

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19, 2011
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"Landowners Question Project Status"

At their 5/09/11 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), reviewed the status of several ongoing projects. A homeowner from Georgetown said his property flooded again in 2011. The BRRWD is working with the City of Georgetown on levee improvements. The Board noted that 14 appraisals are due on 5/15/11, which will be forwarded to the landowners for buyouts that are either on the wrong side of the new levee, or need to be moved for placement of the dike. Most versions of the State's Flood Damage Reduction bonding bill include money for Georgetown. Bruce Albright, BRRWD Administrator, felt the BRRWD should be ready to begin construction this summer.

Landowners questioned the status of the County Line Outlet project. Erik S. Jones, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc., (H.E.), presented the Engineer's Report. Two alignment options have been studied. One would lower the wetlands approximately 4.5 feet. The other, as requested by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) would lower the wetlands approximately 9'. The USFWS option costs approximately \$67,000 more. The USFWS and Ducks Unlimited will be asked for funding assistance.

Jones also presented the Engineer's Report for Lake Jacobs Outlet. Again, several outlet alignments were studied. The USFWS has expressed concerns about routing water through their easement areas. The Board agreed to file the local/state/federal notification form. H.E. will begin working on easements. Albright reported that a group from Otter Tail County would like to petition into the BRRWD to get assistance to lower Lake Annie, which would flow through Lake Jacobs.

Other business included:

- The Board again discussed tiling operation during floods. A landowner along County Road (C.R.) No. 18, east of Glyndon, said he didn't start his lift station until the Buffalo River had crested at Dilworth. The Board intends to spend more time on this topic this winter, with a possible update of the Rules.
- A landowner questioned how the County intends to operate a gate installed on a culvert in C.R. No. 127, lowering a wetland in the NW1/4, Section 6, Norwegian Grove Township, Otter Tail County. The landowner hoped that the culvert would have been installed at a lower elevation. He feels the water will still back up on his property and may overtop/washout the road.
- The Board discussed an easement they have been unable to obtain pertaining to the Cromwell Township Highwater Outlet. The Board will meet with their attorney, Tami L. Norgard, Vogel Law Firm, to discuss condemnation proceedings. Neighboring landowners and the Township attended the meeting to urge the Board to proceed with the project development.
- The Board approved permits to: Robert Faulkner for a 24" dia. culvert in a new field approach off 200th ST in the SW1/4SW1/4, Section 20, Tanberg Township, Wilkin County; and Mark Nyquist for four lines of drain tile along the east side of the E1/2, Section 27, Glyndon Township, draining into County Ditch No. 12.
- H.E. has completed surveys regarding the Lake Alfred outlet. We are still waiting for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to complete the Ordinary High Water (OHW) survey. It appears the DNR is currently busy setting lake elevation gauges, and they may not get to the OHW survey until sometime in June.
- The Board noted that all lake outlets are now operating.

5/09/11 BRRWD News Release (cont.)

- Seeding will be completed when conditions permit for the establishment of the one-rod grassed bufferstrips on Clay County Ditch Nos. 11, 36, 40, and 60. All right-of-way has been staked.
- The Board agreed to sign Amendment No. 3 to the Oakport Flood Mitigation DNR Grant, which allocates an additional \$1.6 million to the project and extends the grant deadline until 12/31/12. The funding will be used to complete work on all existing contracts.
- The Managers discussed Board reservations for the upcoming Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Summer Tour, which will be held on June 16-18, 2011, in Thief River Falls, MN.
- The Board discussed the status of the BRRWD's proposed new office. A Building Committee meeting was held on 5/05/11 with Margaret Follingstad, YHR Partners, Ltd., Moorhead. She feels the BRRWD should be ready to advertise for construction bids in June.
- The Board discussed a possible project with Clay County regarding the potential buyouts of approximately 34 properties. The buyouts total approximately \$8 million. It appears the County would need to contribute \$1 million match.
- The BRRWD signed a contract with the International Water Institute for 2011 water quality monitoring, totaling \$11,350.
- The Board approved payment of bills totaling \$270,141.22.

The next regular BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 23, 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.