

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 17, 2011
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"Project Work Continues In Local Watershed"

At their 11/14/11 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), discussed the status of several projects. The extremely nice weather this fall has allowed contractors to continue their work. Hopes are that several projects will be completed before winter. The contractor has made progress on Project No. 65, Clay/Wilkin County Line Outlet. This is a highwater problem east of Barnesville. Negotiations are nearly complete with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) agreement. Another contractor has also started work on an outlet for Lake Jacobs in northwestern Otter Tail County. H&S Contracting also plans to complete their work on Project No. 50, Cromwell Township Outlet, north of Hawley.

Several landowners attended the meeting regarding a variety of issues. Downstream landowners from Section 27, Skree Township, Clay County, felt that some type of restriction had to be placed along 110th AVE S to prevent flooding of their property next spring. The Board agreed and directed the landowner to reinstall an approach with a 24" dia. culvert. A landowner also filed a complaint regarding a plugged culvert in Section 19, Tansem Township, Clay County. The Board will send the landowner a letter, directing them to remove the rocks. A landowner also discussed the possible restoration of a natural waterway across property he operates in Section 27, Atherton Township, Wilkin County. The Board agreed to schedule a meeting with the affected landowners/agencies this winter.

Other business included:

- The Board discussed inlet pipes needed along Lateral No. 1 on Wilkin County Ditch No. 22. Wade Opsahl, Technician, Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.), said if the nice weather holds, we intend to complete the work yet this fall.
- The Board approved permits to: Kermit Anderson to install a 24" dia. culvert for drainage through 140th ST in the southwest corner of the E1/2, Section 21, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County, subject to Manager field review and downstream landowner permission; modifications to a permit for diking along the Buffalo River in Section 15, Kragnes Township, Clay County, to protect an existing farmstead ringdike, subject to field review on 11/17/11; Karl M. Goehring to improve a ringdike in Section 7, Oakport Township, Clay County; Jud Komrosky to complete a Wetlands Reserve Program restoration in Sections 19/20, Lake Park Township, Becker County; Skolness, Inc., for pattern tiling in Section 6, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County, outletting to County Ditch No. 65; and Jeff Nord to reinstall an approach on the quarterline along 180th AVE in Section 33, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County.
- A Wilkin County landowner expressed concerns regarding the BRRWD's involvement with the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project. He was concerned about the effects of proposed upstream retention associated with the project on landowners in Clay and Wilkin Counties. He questioned why farmers had to sacrifice their property to allow Fargo to build in the floodplain.
- The Board authorized H.E. to conduct a drainage analysis in Section 28, Kragnes Township, Clay County. The analysis will be used to hopefully mediate a solution to the historic drainage problems in that area.
- The Board reviewed a diking complaint in Section 28, Barnesville Township, Clay County. A field investigation will be conducted.

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- H.E. will complete the field survey of Lateral No. 3, Wilkin County Ditch No. 22, for the petitioned improvement project yet this fall. BRRWD Administrator Bruce Albright said the Viewers might also be able to complete their analysis before winter.
- The Board received demolition bids for the Oakport flood control project to cap sewers, demolish basements, etc. The low bidder was Key Contracting, Inc.
- The BRRWD has received the \$3 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Georgetown Flood Control Levee Improvement project. Intentions are to complete the land acquisition and easement process this winter and open bids for the project early next spring.
- The Managers agreed to meet with Attorney Tom Athens at the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) annual meeting to discuss repairs for the Hawley Diversion project. The contractor claims no liability for the failing concrete pipe.
- An agency meeting was held earlier this month to discuss the O&M agreement associated with Project No. 16, Stinking Lake Detention. The agencies would like to take a more active role in management of the lake and downstream wetland elevations to improve water quality and wildlife habitat. The lake will be lowered this fall to start that process.
- The next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on 11/17/11 at 1:30 PM in the MSUM Science Center east of Glyndon. Active projects include the South Branch of the Buffalo River Restoration and the Watershed's Total Maximum Daily Load Study.
- The Managers discussed a petition that will be filed by Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties to enlarge the BRRWD to include approximately 400 square miles. The area is the middle third of Wilkin County and land downstream of Orwell Dam in Otter Tail County. At the present time, the southern part of Wilkin County is covered by the Bois de Sioux Watershed District. The petition will be filed with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.
- The office has received nine applications for the permanent part-time administrative assistant position. The Board agreed to schedule a special meeting to discuss office needs, pay scale, and review of the applicant list.
- Based on advice from their Advisory Committee at a special 11/10/11 meeting, the Board agreed to continue to pursue options for building a new office. The Advisory Committee recommended that it would be better to build a new office than to renovate an existing building. A tentative schedule would be to have plans and specifications completed by 12/12/11 with a 1/09/12 bid opening.
- The Board acknowledged receipt of a repair petition pertaining to Clay County Ditch No. 32. The Board authorized H.E. to conduct the field survey.
- The Board appointed Roger Ellefson and Gerald VanAmburg as delegates for the upcoming MAWD annual meeting in Alexandria on December 1-3, 2011. John Hanson, Becker County, will serve as the alternate.
- The Board approved payment of bills totaling \$490,403.91.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold a special meeting on Tuesday, November 22, 2011, at 7:00 PM, in the Barnesville office. The next regular BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 28, 2011, 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.