"Another Lengthy Meeting for Local Watershed"

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), spent four hours at their 4/23/07 meeting discussing landowner concerns, reviewing problems caused by the recent rainfall, and going through their three-page agenda.

They spent time with a local landowner, who worked with the BRRWD in the fall of 2005 to construct a ringdike in Section 25, Kragnes Township, Clay County. The landowner was concerned about the cost overruns. The initial cost estimate was $19,524, and the final cost was $32,806. Ringdikes are traditionally funded 50% State, 25% landowner, and 25% BRRWD. The Board had asked the landowner to contribute an additional $4,022. A suggested compromise was to split this balance between the BRRWD, landowner, and Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.). The offer will be made in writing if all parties agree.

The Board made an Order to continue with the development of Project No. 61, Clay County Ditch No. 11N-Improvement. The Preliminary Hearing was held on 4/19/07. The Order included combining the project with the Clay County Highway Department's plans to regrade CSAH No. 8.

Four landowners questioned 2007 assessments for Clay County Ditch Nos. 20 and 22. At last fall's budget hearing, the Board levied a $10,000 assessment on each system. The landowners felt that the assessments were excessive, especially for Ditch No. 22. The ditch system benefiting area only has six landowners, and the ditch has been relatively maintenance free. The Board felt that since the County has already mailed out the tax statements, it was too late to change either assessment.

Seven landowners once again discussed a proposed hog facility in the E1/2, Section 20, Skree Township, Clay County. The Conditional Use Permit hearing before Clay County Planning and Zoning is scheduled for 5/15/07. The Board reviewed pictures taken over the weekend showing water standing on the property. Landowners have concerns regarding possible groundwater contamination. The BRRWD will investigate a complaint regarding ditching activities on the property that occurred in the fall of 2006. No permits were issued for work in this area.

Three landowners questioned the status of the Grove Lake Outlet in northwestern Otter Tail County. Erik Jones, H.E., discussed the progress of his review. Several options are being considered. The lake is approximately 5 feet above the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Ordinary High Water elevation. The landowners felt that it would be satisfactory if the lake could be lowered 2' to 3'. This would also help decrease project costs. H.E. is expected to file their full report at the 5/14/07 meeting.

Considerable discussion occurred once again regarding the excavation quantities for the establishment of Clay County Ditch No. 68 in the City of Glyndon. According to the contractor's calculations, he moved approximately three times as much dirt as shown on the plans. The Board felt the easiest way to resolve this issue would be for all parties (BRRWD/H.E./contractor) to reach a compromise. H.E. will state their final position regarding this issue at the 5/14/07 meeting.

Other business included:

- Approved permits to: Steve Holubok to lower a culvert in a field approach along 190th ST S in the NE1/4, Section 6, Humboldt Township, Clay County; David P. Johnson to install four cattle/machinery crossings in the SE1/4SW1/4, Section 3, Holmesville Township, Becker County; Aggregate Industries, Inc., to develop Pit 154- Olson in the SE1/4, Section 20, Hawley Township, Clay County; Xcel Energy to install a gas distribution line to the Brookdale Baptist Church crossing 14th ST S in the NW1/4, Section 28, Moorhead Township, Clay County; the City of
Moorhead for the reconstruction of 15th AVE N between 28th ST and 34th ST; Hitterdal Hogs, LLC, to install a driveway and site improvements in the NW1/4, Section 30, Goose Prairie Township, Clay County; and the City of Moorhead for the Horizon Shores Park Site Improvements in Section 15, Moorhead Township, Clay County.

- Noting that the easement option has been mailed to The Nature Conservancy for the development of a retention site on their property in the E1/2, Section 28, Riverton Township, Clay County. The next step will be to start work with the Appraisers to assess benefits and damages. The Board will schedule the final hearing for sometime in June 2007.

- Noting that the next step for Manston Slough Restoration project will be to develop the easement options and start working with individual landowners.

- Noting that the BRRWD plans to sell 13 houses and associated outbuildings on Thursday, May 3, 2007, at 7:00 PM at Pifer's Auction and Realty, Moorhead. The BRRWD will schedule a meeting with Ulteig Engineers, Inc. (UEI), regarding the status of the dike alignment survey.

- Noting that the office has prepared and forwarded a petition to the City of Moorhead for the relocation of parts of Clay County Ditch No. 47 in conjunction with their 34th ST interchange project.

- Noting that the repair work on Becker County Ditch No. 15 was finished last week. Spoil leveling and cleanup still need to be done.

- Noting that upcoming regional meetings have been scheduled in conjunction with the BRRWD's Comprehensive Planning. The Moorhead Region meeting will be held on 5/10/07 at 7:30 PM in the Dilworth Community Center. A Northern Region planning meeting is scheduled for 5/22/07 at 7:30 PM in the Georgetown Community Center. The office will mail out notices.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, May 14, 2007, at 8:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public. For more information regarding the BRRWD, please visit the BRRWD Website at www.brrwd.org.