

# ***BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT***

BARNESVILLE, MINNESOTA 56514

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## **10 Year Comprehensive Plan Update**

Western Planning Region Public Input Meeting  
Community Center, Comstock, MN

April 3, 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.; Curtis M. Nelson, Roger G. Ellefson, John E. Hanson, Gerald L. VanAmburg, and E. Robert Olson, Managers, BRRWD; Wayne Brendemuhl, Alvin Hansen, Kenneth Schellack, Lyle E. Hovland, Kevin Martin, Arnold Swenson, Eddie Bernhardson, Lauren Peterson, and Mark Carr, Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC); Dave Barsness, Steve Hofstad, Robert A. Zimmerman, Brian Winter, Henry VanOffelen, Michael T. Murphy, Kevin Brennan, and Robert Merritt, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC); Pete Waller and Brian Dwight, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Don Bajumpaa, Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Kevin Kassenborg and Craig Halverson, Clay SWCD; and landowners: Peter Livdahl, Jim Livdahl, Jimmie R. Nelson, Tom Thomas, Dennis VanWechel, Robert Askegaard, Richard Brakke, Hugh Trowbridge, Dean Nelson, Loren Nordholm, David Israelson, James Shellito, Kevin Askegaard, Harold Brandt II, Ronald Hoeck, Ross Aigner, Bradley Nelson, Ted Olsgaard, Lynn Brakke, Mark Askegaard, Lyle Picotte, Larry Ness, Stan Dibley, Doris Dibley, Jerry Butenhoff, Jeff Nord, Marion Allen, Paul Israelson, Gary Israelson, Donald Hoppe, Kurt Krueger, Mark Beedy, Louis Krueger, Robert Nord, and Robert Nyquist.

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

Albright welcomed everyone to the meeting. He discussed the planning process and gave a brief description of public input process that the BRRWD will undertake in the next several months. He then informed the group that the Clay and Wilkin SWCDs had requested time on the agenda to discuss their Clean Water Legacy (CWL) Grant.

7:50 PM – **Clean Water Legacy Grant** - *Clay/Wilkin SWCDs-Steve Hofstad & Don Bajumpaa*

Hofstad discussed the funding that will be available through a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) CWL grant to the SWCDs. The funding will be used to develop a project that will focus on the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee watershed area. The history of water problems in this area goes back to 1963 when there was a Public Law (PL) 566 project proposed for the area. Currently, there is approximately \$289,000 available to work on the project. The project will be focused on channel degradation that is occurring near the outlet into the Red River of the North. Essentially, the project area will be between Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 75 and the Red River. Channel degradation is caused by the lack of a defined channel, channel erosion, beaver dams, and flood damage. The proposed solutions may include in-channel rock stabilization structures, bank stabilization measures, and bufferstrip establishment. Hofstad then went over some slide photos of the area and

showed some examples of the stream stabilization measures. The timeline for the grant is until June 30, 2009. Hofstad then asked if the group had any questions. One question was if they planned to install fabric under the rip rap. Hofstad didn't think there would be fabric under the rock. Waller pointed out that some of the examples did have fabric under the rock. Hofstad noted that landowners who were interested in the project could visit with Bajumpaa or him tonight, or they could contact their respective SWCD offices.

**8:10 PM – Introduction to the Planning Regions and General Description of the Western Planning Region - *Mark D. Aanenson, H.E.***

Aanenson gave a PowerPoint presentation on the establishment of the planning regions and a general description of the Western Planning Region. He showed the BRRWD subwatersheds and explained the differences between the subwatersheds and the planning regions. He discussed the approach that was used to identify the planning regions and how the planning regions and the hydrology model work together. Aanenson gave a general description of the Western Planning Region and displayed a number of maps depicting land use, geomorphology, presettlement vegetation, ecological resources, soils, annual soil loss by subwatershed, and wind erodibility. He concluded with a discussion regarding some of the problems areas that the Planning Team has identified.

**8:30 PM – Hydrology of the Western Planning Region – Wolverton Creek Model - *Erik Jones, BRRWD Engineer***

Jones gave a brief description of the hydrology of the Western Planning Region. He described the HEC HMS hydrology model of the Wolverton Creek area and discussed its use and application for planning projects. He then asked if there were questions regarding the model.

**8:40 PM – BRRWD Projects and FDR Problem Areas in the Western Planning Region – *Bruce Albright, BRRWD Administrator***

Albright discussed the existing problem areas that were identified by the Planning Team. He discussed the number of ditches (approximately one per mile) leading to the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee or the Red River. He explained that the Western Planning Region is the only area where the runoff directly affects the Fargo-Moorhead area. He also discussed the buffers along the ditch systems, which are required by statute when a ditch improvement project is constructed. Much of the problems in this area are related to farmland flooding and sediment issues in the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee area. Other problem areas include the fish passage problems relative to the Christine and Hickson dams on the Red River. He also discussed concerns about how Fargo-Moorhead's water usage impacts upstream water quality on the Red River. Albright said that Jack Frederick from MPCA was not able to attend tonight's meeting. Albright then discussed how the results of local water sampling indicate that the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee is probably impaired for turbidity.

At this point, the group took a 15 minute break.

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

VanOffelen discussed the natural resource enhancement (nre) assessment work that he has completed for the BRRWD as part of the plan update process. He discussed the goals of the nre effort, including the identification of opportunities for projects that will result in both nre benefits as well as flood damage reduction (fdr). Another objective is the avoidance of future conflicts between nre and fdr projects. He indicated that the nre opportunities are somewhat limited in this planning region due to the intensive agriculture land use in the area. Potential nre goals include the increase in bufferstrips along the ditch systems and the Wolverton Creek, the fish passage issues on the Red River, and establishment and maintenance of the wooded corridor along the Red River.

**9:00 PM – Identification of FDR and NRE Issues - Small Group Workshop-** *Mark D. Aanenson, H.E.*

Aanenson gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the waterways within the BRRWD that MPCA has identified as impaired, showing specifically those impaired waters within the Western Planning Region. He also discussed the general causes of the water quality impairments. Following his presentation, Aanenson had everyone work in small groups to identify issues within the planning region and mark the areas on the maps provided at each table.

**9:35 PM – Reports from the Small Groups**

Aanenson shared some of the items that were identified during the small group workshop. Albright talked about how the Planning Team will use the information. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and gave the date for the next scheduled regional planning meeting. He also told the landowners that the BRRWD will have another meeting for the Western Planning Region where we will present solutions based on the input from this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.