

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 30, 2011  
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### **"Local Watershed Ends Year, Plans for Future"**

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held their last meeting of the year on December 27, 2011, at 7:00 PM in their Barnesville office. The extremely nice fall weather allowed field personnel to complete many of the various ditch system and project repairs that have been pending the past several years. The Board also spent time talking about plans for 2012, including hiring a part-time administrative assistant and opening bids for a new office in Commercial Park, Barnesville. The bid opening is tentatively scheduled for February 7, 2012. Interviews for secretarial candidates will be held on 1/05/12.

#### Other business included:

- The Board visited with a landowner in Section 19, Tansem Township, Clay County, regarding her concerns about neighboring field drainage that is causing erosion along her driveway and depositing sediment in a wetland. The matter was discussed with both landowners at the 12/12/11 meeting. The landowner said that the property has now been surveyed, and it appears that the field ditch is on her property. The homeowner will finish the driveway culvert repairs in the spring.
- The Board met with a landowner regarding complaints about ditching completed in Section 14, Barnesville Township, and Sections 1, 12, and 13, Alliance Township, Clay County. The landowner filed a permit application for the work in Section 14, which was approved, subject to road authority approval to work within their right-of-way. The other projects in Alliance Township were considered maintenance work.
- The Managers discussed the BRRWD's current financial situation. The BRRWD has had to utilize funds from an operating loan obtained from Midwest Bank. Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, said the financial status should turn around as six different project billings have been submitted to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for payment. Those requests total \$2.2 million, and when paid, will correct the cashflow problems.
- As of 12/22/11, water started flowing out of Lake Jacobs. The contractor will return next spring to complete cleanup and seeding.
- The BRRWD submitted the Manston Slough Restoration Project to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for Reinvest In Minnesota funding. The project should qualify for 75% state funding because of the natural resource enhancement benefits. To date, the BRRWD is short approximately \$650,000. Plans are to construct the project in 2012.
- The majority of the work has been completed the Cromwell Township Highwater Outlet. The contractor is still waiting for one gate to install. Plans are to finish cleanup and seeding next spring.
- The Board discussed a meeting held on 12/19/11 with officials from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) regarding Wetlands Reserve Program opportunities. Eventually, the BRRWD should develop a list of potential projects, so that when funding becomes available, the NRCS can take action.
- The BRRWD signed the petition to enlarge the watershed district and increase the number of Managers. The petition has also been signed by Otter Tail and Wilkin Counties. It will be

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forwarded to BWSR. The process will add the middle one-third of Wilkin County and an area in Otter Tail County downstream of Orwell Dam to the BRRWD.

- The BRRWD received a Clean Water Fund grant from BWSR totaling \$57,818 to complete the Best Management Practices (BMP) Strategic Plan. The project will provide a means of prioritizing areas of the watershed district for BMP implementation to reduce overland runoff contaminant loadings contributing to water quality impairments by using LiDAR and other state-of-the-art technologies. This work has already been completed for an area of the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties. The grant will complete the modeling for the rest of the District.
- A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, January 17, 2012, at 1:30 PM in the Hildebrand Hall, Assumption Catholic Church, Barnesville. The meeting will cover the TMDL process and why the BRRWD is involved. It will also include a presentation regarding the water quality conditions modeling. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and DNR will present information regarding the geomorphic assessments and stressor identifications. More information about the event and water quality data can be obtained at [www.brrwd.org](http://www.brrwd.org). The public is encouraged to attend.
- The Board approved payment of bills totaling \$173,232.42.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold their annual meeting, including election of officers and appointment of consultants for 2012, on Monday, January 9, 2012, 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).