NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 26, 2008
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"Busy Night for Local Watershed"

It took four hours to address audience issues and to get through their meeting agenda for the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), at their meeting held on 6/23/08 in Barnesville. The rains earlier this month prompted some of the concerns.

The first order of business was to address a long-standing issue between neighbors regarding a flapgate on a culvert through County Road (C.R.) No. 182 on the west side of Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 9 in the NW1/4, Section 9, Manston Township, Wilkin County. The purpose of a culvert gate is to keep water in a waterway, rather than allowing it to flood adjacent lands. They are used quite frequently throughout the Red River Valley. After a thorough discussion, a motion was approved to allow the reinstallation of the gate to keep water in the South Branch of the Buffalo River. Objections regarding the decision were noted.

A drainage/erosion complaint in Section 19, Tansem Township, Clay County, was discussed. Field runoff is causing erosion along a driveway, and the sediment is filling up a downstream wetland. The farmer will be contacted.

Considerable discussion took place regarding repairs needed on Wilkin County Ditch No. 22-Lateral No. 2. Landowners signed a repair petition. Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) will be asked to investigate. They're also asked to make recommendations regarding considerable tree growth on the main ditch in Section 32, Deerhorn Township, and Section 5, Mitchell Township.

An historic drainage problem west of Downer along County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 10 was discussed. A field meeting with all affected parties will be arranged. One possible solution would be to bore a culvert under CSAH No. 10 that would drain into Clay County Ditch No. 55.

Concerns regarding a Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) project in Section 28, Wolverton Township, Wilkin County, were discussed. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be contacted. The project constantly seeps into a natural waterway that the downstream landowners used to farm through.

The Board met with Sheila Carlson to discuss the Barnesville River Watch Program. Ms. Carlson retired at the end of the 2008 school year, but would like to continue her work with the program. The BRRWD agreed to support the program to the extent necessary to get the work done. A letter will be written to the Barnesville School Board, asking for their support of this valuable program.

Harry Krog, Otter Tail Valley (OTV) Railroad met with the Board to discuss replacement of a crossing on Wilkin County Ditch No. 43, near Lawndale. Water is going under the existing pipes, and OTV has problems with frost heaves over the crossing. The new proposal will be to install three lines of 64" x 43" spiral culvert and to install a better bed under the pipes. The total estimated project costs are $40,497.71. A motion was made to approve the permit application. The OTV will be responsible for taking up and replacement of their track, estimated to cost $6,221.50. The BRRWD will split the remaining costs ($17,138.10) from the Ditch No. 43 account.

Other business included:

- Approved permits to: the Clay County Highway Department to remove the C.R. 93 bridge over the Buffalo River and realign the township road in Sections 17/18, Moland Township;
- David Watt for 137 acres of patterned tiling in the SE1/4, Section 32, Spring Prairie Township, subject to Township approval to work within their road right-of-way (r-o-w) for
the outlet; Clay County Highway Department to install an approach with an 18" dia. culvert in the SE1/4, Section 11, Elkton Township; Humboldt Township to install approximately one mile of tile in their road centerline in Sections 5, 6, 17, and 18; Ken Hanson to install an approach and 18" dia. culvert off C.R. 66 in the SE1/4, Section 23, Kurtz Township, Clay County, and David B. Emerson to lower two culverts in Baker.

- Agreed to send a letter to Kragnes area landowners regarding blocking of culverts in the northwest corner of Section 35, Kragnes Township, Clay County. The obstructions were found earlier this month during the heavy rainfall. Culvert plugging is a violation of BRRWD Rules.

- Noting that the Final Hearing for Project No. 62, Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1-Branch No. 4, Improvement/Extension will be held on Monday, June 30, 2008, at 8:00 PM in the Comstock Community Center.

- Awarding of the construction contract for Project No. 58, Riverton Township Retention, to Nanick Construction, Inc., for their bid of $349,948.76. The Board also signed an Agreement with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), acknowledging our responsibility for all wetland issues associated with the project. The BRRWD is still working with NRCS and the Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA) in this regard. An Agreement was also signed that will be sent to the Riverton Township Board of Supervisors for the use of their road (150th S T) for the inlet spillway.

- Noting that the archeological survey for the Manston Slough Restoration project has been completed by the NRCS. A response from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding design concerns is expected next week.

- A proposal from Subsurface, Inc., to clean three culverts under C.R. 55 on the Whisky Creek Tributaries was reviewed. They would like to do the work as a demonstration, with no charges assigned to the project. The adjacent landowner will be contacted regarding his possible use of the removed material.

- A Technical Committee meeting for the Oakport Flood Mitigation project will be held on 7/01/08 at 1:30 PM in the Clay County Courthouse. The contractor hired last fall to clean up demolition sites where houses were removed was contacted about completing their work.

- Authorized repairs for Clay County Ditch No. 67 near Moorhead, culvert repairs on Clay County Ditch No. 2, culvert and erosion repair on Clay County Ditch No. 11-South, and repair of a damaged flapgate on Clay County Ditch No. 65.

- The office is still seeking insurance for the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe (BNSF) Railroad license agreement needed for the Kragnes Ringdike project. The Final Hearing will be held on 6/25/08 at the Moorhead City Hall.

- Noting that at meeting will be held with representatives from Hancock Concrete Products Company, Inc., on 7/02/08 in Hawley to discuss the deteriorating reinforced concrete pipe on the Hawley Diversion project.

- Noting that the next meeting of the Mediation Project Team is scheduled for 7/24/08 at 7:00 PM in the MSUM Science Center east of Glyndon. The Fall Tour is tentatively scheduled for 9/26/08.
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- Granted an extension until 8/31/08 for Northern States Excavating to complete their work on the Wolverton Creek Phase 1 Project. The recent wet weather conditions have delayed progress.

- Authorized William Nichol Excavating, Inc. to remove a log jam on the Buffalo River at the Georgetown texas crossing for their bid of $4,930.

- Received the repair investigation report from H.E. for Clay County Ditch No. 63. The information will be forwarded to the ditch system landowners for their review.

- Approved payment of bills totaling $37,028.75.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, July 14, 2008, 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.