

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

BARNESVILLE, MINNESOTA 56514

123 FRONT STREET SOUTH – PO BOX 341

PHONE 218-354-7710

DATE: Thursday, January 29, 2009
TO: Landowners within Project Area
FROM: Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator
RE: Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with some information regarding the above referenced project. At the 1/26/09 meeting of the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held in Barnesville, the Board approved the Order and Findings of Fact to construct the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project. The Order includes the adoption of the Engineer and Appraisers' Reports. This action starts the 30-day appeal period in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Annotated (M.S.A.) 103D.535.

Work on the geotechnical (soils) investigation is nearing completion. Ulteig Engineers, Inc. is anxiously awaiting that report so they can finish several phases of the design. Our goal is to have Phase 1A (Broadway to Wall ST) and Phase 1B (Wall ST to County Road No. 93) ready for construction bidding by the end of March 2009.

We will try to take advantage of any Federal or State economic stimulus funding that may become available. I personally talked with Senator Keith Langseth last week, and told him that we could spend between \$4 and \$5 million in 2009. This would hopefully complete the identified remaining buyouts and construction on Phases 1A and 1B. While the State's current funding is somewhat limited, we recently learned that Senator Langseth introduced a bill last week, relating to 2009 capital improvements, appropriating money for Red River Flood Hazard Mitigation projects, and authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds. We remain optimistic that funding will be available in 2009 to make some meaningful project progress.

The last issue is to remind everyone to consider purchasing flood insurance, if you don't have it. The insurance needs to be in place at least 30 days prior to the date of any claim. Weather forecasters are predicting a chance for some flooding this spring, especially given the fact that we were so wet last fall. Another reason to consider purchasing flood insurance is that once the new Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain maps come out, which is expected in 2009, almost 100% of the project area will be within the new 100-year projected floodplain, minus some minor exceptions. Acquiring insurance at this time, will not only provide protection if we do have a flood this spring, but it will also grandfather in those at the current rates before the new flood maps are adopted, or until the levee is constructed.

As always, if you should have questions or comments concerning the above or other issues involving this important flood damage reduction project, please feel free to contact our office. More information regarding the BRRWD is also available at our Website at www.brrwd.org. We look forward to working with all of you to complete this project.

BEA/jj