The Bois de Sioux Watershed District was awarded the Red River Basin Commission’s (RRBC) 2010 Project Award. The RRBC annually recognizes outstanding Red River Basin water management projects. The award was presented at the 27th Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference held in Grand Forks, ND on January 19-21.

The North Ottawa Impoundment is found just north and east of Charlesville in Grant County. The impoundment is roughly 1.5 miles wide (east to west) and 2 miles long (north to south). The primary purpose of the project is to provide flood control. Secondary purposes are wildlife habitat enhancement, water quality improvement, and stream flow maintenance.

“This is a great example of an integrated project that addresses several Red River Basin Natural Resources Framework Plan (NRFPP) goals – flood damage reduction, water quality, habitat and wildlife” said Lance Yohe, RRBC Executive Director.

The North Ottawa Impoundment Project is located within a subwatershed of the Rabbit River. Agricultural lands in the lower part of this subwatershed are severely affected by flooding, with crop loss occurring frequently on a biannual basis. The project will store a large percentage of the flood water generated within the subwatershed. It will, thereby, reduce flooding of agricultural lands in the area.
At its regularly scheduled March meeting, the RRWMB:

- Received a report from Jerome Deal, Chair of the Finance Committee.
- Received a report from Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator.
- Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.
- Authorized forwarding a letter to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requesting them to continue full funding support for the stream gages in the Red River basin.
- Received an update from Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC).
- Discussed developing a compact between the RRWMB and the Red River Joint Water Resource Board of North Dakota relative to the establishment of a federal authority in the Red River basin.
- Received a report from Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator.
- Approved a resolution for a funding advance to the Wild Rice WD for the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project.

and diminish the threat to Tintah and Campbell, while reducing the Rabbit River’s contribution to flood flows at Breckenridge and downstream on the Red River of the North.

In addition to flood control, the impoundment will provide erosion and sediment control, stream flow maintenance, improved water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities.

“Finding balances between multiple interest groups and promoting cooperation across boundaries and between groups is necessary in order to make decisions that will have the greatest benefit for those who live here,” Yohe said.

The primary sponsors of the project are the Bois de Sioux Watershed District, the Red River Watershed Management Board, and the State of Minnesota. Contributing sponsors include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Ducks Unlimited.

The mission of the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) is to develop a Red River Basin integrated natural resources framework plan; to achieve commitment to implement the framework plan; and to work toward a unified voice for the Red River Basin. For more information on the RRBC, visit their website at www.redriverbasincommission.org.