



Meeting Highlights – December 15, 2020

MEETING HELD ELECTRONICALLY

- 1. RRWMB Recognition of Kent Lokkesmoe:** The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) recognized the efforts of Mr. Lokkesmoe, who retired from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in November 2019. Attached is a plaque that the RRWMB presented to Mr. Lokkesmoe electronically along with a short summary of his career. The RRWMB thanks Kent for his efforts over a career that spanned 45 years with the DNR.
- 2. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Updates – Troy Daniell, Minnesota State Conservator:** The RRWMB held discussion with Mr. Daniell regarding the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Alternative Funding Arrangement. In particular, the Black River Flood Impoundment Project being constructed by the Red Lake Watershed District was discussed along with elements of frustration related to the RCPP funding procedures and policies, and environmental, regulatory, technical, engineering, and cultural resources review. The RRWMB and NRCS will continue to communicate about RCPP efforts.
- 3. Minnesota Legislative Discussion Forum:** Senator Kent Eken, Senator Jeff Howe, Representative Paul Torkelson, and Representative Elect John Burkel attended the meeting and heard about the RRWMB preliminary 2021 legislative priorities and received updates on RRWMB member watershed district construction projects. The RRWMB thanks these legislators for taking time to attend the meeting and we look forward to their continued support for our efforts in 2021 and beyond.
- 4. Pine Lake Step 1 Submittal:** The Red Lake Watershed District presented a Step 1 submittal for the Pine Lake Project. The RRWMB Managers will receive an electronic tour of the Project in January 2021 and the RRWMB Technical Advisory Committee will also be reviewing the Project. Total estimated costs for the Project are \$1,860,000.
- 5. 2020 Flood Hazard Mitigation (FHM) Grant Allocation:** Pat Lynch and Theresa Ebbenga from the DNR shared information about the approved allocations through the FHM Program. The Cities of Breckenridge (\$1.5 million) and Moorhead (\$2.8 million) will be receiving funds along with the Roseau River Watershed District for the Roseau Lake Rehabilitation Project (\$1 million). In addition, the DNR inquired with the RRWMB about priorities for \$1.5 million for flood damage reduction projects throughout the Red River Basin. The RRWMB will be requesting its member watershed districts to submit additional project status information so that the RRWMB Legislative Committee can develop a recommendation to the RRWMB Managers at the January 19, 2021 regular board meeting. A spreadsheet of the final allocation is attached.
- 6. RRWMB Committee Updates:** The RRWMB Managers were provided with updates regarding activities of the Governing Documents and Legislative Committees. It was noted that the Budget and Finance Committee would be meeting on January 5, 2021 to discuss Water Quality Program funding needs and that the Legislative Committee would be meeting prior to January 19, 2021. Several updates were provided for other external meetings attended by RRWMB Managers and staff.
- 7. 2021 RRWMB Officer Elections:** The January 19, 2021 meeting will include officer elections in accordance with the Joint Powers Agreement. The RRWMB Managers will consider several annual resolutions and committee appointments will be reviewed.
- 8. Next RRWMB Meeting:** Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at **9:00 AM** to be held electronically. Note the new time.

Kent Lokkesmoe Career Information

Throughout his 45 years of service at the Department of Natural Resources, Management Resources Administrator Kent Lokkesmoe has shaped natural resources in Minnesota and surrounding areas.

His work has influenced the definition of public water bodies in Minnesota, the development of the Wetland Conservation Act, the creation of the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program, International Joint Commission Reference studies on the Great Lakes and Red River flooding, and much more.

Lokkesmoe graduated from the University of Minnesota with a civil engineering degree in 1972. He worked for the city of Minneapolis monitoring paving projects for two years after graduation before joining the DNR in 1974 as a hydrologist, where he reviewed public draining systems and testified for the agency in drainage litigation.

In 1979, he became the regional hydrologist for the seven-county metro area. During this time, he was part of a project to identify which wetlands in the state would be regulated by the agency – a six-year undertaking.

Lokkesmoe became the assistant director of the Division of Waters in 1989, where he supervised the field operations in six regions. At this time, he helped pass the Wetland Conservation Act and assisted in the Great Lakes dispute mediation.

In 1991, Lokkesmoe was appointed as the Waters Director, a position he would hold until 2011. As division director, he would oversee the implementation of the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program, which funded removing homes from flood plains and constructing dikes and levees.

“I think the most impactful work in Minnesota was the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program,” Lokkesmoe said. “Over the years, we have spent hundreds of millions of dollars in Minnesota. Minnesota is much more resilient to flooding than it used to be.”

Working closely with local officials, the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program under Lokkesmoe’s direction has resulted in the buyout and removal of 3,600 homes located in flood prone areas, protected thousands of homes and businesses through community-wide flood risk reduction measures, and constructed 275 ring dikes protecting farms and rural residential homes from flood impacts.

In 2011, Lokkesmoe became the director of capital investment, which eventually included the management resources section programs. Since he took over the position, Lokkesmoe has developed the bonding program, negotiated with Fargo and Moorhead over flood plain management and made the final commissioner’s decision on the contested case involving habituation of bears. He also helped bring in almost \$415 million in bonding dollars since 2011 for DNR projects, grants, and funding for local government projects.



The Red River Watershed Management Board Thanks

Kent Lokkesmoe

*for his work on flood damage reduction efforts
in the Red River Basin of Minnesota,
for his many years of leadership,
and his cooperation on many flood initiatives
in conjunction with the Board and its mission.*