

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In April 2000, the International Joint Commission (IJC) formally merged its International Red River Pollution Board and International Souris-Red Rivers Engineering Board consolidating the water quality and water quantity responsibilities of the former boards, to form the International Red River Board (IRRB). This consolidation formalized the already emerging cooperative efforts of the former boards toward an integrated approach to transboundary water issues in the basin. Further, in its November 2000 report *Living with the Red*, the IJC recommended that the governments assign certain flood-related tasks to the IJC for implementation by its IRRB. In June 2001, Canada and the United States formally approved a new expanded directive for the IRRB. The directive is include in Appendix A.

In April 2003, the IJC requested further discussion with the IRRB on how to achieve a more ecosystemic approach and a capacity to respond to the range of environmental and water-related challenges of the 21st century. In April 2004, the IJC adopted guiding principles aimed at broadening the partnership efforts of its international boards with other watershed entities for a more inclusive approach. The IJC refers to this effort as the International Watersheds Initiative. The various water management organizations in the Red River basin appear receptive to the Initiative while at the same time recognizing the independent, impartial and objective role of the IJC and its boards in providing advice to governments. In June 2005 the IJC recommended that the governments of Canada and the United States confirm their support for the Initiative. The Red River basin is one of three pilot watersheds recommended by the IJC for implementation of the Initiative and for funding support.

In brief, the IRRB is responsible for assisting the IJC in avoiding and resolving transboundary disputes regarding the waters and aquatic ecosystems of the Red River and its tributaries and aquifers. This is accomplished through the application of best available science and knowledge of the aquatic ecosystems of the basin and an awareness of the needs, expectations and capabilities of residents of the basin. The geographic scope of the Board's mandate is the Red River basin, excluding the Assiniboine and Souris Rivers. The mandate presently includes the Poplar and Big Muddy River basins, previously the responsibility of the International Souris-Red Rivers Engineering Board. The Red River basin is illustrated in Figure 1.

This report is the sixth IRRB annual progress report to the IJC.

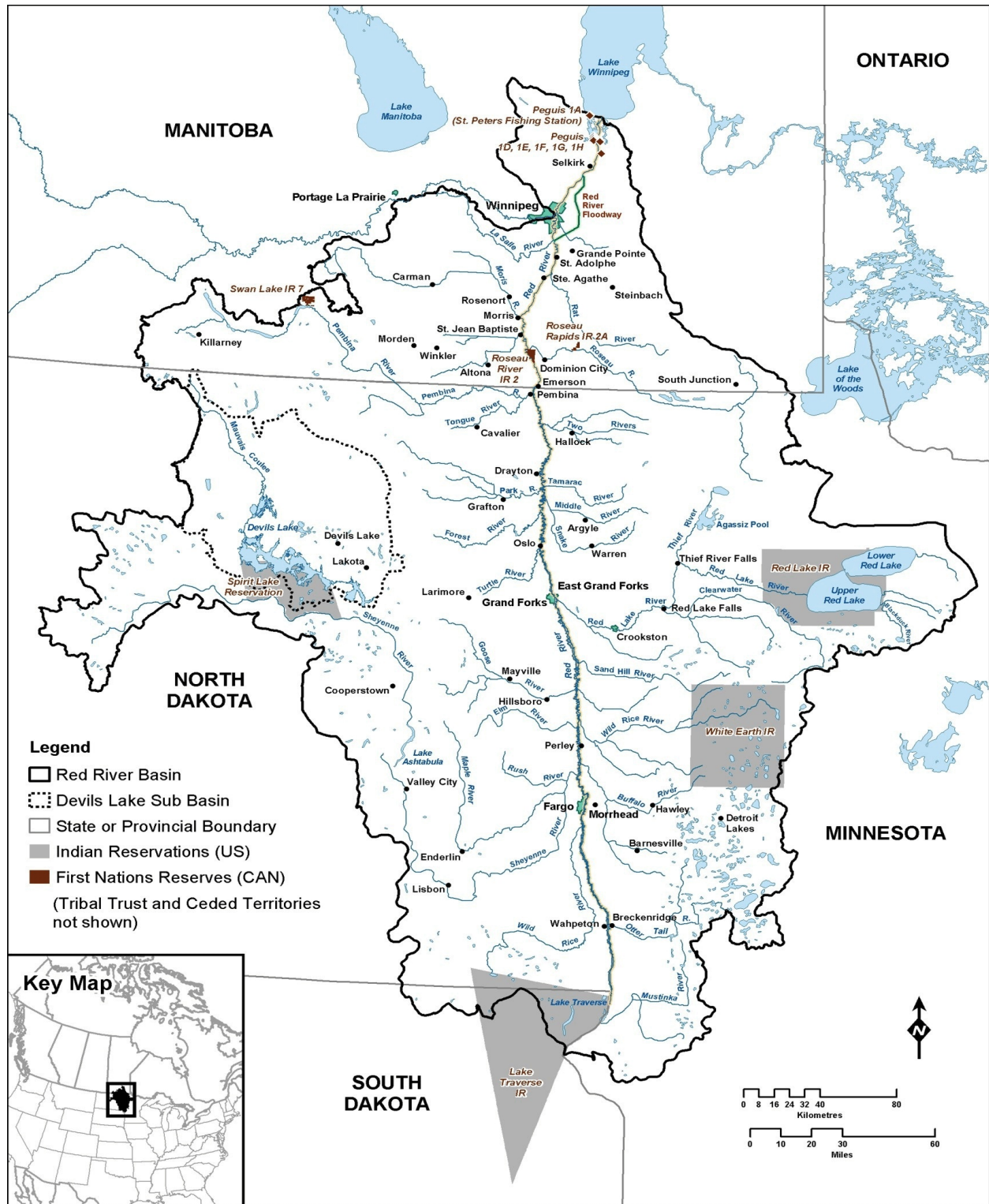


Figure 1. Red River and its Tributaries

3.0 INTERNATIONAL RED RIVER BOARD MEMBERSHIP

In its 1997 report *The IJC and the 21st Century*, the IJC proposed comprehensive international watershed boards as an improved mechanism for avoiding and resolving transboundary disputes. The intent was to broaden the scope of information upon which decisions relating to water and air are being made. While the IJC has experienced some difficulty in advancing the approach, the approach continues to have promise and is being pursued as discussed in Section 4.02.

In the interim, through the continued integration of the water quality and water quantity responsibilities of the former Red River boards, and through efforts to increase stakeholder involvement, many of the goals of a comprehensive approach are being achieved. To facilitate these objectives, Board membership was expanded in 2000 to include non-government participation. At present, from a full complement of nine members each, there are nine members appointed to the Board on the United States side and eight members on the Canada side. The outstanding appointment is expected to be made in the coming months. This large membership, listed below, reflects widely distributed water management mandates in the basin.

During recent months, there have been several retirements and new appointments to the International Red River Board. S. Vermette, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, and B. Oliver, Red River Basin Commission, retired from the Board. These members were replaced respectively by P. Adkins and H. Martens. W. Haapala, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, was also appointed to the Board replacing interim designate M. MacGreggor.

In June 2005, R. Kellow, Canadian Chair, Environment Canada, retired from the Board. K. Cash was appointed interim Canadian Chair for the purposes of the July 2005 annual meeting, following which W. Dybvig, Environment Canada, was formally appointed to the position. M. Bach, United States Chair, Bureau of Reclamation, retired from the Board subsequent to the July annual meeting and was officially replaced by M. Ryan, Bureau of Reclamation.

Further, during the reporting period, CJ McKeral, United States Secretary, was replaced by Michael Collins, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

United States

Michael Ryan
U.S. Chair
Regional Director, Great Plains Region
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Col. Michael F. Pfenning
District Engineer, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Will Haapala
Detroit Lakes Office
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Dennis Fewless
Division of Water
North Dakota Department of Health

Randy Gjestvang
Red River Water Resources Engineer
North Dakota State Water Commission

Gregg Wiche
District Chief, Bismark Office
U.S. Geological Survey

Max. H. Dodson
Assistant Regional Administrator
Office of Ecosystems Protection
& Remediation, Region 8
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Daniel Wilkens
Administrator
Sand Hill River Watershed District, Minnesota
(Red River Basin Commission)

Don Buckhout
Red River Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Michael Collins
U.S. Secretary
Resource Management Coordinator
Great Plains Region
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Canada

Wayne Dybvig
Canadian Chair
Executive Director
Transboundary Waters Unit
Environment Canada

Dwight Williamson
Manager, Water Quality Management Section
Manitoba Conservation

Steven Topping
Director, Water Resources Branch
Manitoba Conservation

Phil Adkins
A/Director, Ag Water Directorate
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada

Herm Martens
Red River Basin Commission

Dr. Kevin Cash
Chief, Ecological Science Division
Environmental Conservation Branch
Environment Canada

Dr. Joseph O'Connor
Director, Fisheries Branch
Manitoba Conservation

Terence Shortt
Manager, Environmental Science Division
Fisheries & Oceans Canada

Michael Kowalchuk
Canadian Secretary
Senior Engineer Advisor
Environmental Conservation Branch
Environment Canada