NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 29, 2019
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Bruce E. Albright, Administrator, 218-354-7710

"Diversion Engineers Discuss "Plan C"

At their regular meeting held on May 13, 2019, at 7:00 PM, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), received an overview of several alternatives considered by the Diversion Authority (DA). Robert Zimmerman, Engineer, City of Moorhead, and Gregg Thielman, Engineer, Houston-Moore Group, gave a presentation regarding several proposed alignment alternatives, focusing primarily on Engineer Charlie Anderson's Plan (Plan C). Timothy Fox, Attorney, made a brief statement in support of Plan C and provided the Board with a handout Anderson prepared to address the DA's claims regarding Plan C. Following the presentation and an Executive Session to confer with legal counsel, the BRRWD approved a motion to request an extension of the 60-day permit rule deadline from the DA to give the Board time to meet with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the DNR's maximum flood pool elevations and potential impacts to Minnesota properties, to finalize the BRRWD's permit conditions, and to meet with the BRRWD's attorney regarding the status of the DNR contested case hearing. The Board should be prepared to act on the DA's permit application at their 6/24/19 regular meeting if they can complete the three listed items. The DA will review the BRRWD's time extension request at their 5/23/19 meeting.

The Managers also reviewed Zimmerman's responses and President Leitch's comments regarding several questions the Board posed to the DA regarding their permit application at the 4/22/19 Board meeting.

Other business included:

- Approved the BRRWD's monthly financial statements, including the project account balance sheet, administrative disbursements, summary of income, and the accounts receivable report. Cash on hand is $2,552,632.77. Administrative disbursements this month equal $22,338.80, and for the year, total $110,620.48. Current 2019 accounts receivable are $6,088,936. Total income this year is $1,190,837.01. Income received since the 4/08/19 meeting totaled $46,072.62: $39,863.64 from Kristi Bixby for the Blilie property sale associated with Project No. 79, Wolverton Creek Restoration, $514.64 from Otter Tail County for delinquent property/ditch taxes, $5,469.34 from Midwest Bank interest, and $225 from Houston Engineering, Inc. for their monthly office rent. Harold Rotunda, BRRWD Auditor, has started his work on the 2018 audit. The Board approved payment of the bills in the amount of $290,864.48.

- Approved permits to Elkton Township to replace damaged and washed-out culverts at three sites with the same size structures and elevations in Sections 15, 34, and 35; M&J Farms, Inc. to install random tile following existing ditches in the NW¼, Section 18, Highland Grove Township, Clay County, outletting onto their property and to a United States Fish and Wildlife Service wetland area, subject to our standard tiling disclaimer; Ross Malakowsky to replace existing clay tile in the N½, Section 29, Highland Grove Township, Clay County, with similar sized new tile, outletting to the 43rd AVE N road ditch and low area where the existing tile currently drains, eventually draining to County Ditch (C.D.) No. 16, to which the property is assessed, subject to our standard tiling disclaimer; Moorhead Public Service to directional bore a new electrical service line in the SE½SW¼, Section 21, Oakport Township, Clay County, near the Crystal Creek Subdivision, subject to our standard utility disclaimer and the recommendation that they work with the City of Moorhead Engineering Department to ensure that the proposed work is coordinated with the City's future permanent flood protection projects for that area; CV Properties to construct a new gravel road (79th AVE N) with ditches, graveled trail, and stormwater pond, and to regrade 80th AVE N and the south road ditch in the NE¼NE¼, Section 10, Oakport Township, Clay County, for a future 30-acre subdivision in the northeast corner of Section 10, located at the intersection of 80th AVE
N and County Road No. 95 (40th ST), subject to County and Township approval to work within their road right-of-way.

- Approved Change Order No. 2 for Project No. 79, Wolverton Creek Restoration, in the amount of $14,103 for increased seeding and mulching, increased quantities for spoil leveling in Section 10, Wolverton Township, and increased topsoil stripping quantities for adjusting the channel alignment. The contractor plans to restart work the week of May 13.

- Awarded the construction contract for the Wilkin-Otter Tail Judicial Ditch No. 2 repair to States Borders Construction, Inc., Graceville, MN, with the low bid of $228,884. The Engineer's project cost estimate was $375,000. The contractor plans to start work in late July/early August.

- Noted that the One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee is scheduled to meet on 5/29/19 at 10:30 AM in the BRRWD Office.

- Authorized Staff to send a letter to landowners in Section 7, Foxhome Township, Wilkin County, advising them to stop adding to the Wilkin C.D. No. 4A spoil bank along their property in accordance with a 2017 "verbal agreement" that both sides of the ditch would remain the same elevation following the County's retrofit.

- Scheduled a landowner informational meeting on Tuesday, June 4, 2018, at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD Office, to discuss possible repairs for Clay C.D. No. 55. Staff will send notices to the affected landowners.

- Approved a motion to adopt the revised draft BRRWD Rules as of 5/16/19 and to distribute them for a 45-day public comment period. A public hearing has been scheduled for July 2, 2019, 7:00 PM, BRRWD office. The Board plans to adopt the final Rules at their 7/8/19 meeting. The draft Rules are available for review on the BRRWD's Website, listed below.

- Approved the 2019 International Water Institute water quality monitoring contract for $26,103.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, May 28, 2019, at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville, MN. The meeting date was changed in observance of the Memorial Day Holiday. All meetings are open to the public. For more information about the BRRWD, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.