NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 29, 2014
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Bruce E. Albright, 218-354-7710

“Local Watershed Plans Meetings”

At their January 27, 2014, meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) planned for several upcoming meetings. Bruce Albright, Office Administrator, said winter is a good time to meet with local landowners regarding their concerns/issues. As of right now, the following meetings have been scheduled:

- February 3, Barnesville Township Drainage Study, 7:00 PM, Barnesville
- February 12, Riverton Township/Clay County Ditch (C.D.) No. 12 Landowner Informational Meeting, 9:00 AM, Barnesville
- February 13, Mediation Project Team, 1:30 PM, Barnesville
- February 19, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)/Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Status Meeting, 1:30 PM, Barnesville
- February 20, Project No. 76, Wilkin C.D. No. 31, Lateral No. 8-Establishment Preliminary Hearing, 7:00 PM, Courtroom, Breckenridge
- March 19-20, Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Legislative Breakfast, St. Paul
- March 25-26, Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) Annual Conference, Detroit Lakes
- March 28, Annual Meeting with Advisory Committee, 2:00 PM, Barnesville

Albright said the office will continue to schedule meetings, including an informational meeting for landowners on Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1, where they experienced flooding problems in the summer of 2013, and an informational meeting with the Steering Committee on the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Project.

Other business included:

- Receipt of the Viewer’s Report for Project No. 74, Establishment of Lateral No. 3 to Clay C.D. No. 51. The Engineers’ estimated costs are $190,160. The Viewers found $150,044 in benefits. The Board will meet with legal counsel to determine what the next steps might be.
- Scheduled a meeting with local Representatives to discuss funding needed to finish the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project (approximately $5.26 million).
- Spent considerable time discussing the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Flood Diversion Project. Wilkin County Planning and Zoning has asked for comments regarding several factors they are considering which might include possible amendments to their zoning ordinance regarding flood water storage projects. Statements are due by 01/31/14. The BRRWD is concerned that regulations could be put in place that would hamper their efforts with a variety of projects. BRRWD’s Mission Statement is “to alleviate flooding and to manage the water resources of the District in a manner that best protects this valuable resource.” The second issue pertains to a letter the Diversion Board of Authority received from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). They note that Minnesota Law, like Federal Law, prohibits a governmental
unit from taking any action on a project, including both construction of all or any part of the project and the acquisition of property in anticipation of construction, if the action will prejudice the ultimate decision on the project until the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been completed and found to be adequate. The DNR expressed concerns regarding the agreement entered into by the Diversion Authority with the City of Oxbow concerning the construction of a ring levee. Clay County, the City of Moorhead, and the BRRWD all have representatives who serve on the Diversion Authority. Gerald L. Van Amburg, the BRRWD’s designee, said the letter is being reviewed by the Diversion Authority’s legal counsel.

- Approved payment of bills totaling $16,517.96, which includes a $200 donation to both the Becker County and Wilkin County Soil and Water Conservation Districts for the Area 1 Envirothon.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, will be held on Monday, February 10, 2014, 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.