

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

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Here's an explanation of the benefits used by the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) on the Turtle Lake Outlet Project and how actual costs that are on your tax statements are determined.

## **Benefit Map**

The Benefit Map shows the different benefit rates for the properties around Turtle Lake. Benefits were based on the value of the property according to County Tax Records in 1999 when these benefits were determined. The benefits are fixed from the 1999 property values and will not be adjusted as property values change. Improvements made after 1999 to a property such as an addition or a new house or garage will not change the benefits to the property.

The yellow shaded property received a Lake Benefit equal to 25% of its 1999 property value. This benefit applied to every property around Turtle Lake. The red cross hatch indicates an additional Damage Benefit equal to 12.5% of the property value for a total benefit equal to 37.5% of its property value for properties that were significantly affected by the high water. The blue dotted hatch indicates an additional Damage Benefit equal to 25% of its property value for a total benefit equal to 50% of its property value for properties that were most significantly affected by the high water.

## **Turtle Lake Appraisers Report**

The benefits that are shown on the benefit map are compiled in Exhibit No. 1 of the Appraisers Report. This lists the Owners name, address and property description along with the amount of the Benefit for each property. At the end of Exhibit No. 1 all of the benefits are added together to get the Total Benefits for the Project which is \$3,262,304.

The benefits that were determined in 1999 are set at a fixed amount that will not change as long as this Appraisers Report is being used. There is a legal process called a Redetermination of Benefits that would be required to change, modify or update this Appraisers Report to more accurately reflect current conditions and property values. The process is not complicated, but would require a public hearing to adopt the new benefit rates. Some possibilities for new benefits could be to just update property values, or now that properties are no longer flooding, they could be changed so each property benefits equally.

## **Turtle Lake Assessments**

The BRRWD has a separate account for the Turtle Lake Outlet Project. All costs associated with the Turtle Lake Outlet project and all money brought in from assessments are kept in this account. The BRRWD has to levy assessments to cover the costs of this project. Here's an example of how costs to each property are determined:

In 2012, the BRRWD assessed \$50,000 to the project. The total project benefits are \$3,262,304. To get the percentage of the cost paid by an individual property, you divide the property benefit by the total benefits. Assuming a property with \$10,000 in benefits, the calculations would be as follows:  $\$10,000 \div \$3,262,304 = 0.003065$ , to get the cost to that property you would then multiply that percentage times the amount of the assessment:  $0.003065 \times \$50,000 = \$153.25$ .

Hopefully this makes it easier for everyone to understand the benefit and assessment process. As always, if you have additional questions, feel free to contact our office at 218.354.7710.