

**MINUTES OF THE ROSEAU RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT BOARD OF
MANAGERS SPECIAL MEETING HELD MAY 9, 2024**

The purpose of this meeting is to meet with landowners in the River Restoration Project system. The meeting was held at the Badger Community Center, Badger, Minnesota.

MANAGERS PRESENT: Chairman Carter Diesen, Manager Jason Braaten, Manager Cody Schmalz, and Manager Jim Johnson

STAFF PRESENT: Administrator Halstensgard, Technician Broten, and Assistant Wensloff

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Erik Jones, Houston Engineering Inc.

For others in attendance, refer to the attached sign in sheet.

Chairman Diesen called the special meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. There was a **motion** to approve the agenda made by Manager Braaten. It was seconded by Manager Schmalz. Motion carried.

Chairman Diesen started the meeting off with the introduction of Engineer Erik Jones, Houston Engineering Inc. Engineer Jones proceeded with a presentation of the Roseau River Habitat Restoration Project overview with illustrations, details, and clear explanation of its purpose.

There were many questions raised from the landowners around the River Restoration area, as well as providing input. Some of the main concerns were 1) costs associated with the project, 2) drainage in the area and 3) Canadian/American waterflow. Administrator Halstensgard and Engineer Jones addressed the questions from the audience, including the funding from the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund and how it is to be used for specific purposes and the changes to drainage in the State Ditch 51 system. The discussion continued with issues such as drainage, taxes, and the 103E legal petitioning process.

Manager Schmalz made a **motion** to adjourn the Special Meeting. That motion was seconded by Manager Braaten. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



LaVerne Voll, Secretary

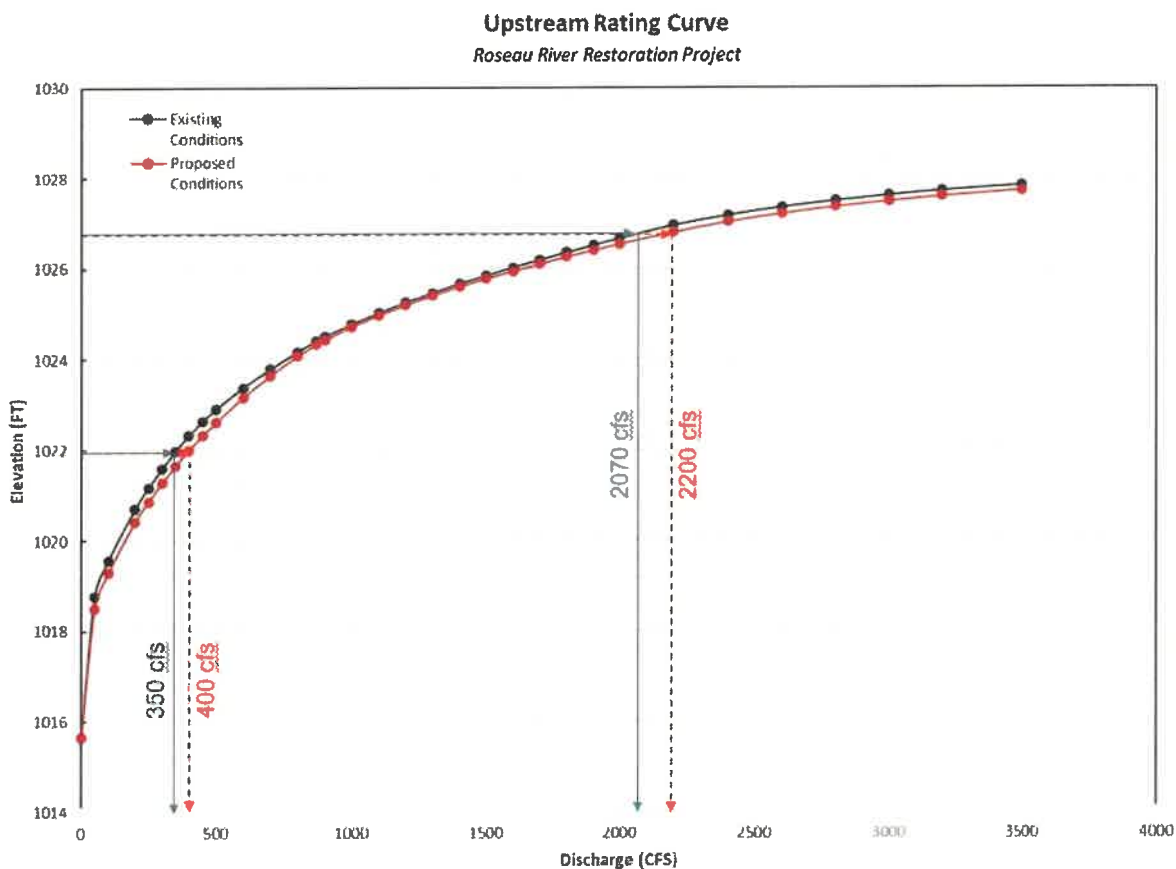


Tracy Halstensgard, Administrator

May 9, 2024 Roseau River Restoration Project public meeting

Questions & Answers

- Duane Frislie: How much water comes into the watershed from Canada?
 - Answer: Where the Roseau River crosses the international border, the drainage area is approximately 1,470 square miles. Of this area, approximately 1,050 square miles are from areas within the United States portion of the watershed while the remainder 420 square miles are from areas within Canada. The split between the US portion and the Canadian portion of the watershed are roughly 71% and 29%.
- Rick Sikorski: Why slow the water down? Won't that cause more cattails to grow in the river?
 - Answer: The project will not slow down the flow of water. The capacity of the channel is designed to maintain channel capacity and to maintain the drainage benefits. At the meeting, the following rating curve was discussed showing that the proposed river hydraulics (red line and numbers) upstream of the project are improved over the existing conditions hydraulics (black line and numbers).



- Betsy Lins: When will the Watershed do maintenance to the Duxby Levee?
 - Answer: The RRWD is continually working on maintenance and repair issues. Most recently installing a crossing / culvert with a trap in the SE ¼, SE ¼ of Sect. 25 of Pohlitz and repairs in Sect. 27 of Pohlitz. In 2024, the District will be reviewing trap and culvert conditions along the length of the levy to schedule replacements as needed.
- Rick Sikorski: Asked about the LSOHC fund and where this money comes from.
 - Answer: It was explained to the group that the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council receives funding from the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the state Constitution. To access the funds, there is an application process that is followed. A council of 12 members, 4 members appointed by each the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Governor, review the applications and make funding recommendations to the legislature. These funds are only allowed to be used for habitat projects. An exhibit showing the Legacy Amendment breakdown is included at the end of the document.
- Marlin Lindland: What if the engineer's calculations are wrong?
 - Answer: It won't be much worse than it is right now.
- Brock Svboda: Can the cutoffs be left open?
 - Answer: Through discussions with the MN DNR partially leaving the straightened channel open can be incorporated into the design.
- Rick Sikorski: Why can't we clean the ditch and make it bigger to Canada?
 - Answer: Increasing the ditch through the project area will result in higher flows and flooding downstream near Caribou. There is an agreement between the two countries to not create additional flooding on the Roseau River.
- Jamie Sikorski: How much water comes from the Pine Creek Diversion?
 - Answer: Those numbers are in the process of being developed.
- Rick Sikorski: talked about the overflow water to Two Rivers.
- Butch Schmalz: asked if the project would make ice jam issues worse.
 - Answer: With the proposed channel alignment being better connected to its floodplain (not confined by the ditch spoil-banks), we expect less potential for the build-up of ice backing up flows in the channel.
- Jamie Sikorski: will allowing the river to widen or flatten out reduce the head pressure?
 - Answer: The proposed channel will be able to more readily flow within it's floodplain on the Wildlife Management Area. This means that the water does not need to build up as much to flow with the same capacity of the existing conditions.
- Question asked about Ditch 95 in Two Rivers.
 - Answer: not able to address that at this meeting.
- Rick Sikorski: The LSOHC is the people's money, not the state's money. Don't the people get a say in where that money is spent?
 - Answer: Yes, agreed. The LSOHC money is allocated into 'buckets.' Once in a certain 'bucket,' the money in there can only be used on that certain project /

'bucket.' The State constitution amendment was passed by a majority of the citizens of the State in 2008. They (LSOHC) fund all kinds of different habitat projects around the state. If we don't use money we get for a project, it goes back, and they use it on other projects around the state.

- Rick Sikorski: Can anyone petition to reroute the ditches? Don't you need a petition to alter the any of the Ditch 51 Restoration?
 - Answer: According to MN Statutes 103E.227, a person, public or municipal corporation, governmental subdivision, the state or a state agency or department, the commissioner of natural resources, the U.S. or any of its agencies can petition for the rerouting of State Ditch 51.
- Question: Why put the oxbows in? Why not just leave the river?
 - Answer: By restoring the river, there are significant benefits that can be achieved for both water quality and habitat. In addition there are small drainage benefits that are also being gained by completing the project.
- Betsy Lins: Are you a little scared of Canada? (? Working with them??)
 - Answer: The RRIW (Roseau River International Watershed) is a collaboration between the U.S. and Canada. The RRWD routinely shares information and strategies with this group. The Seine Rat Watershed District in Canada is currently looking for locations to store water within their portion of the watershed.
- Question How much water is coming in from Canada? How much water is going into Canada?
 - Answer: There are numbers being put together.
- Question: Can we petition for a drainage system?
 - Answer: Anyone is welcome to do that.
- Betsy Lins: Who is in control?
 - Answer: For drainage proceedings, the ditch authority makes decisions related to that ditch. Ditch authorities for each ditch can vary; some are under the jurisdiction of the County, some are under the jurisdiction of the Watershed District, and some are under the jurisdiction of Joint Boards between two Counties.
- Question: Who can sign a petition?
 - Answer: Any one person can sign a petition to reroute a public drainage system.



SPECIAL MEETING
May 9, 2024 --6:00 p.m.
Badger Community Center Badger, MN 56714

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
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Danell Lins		218 528-3284
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