

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 15, 2009
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"Local Watershed Plans for New Year"

At their last regular meeting for 2009, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), discussed proposed projects for 2010. The district remains very busy with the ongoing wet cycle and associated flooding/water problems.

Work will continue on the Oakport Flood Mitigation project, which was started in the fall of 2009, but delayed because of wet weather. A meeting will be held on 12/22/09 with representatives from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and local Legislators to discuss 2010 funding.

The BRRWD is also working on three outlets for lakes experiencing high water problems. They include Boyer/LaBelle Lake near Lake Park, Tansem/Ranum Lakes along Trunk Highway No. 34 east of Barnesville, and the Clay/Wilkin County Line east of Barnesville. All three projects will be submitted to the Legislature for funding through the 2010 bonding bill.

The Board intends to take time this winter to progress development of the Manston Slough Restoration project. Landowners will be contacted regarding easements. The project was recently approved by the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group for 75% state funding. The BRRWD will work with the Legislators in this regard.

The BRRWD has received an extension until 4/30/10 to complete their Revised Watershed Management Plan (RWMP). A special meeting will be held on 12/29/09 at 1:30 PM in the Barnesville office for the Managers to review the "draft" RWMP. They would like to submit the plan for the 60-day public review by 1/15/10.

Other business included:

- Prolonged discussion regarding a drainage/neighborhood dispute in Section 2, Riverton Township, Clay County. The argument pertains to water from a sump pump that is being blocked by the neighboring driveway, which does not have a culvert. The two parties did agree that if the sump pump water could be rerouted, the other neighbor would install a culvert at their expense to address surface drainage. The Board cautioned both landowners that we have been in an extremely wet cycle and the wetlands on their property are full.
- Approved a permit to Donald Biewer for the replacement of a driveway culvert to his business, located in Section 11, Barnesville Township, Clay County.
- Signed a DNR Grant extension until 9/30/10 to complete work on Riverton Township Retention. The contractor has had two wet years (2008/2009) to complete his work. The Board also denied a request from the contractor for a fuel escalation clause.
- Noting that the Turtle Lake siphon will be stopped to allow the open water hole on Long Lake to freeze so that thin ice signs can be placed. Once the signs/fencing are erected, the Turtle Lake siphon will be restarted. The BRRWD intends to run both the Turtle and Long Lake siphons this winter to get the lakes down before the spring melt. Landowners on Turtle Lake continue to express concerns about the project's operation in 2009 because of the extremely wet summer.
- Appointed a committee to research the possibility of building/purchasing a new office. At its present location, the BRRWD is running out of room for storage, etc. With the heavy workload, the future may include the possibility of hiring additional staff.

12/15/09 BRRWD News Release (cont.)

- Received an award from the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District as the 2009 Conservationist of the Year. The award was presented to Manager John Hanson, Becker County, at the annual SWCD meeting in Duluth on 12/07/09.
- Noting upcoming meetings for the Mediation Project Team. A meeting will be held on 12/17/09 at 1:30 PM at the MSUM Science Center. The next meeting is scheduled for 1/28/10 at the same time and location.
- Approved payment of bills totaling \$258,756.40.

The next regular and annual BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 11, 2010, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office. The annual meeting includes election of officers and appointment of consultants for the coming year. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.