NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 20, 2012
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“Watershed Advertises for Project Bids”

At their 8/13/12 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), made an Order to advertise for construction bids for Project No. 39, Georgetown Levee Improvements. The BRRWD received a grant from the State of Minnesota for $3.5 million after the 2011 spring flood to do the project. Complicated land acquisitions have delayed development. The BRRWD felt they had enough land to get started with the work this fall. Bids will be opened at 7:00 PM at the 9/10/12 BRRWD meeting in Barnesville.

The Board also spent time meeting with several groups of landowners regarding various concerns. Representatives from Wolverton Township wanted to appeal the Board's 6/25/12 decision for them to lower a road over Wolverton Creek between Sections 9 and 10 on 130th AVE. They felt the Engineering study showed that the slight road raise (1.27') in the spillway area did not cause an upstream effect. The neighboring landowner disagreed. A motion to leave the road as is failed.

The Board reviewed bids for repairing the 60" dia. reinforced concrete pipe on Project No. 32, Hawley EDA Diversion. The pipe has been failing since it was initially installed in 1998. The BRRWD, the City of Hawley, Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.), and Hancock Concrete Products, Inc., have agreed to split the repair costs. The BRRWD is still waiting for a price from Hancock for the replacement culvert. Intentions are to try to get the work done this fall.

Considerable discussion took place regarding a petition filed for a new lateral to Clay County Ditch No. 51 in the Kragnes area. The hearing was held on 7/10/12. The BRRWD's Attorney, Tami L. Norgard, Vogel Law Firm, attended the meeting to advise the Board regarding this matter. The next step, which was approved, was an Order to continue with project development including the Engineer's Detailed Survey Report and the appointment of Viewers to assess benefits and damages. The project is somewhat controversial, as neighboring landowners feel there are a number of alternatives that would provide better drainage at a lower cost.

Other business included:

- The Board approved permits to the John Williams for pattern tiling in the N½, Section 33, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; Rick Brakke for pattern tiling in the SE¼, Section 8, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County; the City of Moorhead for Phase 2-Horizon Shores detention pond and storm sewer collection system located in Section 15, Moorhead Township, Clay County; Clay County Highway Department and Joseph Pederson for an approach/culvert off CSAH No. 31 in Section 35, Humboldt Township; Thomas Bergren for pattern tiling in Section 28, Riceville Township, Becker County; Clay County Highway Department to add a 60" dia. culvert to a protected waterway on CSAH No. 15; Lyle Hovland for pattern tiling the W½, Section 15, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County; Kirk Watt for pattern tiling in the SE¼, Section 2, Moland Township, Clay County; Kimm Dairy to install sediment control basins in Section 24, Tansem Township, Clay County; and Sabre Tower to install access road/culverts for WDAY radio towers in the SE¼, Section 28, Humboldt Township, Clay County.

- The Appraisers need to finish their work on two projects in Oakport Township, including the County Heritage Outlet Ditch and the Crystal Creek Flood Protection. The Board expects that the hearings could be held yet this fall.

- The Board received an update from Erik S. Jones, H.E., about the 50th AVE Drainage/Flood Control Improvements. The City is interested in installing a long term drainage outlet along the south side of 50th AVE. Other work will include levee improvements that will tie in with other work being done by the City of Moorhead. The City would like the BRRWD to complete their portion of the project development this winter, so that bids can be opened next spring. The City has petitioned the BRRWD for the projects.

- The BRRWD authorized repairs to Project No. 63, Grove Lake Outlet. The inlet structure has separated from the drainage conduit. There are also some expected blockages in the pipe that will be removed.

- The Board discussed the status of the Manston Slough Restoration project. The Appraisers made adjustments to their Report following the 5/22/12 hearing. The office still has some work to do on the
remaining easement options. Once that work is completed, the final hearing will be continued. The Board would like to advertise for construction bids this fall.

- The BRRWD signed a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grant agreement for the Oakport Flood Mitigation project, totaling $777,500. The funding was promised to the BRRWD earlier this year. The money will be used for completion of Phase 3C. The contractor should be paving Wall Street yet this week. This winter, the Board will look for the additional $5 million needed to complete Phase 4, which is the Broadway levee. Ulteig Engineers, Inc., is working on the levee certification east of the Oakport Coulee. Once this portion of the levee is certified, the homeowners in this area should qualify for lower flood insurance premiums.

- The Board discussed pending repairs for Clay County Ditch No. 10. Erik Jones estimated that the repair costs at approximately $100,000. The project account currently does not have enough funding. The Board agreed to stage the work as funding becomes available. Assessments will be made to benefited landowners.

- Progress is being made on the Reep Lake Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) project in Audubon Township, Becker County. Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, met with the remaining landowners on 8/10/12, and they reached an agreement regarding the wetland pool elevation, the flood control pool elevation, and easement terms. Some additional survey work is needed.

- The annual fall tour is scheduled for 9/20/12, starting from the new BRRWD office at 1:30 PM.

- A field review has been completed for the new watershed district area in Otter Tail County. The area was added on 4/25/12 by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The eastern boundary to date has always been a hydrologic boundary. Field work was conducted to delineate the boundary in terms of legal parcels that can be identified by the Auditor's Office. A hearing will be scheduled in Rothsay to review the boundary with the affected landowners. Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties are still working on appointing additional managers.

- The Board discussed budgets for the upcoming 9/10/12 budget hearing. The BRRWD had been levying a district wide tax for a variety of projects/programs. Discussion took place regarding River Keepers funding. It's anticipated that the 2013 levees will include the new watershed area in Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties.

- A meeting is scheduled on 8/14/12 for representatives from the DNR to discuss a permit for cleaning portions of Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee. H.E. has prepared a comprehensive plan regarding all of the work that's needed for this waterway, which includes bufferstrips, side inlets, and channel restoration. One of the next steps will be for the BRRWD to develop an assessment area to help finance the work. The BRRWD has received grants totaling approximately $500,000 from the BWSR for Phases 1 and 2 of the project development. The comprehensive plan's estimated costs are in excess of $5 million.

- The Board discussed the status of the new office building. The Board reviewed quotes for the new office furniture. The also agreed to file a Conditional Use Permit with the City of Barnesville for a lighted monument sign. Hopes are that we can move into the new office in September 2012.

- Managers Breanna Paradeis Kobiela (Clay County) and John Hanson (Becker County) have been reappointed. The three-year terms will run from 9/01/12-8/31/15.

- The Board approved payment of bills totaling $241,263.03.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, August 27, 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.