NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 18, 2012
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“Local Watershed Holds Annual Meeting”

At their 1/14/13 annual meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), elected their 2013 officers and appointed their consultants. Acting as officers for 2013 are:

- Gerald L. Van Amburg, Clay County-Chair
- Breanna L. Paradeis-Kobiela, Clay County-Vice Chair
- Curtis M. Nelson, Clay County-Treasurer
- John E. Hanson, Becker County-Secretary

Other Managers include Roger G. Ellefson, Wilkin County, Troy Larson, Wilkin County, and Peter Fjestad, Otter Tail County.

The Board renewed one-year contracts with Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) who provides engineering and administrative services for the District. Proposals for 2013 were also reviewed and accepted from Vogel Law Firm for legal services and from Harold Rotunda, Certified Public Accountant (CPA) for auditing services. The Board also renewed a two-year contract with Joel D. Carlson for legislative lobbyist services.

Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute attended the meeting to furnish information regarding their Red River Basin Decision Information Network (www.rrbdin.org). The goal of the project is to develop a comprehensive decision support system for the Red River Basin that will include information on projects, news, and a suite of innovative and interactive web-based tools for local land resources managers and the public. Some of the tools include a flood forecast display, regional drought decision support, LiDAR portal, LiDAR Viewer, River Watch Water Quality Database, Project Planning Tool (PPT), Social Networking, Water Quality Decision Support, and an Integrated Warning Team. The PPT is being developed for all Watersheds within the Red River Basin except the BRRWD. The project is funded by the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) and the BRRWD is not a member.

The PPT is a decision support system that incorporates new web-based technologies, geospatial information, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to help align a local district's strategic watershed planning processes with the Clean Water Act Section 404 permit evaluation process. The tool will help identify and define problems/projects and their upstream watershed. It will also locate areas of greater or lesser permit complexity and analyze potential project environmental concerns. The depression analysis will identify potential floodwater storage areas and hydrology/time of concentration will model problems and project locations. Various reports will be generated. Fritz asked if the Board would be interested in acquiring the PPT for the BRRWD. The Board asked about the cost and Fritz indicated he would like to meet with H.E. representatives to determine how much work is already done. To date, the cost for individual watersheds has been approximately $20,000. Fritz encouraged Managers and the general public to visit their website for more information on the various tools. The Board will consider the PPT at a future meeting. Fritz said the project is scheduled for completion in June, 2013.

Other items included:

- The Board approved permits to: Clay County Highway Department for the reconstruction of the intersection at County State Aid Highway Nos. 31 and 33 and Trunk Highway No. 10 in the City of Hawley; Gordon Kassenborg for 138.8 acres of pattern tiling in the NE¼, Section 18, Moland Township, Clay County, with a control structure/lift station, outletting into Clay County Ditch No. 35, to which the property is assessed; and Excel Energy on behalf of CAPX2020 in conjunction with their 345kv transmission line for the installation of 11 temporary approaches needed to construct the transmission line. Where necessary, culverts will be installed.
The Board scheduled a special meeting for Wednesday, January 30th at 10:00 AM in the Barnesville office to meet with representatives from H.E. to review a Permit Data Management Suite. Last year, the BRRWD processed 165 permit applications and it is anticipated permit applications will increase this year due to the district's enlargement. The suite can be customized for individual Watershed Districts. Brian Fischer, GIS Senior Project Manager, H.E., will facilitate the demonstration.

The Board signed contracts for Project No. 73, Country Heritage Ditch Improvements. The bids were opened last fall and the low bidder was Steven Johnson Excavation, Ottertail MN. Due to the timing of the Board order, appeal period, and weather conditions last fall, the work will be completed in the spring of 2013. The contracts as prepared by Ulteig Engineers, Inc. were signed.

The Board accepted the Appraisers' Report for Project No. 71, City of Moorhead 50th AVE S Flood Control. The total benefits determined by the Appraisers are $6,050,000. The City of Moorhead is anxious for the BRRWD to hold the project hearing as they would like to advertise for construction bids early this spring.

The Board accepted the Appraisers' Report for Project No. 70, Crystal Creek/McCann's Subdivision Flood Control Levees. The temporary levees were made permanent following the 2011 spring flood. Total benefits are $319,668. The office will schedule the required hearing.

An update on easement issues was given for Project No. 56, Manston Slough Restoration. The office is working on mailing revised options to effected landowners. The project schedule is:

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>Early February, 2013</td>
<td>Finish signing/extending easement options, continuation of the final hearing, and Board order. Start 30-day appeal period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-March, 2013</td>
<td>Open construction bids and make payments to landowners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring, 2013</td>
<td>Begin construction as soon as conditions permit.</td>
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The Conservation Partners Legacy grant dollars ($350,000) must be used for construction no later than 6/30/13. The Board discussed their goals for 2013. It is hoped the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project, Manston Slough Restoration, and the Georgetown Levee Improvements will be completed.

The office sent a letter on 1/09/13 to Kent Lokkesmoe, Director of Capital Investment, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the funding needed to complete the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project. At this time, an additional $5,620,000 is needed. Total project cost will be approximately $34.9 million. The funding will be dependent upon the Legislature having a 2013 bonding bill and how much money is allocated to this project.

The Board accepted the Viewers' Report for the redetermination of benefits associated with Project No. 42, Clay County Ditch No. 67. The only change affects one property west of County Road No. 96 in Oakport Township. The hearing will be held in conjunction with the hearing for Project No. 70 as the two project areas overlap.

The office met with Corey Elmer, Attorney, Vogel Law Firm, regarding the status of easements needed to complete the Georgetown Levee Improvement Project. To date, seven easements are still needed. The office is working with Bob Schmidt & Sons, house movers from Kindred ND, on moving several houses that are in the proposed dike alignment.

The Board discussed a log jam complaint on the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Section 9, Elmwood Township, Clay County. G&G Farms, Inc. has submitted a bid for $2,000 to remove
and dispose of the debris. H.E. personnel have inspected the site. The Board authorized the work.

- The next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17, 2013 at 1:30 PM in the BRRWD office. The meeting agenda will focus on flood damage reduction.

- A hearing has been scheduled for Thursday, January 31, 2013 at 7:00 PM in the Rothsay High School gymnasium to define the eastern boundary for the newly added area to the Watershed District in Otter Tail County. Affected landowners will be mailed the hearing notice and their respective maps.

- The Board approved the 2011 Annual Report. By law, the report must be filed with the DNR and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

- The Board spent considerable time discussing the RRWMB. Last summer, the Clay County Board of Commissioners filed a letter asking the BRRWD to consider holding a meeting with the RRWMB and the four counties in the Watershed District to discuss whether the BRRWD should rejoin this organization. Earlier that request was tabled pending the addition of two new Managers, who have now been appointed. After considerable discussion, the Board decided to table the issue until the next meeting. This allows the office time to complete the necessary work on the Manston Slough easements.

- The Board approved payment of bills totaling $129,148.36. The Board's current financial balance is $255,471.21. On 12/10/12, the Board had a negative balance of $69,702.62. In 2012, the Board had income receipts of $8,303,302.48. The estimated Accounts Receivable for 2013 is $5,282,195. The majority of the tax revenue is received in June and November.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, will be held on Monday, January 28, 2013, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.