

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT GLYNDON EAST TRIBUTARY RESTORATION Minutes for Landowner Informational Meeting

April 12, 2021

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held a landowner informational meeting regarding the Glyndon East Tributary Restoration on Monday, April 12, 2021, at 6:00 PM in the BRRWD office in Barnesville. Due to the Coronavirus protocols for public meetings, the meeting was available online following Minnesota Statutes Annotated (M.S.A.) Section 13D.021. BRRWD Managers present were Peter V. Fjestad, Gerald L. Van Amburg, Catherine L. Affield, Paul G. Krabbenhoft, Troy E. Larson, John E. Hanson, and Mark L. Hanson. BRRWD staff attending included: Kristine M. Altrichter, Administrator, Zach D. Anderson, Watershed District Specialist, Erik S. Jones, Engineer, and Bennett Uhler, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI). Others attending included: Wendy Affield, Clerk/Treasurer, City of Glyndon, and landowners: LeRoy Babolian, Tory Jacobson, Gerald Zimmerman, and others online.

BRRWD President Fjestad called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM and announced that the meeting was being recorded to aid in the preparation of the minutes.

BRRWD Engineer Jones explained the purpose of the informational meeting. He noted that last year, the BRRWD worked with Randall Excavating, Glyndon, to address the heavy beaver infestation on the Glyndon waterway, which improved drainage north of Trunk Highway (T.H.) No.10.

Bennett Uhler, Engineer, HEI, presented an overview of the project development. He displayed a map showing the project drainage area and the location of the Glyndon East Tributary project, starting at T.H. No. 9 on the east side of Section 17, Riverton Township, Clay County, and flowing northwest to the Buffalo River in Moland Township, Clay County. Jones noted that part of the tributary, starting on the west side of Section 17, Riverton Township, to the Buffalo River is considered Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Public Water. Sections of the tributary northeast of the main waterway are also Public Waters. The stream length is 9.2 miles with a drainage area of 9.5 square miles (sq. mi.). Landowner concerns included: drainage issues worsening when Glyndon releases their lagoons, beaver dams, and undersized culverts throughout the system. In 2018, a survey from the Glyndon lagoons to the Buffalo River was conducted, and in 2019, an additional survey was completed between the lagoons and T.H. No. 9. The survey included a channel profile every 100' and cross sections every 500'. Sediment test pits were taken every 500', showing about 3' of sediment on average throughout the system. An inventory of all the in-stream crossings, road top overflows and beaver dams was completed. Approximately 2,000 total survey data points were collected. Uhler noted that the major road crossings appear to be adequate, providing a 50-year protection. The field crossings are much smaller than the road crossings, overtopping at 2-5-year events, indicating that this needs to be addressed in the project design. Jones noted that each of the undersized crossings provides an opportunity for unnecessary sediment buildup in the channel.

Uhler explained that the proposed project will include a channel cleanout starting upstream at the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe (BNSF) Railroad crossing and continuing downstream to the Buffalo River, the creation of a two-stage channel starting downstream at the BNSF crossing and moving upstream to the west side of Section 17, Riverton Township, and a ditch repair to address channel breakouts during highwater events, starting on the west side of Section 17 and working upstream to T.H. No. 9. Flows adjacent to 12th AVE S

through Sections 8 and 9, Riverton Township, would be relocated west to the main channel. Side inlet pipes will also be installed to address sedimentation from runoff and improve field drainage. In addition, undersized culverts will be replaced, and beaver dam removal and maintenance will be completed within the watershed.

The group reviewed location maps and typical channel section drawings of the proposed project features. The channel cleanout will be located in Sections 1, 2, and 12, Glyndon Township, and Section 35, Moland Township. The two-stage channel will extend from the east side of Section 18, Riverton Township, to the railroad tracks in Section 12, Glyndon Township. The two-stage channel in the Public Water area is designed to conform to DNR permit requirements. Uhler also reviewed a map and typical channel section of the proposed ditch repair that will run east-west through Section 17, Riverton Township, from T.H. No. 9 to the west side of Section 17. The 12th AVE S relocation will begin where the waterway currently flows south to the east tributary in Section 17, Riverton Township. The plan is to redirect flows to the west by removing existing culverts through 12th AVE S that currently direct the water south. The water would flow west in the north road ditch until it passes an existing farmstead, then it will be directed through the road to the south ditch, where it will flow west to the creek, paralleling the road. Jones noted that the route was chosen to avoid as many existing field entrances and driveways, as possible. The side inlet locations were determined using the Stream Power Index (SPI), which is verified by field review, aerial photography, and landowner information.

Uhler discussed the land acquisition process. The right-of-way (R/W) will be a minimum of 100' wide corridor from the Buffalo River to the west side of Section 17, Riverton Township, and a 90' corridor through Section 17. Jones noted that the current land use for the R/W within the project footprint should not change significantly in most cases. The proposed easement rates vary by land use. Areas within the stream or that should be buffered, according to the Minnesota Buffer Law, would be paid at a rate of \$100/acre. For cropland outside the existing buffer area, the rate is estimated be paid at the County's Estimated Market Value (EMV). Uhler reviewed the project benefits: improved drainage and conveyance, approximately 20 side inlets, and approximately 9 miles of improved channel.

Potential project funding sources include \$400,000 from the One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) watershed-based implementation funding; \$520,000 (\$40,000 annually) from a watershed management district (wmd) fee to provide the local share of the project costs; \$230,000, or approximately 20% of the estimated project cost, from a BRRWD M.S.A. 103D.905, Subd. 3, district-wide watershed tax levy. The total estimated project cost is \$1.15 million. Jones noted that this amount is only an estimate, which could potentially change once bids are let for the project.

Uhler displayed a map of the proposed wmd boundary and how the rates were determined, based on parcel runoff and sediment contribution (pre-settlement vs. current conditions). Rates range from \$0-\$7.40 per acre for agricultural and conservation acreage, and \$28.50/acre for commercial property. The Glyndon lagoon design capacity was considered when setting the runoff values from ag land (81%) vs. City (19%). The wmd would be assessed annually by the BRRWD, based on project needs to complete the project and to provide funding for maintenance.

The next steps in project development will be to gather local feedback, begin the permitting and Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW), develop the wmd funding source, establish the project according to Minnesota Watershed Law, and develop the final design and plan set preparation. Jones explained that the BRRWD will hold a public Preliminary Hearing to establish the project and provide more concrete project cost estimates.

Following his presentation, Uhler opened the floor for audience questions.

Tory Jacobson asked for clarification regarding the project path north of T.H. No. 10. Jones explained that the project would follow the existing waterway and remove the channel sediment and upsize some of the culverts. The project will provide a funding system to control beaver activity and the R/W will give the BRRWD access to

the waterway for maintenance. The wmd fee would provide funding specifically for project maintenance. The project won't change impacts from high water events in terms of volume, but the water would pass downstream through the system more effectively and reduce sedimentation.

Leo Babolian asked about a fence and culverts on the east side of the waterway on his property. The fence will need to be moved off the project R/W and the culverts will be replaced with larger structures, so he won't lose his access.

Fjestad asked if the design would include a sinuous channel like the Wolverton Creek project. Jones explained that for the most part, the waterway has enough natural meanders, so there will be only about three locations where the meanders will be restored.

Krabbenhofst asked about the timeline for the establishment of buffers, in accordance with the Buffer Law. He also asked how the project design will make the rerouted water drain west along 12th AVE S. Jones said the road ditches will be improved and culverts installed to drain water to the west. He noted that all public waters were to have been buffered by November 1, 2017.

Gerald Zimmerman discussed a 2020 permit application involving pattern tile in Section 16, Riverton Township, that had planned to use the East Tributary as an outlet. Jones was aware of the tile project and noted that it was not constructed due to landowner concerns about outlet adequacy.

President Fjestad asked if there were any further comments or questions. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 6:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John E. Hanson, Secretary