



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt Steve Lee-Badger Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Robert Wright, Secretary-Felton Jerome Deal-Wheaton
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

August 19, 2008

Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, August 19, 2008, at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President, Orville Knott-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Steve Lee Dan Money
 Daniel Wilkens Robert Wright
 Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
Mark Meister, CR*CS
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
Danni Halvorson, Monitoring Specialist
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
Brian Dwight, Board of Water & Soil Resources
Joe Spaeth, Wild Rice WD
Arnold Stanley, Red Lake WD
David Holmbeck, Con-Con Drainage Project Coordinator
Mike Carroll, MNDNR, Regional Director
John Jaschke, Executive Director, Board of Water & Soil Resources
Paul Swenson, MNDNR, Natural Resource Tribal Liaison
Lee Coe, Red Lake WD
Pete Waller, Board of Water & Soil Resources
Bob Bezek, MNDNR Regional Hydrologist
Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
Tammi Jalowiec, MNDNR NW Region Information Officer

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Money to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Wright, **Seconded** by Manager Lee, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Public Information Initiative

Mark Meister distributed the public information monthly report. Ten potential members have been contacted to serve on the Bois de Sioux WD's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). All expressed an interest in serving but requested additional information prior to making a decision. Meister continues working with BdSWD staff to develop roles, activities, and expectations of CAC members.

Meister reported that he drafted a newspaper editorial clarifying the role and watershed perspective of the Wild Rice WD following a meeting with Warren Seykora, Chairman, and Steve Dalen, Administrator. The public information themes of goodwill, basin, collaboration, partnerships, and obligation that were recommended at the RRWMB January 2008 retreat were included in the publication.

Project Coordinator Report

Ron Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He reported that he met with Cheryl Miller regarding RRWMB sponsorship of a terrestrial Carbon Sequestration Demonstration Project. They discussed several river restoration projects currently being proposed by the following watershed districts: Wild Rice WD, Roseau River WD, Two Rivers WD, Red Lake WD, and Bois de Sioux WD. Ms. Miller is on the agenda of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting later today, following the conclusion of the RRWMB meeting.

Harnack stated that he attended the Drainage Work Group meeting. A final draft of the Drainage Records Modernization Guidelines was discussed. He noted that at the previous monthly meeting, the Board of Managers directed N. Erickson to draft a letter in conjunction with himself and Manager Wilkens to forward to BWSR requesting development of a cost-share program and implementation strategy regarding the Drainage Records Modernization Guidelines initiative. The letter was submitted to BWSR for consideration.

Harnack discussed the Red River Valley Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Proposal. The legislature recently passed a bonding bill allocating up to \$8,000,000 for wetland restorations and flood damage reduction projects in the Red River Valley.

John Jaschke, Executive Director – BWSR, stated that applications are being received for wetland restorations associated with the federal Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). The goal of the initiative is to achieve priority river and stream resource outcomes related to the established goals and

objectives of the Mediation Agreement and to use the mediation process for the recommendation of Red River Valley RIM projects submitted to BWSR for funding.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize R. Harnack to work with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to develop the proposal for implementation of the Red River Valley RIM Reserve initiative, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring distributed an agenda for the September 4, 2008 Red River Basin Commission meeting in Fargo, ND. She reported that at the conclusion of the September RRBC meeting, the Red River Water Resources Council would begin meeting again after taking a 5-year hiatus that began in 2002.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed the project monitoring monthly report. He stated that he met with Chuck Fritz and Grit May of the International Water Institute (IWI) and Joe Courneya of Minnesota Extension to develop a strategy for seeking resources to expand the River Watch program. Since the proposal submitted to the Bush Foundation was not funded, plans are proceeding to schedule a meeting with representatives from the Minnesota Department of Education to discuss their interest in integrating River Watch directly into school curriculum.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet this month. He discussed the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

The RRWMB and the North Dakota Red River Joint Water Resource Board have each executed contracts with the USACE to undertake a Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). The work tasks, scope, and strategy for federal and non-federal cost sharing are documented in a project management plan (PMP). A number of deliverables are required to be part of the PMP according to the Corps mandate from Congress. For example, the Corps must perform the WFS with an eye towards developing projects that can be shown to have a federal interest – and therefore eligible to receive federal funding. The PMP is also the central guiding document that outlines the entire project scope and deliverables sought by the local sponsor.

At this time, the local commitments to the Red River Basin WFS include only work in kind tasks (no cash transfers to the USACE). Each work in kind task (paid for by the non-federal partners) is eligible for a 1:1 federal match.

The current PMP should be viewed by the local sponsors as a work in progress; with options to further refine the objectives and study outputs as the study progresses.

Administrator Report

A) Funding Commitments Worksheet

N. Erickson distributed a revised funding commitments worksheet.

B) Red River Water Resources Council

Linda Weispfenning, North Dakota State Water Commission, notified the Board that the Red River Water Resources Council would begin meeting again after five years on Thursday, September 4, 2008 at the Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND at the conclusion of the Red River Basin Commission meeting.

The purpose of the Council is to enhance communication and cooperation between governments in the management of water and related land resources for the benefit of the citizens of the Red River basin. Advisory, non-voting members include: the Red River Basin Commission, the Red River Watershed Management Board, the North Dakota Red River Joint Water Resources Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. N. Erickson distributed the recently finalized bylaws.

C) Drainage Records Modernization Guidelines

N. Erickson reported that at the previous monthly meeting, the Board of Managers authorized a letter to be forwarded to BWSR requesting that a cost-share program be developed as stakeholders submit grant requests to implement the modernization initiative. Please refer to handout.

D) Requests for Public Data

N. Erickson stated that she continues to work with legal counsel in preparing responses relative to various data requests.

E) 2008 MAWD Awards Program

The MAWD Board of Directors are asking for nominations for the awards program to recognize watershed districts throughout Minnesota for their achievements. The program has two award categories – Capital Improvement Project of the Year and Watershed Program of the Year. N. Erickson suggested that the Board of Managers consider selecting a project or program from member watershed districts for nomination by the board.

F) Supplemental Project Team Funding

At the August 21, 2007 board meeting, the board authorized supplemental funding of an additional \$5,000 for FY 07 for member watershed district project teams.

N. Erickson stated that due to several watershed districts submitting for reimbursement in excess of the Work Group FY 08 allocated amount of \$15,000 per project team, the board may want to consider entertaining a similar motion for this fiscal year. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize an additional \$5,000 for project teams of member districts for FY 08, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

G) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Commission, September 4, 2008, Ramada Plaza Suites & Convention Center, Fargo, ND.

2. MAWD Annual Meeting & Trade Show, December 4-6, 2008, Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN.
3. Red River Basin Commission's 26th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference, January 20-22, 2009, Hotel Fort Garry, Winnipeg, MB.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek / Norland Project. The District is currently in the process of acquiring the final three parcels of land along the corridor and connecting channel of the project. HDR Engineering is working on the permitting, final engineering and wetland delineation of the project. Construction on Phase 1 of the project is expected to begin in 2009.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Brandt Outlet Restoration Project 60E, Phase II. Construction has started on the restoration of approximately 6,000 feet of channel with the project location ~ 1.5 miles downstream of the Brandt Impoundment. This project not only restores the existing channel back to its original condition but also establishes a 65-acre riparian corridor which will adjoin an ~ 4,000 foot existing natural riparian corridor and the 3,800 foot riparian corridor of the Brandt Outlet Restoration Project 60E Phase I. The project also includes installation of setback levees and side inlet pipes and the planting of buffer strips. The total project cost, with land acquisition is approximately \$200,000.00. Funding partners include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Working Lands Initiative and the Red Lake WD.

Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) Report / MSTRWD

Brian Dwight, BWSR, stated that he met last night with the Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD (MSTRWD) Board of Managers to discuss the PRAP report developed by BWSR. John Jaschke, BWSR, explained that PRAP was authorized by the 2007 Minnesota legislature to direct BWSR to periodically conduct reviews and assess the performance of local units of government that have land conservation and water management responsibilities.

Based on a recommendation from BWSR field staff and requests from both the Marshall County board of commissioners and the RRWMB, BWSR conducted a Level III review of the MSTRWD's operation and execution of planned projects and programs.

Dwight stated that the purpose of the Level III performance review was to determine if the MSTRWD is able to make decisions and carry out planned actions effectively and efficiently. He noted that following the review and assessment, BWSR believes that in order to maintain the effective and efficient operation of the MSTRWD, further actions should be taken by the board of managers to address some or all of the issues identified in the report.

Manager Deal noted his disappointment regarding the results of the report. In recent years, the MSTRWD has experienced a significant amount of controversy among managers and between managers and staff. Jaschke stated that BWSR believes the PRAP report provides an opportunity for the MSTRWD to improve the operation of the District should the Board of Managers seek to implement the recommendations in the report.

Consolidated Conservation Lands

Mike Carroll, MNDNR-Regional Director, discussed the proposed rules governing drainage projects impacting state-owned lands in consolidated conservation (con-con) areas. The DNR intends to adopt rules that govern the criteria and procedures for determining drainage benefits to state-owned lands in con-con areas administered under Minnesota state law.

Dave Holmbeck, Con-Con Drainage Project Coordinator, discussed the process for developing criteria to determine how a functioning ditch system impacts management objectives. He stated that once the natural resource benefits from drainage have been determined using a pilot project in Beltrami County, the results will be communicated to an advisory team.

An outreach and media plan open to input from external groups will be developed, as well as a parcel "Investigation/Procedure Manual" with outreach to an inter-agency ditch group. A target date of December 2009 has been established for presenting the recommendations of the proposed updates to the MNDNR Commissioner. The results of the evaluation will provide a baseline for discussions to occur at the legislative level.

Arnold Stanley, Red Lake WD, stated that he has been involved in the Con-Con land issue since the 1960s. He recalled former MNDNR Commissioner George Selke visiting the Grygla area regarding this issue. He noted his dissatisfaction with the how the MNDNR has previously addressed Con-Con lands but agreed there is a need for a redetermination.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on September 16, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator