"Citizens Voice Concerns About Rising Water Levels"

At the 5/11/09 meeting of the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), several complaints were filed regarding rising water levels. Landowners from Ranum Lake in Tansem Township along Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 34 said their house is threatened by the rising waters. The Lake doesn't appear to have an outlet. The Township road (280th ST S) off T.H. No. 34 is now underwater and blocked. The Board agreed to conduct an investigation regarding a possible outlet. The second group of landowners was from Becker County on LaBelle Lake. The BRRWD has been working with them since last fall to establish an outlet. An emergency declaration was made at the 4/27/09 meeting to hopefully speed up that process. Since then, we've learned that several landowners and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) are also concerned about rising water levels on Boyer Lake. The water levels are affecting T.H. No. 10. The Board amended their 4/27/09 motion to include Boyer Lake in the emergency declaration. The addition of Boyer Lake to the drainage area complicates the project design, since Boyer Lake would drain eventually into LaBelle Lake. A landowner on the Clay/Otter Tail County line also expressed concerns regarding rising water levels near T.H. No. 34. His problem can be more easily solved by raising his driveway. The Board said the District is plagued with rising water levels on wetlands and lakes that do not have outlets. Obviously, the BRRWD cannot install an outlet to every area that has a problem. We will work with landowners whose homes are being threatened, or if a major road system is in jeopardy.

Other business included:

- Agreed to hold a hearing regarding a redetermination of benefits for a landowner on Project No. 42, Clay County Ditch No. 67. The property that they acquired last year was assessed heavily during the 2000 project establishment because it was sliding into the coulee. The project corrected those problems. The owners feel that since the initial assessment has been paid, they should be treated the same as other landowners along the ditch for maintenance. A date for the hearing will be set.

- Approved permits to: Aaron Wetterlin for 79 acres of patterned tiling in the N1/2SW1/4, Section 10, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; Jerry Wetterlin to install 145 acres of patterned tiling in the SE1/4, Section 8, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; MNDOT to replace deteriorating end sections on a culvert under T.H. No. 10, which is an outlet for Becker County Ditch No. 5, located in Section 9, Audubon Township; Michael Morton to install a ringdike around his house on the Oakport Coulee/Red River of the North in Section 17, Oakport Township, Clay County, subject to County Planning and Zoning regulations; and the Wilkin County Highway Department to replace two 24" dia. culverts with one line of 36" dia. pipe between Sections 12 and 13, Wolverton Township.

- Noted that the bid letting for Project No. 61, Clay County Ditch No. 11 North will be held by the Clay County Highway Department on 5/26/09. To date, no appeals have been filed. The appeal period expires on 5/15/09.

- Noting that the office has signed the first easement option pertaining to the Manston Slough Restoration project. Time permitting, other options will be forwarded to landowners for their review and hopefully, approval.

- Noting that the Legislature is considering a $12 Million allocation through the bonding bill for the Oakport Flood Mitigation project. A sale of approximately eight houses will take place on 6/16/09 at Pifer's Auction and Realty, Moorhead. An open house will be held on 6/04/09 between 4:00 PM-7:00 PM.
• Noting that the Turtle Lake and Long Lake siphons are running. The Long Lake siphon was stopped for two weeks on 5/12/09 because the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources placed walleye fry in the lake. The Turtle Lake siphon continues to run.

• Noting that to date, the BRRWD has twenty candidates for Farmstead Ringdikes. Weather permitting, we have funds for one ringdike that need to be used by 6/30/09. Wade Opsahl, Technician, Houston Engineering, Inc., is conducting applicant interviews.

• Noting that a plan has been forwarded to the City of Hawley for their review to do temporary repairs for bank erosion along the Buffalo River on the north side of T.H. No. 10.

• Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on 5/28/09 at 7:30 PM in the MSUM Science Center east of Glyndon. Discussion topics will include the South Branch of the Buffalo River Restoration project in Wilkin County.

• Appointed Ross Aigner to replace Arne Peterson on the BRRWD's Advisory Committee. Clay County Commissioner Jon Evert was also added to the Committee.

• Accepted a proposal from Sheila Carlson regarding the 2009-2010 Barnesville River Watch Program. The Program is run in conjunction with the Barnesville High School, who contributes $2,000. The BRRWD's estimated cost is $8,408.

• Approved payment of bills, totaling $115,959.52

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, 2009, at 8:00 PM in the Barnesville office. The meeting date was changed from the traditional fourth Monday because of Memorial Day. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.