

PROJECT TEAM MEETING MINUTES
November 10, 2009

- 1. ATTENDANCE:** Bill Baer – Corp of Engineers, Brian Dwight – BWSR, Dan Thul – DNR Waters, Bryan Paradis – LID, Lawrence Woodbury – Houston Engineering, Paige Guetter – West Polk SWCD, Craig Bunes – Polk County Commissioner, Steve Clark – COE, Cary Hernanson – MPCA, Jim Ziegler – MPCA, Mick Alm – Norman County Engineer, Garry Bennett – MNDNR, Cathy Henry – USFWS, Tiffany Parson – USFWS, Jim Wolters – DNR Fisheries, Dan Thul – DNR Waters, Paul Swenson – RRFDRWG, Phillip Swenson – Landowner, Henry Van Offelen – MCEA, Wayne Goeken – Red River Watershed Management Board Monitoring, Harold Vig – Sand Hill River Watershed Manager, April Swenby – SHRWD Administrative Assistant, and Daniel Wilkens – SHRWD Administrator.
- 2. AGENDA REVIEW:** No new items were added to the agenda.
- 3. MODEL/OVERALL PLAN UPDATE:** Woodbury reviewed with the project team and the many new attendees the progress of the modeling project and the overall plan. The purpose in need statement will be incorporated with the overall plan update. Woodbury presented a revised purpose and need statement.
- 4. GARDEN SLOUGH:** Woodbury presented a range of alternatives that was discussed at the previous project team meeting. Mick Alm stated that the county is proceeding with the rebuild of Norman County # 1, near Garden Slough and the project is set to start in the summer of 2010. Alm gave the project team the opportunity to coordinate the Garden Slough project into the road rebuild project. The district needs to act quickly (by January) to incorporate Garden Slough into the design process. Woodbury explained that the permitting process with the Corp. is holding the project up due to the purpose and need statement.

It was suggested to possibly build the project “dam friendly” so that the Garden Slough flood control portion could be built in the future if the time element became too restrictive. An arch pipe size of 169” x 108” will be incorporated into the project which is comparable to the pipe in the Bear Park project. Phillip Swenson suggested and encouraged a smaller pipe to assist in holding the water back. Because of the road rebuild, the size pipe calculated is necessary, but Swenson was assured that the Garden Slough project is meant to hold the water back.

Clark reviewed with the project team the revised purpose and need statement. Clark assured that the current purpose and need is sufficient with minor changes as a general purpose and need statement for the overall plan. A separate purpose and need statement should be written for each individual project. Clark presented his opinion for additional changes to the statement.

Because of the number of alternatives available, there is no guarantee that the COE will approve the permit in conjunction with the road rebuild. Without the completion of the overall plan, it is a difficult task to prove that the Garden Slough is the best possible area for a holding spot. From a COE permitting perspective, all alternatives need to be considered and proved inadequate. The range of alternatives presented needs some additional work. It should be clear that the alternatives presented are inadequate or not cost effective. Woodbury will revise the alternatives.

The purpose and need statement should be revised to include a proposal for flood damage reduction for the specific project (Garden Slough). Suggestions were given to Woodbury for revisions to the statement.

Wilkens argued that this is all impertinent as per the mediation agreement as the purpose for the Garden Slough would be for water retention in the spring during the dormant season. He argued that the benefits far out weigh the risk to wetlands.

Henry Van Offelen suggested creating a table of risks vs. benefits for each site. Attached is the table that was brainstormed.

Because of the project team's reluctance for the Garden Slough project, Thul asked if the road rebuild could be delayed. Alm informed the project team that the funding is available and the construction will begin in the spring of 2010 regardless of the district's implementation of the Garden Slough project. The opportunity to coordinate the two projects will be unfeasible due to the amount of research that the project team and requires and the time necessary to address the permitting requirements.

Wilkens asked this process should stop due to the lack of feasibility for building a holding spot in that area. The permitting process is proving to be a large road block for the completion of a project in the area. Clark would like to see the process continue in hopes for a unified agreement amongst the project team allowing flood control projects in the Sand Hill River Watershed District.

It was decided that the group meet on a regularly scheduled basis to continue their efforts for building flood control projects in the Sand Hill River Watershed District.

5. **FUTURE AGENDA:** Woodbury will revise the purpose and needs statement for the Garden Slough project based on Clarks recommendations. Woodbury will present a footprint of each flood pool at the next project team meeting. Mark Aanenson will quantify wetland impacts (wetland acreage and quality) in pool similar to previous efforts and present a report to the project team. Aanenson will also bring cost estimates for the structures and wetland mitigation based on similar previous efforts. Based on the engineering provided at the next meeting, the project team will identify/brainstrom/think of other alternatives and ways to potentially combine alternatives.
6. **ADJOURN:** Meeting was adjourned at 3 PM. The next meeting will be held on the second Tuesday in December (December 8) in 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District office in Fertile, MN.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

April Swenby – Administrative Assistant