

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 20, 2014
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"Local Watershed Reaches Agreement with Skree Township"

At their 11/10/14 held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), reached an agreement with Skree Township officials and landowners in Sections 27 and 34 regarding culverts and drainage in that area. Skree Township has been working with local landowners to rectify a long standing issue regarding local drainage, diking, culvert locations, and wetland issues. The proposed agreement, which is acceptable to both landowners, is to remove an 18" diameter centerline culvert through 110th AVE S and place an 18" diameter culvert in a field approach on the south side of 110th AVE S at the same elevation as the removed culvert. A 12" diameter culvert currently in the field approach will be removed. Weather permitting, the work was intended to be done yet this fall. Wade Opsahl, Technician, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI), will verify the approach culvert elevations. Lynn Foss, Water Resources Management Technician, Clay Soil and Water Conservation District, has also agreed to the proposal.

Other business included:

- Discussed Permit Application No. 14-147 from Briks Farms to increase the sizing of a culvert in County Road (C.R.) No. 176 along the north line of the W1/2 of Section 22, Manston Township, Wilkin County. Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, measured the area culvert sizings on 11/06/14. There are four culverts downstream of the proposed project location before the water reaches the South Branch of the Buffalo River. The Board agreed to table the application until a meeting can be held this winter with all affected downstream landowners.
- Approved permits to the Minnesota Department of Transportation to relocate a portion of Trunk Highway No. 75 near Kent. The project is located in Section 2, McCauleyville Township, Wilkin County; Skree Township to do the work referenced in the earlier discussed agreement; Bradley Renzo to install a driveway and culvert in the Amber Waves Estates Subdivision located in Section 3, Oakport Township, Clay County; Holy Cross Township to replace an existing 48" diameter corrugated metal pipe (CMP) with a 60" diameter CMP, in 140th AVE S between Sections 8 and 17; Goltz Farm, LLC, for 282 acres of pattern tiling in the N1/2 of Section 8, Tanberg Township, Wilkin County, outletting to Wilkin County Ditch (C.D.) No. 44 to which the property is assessed; and Leland Erickson to install random tiling to drain low areas into a natural waterway, eventually to Hay Creek in the S1/2, Section 31, Cuba Township, Becker County.
- Discussed a drainage complaint along C.R. No. 54 in Section 27, Alliance Township, Clay County. Spring Prairie Colony was rerouting water flows in that area and plugged a culvert through the road. The upstream landowner complained. The Colony agreed to correct the situation.
- Noting that specifically named individual BRRWD Managers have been dropped from a federal lawsuit filed by Roger Minch pertaining to drainage issues in Sections 28 and 34, Kragnes Township, Clay County. Mr. Minch is working with the BRRWD regarding a lateral to Clay C.D. No 51 to provide drainage for that area. Erik S. Jones, Engineer, HEI, will file the preliminary survey report for that project at the 11/24/14 BRRWD meeting.
- The next step for the restoration of Whiskey Creek in Section 14, Connelly Township, Wilkin County, will be to work with individual landowners regarding easements required to complete that project. The BRRWD also needs to file for a Conditional Use Permit through the Wilkin County Environmental Office. No issues regarding wetlands were noted during a field review.

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- Discussed the status of the Manston Slough Restoration project. The contractor has basically completed all of the required work. There is still some seeding and erosion control measures to install yet this fall, weather permitting. The contractor will probably need to come back next spring to do some additional cleanup work. The office will be billing the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for their share of the approved costs.
- The office is still working with a number of agencies to get clearance to remove sediment from “east tributary” regarding the Whiskey Creek Tributaries project. The plan was to remove sediment from the channel in Section 14, Barnesville Township, Clay County. Some additional ditch cleaning is also needed along 140th AVE S to address concerns relayed to the office by Scott and Betty Anderson.
- The office is working with Vogel Law Firm to clear issues pertaining to one remaining house buyout in the City of Georgetown. Once that home is acquired, the hazardous material abatement can be conducted and the house can be demolished. This will allow for the contractor to come back to finish the levee work in that area. The DNR grant for that project has been extended until 12/31/15, if the work needs to occur next year.
- William Nichol Excavating, Inc. has been hired to do sediment removal from Clay-Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1. Work will be downstream of County State Aid Highway No. 11 in Section 30, Alliance Township, Clay County.
- The next Mediation Project Team (PT) meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 11, 2014, at 1:30 PM in the BRRWD office, Barnesville. The PT is currently working on a number of projects, including a comprehensive project for Stony Creek, the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Wilkin County, the Barnesville Township Drainage Area, and aspects of the new Farm Bill pertaining to wetland restoration projects that can be used for flood water retention. A meeting was held with the Natural Resources Conservation Service on 11/06/14 to discuss aspects of the new Farm Bill.
- Reviewed an analysis completed by Erik S. Jones pertaining to an outlet fee on Becker C.D. Nos. 5 and 15 regarding the City of Detroit Lakes’ possible use of these two drainage systems for their Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF). A couple of preliminary meetings have been held with the City to discuss their options. If the City chooses to possibly outlet their WWTF into the BRRWD, then they will need to petition the BRRWD for that use. A hearing would be held with all of the affected ditch system landowners. Statutes allow for payment of an outlet fee. Jones’ analysis looked at an outlet fee of approximately \$15,000. He also did some calculations regarding the average annual run-off and the total volume of discharge from the WWTF. His analysis also looked at the average annual maintenance cost for each drainage system, equating the additional flow contribution to the flow calculation results could add additional benefits to Becker C.D. No. 5 in the amount of \$86,201.75 and for Becker C.D. No. 15 in the amount of \$102,082.75 for a total of \$188,284.50. In the future, the City would also be assessed their share of the annual maintenance costs in addition to the proposed outlet fee. The last consideration made was the fact that the WWTF would have to build enough on-site storage to hold their discharges if there was downstream flooding. The Board felt that Jones’ analysis was fair and that the information should be furnished to the City of Detroit Lakes for their consideration.
- The office will be working with Eric Dodds, AE2S, regarding the right-of-entry (ROE) forms needed for the Army Corps of Engineers to access four cemetery sites in the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Diversion staging area. Access is needed for cultural resources surveys. The Board approved seeking the ROE permissions at the 10/27/14 meeting.
- Noting that a meeting with the Steering and Advisory Committees regarding the Whiskey Creek pilot area and the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program is tentatively

scheduled for Wednesday, December 3, 2014, at 9:30 AM at the Wilkin County Environmental Office, Breckenridge. Attendees will discuss the 2015 budgets, workload, project status, and Dr. Karlyn Eckman, University of Minnesota, will discuss some of the preliminary Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices survey results.

- Breanna L. Kobiela and John E. Hanson were appointed as delegates to the upcoming Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) Annual Meeting to be held in Alexandria on December 4-6, 2014. Peter V. Fjestad will be the alternate delegate.
- Pay Request No. 1 in the amount of \$130,766.50 was approved to Reiner Contracting, Inc. and their work associated with the Buffalo River Restoration project in Hawley. The work is progressing well.
- Reviewed correspondence from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as to whether or not the BRRWD has to be identified as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System subject to regulation under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System requirements of Minnesota Rule 7090 for storm water discharges. The BRRWD needs to respond within 30 days as to whether or not they meet the criteria specified for storm water regulation or an explanation of why we do not meet the criteria detailing that the BRRWD does not own or operate a storm water conveyance system.
- Albright met with Luke Jordan, North Country Trail Planner, regarding a possible hiking trail that would connect Maplewood State Park with Fort Abercrombie. One of the trail alignments they are considering is the use of the right-of-way (R/W) along Wilkin C.D. No. 6A. More information should be available early in the new year. The Association would be responsible for contacting the affected landowners to obtain the necessary permissions.
- Starting in November, the Board of Managers will implement a new agenda format for the second meeting of the month. We will take approximately one hour to cover necessary items relating to permits, payment of bills, project updates, and audience questions. The second part of the meeting will be devoted to discussion of upcoming issues, etc. At the November meeting, we will talk about the 2014 MAWD resolutions and projects for the South Branch of the Buffalo River.
- Approved the payment of bills, totaling \$321,378.80.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD is scheduled for Monday, November 24, 2014, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org. The office will be closed on November 27-28, 2014, in observance of the Thanksgiving Day holiday.