



ONE ROSEAU RIVER PROJECT COMPLETED AND ANOTHER BEING EXPLORED

Nearing the end of a tour of the Hay Creek/Norland Impoundment Project on a pleasant, sunny March Tuesday afternoon, Roseau River Watershed District (RRWD) Administrator Rob Sando walked across the gated structure at the southeast end of the project area where water will flow in from Hay Creek.

"The project is about 95% complete," said Sando. "Most of the remaining work will be the excavation of this area adjacent to the structure," he added.

And less than 24 hours later, Sando facilitated a meeting for local landowners with Keith Weston of the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) and Nate Dalager of HDR Engineering, Inc. to discuss possible participation in a Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) that may allow the District to explore building another project. The "Arpin Impoundment" potential



Roseau River WD Administrator Rob Sando at the Hay Creek inlet control structure.

site lies just north and west of the Hay Creek/Norland project. Roseau River Watershed Board Managers Laverne Voll and Floyd Haugen were also in attendance.

Although no project has been defined, the meeting gave the watershed district and Weston another opportunity to meet the public, answer questions and explain the opportunity available to landowners.

While Weston covered components of the WRP program, Nate Dalager of HDR Engineering men-

tioned how the WRP opportunity provides another tool for bringing federal dollars to watershed projects. Contingent on landowner participation, a project "would be predicated on the slope of the land," said Dalager. "Any project would be long, east to west," he continued, "and would probably be at least 2 miles."

Landowner sentiment at the meeting was positive. One person said "We'd be interested," and others had similar favorable reactions. "I think we'd all be favorable," said another. Yet another voiced what he perceived as the beneficiaries; those people downstream all the way to Winnipeg.

"Yes, definitely," said Sando. "It benefits everyone in the immediate area and downstream."

Stressing that no impoundment outline has been drawn, Dalager provided a conceptual idea of what a project could look

like. "This wouldn't be a gargantuan, 15-foot dike," said Dalager. "What you're going to be looking at are levees, 4 to 6 feet tall," he said. Control structures would be included. In addition, Dalager added that the RRWD would be interested in adding adjoining public land to any possible project. That land, just north of the privately owned area, is property of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Construction of the nearby Hay Creek/Norland Impoundment began in 2009. Benefits of the \$10.8 million dollar project include flood control, habitat restoration and erosion reduction. Now, three years later, that ambitious effort nears completion.

"We've done a lot the past couple of years," says Roseau River Watershed Board Manager Haugen. "I feel good about what we have accomplished and how we've served the people."

With a tax base relatively small compared to other watershed districts in the Red River Basin due to approximately 40% of the land area being publicly held, Roseau River Watershed Board President Todd Miller says "we may be the poorest watershed in the valley."

But Sando quickly adds that "we may be one of the most active as well."



Landowners at the Roseau River WD Wetlands Reserve Program meeting.

WATERSHED DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT

As part of the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction/Improvement to Pennington County Ditch #1, the RLWD announced that the low bid was awarded to Spruce Valley Corporation for construction of both the Red Lake Watershed District Ditch #14 and the Thief River Falls FDR Project.

The Red Lake Watershed District Board of Managers approved by unanimous vote to establish the project referred to as Grand Marais Creek Cut Channel, RLWD Project No. 60 FF and directed legal counsel to prepare appropriate Findings of Fact and Order. In addition the board voted to authorize Engineer Jeff Langan of Houston Engineering, Inc. to prepare the plans and specifications for the project. Bids are expected to be open in late April with construction being completed late fall of 2012.

ROSEAU RIVER WD

At their March 2012 board meeting, the RRWD board of managers directed Administrator Sando to install stop logs at both control structures of the Palmville Project.

On March 15th officials from the RRWD met with representatives from the city of Roseau, Roseau County, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Minnesota DNR, Congressman Collin Peterson's office, and

Senator Al Franken's office to discuss the management plan for the Land Utilization Program (LUP) lands in Beltrami as well as to address issues related to water structures in Beltrami Island State Forest.

HDR Engineering continues to work on the preliminary engineering plans for the Roseau River Wildlife Management Area.

A meeting was held March 27th at the Roseau City Center to discuss LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) and its function and uses for landowners and agriculture producers. The meeting was hosted by Chuck Fritz of the International Water Institute.

WILD RICE WD

The WRWD awaits the engineer's report on the petition from the City of Ada for moving a portion of Judicial Ditch 51 (JD 51). It has been determined that JD 51 is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project. Before responding to the City of Ada, an opinion from the Corps will be needed.

A tentative date of April 9th is scheduled for bid opening on the demolition of six homes acquired by the WRWD.

The WRWD board has received and is reviewing a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources response regarding a Moccasin Creek operations and maintenance plan.

RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At its regularly scheduled March meeting, the RRWMB:

- *Heard a report from Project Coordinator Ron Harnack that included information on the Minnesota State House draft bonding bill that tentatively includes \$4.1 million for the Red River Watershed Management Board.*
- *Held a discussion regarding the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) Executive Director position. Concerns include ongoing funding for the position. After discussion, motions were made and carried to extend an offer to retain an Executive Director for the RRRA.*
- *Heard a report from Nate Dalager of HDR Engineering, Inc. that provided background on a possible option to leverage U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' funds for geotechnical services under the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study for Pool 3 work in the Roseau River Wildlife Management Area Project.*
- *Heard a report from Public Information Officer Jeff Nyquist offering his assistance in preparation and use of press releases to support Board and member district initiatives.*

EVENTS COMING UP

The next meeting of the RRWMB will be on Tuesday, April 17, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, 219 N Mill Street, Fertile, MN.



NEWS & VIEWS

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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,

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