"October Rains Cause Problems Within Local Watershed"

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), spent over four hours at their meeting held on 10/14/08 in Barnesville discussing problems caused by the recent heavy rainfall events.

A landowner in Section 6, Riverton Township, Clay County, had questions pertaining to use of a township road ditch for additional drainage from upstream landowners. He also questioned the proposed repair of Clay County Ditch No. 63 and how that work will be financed. The landowner has filed cases in Small Claims Court against his neighbors.

Discussion also took place regarding drainage west of Downer along County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 10. Concerns were expressed regarding a permit the Board approved for tiling on the north side of the road. That sparked discussions about historic drainage problems in the area. The Board authorized Houston Engineering, Inc. to conduct a survey of the north CSAH No. 10 road ditch east of Interstate-94. Once the survey is completed, the Board will schedule a special meeting with the affected landowners to continue the discussions with hopes to find a permanent solution for all of the problems.

Other business included:

- Approved permits to: Robert and Linda Dietrich to install an approach/culvert off 57th AVE N to access a building site in the NE1/4, Section 24, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; LeRoy Turner to install an approach/culvert off CSAH No. 3 in the NW1/4, Section 32, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County; Chuck Anderson to replace approach/driveway culverts, ditch cleaning, and to eliminate one crossing along 140th ST S on the west line of Section 9, Barnesville Township, Clay County; Highland Grove Township to install an 18" dia. culvert for a field approach off the east side of 270th ST N in Section 34; and Oakport Township to repair an erosion slide along the Buffalo River on 50th ST N in Section 1.

- Several complaints regarding drainage activities were reviewed. People need to be reminded that projects that involve drainage changes do require BRRWD permits. A violation of the Rules could be considered a misdemeanor.

- Considerable discussion regarding the Grove Lake Outlet project. Notices have been sent for the 10/20/08 Final Hearing, which will be held at 7:30 PM in Hildebrand Hall, Barnesville. The Board has scheduled a 10/27/08 bid letting for the emergency project. Assuming everything goes well, the Board would like to construct a project yet this fall to give landowners on Grove Lake some relief. With the recent rains, the lake is at an all time high water elevation.

- Approved Pay Request No. 1 to William Nichol Excavating, Inc., for their work on Project No. 62, Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1 (J.D. 1), Branch No. 4-Improvement/Extension. The work is temporarily halted because of the recent rains.

- Approved Pay Request No. 3 to Nanik Construction in the amount of $57,023.09 for their work on the Riverton Township Retention project. Wet weather has also delayed progress.

- Discussed the Oakport Flood Mitigation project. An Open House is tentatively scheduled for 11/25/08 to meet with landowners. The Final Hearing is tentatively scheduled for 12/02/08. The work on buyouts continues. A meeting with the Engineer, Attorneys, and Township officials will be held to discuss land acquisition.
• Received proposals for Federal Emergency Management Agency repairs on J.D. 1 and Clay County Ditch No. 53. Ziegler Construction, Inc., with a bid of $27,510 will do the work on Ditch No. 53. Sellin Brothers, Inc., with a bid of $37,047.50 will do the work on J.D. 1.

• Noting that Ziegler Construction, Inc., has signed the contracts for the Kragnes Ringdike project. Given the wet conditions, no further work will be completed on farmstead ringdikes in 2008.

• A number of drainage repairs involving Wilkin County Ditch No. 22, Clay County Ditch Nos. 35 and 63, and Becker County Ditch No. 15 are pending because of the wet weather conditions. Crops need to be harvested before the work can begin.

• Noting that the next meeting of the BRRWD Mediation Project Team will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2008, at 7:00 PM in the MSUM Science Center near Glyndon.

• Discussion regarding a request for an extension to complete work on the Revised Watershed Management Plan. Given the heavy work load at the BRRWD office, the Board would like an additional six months (6/30/09) to complete the planning effort. The request will be filed with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

• Agreed to work with the City of Hawley and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regarding an erosion problem within the city limits on the Buffalo River.

• Noting that a number of meetings have been held with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency regarding the watershed based Total Maximum Daily Load study that the BRRWD will be complete for the Buffalo River.

• Approved payment of bills totaling $318,451.02.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, October 27, 2008, at 8:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.