"Local Watershed Reviews Tiling Study"

Mark Dittrich, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, attended the 1/22/07 meeting of the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), in Barnesville to give an update regarding their Conservation Drainage Study. They have a project with landowner Brad Pake in the NE1/4, Section 5, Morken Township, Clay County, which drains directly into County Ditch No. 5. The property has been broken into three plots, two that have tile drainage, and one that has surface drainage. Conservation drainage is the use of drainage systems, designs, and management strategies that are intended to maximize the benefits of drainage, while minimizing negative impacts on the environment. Dittrich said six control structures were placed on the drainage tiles to hold water back to varying levels during the year. Controlled drainage has been shown to reduce water volumes and nitrate losses by 25%-40%. It also makes more water available to growing crops. Dittrich thanked the BRRWD for working with him last fall to complete the project. The Department of Agriculture intends to hold a field tour this spring.

Other business included:

- Noting that a meeting was held with Ehlers and Associates regarding a bond sale for Project Nos. 51 and 57. The total estimated costs for both project is $440,000. The BRRWD should be reimbursed for their costs by approximately 4/01/07.

- Discussion regarding the Manston Slough Restoration Project. A permitting meeting was held on 1/11/07. It was noted that Wilkin County will require a Conditional Use Permit. Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) will file the Engineer's Report at the 1/25/07 Project Team meeting at the MSUM Science Center east of Glyndon.

- Noting that BRRWD representatives will meet with local auctioneers in the Moorhead area to review the sale of the homes the BRRWD acquired for the Oakport Flood Mitigation. The Property Manager has winterized all properties acquired to date.

- Approved a motion to release temporary right-of-way pertaining to Clay County Ditch No. 50 from property Wal-Mart recently acquired in Section 3, Moorhead Township.

- Approved a motion to send a letter to the Becker County Highway Department to remove excess riprap from their culvert installation project in County Road No. 27 at the outlet of Momb Lake. Holmesville Township filed a request to address this problem, as they feel the work will allow more water to flow downstream into Rock Lake.

- Received recommendations from H.E. to repair parts of Becker County Ditch No. 5, located in Sections 15 and 16, Audubon Township. Approximately 4,700 feet of cleaning will be required. The report will be mailed to the affected landowners. The work is planned for the summer of 2007.

- Contributed $100 to the Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District for the 5/03/07 Area II Envirothon for high school students.

- Agreed to send letters to Senators Klobuchar and Coleman, and Congressman Peterson regarding the BRRWD's support to keep the Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters open.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, February 12, 2007, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public.