"Local Watershed Holds Annual Meeting"

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held their annual meeting in Barnesville on 1/14/08. The following were elected as officers for 2008:

Roger G. Ellefson, Wilkin County-Chairman
Gerald L. VanAmburg, Clay County-Vice Chairman
Curtis M. Nelson, Clay County-Treasurer
John E. Hanson, Becker County-Secretary
E. Robert Olson, Clay County-Manager

For 2008, the Board renewed contracts with Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.), Fargo, ND, as their engineering consultant; Vogel Law Firm as their legal counsel; Joel D. Carlson as their Legislative Lobbyist, and Harold J. Rotunda, Certified Public Accountant (CPA), West Fargo, ND, to complete the 2007 financial audit.

Other business included:

- Signed a Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Agreement with the State of Minnesota for the construction of a ringdike. To date, the BRRWD has constructed approximately 20 ringdikes, which protect rural building sites from flooding. Anyone interested in the program should contact the BRRWD office. The grant funds 50% of the construction costs. The BRRWD contributes 25% and the landowner is responsible for the remaining share.

- Noted that the next BRRWD's Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on 1/31/08 at 1:30 PM at the MSUM Science Center.

- Authorized up to a $15,000 expenditure for updating the BRRWD's computer system.

- Confirmed Manager reservations for the 25th Annual Red River Basin Commission Land and Water International Summit Conference, which will be held on January 22-24, 2008, at the Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND. This year's conference is titled "The Power of A Dream". The BRRWD will have a booth at the event.

- Noted that a Technical Committee meeting for the Oakport Flood Mitigation project will be held on 1/29/08 at 9:00 AM in the Moorhead Police Department. The office is trying to schedule a landowner informational meeting, which will be held in early April 2008. The BRRWD has received a $1 million amendment (total $4 million) for this project. Work continues regarding buyouts and dike alignment.

- Agreed to offer a letter of support for North Dakota State University regarding a grant application they are submitting to the United States Department of Agriculture to study the source, fate, and transport of cryptosporidium in the BRRWD.
• Received the Lawndale Creek Channel Restoration investigation and report from H.E. Their findings will be forwarded to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for review and comment. The next step will be to schedule a hearing with the Wilkin County Ditch No. 40 landowners.

• Received an update regarding the status of the Manston Slough Restoration project. H.E. is working on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet. Some design questions raised by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be dealt with at an upcoming meeting with them. The office is currently working on developing the easement options.

• Noting that the office will schedule a meeting with the Clay County Highway Committee to discuss the Swede Grove Lake Outlet project.

• Noting that a meeting of the Citizen and Technical Advisory Committees regarding their work on the Comprehensive Plan will be held on Tuesday, February 5, 2008, at 9:00 AM at the Eagle Café, Barnesville.

• Received the repair investigation report as completed by H.E. for Clay County Ditch No. 31 (Stony Creek) northwest of Barnesville.

• Approved payment of bills totaling $103,223.37.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, January 28, 2008, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.