“Local Watershed Activities”

At their 7/23/12 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), spent some time discussing the status and assessments for Project No. 65, County Line Outlet with two landowners. They questioned the assessment payment process/timeline. The landowners can make a one-time lump sum payment of their project assessment or spread out the payments over a number of years with additional financing costs, as determined by the Board of Managers, BRRWD, at their September 10, 2012, annual budget hearing. The outlet structure is currently set at the Ordinary High Water elevation. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has applied for a permit from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to lower the water to 1101.0 to allow for winter kill of undesirable species.

Ron Salber, Salber & Associates, discussed payment options for the State required Public Employee Retirement Association contributions for the BRRWD’s Administrative Assistant. The Board agreed to authorize Salber to use the State’s electronic reporting system and electronic transfer of funds to make the BRRWD’s payments. The Board also authorized Salber to start filing the State and Federal quarterly withholding tax payments electronically.

The project petitioner for Project No. 72, Wilkin County Ditch No. 22-Lateral No. 3 Improvement, asked for an update of the project's status. Following the 7/10/12 Final Hearing, the Viewers made changes to their Report. Once their changes have been finalized, the BRRWD will continue the Final Hearing to make a final order to move forward with project construction.

Other business included:

- The Board received a report from Houston Engineering, Inc. regarding the location and possible impacts of 32 wind turbines that will be placed in a wide array across a number of eastern townships within the BRRWD. H.E. determined that Lakeswind Power Partners, LLC, has adequately accounted for drainage at the road access sites, and the approved permit will be issued.

- The Board approved permits to the City of Moorhead for a flood mitigation project along the Red River in north Moorhead; Stephen H. Wiese for random tiling in the S1/2, Section 34, Tanberg Township, Wilkin County, outletting to a natural waterway; John Boen for 10 sediment control basins in Sections 32/33, Norwegian Grove Township, Otter Tail County; and the City of Barnesville to expand their Commercial Park to include road and utility extensions and a storm water retention pond.

- The Board agreed to a 50% cost share with the Clay County Highway Department to install a culvert through County Road No. 114 by boring or open cut as determined by the County. This work is being done in conjunction with Project No. 50, Cromwell Township Outlet.

- The Board discussed the status of the land acquisitions needed for the Georgetown Levee Improvement Project.

- Plans were sent to several contractors to solicit bids for the repair of the deteriorating 60” concrete pipe, associated with Hawley Diversion project. The bids will be reviewed at the 8/13/12 BRRWD meeting. Hancock Concrete Products still has to submit their bid for furnishing the culvert.

- The next Mediation Project Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 26, 2012, at 7:00 PM in the MSUM Science Center.

- The Board discussed the status of the watershed district enlargement. Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) approved the petition on 4/25/12. The BRRWD intends to hold a hearing this fall to define the eastern boundary. Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties will each need to appoint one new
Manager by 9/01/12. BWSR has asked for a schedule for updating the Revised Watershed Management Plan to include the new area.

- The Board reviewed the status of the new office building construction. The BRRWD expects to move into their new location by 9/15/12.

- Manager Paradeis Kobiela discussed her interview with the Clay County Board of Commissioners regarding her reappointment to the BRRWD Board. She reported that Clay County has offered to set up a meeting with the other County Commissioners and elected officials to discuss their desire for the BRRWD to consider rejoining the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB). At their last meeting, the Managers decided to postpone a meeting of this nature until the issues regarding the new watershed area are resolved and the new Managers are appointed.

- The Board approved payment of bills totaling $55,104.28.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, August 13, 2012, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office at 114 Front ST S, Barnesville. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.