

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 25, 2010

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bruce E. Albright, 218-354-7710

### **"Local Watershed To Adopt New Plan"**

At the 2/22/10 meeting of the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), discussions took place regarding upcoming hearings to review the draft Revised Watershed Management Plan (RWMP). Hearings will be held on Thursday, March 18, 2010, at 7:00 PM, in Hildebrand Hall, Assumption Catholic Church, Barnesville, and Tuesday, March 30, 2010, at 7:00 PM, in the Community Center, Hawley. The public is invited. The RWMP is available for review on the BRRWD's Website at [www.brrwd.org](http://www.brrwd.org). The planning process has taken approximately four years. BRRWD Chairman Roger Ellefson said the Plan is very detailed and should be a useful guide over the next 10 years. The Plan is scheduled for completion in April 2010, when it will be presented to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

The Board also spent time meeting with Molly McGregor, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Dr. Karlyn Eckman, Water Resources Center, University of Minnesota. In conjunction with the BRRWD's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Study on the Buffalo River, the process needs to include "civic engagement". McGregor will hold study circle sessions on March 11 and March 25, 2010, Upstairs Meeting Room, Wells Fargo Bank, Barnesville. The sessions will accommodate approximately 12 to 15 participants. Interested parties should contact the BRRWD. Those who attend the events will learn about the Barnesville River Watch Program. The Study will also involve surveys that will be sent to district residents. Approximately two to three thousand surveys will be mailed this summer.

Concerned landowners attended the meeting to discuss the proposed flood control diversion for Fargo-Moorhead. Two options have surfaced: one on the Minnesota side of the Red River of North, and the other on the North Dakota side. The local landowners felt that it should be placed in North Dakota because it made more sense and addressed more flooding issues. Gerry VanAmburg, BRRWD Manager, does have a seat on the Metro Area Task Force.

Other business included:

- A request from a landowner in Section 36, Kragnes Township, for possible funding to correct erosion at three sites entering the Red River of the North. The Natural Resources Conservation Service is working with the landowner. They estimated that the three projects could cost \$153,940. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program will pay 75%. The Board would like to see the sites before making a decision regarding assistance.
- Noting that an informational meeting will be held on 3/01/10 at 8:00 AM in the Barnesville office to discuss a waterway the drains along the south side of the City of Barnesville. Last fall, the Highway Department replaced culverts in County State Aid Highway No. 52. Landowners feel that more work is needed on the ditch. The area has historic flooding problems.
- Discussed the status of six lake outlets. The Turtle Lake siphon has been operating all winter. Ground water is affecting lake levels. The Grove Lake project has also been operating this winter, and the lake elevation is about 1.3' above the design runout elevation. Both projects will be stopped if there's flooding this spring. The other four areas are proposed projects. Three of the projects are east of Barnesville, and the fourth project is between Lake Park and Audubon on Trunk Highway No. 10. The projects will be reviewed with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) at their upcoming annual coordination meeting, scheduled for 3/09/10 at 10:00 AM in Detroit Lakes.
- Discussed the contract for the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Grant in the amount of \$350,000 received for the Manston Slough Restoration project. Paperwork has also been signed for the transfer of BRRWD property in the SE1/4, Section 30, Manston Township, to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and for the BWSR Reinvest In Minnesota easement.
- Reviewed the financial status of the Oakport Flood Mitigation project. To date, the BRRWD has approximately \$2.7 million left in uncommitted funds from the current DNR grant. The Construction

## 2/25/10 BRRWD News Release (cont.)

Committee will meet on 2/25/10 to discuss if bids should be solicited for more work or if we should continue buying unprotected houses. The BRRWD has asked for an additional \$3.5 million in funding from the 2010 bonding bill. The Board authorized the purchase of property and flood insurance on approximately fourteen homes that the BRRWD owns. An auction of the homes will take place on 5/04/10 at 7:00 PM at Pifer's Auction and Realty, Moorhead.

- Noting that an appraisal is being completed on a potential buyout in Georgetown. Since the 2009 spring flood, the BRRWD has been working with the City on improving their levee system.
- Reviewed a request from Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc., for the placement of poles on Project No. 37, Clay County Ditch No. 41-Lateral No. 1, right-of-way. A field inspection will be conducted.
- Discussed petitions from MNDOT pertaining to Clay County Ditch Nos. 9 and 50. Hearings will be scheduled.
- Noting that continuance of the redetermination of benefits hearing for Clay County Ditch No. 49 will be finalized on 3/16/10 at 7:00 PM, First Floor Council Chambers, Moorhead. Notices will be sent to affected landowners.
- Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on 3/25/10 at 1:30 PM, MSUM Science Center near Glyndon.
- Noting the Clay County Board of Commissioners agreed to petition the BRRWD to use taxation through Minnesota Statutes Annotated 103D.905, Subd. 3. The first petition for \$250,000 will be used to provide the local share of project costs to match Federal and State funding to purchase qualified house/properties that are located in the floodplain, were damaged by the 2009 spring flood, or are along a river where bank failures are occurring. The second petition for \$346,616 will be used for a variety of projects/programs, including the TMDL Study, Comprehensive Planning, log jam removal, and a number of flood damage reduction projects, including Manston Slough Restoration and Farmstead Ringdikes.
- Noting that Managers plan to attend the upcoming Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Legislative Day at the Capitol, scheduled for March 10-11, 2010. Meetings will be arranged with local Legislators.
- Authorized repairs for Clay County Ditch No. 22 in Section 30, Kragnes Township, including channel cleaning, two grade control rock drop structures, and approximately 550' of sloping. The estimated costs are \$4,000-\$5,000.
- Agreed to purchase new technical equipment for recording BRRWD meetings.
- Approved a request from Tim Magnusson, Clay County Planning & Zoning, for \$8,500 to complete a floodplain remapping project that will insure the most current data is used in the map production.
- Approved payment of bills totaling \$204,733.50.

The next regular BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 8, 2010, 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](http://www.brrwd.org).