

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

BARNESVILLE, MINNESOTA 56514

123 FRONT STREET SOUTH – PO BOX 341

PHONE 218-354-7710

10 Year Comprehensive Plan Update

Moorhead Planning Region Public Input Meeting
Community Center, Dilworth, MN

May 10, 2007

In attendance were: Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) and Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.); Erik S. Jones, Engineer, and Mark D. Aanenson, H.E.; Gerald L. VanAmburg, Curtis M. Nelson, John E. Hanson, and E. Robert Olson, Managers, BRRWD; Alvin Hansen, Jerome Flottesmesch, Eddie Bernhardson, Kevin Martin, Arvid Thompson, and Lauren Peterson, Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC); Michael T. Murphy, Robert A. Zimmerman, Jack Frederick, and Don Schultz, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC); Brian Dwight, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Chris Thorson and Dan Hanson, Ulteig Engineers, Inc. (UEI); and landowners: Kurt Lackmann, Jessie L. Swanson, Tim Brendemuhl, Bob Videen, Jerry Skalicky, Arden Pearson, Terry Thompson, Florence Thompson, Robert H. Swenson, Diane Wray Williams, Darsey Thoen, and Bettye Morton.

7:40 PM – **Welcome and Introductions** – *Bruce Albright, BRRWD Administrator*

Albright welcomed everyone to the meeting. He discussed the planning process and differences between the old plan and the level of detail in the new planning process. Albright also talked about the need for public input in the planning process. He stressed that the BRRWD welcomes any public input regarding water management issues. We have already completed meetings for the Western and the Lakes Planning Regions. Each area has different opportunities and problems. Albright introduced the BRRWD Board members.

7:55 PM – **Introduction to the Planning Regions and General Description of the Moorhead Planning Region** - *Mark D. Aanenson, Houston Engineering, Inc.*

Aanenson gave a PowerPoint presentation on the establishment of the planning regions and a general description of the Moorhead planning region. He also discussed the different ways in which the new plan will be organized. He pointed out the location of the subwatersheds. He explained the differences between the subwatersheds and the planning regions. He talked about the approach that was used to identify the planning regions and how the planning regions and the hydrology model can be used together to identify projects. Aanenson then gave a general description of the Moorhead planning region and displayed a number of maps depicting land use, presettlement vegetation, ecological resources, groundwater aquifers, soils, annual soil loss by subwatershed, and wind erodibility.

8:15 PM – Hydrology of the Moorhead Planning Region – Erik Jones, BRRWD Engineer

Jones gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the hydrology of the Moorhead planning region. He talked about the ditch systems in the region, including some established by the City of Moorhead. Jones noted that some of the systems have had concrete channel liners constructed in the last ten years. He discussed some projects that are proposed for the region, such as the Moorhead Township Ditch. The BRRWD issued permits for many of the storm water ponds and other storm water projects constructed in the Moorhead area. Jones indicated that the City of Moorhead requires the storm water systems to handle a 100-year event plus three feet of freeboard. He commented that the Moorhead has done an excellent job of storm water management by implementing these design requirements.

8:35 PM – BRRWD Projects and FDR Problem Areas in the Moorhead Planning Region – Bruce Albright, BRRWD Administrator

Albright discussed the existing problem areas that the Planning Team has identified. He discussed the Oakport Township Levee Project and other community levees projects that have been constructed throughout the region, such as those for the Cities of Georgetown and Hendrum. Albright also discussed the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) study of upstream storage areas, which would benefit the Fargo-Moorhead area. Generally, people are not willing to store water on their land, so the construction of these storage areas will be difficult. He also discussed the Fargo Southside Diversion Project. He indicated that the Steering Committee has done a good job of coordinating the project development with the residents on the Minnesota side of the Red River. For example, many homeowners along Rivershore Drive in south Moorhead are unable to handle any additional water during flood events. The Steering Committee has not scheduled any additional meetings. Albright talked about other items including the remapping of floodplain areas along the Red River and in Dilworth. Dilworth will probably no longer be in a floodplain due to recent projects and flood control efforts. Due to the Oakport Flood Mitigation ringdike project, portions Oakport Township will also be taken out of the floodplain. Other problems the planning process will need to consider include the slumping of the banks along the Red River, such as those on the Convent Road (County Road No. 12).

Jerry Skalicky asked why some residents have to sacrifice their property for the Oakport Flood Mitigation project so that others don't have to pay flood insurance. Albright responded by saying that he wouldn't characterize the project in that way. A lot of factors have to be considered regarding the placement of levee, including engineering, soils stability, and flood impacts. Essentially, the levee can't result in increased flooding for anyone, and it also can't be placed right on the river bank because the soils won't support the weight of the levee. In some areas, it becomes an individual property owner's decision whether to take a buyout or not. Another landowner asked why the Coulee channel couldn't be cleaned south of Clay County Ditch No. 20. Albright explained that this part of the coulee is Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protected waters. We would need DNR permits to work in this area. Other issues were discussed regarding the Oakport Levee project. Albright commented that area landowners deserve answers to their questions, and the BRRWD plans to visit with property owners when more information is available.

8:50 PM – **Natural Resource Enhancement Opportunities in the Moorhead Planning Region**–
Henry VanOffelen, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA)

Since VanOffelen was unable to attend tonight's meeting, Albright discussed the natural resource enhancement (nre) assessment work that the BRRWD is undertaking through the MCEA. Items that have been identified for this region include: improving the conditions of watercourses through better storm water management, maintaining and improving the Red River Corridor, and improving the water quality for the Red River. Albright noted the BRRWD helped the River Keepers get established in 1984 and makes annual contributions. Currently, the BRRWD contributes \$40,000 per year to the organization.

9:00 PM – **Water Quality Issues in the Moorhead Planning Region** – *Jack Frederick, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)*

Frederick discussed the water quality program administered by the MPCA. He discussed the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process and how it relates to the State's water quality standards and intended uses. He also covered the types of stressors including toxics and conventional parameters. Many of the stream reaches in the Red River Valley are impaired due to turbidity levels. With the appropriate data, he commented that all of the waters in the valley are probably impaired for turbidity. Frederick discussed the methods used to measure turbidity and how the smaller soil particle sizes in the western part of the district are contributing to the turbidity levels. The turbidity levels are currently affecting fish habitat and causing hypoxia in Lake Winnipeg and the Gulf of Mexico. He explained the causes of turbidity such as the agricultural runoff, wind erosion, and streambank erosion. Much of the streambank erosion is caused by the variable flows in the systems. Some watershed flood control projects can have a positive effect on these flows and sediment levels. A question was asked regarding the aquifer protection efforts. Frederick responded that this is primarily a Minnesota Department of Health issue.

Following Frederick's presentation, the group took a 10 minute break.

9:30 PM – **Identification of FDR and NRE Issues - Small Group Workshop**- *Mark D. Aanenson, Houston Engineering, Inc.*

Albright noted that Moorhead's Buffalo Aquifer wellhead protection effort could be included in tonight's discussions. Aanenson went over the input forms and surveys. He had everyone work in small groups to identify issues within the planning regions and mark the areas of concern on the maps provided at each table.

9:50 PM – **Reports from the Small Groups**

Albright thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He explained how the information received tonight will be used and when the next scheduled meeting will be held. He also indicated the BRRWD will have another meeting for the Moorhead Planning Region to present solutions based on the input from this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 PM.