed districts up and down the valley.

RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At its regularly scheduled February meeting, the RRWMB:

- *Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.*
- *Distributed a revised letter previously authorized to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Watershed Feasibility Study Project Manager requesting that the modeling efforts currently being conducted in the southern part of the basin are also performed in the northern part of the basin, with assistance provided by the board's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).*
- *Reviewed a report from Mark Meister, Public Information Officer.*
- *Received a report on the Red River Retention Authority (3RA) from Managers Finney and Deal.*
- *Received a report from Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator regarding the TAC's review of the Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee's (TSAC) Report No. 14 and directed the RRWMB Work Group members to convey the board's concerns at the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting scheduled for the following day.*
- *Received a report from Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator.*

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For 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.