

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **"Lake Alfred Landowners Seek Relief from Flooding"**

At their 12/13/10 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), was approached by landowners in northwestern Otter Tail County regarding high water flooding problems around Lake Alfred. Lake Alfred is located in Sections 2, 3, 10, and 11, Norwegian Grove Township. A series of wetlands, some located on United States Fish and Wildlife Service property, to the east of 150<sup>th</sup> AVE are also flooding. Landowners would like to seek an outlet for the area. Lucas Bakken said water is already in one building and is threatening another. The Board will have Houston Engineering, Inc. conduct an area survey. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will also be asked to determine ordinary high water elevations for the affected wetlands. Once this information is gathered, an informational meeting will be scheduled. It appears that the outlet would be north to Whisky Creek.

Other business included:

- A request from Oakport Township to assist with potential 2011 spring flood fight costs. Greg Anderson and Jeff Schaumann, Supervisors, Oakport Township, attended the meeting. They said now that assessments have been sent out regarding Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation, it may be difficult to collect an additional assessment from the affected landowners regarding potential 2011 flood fighting costs. The Supervisors hope that the Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will also be there to help if there's major flooding. The Board indicated that they would like to review their contributions to date to the project before making a decision as to what amount of additional funding could be allocated to the request.
- The contractor for Project No. 67, HRBP Lakes Outlet, which involves a series of lakes east of Barnesville along Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 34, attended the meeting regarding a request for additional compensation for small diameter rock used for backfilling the outlet pipe. He said the conditions were so wet this fall that they needed to bring in rock rather than sand. The Board agreed to a \$14,012.51 Change Order for the project, which will be processed at the next meeting.
- Steve Dalen, Pinnacle Water Management, attended the meeting to further discuss the "distributive storage" concept. He, along with Bethany Kurz, Energy & Environmental Research Center, Grand Forks, attended an 11/29/10 special BRRWD meeting in Barnesville to discuss this issue. The Board may consider approaching landowners in the Sabin Coulee or Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee areas regarding a potential project. Both areas are located upstream of Fargo/Moorhead. The Board also stressed that they are very busy dealing with "emergencies" and may not have time to work on distributive storage at this time. A decision to participate will be made at the 1/10/11 annual meeting.
- Noting that funds have been secured for a potential buyout of property, located on Ranum Lake east of Barnesville along T.H. No. 34. A meeting will be held with the landowners after the new year to discuss the program.
- Noting that all lake outlet projects are currently operating, including Turtle/Long Lakes, LaBelle/Boyer Lakes, Grove Lake, Pete Lake, Helgeson/Randkler/Businger/Seim Lakes, and the Cromwell Township Highwater Outlet. According to the Operation Plans, Erik S. Jones, Engineer, H.E., felt they should be stopped around March 1, in case there is spring flooding.
- The office noted that an error was found regarding the Viewers' Report calculations for Project No. 62, Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1 (J.D. 1), Branch No. 4-Improvement/Extension. The Viewers wanted to assess 75% of the total project costs to the existing J.D. 1 benefiting area. Instead, 25% of the benefits for J.D. 1 were added to the Project No. 62 benefits. Corrections have been made, and the office has mailed revised assessments to all affected landowners.

## 12/13/10 BRRWD News Release (cont.)

- Approved a permit to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) for installation of a "round-about" on T.H. No. 75 and County State Aid Highway No. 12 south of Moorhead. MNDOT plans to bid the project in February 2011. The work involves Clay County Ditch No. 9.
- Agreed to sign an amendment to a DNR grant involving the City of Georgetown's flood control levee improvements. The amendment extends the grant until 12/31/12 and adds an additional \$500,000 to the project. The funding will be used to complete appraisals of potential buyout properties, preparation of easements, and completion of the plans and specifications. Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, will meet with Traci L. Goble, Mayor, City of Georgetown, to discuss the next steps.
- Noting that an informational meeting regarding a potential project for the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Otter Tail and Wilkin Counties will be held on 1/27/11 at 2:00 PM in Hildebrand Hall, Assumption Catholic Church, Barnesville. Notices will be sent to affected landowners. For several years, the BRRWD Mediation Project Team has been looking at options regarding flood control and natural resource enhancement benefits for this area. The South Branch of the Buffalo River also has a water quality problem.
- Discussed steps regarding development of a new watershed district office. The BRRWD has already purchased land from the City of Barnesville in Commercial Park for the building. Hopes are that construction can begin next spring when conditions permit. In preparation, the BRRWD will tour the Bois de Sioux Watershed District office in Wheaton on 12/22/10.
- Discussed reservations for the upcoming Red River Basin Commission Annual Conference on 1/18/11-1/20/11 in Fargo.
- Approved payment of bills totaling \$435,758.89.

The next regular BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 27, 2010, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office. Traditionally, the Board has not met between the Christmas and New Year's Holidays. They are hoping that this can be a short meeting to address bill payments, etc. The BRRWD's Annual Meeting is scheduled for 1/10/11 at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office. That meeting will include election of the officers and appointment of consultants for 2011. All meetings are open to the public.

For more information, please visit our Website at [www.brrwd.org](http://www.brrwd.org).