NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 16, 2012
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“Local Watershed Acts on Pending Permits”

At their meeting held on 3/12/12 in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), discussed 32 permit applications that have been filed already this year. Seventeen of those applications deal with agricultural tiling. Tiling projects in the BRRWD require a permit. Landowners also need to check with the Farm Service Agency if the tiling could affect wetlands. BRRWD’s primary review of tiling applications is to make sure the applicant has an adequate outlet. There has been discussion in the Red River Valley to look at more stringent tiling permit conditions, such as operation of a lift station during a flood. Local watersheds intend to discuss this topic further in 2012. We are also waiting for results of a drainage study being completed by the International Water Institute (IWI) that will take a closer look at the effects of tiling in regards to flooding. The extremely nice weather has advanced many project schedules.

The Board approved permits for the following: Jeff Nord for 160 acres of pattern tiling in the NE1/4, Section 2, Mitchell Township, Wilkin County; Clay County Highway Department for the reconstruction of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 19 north of Glyndon including replacement of a bridge on County Ditch No. 63; Richard Sorby for 155 acres of pattern tiling in the NW1/4, Section 12, Oakport Township, Clay County; Trevor Sorby for 128 acres of pattern tiling in the NW1/4, Section 25, Morken Township, Clay County; Chad and Curt Leach 141 acres of pattern tiling in the NW1/4, Section 4, Elkton Township, Clay County; Chad Leach for 286 acres of tiling in the S1/2, Section 7, Elkton Township, Clay County; Jeremy Tischer for 129 acres of pattern tiling in the SE1/4, Section 32, Manston Township, Wilkin County; City of Moorhead for a new outfall from their waste treatment facility to Project No. 37, Clay County Ditch No. 41-Lateral No 1; Paul Aarness to repair tiling in the S1/2, Section 29, Norwegian Grove Township, Otter Tail County; Gordon Kassenborg for 129.7 acres of pattern tiling in NW1/4, Section 7, Moland Township, Clay County; Richard Scheffler for 66 acres of pattern tiling in the W1/2NW1/4 Section 24, Atherton Township, Wilkin County; Clay County Highway Department to correct a drainage problem south of Sabin along CSAH No. 52, including the installation of a culvert in an approach; Bob Whaley to install drain tile in low areas in E1/2W1/2, Section 26, Skree Township, Clay County; Bruce Yaggie for 160 acres of pattern tiling in the NW1/4, Section 29, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County; Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) to realign CSAH No. 31 and 33 with Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 10 in Hawley; MNDOT to replace the on and off ramps from Interstate-94 to CSAH No. 52 in south Moorhead; and MNDOT to mill and overlay portions of T.H. Nos. 10/75 in Moorhead.

Other business included:

- The Managers discussed their current funding shortfall. The BRRWD will not see major income until after the first half (May 15th) property taxes are collected. In the interim, the BRRWD will continue to bill various agencies for reimbursements and may have to use funds from the operating loan at Midwest Bank.

- The Board heard concerns from several landowners on LaBelle Lake near Lake Park regarding the lake elevation. In 2010, the BRRWD installed an outlet on LaBelle Lake to deal with high water problems. Lake elevations can be adjusted with the project’s outlet structure. The lake fell below the Ordinary High Water elevation last fall due to the dry conditions.

- The Board discussed a possible Lateral petition to Clay County Ditch No. 51 in Section 28, Kragnes Township, Clay County.
• The final hearing for Project No. 67 HRBP Outlet east of Barnesville on T.H. No. 34 will be held on Monday, March 19, 2012 at 7:00 PM in Hildebrand Hall, Assumption Catholic Church, Barnesville. Notices have been sent to affected parties.

• The Managers discussed possible Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) funding through the Reinvest in Minnesota program for the Manston Slough Restoration project to meet the 75% state level ($650,000). The BRRWD office will furnish information to BWSR in that regard.

• The Board discussed a possible culvert through CSAH No. 114 between Sections 26 and 35, Cromwell Township. The culvert would allow for water on the north side of the road to flow south into Project No. 50. In recent years, the road has created a flooding situation. The issue will be discussed with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

• The Board discussed meetings held last week with local legislators and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regarding funding needed to complete the Oakport Flood Mitigation project. Approximately $1,000,000 is needed to complete existing contracts and an additional $5,000,000 to construct Phase 4 (Broadway).

• Easements will be mailed to affected landowners regarding the Georgetown Levee Improvement Project. The Appraisers’ Report was accepted for proposed benefits totaling $5,457,177. A hearing will be scheduled for mid-April.

• The next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on 3/22/12 at 1:30 PM in the MSUM Science Center.

• The BWSR comment period for the possible watershed district enlargement and the addition of two managers ended on 3/09/12. It appears BWSR will discuss this issue further at their 4/25/12 meeting in St. Paul.

• The BRRWD authorized the sale of $500,000 in tax free bonds to finance the new office project. The bond sale will be handled by Ehlers and Associates.

• The BRRWD donated $200 to the IWI for the 17th Annual River Watch Forum held on 3/13/12 at the University of Minnesota Crookston.

• The Board authorized the expenditure of $1,400 to update a computer workstation, including the purchase of new QuickBooks software. The software version currently being used in the office is from 1999.

• The Board approved payment of bills totaling $173,115.03.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold their next meeting on Monday, March 26, 2012, 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.