

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 17, 2011
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Bruce E. Albright, 218-354-7710

"Legislators Introduce Funding Bills for Local Watershed"

At the 3/14/11 Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) meeting held in Barnesville, the Managers learned that Representative Morrie Lanning introduced H.F. #1051 and Senator Keith Langseth introduced S.F. #815, appropriating \$12,647,082 in bond proceed funds for a number of pending BRRWD projects, including \$3,289,346 for Georgetown Levee Improvements, \$8,700,000 for Oakport Flood Mitigation, and \$657,736 for the Manston Slough Restoration. Both bills were read for the first time and referred to the appropriate committees.

Other business included:

- A landowner along the South Branch of the Buffalo River south of Sabin questioned the status of his ringdike project. Because of geotechnical concerns, the landowner has agreed to build part of the dike with treated timber. The BRRWD is working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on funding. The landowner is very concerned about the 2011 spring flood. He would also consider a buyout.
- A landowner along Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1 near Comstock attended the meeting to discuss his concerns regarding snow in the ditch and possible flooding that could take place this spring. The landowner would like to try a demonstration project to see if it would help open the ditch if a dozer could be used to cut a groove in the center. The Board agreed to give it a try. The group agreed that the work would probably need to occur this week with the predicted warm weather.
- The Board approved a permit to the Clay County Highway Department to replace a bridge over the Buffalo River on CSAH No. 19 north of Glyndon; Mark Kasin to install a new approach/culvert along C.R. No. 31 in the NE1/4, Section 26, Hawley Township; and Gerald Zimmerman for pattern tiling to outlet to Clay County Ditch No. 39 in the NE1/4, Section 32, Morken Township.
- The BRRWD has closed the outlets on Long Lake and Grove Lake in preparation for the 2011 spring flood. All lake elevations are in good shape. The Turtle Lake siphon will continue to run with 3 feet of separation between Turtle Lake and Long Lake. No water will go downstream.
- Houston Engineering, Inc. provided water depth information for the County Line Outlet Project east of Barnesville. On 3/07/11, the BRRWD held a meeting with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), who indicated that they would like to manage the lake at a lower level than the Ordinary High Water (OHW) elevation set by the DNR. The information will be forwarded to the USFWS, and another meeting will be held. There will be some additional costs associated with lowering the lake beyond the BRRWD's target elevation.
- The Board discussed the status of the Manston Slough Restoration project. The Managers urged the office to continue work on the acquisition of the required easements. A hearing will be scheduled this spring with construction anticipated in the summer of 2011.
- The Board discussed obtaining the final easement needed for Project No. 50, Cromwell Township Highwater Outlet. The landowner has agreed to furnish a response to the BRRWD on 4/01/11. A meeting will be scheduled with the USFWS to discuss OHW elevations for the affected wetlands.
- Oakport Township is still working with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding 2011 flood preparedness. The BRRWD has purchased the last property needed for the project. There are

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still three remaining easements to obtain. The BRRWD is working with the DNR to secure \$1.7 million to complete work on the existing contracts this spring when conditions permit. An additional \$1.5 million will be needed to complete the Wall Street road raises in 2011. That funding will be dependent on the Legislature and the bonding bill.

- The BRRWD received quotes from four appraisers for appraisal work associated with the Georgetown Flood Control Levee Improvement. The contract was awarded to ARC Appraisals, Barnesville. The work is to be finished by 5/15/11.
- The Board discussed the status of an agreement to repair a 60" dia. reinforced concrete pipe on the Hawley Diversion. A portion of the pipe began failing almost immediately after it was installed. The BRRWD and Hawley would like to see the pipe repaired this summer. The office will work with a landowner to secure the required right-of-way.
- William Nichol Excavating, Inc., has removed a log jam in Section 15, Kragnes Township, Clay County. The contractor is still working on a site in Georgetown at their Texas crossing.
- All Managers plan to attend the upcoming Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Legislative Briefing and Breakfast, Kelly Inn, St. Paul, on March 23-24, 2011. Invitations have been sent to local legislators.
- The BRRWD will hold redetermination of benefits hearings for Clay County Ditch Nos. 36, 40, and 60 on March 22, 2011, at 8:00 PM in the Comstock Community Center.
- The BRRWD agreed to contribute 25% funding to the cost of constructing a ringdike that will protect five properties in Section 6, Oakport Township. The homeowners would like to build the dike before the 2011 spring flood. The total estimated project cost is \$15,000.
- The Board approved payment of bills totaling \$147,710.89.

The next regular BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 28, 2011, 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.