



Yellow Medicine River Watershed District 2010 Annual Report

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The Mission of the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District is to provide an organized means for proper management and protection of the water resources in the Yellow Medicine River Watershed. Our watershed district places emphasis on flood control, water control management through the process of viewing and approving drainage permits, and water quality problems. We view and approve all water-related projects in the district. Our watershed district partners with Federal, State, Counties, Cities, and Townships in water planning and management. The Watershed District employs technical staff who conduct water quality monitoring of lakes, rivers and streams in the watershed, and establishes and maintains records and hydrological data. The District endeavors to provide for wildlife and create opportunities to enhance the recreational opportunities as a supplementary benefit of projects that improve water quality and provide flood protection.

Projects Summary

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|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| *Tiling and Drainage Projects | *River Maintenance | *Annual Advisory Meeting |
| *Beaver Damage Control | *South Branch TMDL | *Flood of September 2010 |
| *Ditch Survey & Inspections | *River Maintenance | |
| *SWAG | *New Projects | |

*** Tiling and Drainage Projects ***

188 tiling and drainage permits were viewed and approved in 2010. 84 permits were approved in Lincoln County, 72 permits were approved in YM County, and 32 permits were approved in Lyon County. With the amount of permits applied for in the fall of 2010, landowners were instructed at the time of obtaining a blank permit where their neighboring landowners needed to sign. By instructing the farmers to negotiate prior to the tile being installed, the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District Board of Managers believes this will alleviate future disputes. There were a total of four instances in 2010 where the permit was not allowed due to lack of signatures. Following the suggestions of the Advisory Committee, the Watershed District has continued to strive for 1) obtaining the neighboring signatures, 2) talk with the upper landowner to see if they would like to cost-share a project, and 3) make a more detailed tiling permit. It is the hope that with these changes to the permitting process, disputes will be lessened or eliminated all together.

*** Beaver Damage Control Program ***

The Yellow Medicine River Watershed District annually budgets for funding to operate a beaver damage control program to eliminate nuisance beaver and beaver dams, and lessen the crop damage done to the croplands in the vicinity of the beaver dams. We continue to research and utilize ideas for controlling the building of beaver dams in the streams and ditches. In the early spring of 2010, we hired local contractors to remove the nuisance beavers and the dams. On a couple of sites, the beavers were removing standing corn stalks as material for their dam. 2010 expenditures for beaver control were \$6230.07.



Nuisance beaver dam

***Watershed Ditch & Berm Inspections ***

The board achieved completion of the enforcement of the 16.5 ft ditch berm law in 1999. From that time forward, each year, the staff completes a ditch berm inspection and reports back to the watershed on whether any ditch berms become out of compliance. Two ditch berms were reported out of compliance in 2010. Those landowners have been contacted and have indicated that they will reestablish the area to seed.

A meeting was held for the Ditch 16 benefactors for the installation of a new Sluice Flood Control Gate and overflow structure. Construction was completed in December of 2010.

A number of intakes have been repaired, or will be repaired in 2011, following the heavy rains in the September.

A crossing structure for Ditch 2 in Friendship Township was damaged due to flooding and will be replaced in 2011.

A petition for an outlet into Ditch 4 in Burton Township was heard and the process is continuing according to Minnesota Statutes.



***Flood of September 2010 ***

The Yellow Medicine River Watershed District conducted inspections of the retention structures following the heavy rains and flooding which occurred in September of 2010. There was minor damage identified to eight of the structures. After meeting with the FEMA representative, it was determined that there would be FEMA dollars available to repair the structures back to pre-disaster form. The majority of the damage identified included erosion due to the amount and the force of excessive water. Another contributing factor included debris blocking and eventually altering the natural flow of water. The projects will be completed by local contractors and will begin in the Spring of 2011.

***Fallen Tree Removal Program- River Maintenance ***

For the past five years the Yellow Medicine River watershed district has managed a fallen tree removal program, working with contractors to focus on a portion of the Yellow Medicine River or a tributary, to saw up, drag up, and burn up, fallen trees.

In 2010 The Watershed District spent \$2905.82 on fallen tree removal. We also received a grant from Lyon County Environmental Office for \$5000.00 for the removal of fallen trees in Lyon County.



***Lac Qui Parle River Overflow Project ***

The Yellow Medicine River Watershed District, Lac Qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District, and Minnesota DNR continue to work closely on finding a solution for a portion of the LQP River which, when during high waters, will jump the banks creating problems for YMRWD Ditch #5 Benefactors and the Mud Creek Drainage area.



***South Branch TMDL ***

The watershed board and staff submitted an application for a 319 Non point source management grant for the South Branch of the Yellow Medicine River, for our TMDL Fecal Coliform Reduction Project. The contract was received in December of 2007, and began in 2008 and will be completed in June of 2011. Data and outcome results will be made available in 2011 after the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency review.

The grant of the sum of \$238,500.00 was designated for use on projects designed to reduce the deterioration of water quality due to excess fecal coliform in the South Branch of the Yellow Medicine River.

A total of \$102,566.41 was paid out in 2010 to producers who installed projects. Example of projects include; Blind Intakes, Feedlot Upgrades, and Filter Strips. The MPCA has granted a \$10,000.00 Feedlot Runoff project to be completed in 2011 as the weather did not cooperate for its completion on 2010.

*** SWAG Project ***

The Yellow Medicine River Watershed District was approved for a grant from the MN Pollution Control Agency in the amount of \$29,555 for water sampling and testing. Nine locations were identified along a stretch from West of Taunton, going Northeast to a location along the Yellow Medicine River before it flows into the Minnesota River. The grant will continue through 2011.

Samples which were collected were sent to a lab for analysis of: TKN, TP, TSS, TSVS, TSVS, nitrate-nitrate, ammonia nitrogen, sulfate, chloride, hardness, E.Coli. Testing for the 2011 season will focus mainly on E.Coli levels.



***New Projects ***

We have begun some grant research on acquiring funding for additional projects at varying locations in the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District.

- We also plan to resubmit an application for a grant for Records Modernization, to transfer hard copy of permits, etc, to the computer files.
- We continue to work with the Area II out of Marshall on the construction of a Water Retention Structure to be located in Lincoln County, Limestone Township, Section 1. A meeting will be held for all involved parties, in the spring of 2011 after the final surveying is conducted. It is the hope that a larger holding reservoir can be implemented with this additional surveying.
- There is preliminary discussion on a Water Retention Structure to be built in Lincoln County, Lake Stay Township, Section 20.
- Supporting the LQPYB Watershed's projects for the overflow of the LQP River.

***The 2010 Annual Advisory Hearing**

Our advisory hearing is held annually, with a presentation by the watershed district staff, and comments and suggestions by the advisory hearing committee.

*Annual Advisory Committee Hearing
August 19, 2010*

The annual meeting of the YMRW District annual advisory committee hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by advisory committee chairman Curt Blumeyer, Lincoln County Commissioner. Committee members present were Jolene Johnson, YM County Water Task Force; Norris Peterson, YM SWCD Supervisor; Gary Crowley, Lyon County SWCD; Merle Rost, Lincoln Water Task Force member, and Ron Antony, YM County Commissioner.

Introductions were made.

*Yellow Medicine River Watershed District Board of Managers in attendance were:
John Boulton, Donald Oerter, Jeff Hoffman, Tim Buysse and Corey Hoffman.*

Attending the meeting were: Leonard Drietz, Alta Vista Township Board, Leon Drietz, Alta Vista Township Board; David Lanners, Omro Township Officer; Pauline Van Overbeke, Lincoln SWCD Coordinator; Pete Doyscher, Lincoln County Environmental Office; Todd Hammer, Lyon County Asst. Zoning Officer; Joe Weber, Lincoln SWCD; Kevin Swedzinski, Alta Vista Township Supervisor; George Potz, YM County Landowner; Cindy Potz, YMRW District Administrator; and Mike Weckwerth, YMRW District Asst. Administrator.

Cindy Potz read the published notice.

Mike Weckwerth read the 2009 advisory committee hearing minutes.

Donald Oerter made a motion to approve the 2009 advisory committee hearing minutes.

Tim Buysse seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Cindy Potz presented the annual report and projects presentation through a powerpoint presentation.

During the presentation, comments and questions were taken. The powerpoint presentation was completed at 7:35 p.m.

Discussion was held on past discussions of the future of the watersheds drainage and tiling permit program, and whether the board has plans to discontinue the permitting program, as some other watershed districts have done. Potz reported that after having had some meetings and input from our project partners, that the board has decided to maintain the permit program, and that changes have been made on revising the permit application and procedures for assuring that the actual project that was permitted does not go beyond the permits approved work, and that adjacent landowners to the project will be notified.

Chairman Blumeyer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motioned by Ron Antony, YM County Commissioner, seconded by Merle Rost, Lincoln County Water Task Force member to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. Lunch was served.

Respectfully Submitted,

Corey Hoffman, YMRW District Secretary

This concludes the 2009 annual report of the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District.

The Yellow Medicine River Watershed District Board of Managers and staff would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the support given to our organization, by the various county offices and personnel, as well as the Commissioners of each Lyon, Lincoln, and Yellow Medicine Counties. We appreciate the opportunity to work with each of you, in meeting the goals of the Watershed District, in our efforts to successfully manage and monitor the waters of the Yellow Medicine River Watershed.

