"Local Watershed Completes Sediment Modeling Study"

The 6/22/09 meeting of the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), took approximately five hours. They started the meeting by reviewing a sediment modeling study that was completed through an Environmental Protection Agency 319 Grant, which was obtained in February 2008. The funding was used to develop a computer model that will be used to set sediment water quality goals and practical measures to achieve these goals. Josh Kadrmas and Erik Jones, Engineers, Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.), presented the findings. The model looked at 218 pre-defined sub-basins and streams and was calibrated to several runoff events, using the United States Geological Survey (USGS) gauging station at Dilworth. The model also looked at trends regarding the types of crops that are typically grown within the BRRWD and analyzed several best management practices that could be implemented, including installation of filter strips, restoration of wetlands, or increasing the amount of permanent cover. The installation of filter strips could return sediment yields to the baseline 1970 condition. Additional monitoring will be needed to more closely calibrate the model, which will be updated and used in the future as needed to guide implementation efforts.

At 8:00 PM, the Board started their regular meeting agenda. They continued discussions regarding highwater problems east of Barnesville. Brad Hersch questioned the status of a study along Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 34, involving Ranum and Tansem Lakes. The Engineer indicated that he is still waiting for information from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) regarding culverts in T.H. No. 34. Options to address Hersch's concerns might be relocating his house, a buyout, or the installation of some type of tiled outlet in the south ditch of T.H. No. 34, which would drain the water west to a natural waterway that eventually drains to Whisky Creek.

Adrian Haugrud discussed a water problem he's having in Section 34, Humboldt Township, Clay County. The wetland near his buildings is now risen to a point where it is overtopping roads, and water is in his barn. He circulated photographs of the damage. The Board authorized H.E. to investigate a possible outlet.

The third complaint about highwater was filed by Muriel Grefsrud north of Hawley. The area in question was studied several years ago by the BRRWD. It appears that one outlet for lowering several wetlands in this area might be the Hawley EDA Diversion Ditch on the east side of County Road (C.R.) No. 33. The Board authorized H.E. to review their earlier findings and to make a recommendation to address the current problems.

Other business included:

- Filing of a complaint regarding diking completed north of Interstate-94 (I-94) along T.H. No. 9. The upstream landowners feel that the dike either needs to be opened or a better outlet should be installed so that the water can drain into the north ditch of I-94. The Board will follow up on the complaint.

- The Board viewed a presentation by Cliff McLain, Water Division Manager, City of Moorhead, regarding a possible study to look at the Buffalo Aquifer. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has applied for a Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) Grant for $945,000 to complete the study. The Buffalo Aquifer would be one of two study areas listed in the Next Generation in Water Supply and Management Pilot Studies. Other participants include the City of Moorhead, DNR, and USGS. The BRRWD agreed to support development of the management plan, offered their support for completion of the Clay County Atlas, agreed to be a participant in the action plan development, and will draft a letter of support for the LCCMR funding.
• Received a letter from Manager E. Robert Olson indicating that he will not seek another three-year term on the Board of Managers, BRRWD. Clay County is currently advertising for the position. Interested parties should contact their County Commissioner.

• Approved permits to: Tri-T Farms, Inc. to regrade 0.6 miles of ditch along the SE1/4, Section 12, Alliance Township, within the C.R. No. 57 right-of-way; Clay County Highway Department to replace two 24" dia. culverts with on single line of 36" dia. culvert on the quarterline in Section 12, Alliance Township, on the north side of C.R. No. 57; Hawley Township to lower/replace culverts along 50th AVE S between Sections 29 and 32 and Sections 27 and 34; Qwest Corporation to relocate a power line between Sections 29 and 32, Kurtz Township, in conjunction with the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 8/Project No. 61, Clay County Ditch No. 11N-Improvement Project; Thomas B. Friederichs to add 24" dia. culverts to two crossings along C.R. No. 55 in Section 18, Humboldt Township, Clay County; and Karlo J. Etten to install culverts and reslope the ditch along 140th ST to lower water levels in the NE1/4, Section 28, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County, to protect the Arne Peterson residence.

• Discussed the status of the LaBelle/Boyer Lake Outlet project. The Engineer is meeting next week with the Technical Evaluation Panel regarding possible wetland impacts. We're still waiting for a response from MNDOT as to whether or not they want the BRRWD to also design an outlet for Boyer Lake, which is affecting T.H. No. 10.

• Noting that the contractor is working on completing the Grove Lake Outlet in northwestern Otter Tail County. During the recent rainfall/flooding events, the outlet was closed to comply with the Operation and Maintenance and address downstream landowner concerns.

• Approved Pay Request No. 5 to William Nichol Excavating, Inc., for his work on Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1, Branch No. 4 Improvement/Extension. The utility company has relocated the required power lines.

• Noting that Midwest Construction, LLC, was awarded the contract for the CSAH No. 8/Clay County Ditch No. 11N Improvement Project. The pre-construction meeting was held on 6/16/09. They plan to begin their work after the Fourth of July.

• Noting that the site is still too wet to finish construction of the Riverton Township Retention project.

• Noting that a Technical Committee Meeting for the Oakport Flood Mitigation will be held on 6/30/09 at 1:30 PM in the Clay County Courthouse. Plans are to authorize advertisement for bids at the 7/13/09 BRRWD meeting for Phases 1B and 2. H.E. is reviewing the hydraulic modeling, completed by Ulteig Engineers, Inc., which reviews the project impacts in relationship to the Oakport Coulee and the Red River of the North.

• Noting a request from the Turtle Lake Association for Managers/Staff to attend their annual meeting, scheduled for 7/18/09 at 11:00 AM. This marks the 10th Anniversary since the siphon was installed.

• Noting that the BRRWD has received approximately 30 applications for farmstead ringdikes since the 2009 spring flood. It appears that the Natural Resources Conservation Service will have Environmental Quality Incentive Program funding available for those landowners who qualify.
• Discussed the City of Hawley's concerns pertaining to the deteriorating 60" dia. reinforced concrete pipe at the outlet of their diversion project. The City and BRRWD are waiting for recommendations from H.E. to address the problem.

• Noting that the next meeting of the BRRWD's Mediation Project Team will be held on 7/23/09 at 7:30 PM, in the MSUM Science Center.

• Scheduling of the continuation hearing for the Clay County Ditch No. 49 Redetermination of Benefits for 7/21/09 at 7:30 PM, in the Moorhead City Hall Council Chambers.

• Accepted a proposal from Jerdee Bridge Company to replace planking on a bridge at the outlet of Clay County Ditch No. 63 in the amount of $1,452.00.

• Noting that informational meetings regarding the BRRWD's Buffalo River Total Maximum Daily Load Study will be held on 6/23/09 in Hildebrand Hall, Barnesville, and 6/30/09 in the Hawley Community Center. The meetings are open to the public and are being coordinated with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

• Noting that Managers Hanson and Nelson plan to attend the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Summer Tour, hosted this year by the Shell Rock River Watershed District in Albert Lea, MN.

• Approved payment of bills totaling $24,368.25.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, July 13, 2009, at 8:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.