NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 13, 2015
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“Watershed Reviews Several Permits”

At their meeting held on Monday, April 13, 2015, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), reviewed six permit applications, approving the following: Xcel Energy for installation of a 4” natural gas main line under Clay County Ditch (C.D.) No. 41 in north Moorhead; Jerry Janssen for the installation of sediment control basins designed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the SW1/4, Section 24, and in the SE1/4, Section 23, Humboldt Township, Clay County; Ivan Nelson for the installation of 520 acres of pattern tiling in parts of Sections 29 and 30, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County; Brian Strawsell for the installation of an approach/culvert for a building site in Winnipeg Junction, Section 33, Highland Grove Township, Clay County; Cory Heng for the installation of an approach/culvert for field access in the NE1/4, Section 26, Elkton Township, Clay County. Additional information about the BRRWD permit system and permit applications can be found online at: www.brrwd.org/permits.

The Board recognized Roger Ellefson’s 41 years of service to the BRRWD in light of his recent passing on April 6, 2015. Chairman Van Amburg commented that Roger will be remembered as an outstanding Watershed District Manager, who had a vast knowledge of the Watershed District.

Other business included:

- Discussed a drainage complaint in the SE1/4, Section 22, Atherton Township, Wilkin County. An adjacent landowner blocked a ditch that drains south from the NE1/4. The Board directed Albright to invite the landowners to a future meeting to discuss the complaint.

- Discussed a drainage complaint in the NE1/4, Section 7, Manston Township, Wilkin County. A BRRWD permit was approved to regrade approximately 0.75 miles of the County Road ditch. The permit was subject to Wilkin County Highway Department and downstream landowner approval, which were not obtained before the work was done. The downstream landowner was concerned that a fenceline ridge was removed during the cleanout which could allow water to flow onto his property. The Board directed Albright to send a letter stating that the permit requirements have not been met. The Board also authorized an elevation survey of the fenceline and recommended the downstream landowner obtain a permit to replace the fenceline berm.

- Carolyn Swenson, a landowner in the NE1/4, Section 6, Manston Township, Wilkin County, discussed her concerns with a project to help prevent erosion on her property. The BRRWD has worked with her along with other agencies over the last several years to find a solution to the erosion problems on her property, but she now feels that the proposed project will not fix the problem and will be too expensive. She no longer wants to continue with a project.

- Noting that Albright has been working with landowners on Project No. 75, Wilkin C.D. No. 31-Lateral. Easement agreements have been mailed to the landowners, and Albright has also met with some of the landowners with hopes of having easements signed in the next couple of weeks.

- Noting that the Board is hoping to receive funding from the State of Minnesota to complete Phase 4 of Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation. Approximately $5.66 million is needed to complete the project. Also, the Board is working with the Audubon Society to seed native grasses along the Red River, on the west side of Broadway.
• Reviewed Project No. 39, Georgetown Levees, and the progress on the condemnation process for the Greywind property. The appraisal has been completed and our attorney will file the required documents.

• Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2015, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville Watershed Office. Active projects include the South Branch of the Buffalo River, Barnesville Township Area Drainage Study, Haick/Peppel Wetland Reserve Program Site, and the Reep Lake site.

• Noting that the cleanout work on Project No. 23, Becker C.D. No. 15, through the Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge will begin as soon as the frost is gone. The contractor attempted to start the work in March. This work will also continue to the south side of the Refuge.

• Discussed the Stony Creek Comprehensive Project. The soil borings have been completed and are being analyzed. The Board reviewed some design enhancements that are being considered and authorized additional channel surveying on Stony Creek, which is needed to continue the project development. Landowner Sherwood Peterson discussed his concerns with using productive farm land for flood storage.

• Noting that the Viewers met with landowners on 04/07/15 at an open house and the Final Hearing was held for the Redetermination of Benefits for Clay C.D. Nos. 9, 32 and 33 on 04/09/15. A landowner questioned the benefitting area for C.D. No. 32, which will be reviewed before the next Board meeting.

• Discussed the Otter Tail River Restoration project that is being considered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. One project would include about 1,500 feet of channel and bank restoration with some of the work possibly being completed by the Wilkin County Highway Department in exchange for their using some of the material on a nearby road construction project.

• Approved the payment of bills, totaling $143,215.24.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, April 27, 2015, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville, MN. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.