"Local Watershed Studies Lake Outlet"

At their 6/25/07 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), discussed options to address a highwater problem on Grove Lake in northwestern Otter Tail County. An informational meeting was held on 6/19/07, where Grove Lake landowners expressed an interest in seeing a project developed. An outlet would probably drain into Maple Lake, which is connected to Whisky Creek, and eventually drains through the City of Barnesville and Clay County Ditch No. 34 to the South Branch of the Buffalo River. The Board noted that any outlet for the lake would need to have an Operation Plan so that if downstream areas are experiencing highwater problems, the Grove Lake outlet would be stopped. Over the course of the next two weeks, the BRRWD will meet with downstream landowners to review their concerns expressed at the informational meeting regarding the need to also lower Maple Lake.

Other business included:

- Discussions with a landowner on Clay County Ditch No. 47 regarding retrofitting of the stainless steel flap gates installed on culverts through the railroad tracks. The landowner complained that the gates do not open properly, which prolonged the flooding problems south of Moorhead during last months heavy rains. A local contractor will be hired to modify one of the gates and if the modifications work, the remaining gates will also be changed.

- Approval of permits to: Qwest Communications to directional bore under Clay County Ditch No. 49 in the northeast corner of Section 22, Kragnes Township; the City of Moorhead to reconstruct 26th ST between 24th and 28th AVE S; and Red River Valley Power Cooperative Power Association to bore a high voltage power line under Clay County Ditch No. 59 in Section 25, Kragnes Township.

- Approved a motion to increase the petitioner's bond from $10,000 to $20,000 pertaining to Project No. 61, Clay County Ditch No. 11N-Improvement.

- Accepted the Appraisers' Report for Project No. 58, Riverton Township Retention. The total benefits are $3,773,924.11. The total estimated project costs are $794,460, which will be shared by the State of Minnesota through a Flood Damage Reduction grant ($397,230), a BRRWD contribution ($198,615), and local landowner's assessments ($198,615). The office will look at a date for the final hearing. The Board remains optimistic that this project can be constructed in 2007.

- Noting that a final inspection of Project No. 51, Clay County Ditch No. 68-Establishment in the City of Glyndon will be conducted on 6/26/07. The contractor will be required to make the necessary repairs. Upon completion of those repairs, the construction contract will be closed.

- Noting that the BRRWD will complete another home buyout in conjunction with the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project on 6/28/07. To date, two houses have been moved that were sold on 5/03/07. Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) was authorized to prepare plans and specifications for basement demolition, service line disconnection, and site restoration.
• Received a report from Erik Jones, H.E., regarding his work on the proposed Village of Kragnes ringdike. Jones is currently studying different dike alignments and is working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) regarding several gates that will need to be installed within their right-of-way.

• Authorized H.E. to complete the Engineer's Report pertaining to the City of Moorhead's petition to relocate a portion of Clay County Ditch No. 47 in conjunction with their 34th ST interchange project.

• Authorized H.E. to investigate restoration of a portion of Deerhorn Creek in Section 24, Atherton Township. The creek channel is currently filled in with sediment and the creek is being rerouted along the levee. Channel restoration will require Minnesota Department of Natural Resources approval.

• Discussion regarding the improvement of Clay County Ditch No. 55 east of Interstate-94 (I-94). MNDOT has a contract to bore an additional line of 48' dia. culvert under I-94. County Ditch No. 55 was improved in 1996, but the area east of I-94 was never improved because the I-94 culverts were inadequate. Landowners in this area have expressed an interest in getting all of the work done as soon as possible.

• Noting that the next meeting of the Mediation Project Team is scheduled for 8/23/07 at 7:30 PM in the MSUM Science Center east of Glyndon. The Fall Tour is tentatively scheduled for 9/20/07.

• Noting the scheduling of additional meetings for the BRRWD's Comprehensive Planning effort. The Central Region meeting, which includes Whisky, Stony, and Hay Creeks, as well as the City of Barnesville, will be held on 7/19/07 at 7:30 PM in Hildebrand Hall, Barnesville. The Mainstem Region meeting will be held on 7/31/07 at 7:30 PM at the Hawley Community Center. All of the planning meetings are open to the public and public participation is encouraged.

• Noted concerns regarding a proposal to change the sizing of five structures on Clay County Ditch No. 49. Viewers are currently working on a redetermination of benefits for this ditch system. A redetermination hearing will need to be held.

• Noting that H.E. has completed their repair investigation pertaining to the upstream four miles of Clay County Ditch No. 35. The report will be mailed to the project petitioners for their review.

• Noting that the office has received a petition for the abandonment of Becker County Ditch No. 19. Once the petition signatures have been verified, and assuming they've met the 51% requirement, the BRRWD will schedule a hearing.

• Noting that the office has received a 6-month extension to complete ditch-mapping work, which is being funded by a Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources grant. The new project completion deadline is 12/31/07.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, July 9, 2007, at 8:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public. For more information regarding the BRRWD, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.