NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 13, 2012
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“Local Watershed Addresses Landowner Concerns”

At the 6/11/12 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), dealt with several landowner concerns. On 6/04/12, a hearing was held to discuss two possible impoundments on Clay County Ditch No. 39 northeast of Moorhead. The project petitioner, Gerald Zimmerman, attended the meeting to answer any questions following the hearing. Zimmerman is working with North Dakota State University and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture on an experimental project that will investigate using ditch water for sub-irrigation. Temporary impoundments will be installed to catch the ditch flows. The BRRWD is also a partner to the grant application. Ditch system landowners are concerned that they are not assessed for any of the associated costs. The Board issued an Order/permit for Mr. Zimmerman to proceed with his project.

A landowner in Section 19, Tansem Township, Clay County, showed the Board pictures of her driveway culvert following the Memorial Day heavy rains. Sediment from the upstream neighbor's field ditch nearly plugged the culvert with sediment. The landowner asked for a BRRWD permit to line her portion of the ditch with rocks to help control the erosion. The Board approved the request.

Representatives from Wolverton Township attended the meeting. The Board has repeatedly asked the Township to recreate an overflow section on 130th AVE between Sections 9 and 10. The upstream landowner has complained to the BRRWD that the overflow section has been raised. A survey conducted by Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) shows the spillway has been raised approximately 1.29 feet. Options to address the concerns were furnished by H.E. in a letter dated 6/09/12. The Township feels that they could leave the road as is without causing upstream problems. The H.E. letter will be furnished to the upstream landowner for further discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Larry Martin, United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Fergus Falls Wetland Management District, attended the meeting to discuss Project No. 65, County Line Outlet. His office has signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Martin discussed their plans to lower the wetland below the Ordinary High Water elevation. This will require a permit from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and two landowner easements. Previous discussions have taken place regarding the MOU, and the Board signed the document.

Other business included:

- The Board approved permits to David Israelson to install an approach on the west side of Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 75 in Section 8, Wolverton Township, Wilkin County; Justin Stock to install tiling in Sections 21 and 22, Norwegian Grove Township, Otter Tail County; Paul Fossum to install pattern tiling in Section 18, Kragnes Township, Clay County; four permits to Oberg Farms for pattern tiling in the NE1/4, Section 2, the E1/2, Section 3, and the NW1/4, Section 11, Elmwood Township, Clay County, and the NE1/4, Section 20, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; Ronnie Tang to install 9.7 acres of pattern tiling in the southwest corner of the SW1/4, Section 23, Flowing Township, Clay County; Ronnie Tang to install pattern tiling in the SE1/4, Section 16, Morken Township, Clay County; and Lee Gray to install an approach/culvert off 85th AVE N in Section 1, Oakport Township, Clay County, for relocation of a house he purchased from the Oakport Flood Mitigation project. Permit approval conditioned on Clay County Planning & Zoning approval to relocate the house.

- The Preliminary Hearing for Clay County Ditch No. 51-Lateral will be held on Thursday, June 28, 2012, at 7:30 PM in the First Floor Council Chambers, Moorhead City Hall. Notices will be sent to affected landowners.
The Board received the Project No. 72, Wilkin County Ditch No. 22-Lateral No. 3 Improvement Viewers' Report. The next step will be to schedule the Final Hearing.

The Appraisers are working on their assessment of benefits for the Crystal Creek and McCann's Additions diking and the Country Heritage Outlet Ditch in Oakport Township.

A final billing in the amount of $10,405.80 will be sent to the DNR for Project No. 68, Lake Jacobs Outlet.

The DNR has promised approximately $800,000 from their 2010 Bond funding to continue work on the Oakport Flood Mitigation project. The funds will be used to complete road raises involved with Phase 3C. The contractor is currently working.

The Board discussed the status of easement and land acquisitions for the Georgetown Levee Improvement project. The office continues to make progress in both regards. The Board felt H.E. should prepare the plans and specifications as soon as possible. The BRRWD would like to see project construction begin yet this summer.

The BRRWD sent a letter to the Wilkin and Otter Tail County Board of Commissioners regarding the watershed district enlargement process. Each County will need to appoint an additional Manager. The BRRWD intends to hold a hearing sometime in August to discuss the eastern boundary for the new area, BRRWD Rules, and landowner questions. The BRRWD was given two years to complete the update of their Revised Watershed Management Plan to include the new area.

A kickoff meeting will be held on 6/14/12 at 1:00 PM in the Fargo H.E. offices, 1401 21st AVE N, for the Upper Red Total Maximum Daily Load Study. Participants have been invited.

A Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Project Team meeting will be held on 6/20/12 at 7:30 PM in the Comstock Community Center. Invitees will also include landowners on Clay County Ditch No. 36. Repairs are contemplated for the ditch outlet west of T.H. No. 75.

The BRRWD adopted a Data Management Practices Act policy to address procedures for document requests.

Work on the new BRRWD office is progressing. The contractor has put up the walls and is setting rafters. The BRRWD expects to move into the new office around 9/01/12.

The Board approved a DNR Grant extension until 6/30/14 for Project No. 56, Manston Slough Restoration. The office is currently working with landowners to obtain the remaining easement options. The hearing continuation date will be set once that work is completed.

The Board approved payment of bills totaling $233,860.33.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD is scheduled for Monday, June 25, 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.