



2019 Annual Report

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Acronyms

1W1P	One Watershed, One Plan	MCCJPA	Minnesota-Clay County Joint Powers Agreement
BBRRWD	Buffalo-Red River Watershed District	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
BWSR	Board of Water & Soil Resources	MPCA	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
C.D.	County Ditch	M.S.A.	Minnesota Statutes Annotated
COE	Army Corps of Engineers	NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
CPA	Certified Public Accountant	nre	natural resource enhancement
C.R.	County Road	NWQI	National Water Quality Incentive
CREP	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	PE	Professional Engineer
CSAH	County State Aid Highway	PRAP	Performance Review and Assistance Program
CWF	Clean Water Fund	PT	Mediation Project Team
DNR	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	RRBC	Red River Basin Commission
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	RRBFDRWG	Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentive Program	RRWMB	Red River Watershed Management Board
fdr	flood damage reduction	R/W	Right-of-Way
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	RWMP	Revised Watershed Management Plan
FIS	Flood Insurance Study	SWCD	Soil & Water Conservation District
FM DA	Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Authority	T.H.	Trunk Highway
FY	Fiscal Year	TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
HEI	Houston Engineering, Inc.	USGS	United States Geographical Survey
IWI	International Water Institute	WMD	Water Management District
J.D.	Judicial Ditch	WRAPS	Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy
JPA	Joint Powers Agreement	WRMP	Water Resource Management Project
LCCMR	Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources	WRP	Wetland Reserve Program
LOMR	Letter of Map Revision		
LSOHC	Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council		
MAWD	Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts		

Office Location and Hours

The BRRWD office is located at 1303 4th AVE NE in Barnesville, MN. The office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.



Meetings

The Board holds regular business meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month, starting at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD office. The Annual Meeting is held in January and the Annual Budget Hearing is held in August. Regular meetings are open to the public. In 2019, the BRRWD held 22 business meetings. Minutes for each of these meetings are available at www.brrwd.org.

January 14, 2019-Annual Meeting	May 13, 2019	August 26, 2019-Budget Hearing
January 28, 2019	May 28, 2019	September 9, 2019
February 11, 2019	June 10, 2019	September 23, 2019
March 11, 2019	June 24, 2019	October 15, 2019
March 25, 2019	July 8, 2019	October 28, 2019
April 8, 2019	July 22, 2019	November 12, 2019
April 22, 2019	August 12, 2019	November 25, 2019
		December 9, 2019

2019 Annual Report Summary

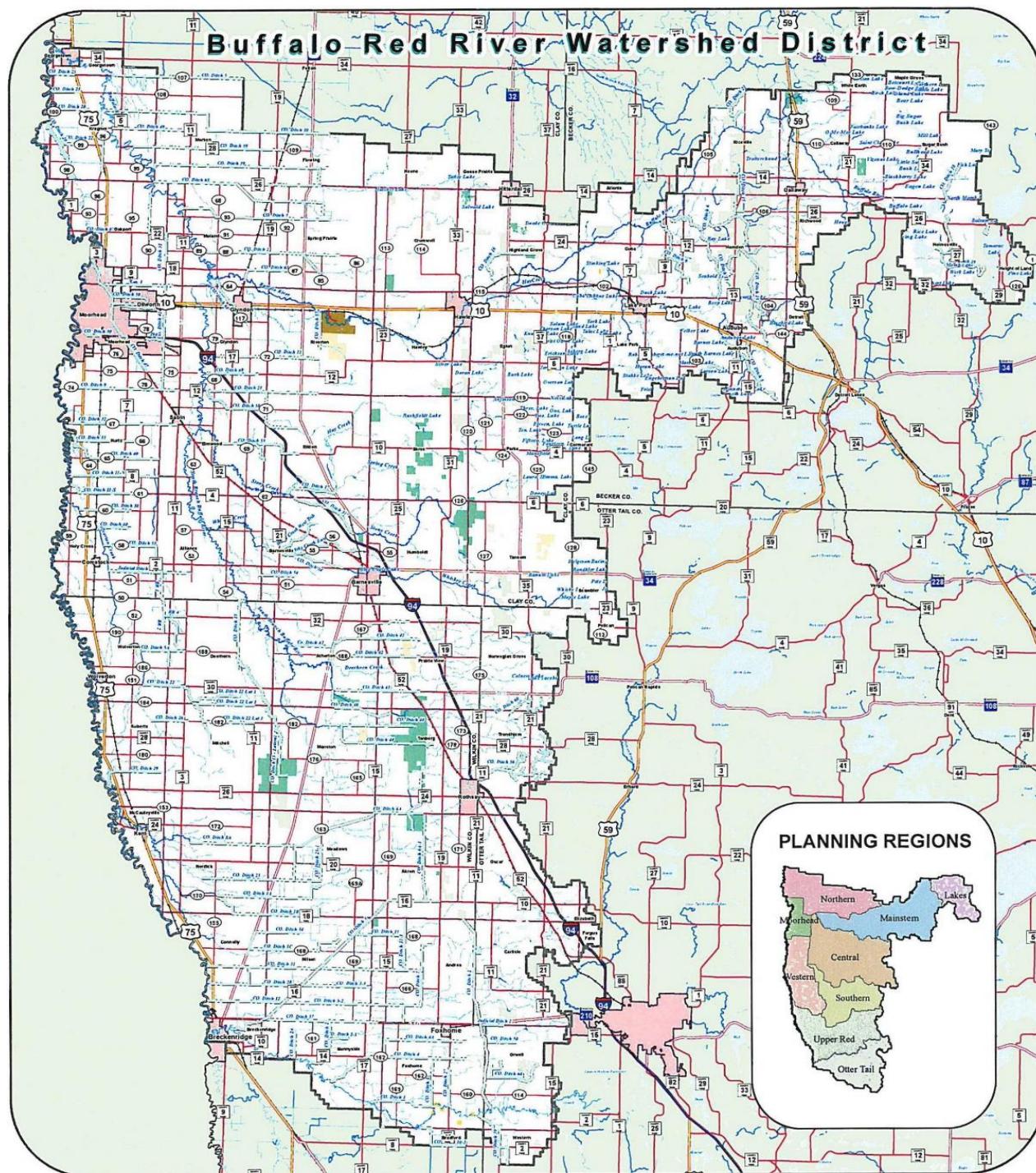
Pursuant to *M.S.A. 103D.351*, we hereby submit the 2019 Annual Report of the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District. The Report contains a summary of the District's activities, projects, and programs for the past year. The public can view the District's 2019 audit on the BRRWD's website: www.brrwd.org. The BRRWD's Mission Statement is "to alleviate flooding and to manage the water resources of the District in a manner that best protects this valuable resource." This Annual Report reflects the Board of Managers' commitment toward serving the residents of the BRRWD to provide efficient management of our water resources. The BRRWD is focused on providing the leadership and resources needed to fulfill these water management goals and objectives. A summary of the BRRWD's goals, as stated in the 2010 RWMP, include:

- ◆ Opportunistically manage floodplains for multiple, non-development use
- ◆ Minimize existing and future potential damages to property, public safety, and water resources due to flood events in urban and agricultural areas
- ◆ Manage legal drainage systems in accordance with *M.S.A. 103E*, while recognizing the need for agricultural drainage and sensitivity to environmental concerns
- ◆ Maintain and, where practical, improve the water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, and groundwater resources within the District
- ◆ Manage the quantity and quality of wetlands within the watershed for their best function in a rapidly changing landscape
- ◆ Participate in the restoration, conservation, and protection of key areas providing unique ecological values and recreational opportunities
- ◆ Pursue a sustainable balance between surface water management, land use activities, and groundwater integrity
- ◆ Facilitate the use of erosion and sediment control practices to reduce the impacts to channel stability, water quality, and wetlands from sedimentation
- ◆ Heighten the awareness of key constituencies within the District, sufficient to modify behavior to improve the recognition of Water Management through implementation of District policies, programs, and activities
- ◆ Use District funds to initiate or support long-range work plan programs, projects, and activities to improve the resources of the District
- ◆ Collect and manage data in a manner that maximizes the availability to, and use by, constituents of the District to enhance decision-making

Watershed Description

Established in 1960, the BRRWD covers an area of approximately 1,780 square miles in Clay, Becker, Otter Tail, and Wilkin Counties. The principal watercourse is the Buffalo River, located in parts of Becker and Clay Counties. The South Branch of the Buffalo River is a tributary to the Buffalo River in parts of Clay, Wilkin, and Otter Tail Counties. Tributaries to the South Branch include Stony Creek, Hay Creek, Whisky Creek, and Deerhorn Creek. Other major tributaries to the Buffalo River include Hay Creek, east of Hawley, and Becker C.D. No. 15, north of Audubon. Direct tributaries to the Red River of the North include Wolverton Creek in Wilkin and Clay Counties; Whiskey Creek near Kent, MN, in Wilkin County; and the Otter Tail River, downstream of Orwell Dam to Breckenridge, MN, in Otter Tail and Wilkin Counties.

BRRWD Map



District History

The BRRWD, formerly known as the South Buffalo Watershed District, was established on August 31, 1960, and covered approximately 344 square miles in Clay, Otter Tail, and Wilkin Counties (primarily the South Branch of the Buffalo River watershed). Following a severe summer flood in 1975, it became apparent that any rational approach to address flooding needed to include all the area contributing runoff to the Buffalo River. By Order, dated September 17, 1976, the State of Minnesota expanded the District and changed the name to the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District. The same Order expanded the representation on the Board of Managers to five Managers. The newly formed Board of Managers adopted their first Overall Plan on January 9, 1978. BWSR approved it on July 26, 1978. The most recent RWMP was approved by BWSR on June 23, 2010. Starting in 2018 and continuing in 2019, the BRRWD is working with local government agencies from Becker, Clay, Wilkin, and Otter Tail Counties, local government officials, and regular citizens on the BWSR mandated One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P), which is a single plan for the three watersheds within the BRRWD: the Red River, Otter Tail River, and the Buffalo River. We expect to complete our work in 2020. In 2011, Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties petitioned BWSR to expand the BRRWD to include lands within the pre-expansion south border of the BRRWD and the Bois de Sioux Watershed District. By Order of BWSR on April 25, 2012, the State of Minnesota expanded the BRRWD to its current size. The same Order expanded the representation on the Board of Managers to include seven Managers: three from Clay County, two from Wilkin County, one from Becker County, and one from Otter Tail County.

Board of Managers

A Board of seven Managers governs the BRRWD. Managers are appointed by the County Commissioners for a term of three years, and they can be reappointed. Their job is to preside over the business of the District as it pursues the conservation of natural resources through regulation and the use of sound principles. Officers are elected at the Annual Meeting, held in January.



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Staff and Consultants



Administrator
Bruce E. Albright

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Rules and Bylaws

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, adopted their original Rules (*M.S.A. 103D.341*) on May 21, 1979 and their original Bylaws on February 10, 1997. The BRRWD adopted revised Bylaws on April 9, 2018 and revised Rules on July 9, 2019. Both documents can be found on our Website at www.brrwd.org.

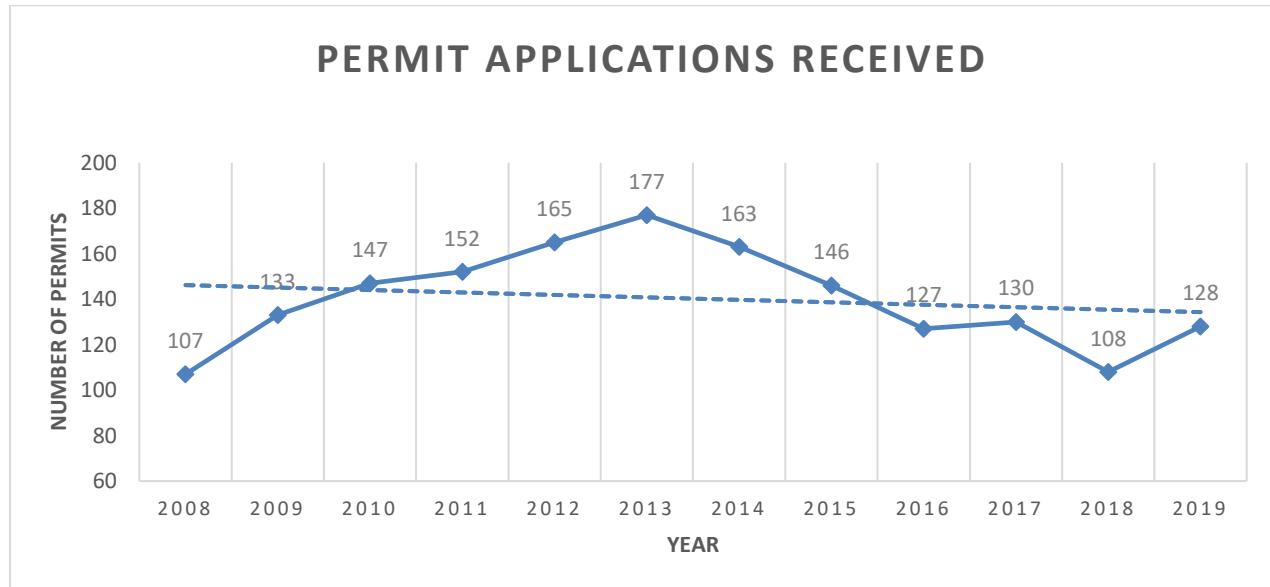
Permits & Applications

In 2019, the BRRWD reviewed 128 permit applications for a variety of projects: 116 approved, 2 denied, 2 tabled, and 8 were administratively withdrawn. The Board considers all permit applications at their regular meetings. Anyone contemplating any of the work described below is urged to contact the BRRWD office for further information. No fee is required. The BRRWD's online permit application can be found on our Website at www.brrwd.org.

ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE A BRRWD PERMIT (*M.S.A. 103D.345*):

- Pattern or random tiling
- Construction of an artificial drainageway across a subwatershed into another watershed
- Diversion of water into a legal drainage system from lands not assessed for the drainage system

- Works or alterations of any legal drainage system under the jurisdiction of the Board of Managers
- Drainage of any wetland
- Construction, removal, or abandonment of a reservoir having a surface area of five acres or more
- Construction of a bridge or placement of a culvert on any natural or legal drainage system
- Change in the bed, banks, or shores of natural drainageways, lakes, or wetlands
- Placement of obstructions or disposal of wastes directly or indirectly into a natural or legal drainage system
- Excavation, grading, or placing fill in or near any natural or legal drainage system
- All water uses other than domestic use; domestic use is limited to sources serving twenty-five or fewer people
- Crossing of natural drainageways or established legal drainage systems by pipelines or underground utility lines



Organizations

Citizen Advisory Committee

To ensure public input and fulfill the needs of the community, the Board of Managers, BRRWD, appointed a Citizens' Advisory Committee (*M.S.A. 103D.331*) to provide recommendations on matters affecting the BRRWD, including projects, improvements, and activities. The BRRWD does annual work planning with its Advisory Committee, as required by Minnesota Statutes. This year, the Advisory Committee held their annual meeting on April 26, 2019, at the BRRWD Office. The group reviewed the BRRWD's 2019 activities and the proposed 2020 projects.

2019 Advisory Committee members include:

Ross Aigner	SWCD Supervisor, Wilkin County
Don Bajumpaa	SWCD Office Manager, Wilkin County
John Boen	Landowner, Otter Tail County
Wayne Brendemuhl	Landowner, Clay County
Sally Casey	Landowner, Clay County
Jon Evert	Former Commissioner, Clay County
Jerome Flottemesch	SWCD Supervisor, Becker County
Roger Haglund	Landowner, Clay County
Lyle Hovland	Commissioner, Wilkin County
Wayne D. Johnson	Commissioner, Otter Tail County
Edwin Johnson, Jr.	Landowner, Otter Tail County
Jenny Mongeau	Commissioner, Clay County
Barry Nelson	Commissioner, Becker County
Gerald Nordick	Landowner, Wilkin County
Charles Piekarski	Landowner, Otter Tail County
Orrin B. Sorum	Landowner, Otter Tail County
William D. Steffl	Former BRRWD Manager, Becker County
Russ Wilson	Mayor, City of Breckenridge

2019 River Keepers Highlights

The Board of Managers continues to support the efforts of River Keepers. This organization is an advocate for the Red River in the Fargo/Moorhead community. River Keepers identifies several goals they have set to realize their role as a Red River advocate:

- Increase public awareness of the Red River, its uses, and water related issues by disseminating accurate information and engaging in educational activities.
- Maintain and increase appropriate recreational use of the Red River.
- Advocate land use, river use, and environmental practices that contribute to a sustainable, safe, and economically beneficial river ecosystem.
- Provide financial sustainability of River Keepers by securing adequate funding.

In 2019, the BRRWD contributed \$55,000 to River Keepers from revenue levied in accordance with our *M.S.A. 103D.905, Subd. 3, ad valorem* taxing authority. At their annual Budget Hearing on 8/26/19, the BRRWD included River Keepers in the 2020 General Levy at the same level.

2019 RRBC Highlights



The Board of Managers continues to support the efforts of the Red River Basin Commission with a \$25,000 contribution in 2019 from revenue levied in accordance with our *M.S.A. 103D.905, Subd. 3, ad valorem* taxing authority. Administrator Albright and Managers Fjestad and Hanson attended RRBC's 36th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference on January 15-17, 2019, at the Alerus Center, Grand Forks, ND.

Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts

2019 Legislative Reception and Day at the Capitol

BRRWD Manager Peter V. Fjestad, BRRWD Administrator Bruce E. Albright, and Assistant Administrator Kathleen K. Fenger attended the 2019 MAWD Legislative Reception and Day at the Capitol on February 20-21 in St. Paul. The purpose of the Legislative Day is for Watershed Managers to meet with their Legislators to get better acquainted and to make them aware of Watershed Districts' perspectives on key issues.



2019 Summer Tour

The 2019 MAWD Summer Tour was held on June 26-29 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead. BRRWD Managers John E. Hanson, Peter V. Fjestad, Gerald L. Van Amburg, Administrator Bruce E. Albright, and Assistant Administrator Kathleen K. Fenger attended the event.

2019 MAWD Annual Meeting and Trade Show



Receiving the MAWD Project of the Year Award (left to right): Managers Mark Anderson and John Hanson, BRRWD Administrator Bruce Albright, Managers Peter Fjestad and Gerald Van Amburg, Assistant Administrator Kathy Fenger, and Manager Jay Leitch

The MAWD Annual Meeting and Trade Show was held at the Arrowwood Conference Center in Alexandria, MN, on December 4-7, 2019. BRRWD Managers Jay Leitch, Gerald L. Van Amburg, Peter V. Fjestad, John E. Hanson, Mark Anderson, BRRWD Administrator Bruce E. Albright, and Assistant Administrator Kathleen K. Fenger attended. Managers Anderson and Hanson were meeting delegates, and Van Amburg was the alternate. The BRRWD received the MAWD "2019 Project of the Year" award for Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation. Following the devastating 1997 and 2001 spring floods, Oakport Township approached the BRRWD to consider a

flood mitigation project to provide permanent flood protection for their residents along the Red River of

the North, Oakport Coulee, and associated floodplains. In response, the BRRWD started project development in 2002, with project construction commencing in 2007. Completed in 2016, this \$36 million, seven-phase project resulted in two Federal Emergency Management Agency-certified levee systems, totaling approximately five miles in length. The "East" levee was completed and certified in 2015, and the "West" levee was certified in 2018. The levee project provides flood protection to 750 acres and over 300 homes with the potential to protect approximately 200 future homes. Working cooperatively with Audubon Dakota, more than 110 acres of buyout property has been planted to native prairie on which North Dakota State University is now doing pollinator studies. Project funding sources include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (\$31 million), the BRRWD (\$1 million), local benefitting area (\$3 million), buyout property sales (\$0.75 million), and Audubon Society seeding (\$0.25 million).

Mediation Project Team

In 1997, the Legislature mandated formation of the RRBFDWG to resolve grid lock over state/federal permitting of flood damage reduction projects in the Red River Valley. The resulting agreement was intended as the framework for a new, collaborative approach to implement both flood damage reduction and natural resource protection and enhancement in ways that benefit all Minnesota citizens. The keys to this new approach are comprehensive watershed planning, clearly identified goals, early consultation and collaboration on flood damage reduction projects among the stakeholders' representatives, who comprise the BRRWD's Mediation Project Team. This group works to achieve a cooperative approach to project permitting and development. The purpose of the Mediation Agreement is:

To reach consensus agreements on long term solutions for reducing flood damage and for protection and enhancement of natural resources. Such agreements should balance important economic, environmental, and social considerations, and must provide for fair and effective procedures to resolve future conflicts related to flood damage reduction.

Since 1998, the BRRWD's PT meets as needed throughout the year. The result of their work has been several multipurpose projects, incorporating both fdr and nre features. In 2019, the Mediation PT worked on several projects, including the Stony Creek Comprehensive Project, Barnesville Township Area Drainage Study, Glyndon Waterway, South Branch of the Buffalo River, Otter Tail River Restoration, and Whiskey Creek Restoration near Kent, MN. PT meetings were held on April 18 and December 19.

Fall Tour

The BRRWD held their Fall Tour on Thursday, September 19, 2019. The BRRWD Advisory Committee, Mediation PT members, County Commissioners, State Legislators, SWCD Supervisors and staff, and other agency personnel were invited. The group took a bus tour of BRRWD projects that included the Barnesville Township WRMP, Clay/Wilkin J.D. No. 1-Improvement, Wolverton Creek Restoration, South Branch of the Buffalo River WRMP, Manston Slough Restoration Project, and Wilkin-Otter Tail J.D. No. 2-Improvement. Supper was catered by the Eagle Café at the BRRWD office upon conclusion of the tour. Approximately 35 people attended.



2019 Meeting Highlights

January 2019

- Held Annual Meeting. Board re-elected standing Officers: Jay Leitch, President; Peter Fjestad, Vice President; Mark Anderson, Treasurer; and John Hanson, Secretary. Renewed contracts for Engineering services-HEI; Legal services-Vogel Law Firm; Accounting services-Harold J. Rotunda, CPA; and Lobbyist-Joel Carlson.
- Hosted large group of landowners and local government representatives regarding the FM Diversion project to discuss the DNR recent decision to grant a permit to the DA. Approved a motion to file a request for a contested case hearing regarding the DNR's conditional permit.
- Received update regarding the Wolverton Creek Restoration project: Phase 1 is still under construction with an extended deadline of 6/30/19; DNR Fisheries office granted a variance to work next spring in the protected waters during the spawning season, so the contractor can start as soon as conditions allow; Phase 2 easements have been mailed to the landowners; staff will start the Phase 3 easements (Clay County portion) process.
- Approved the Final Order for Project No. 78, Clay/Wilkin J.D. No. 1-Improvement, beginning 30-day appeal period.

February 2019

- Administrator Albright presented 2018 tax levy petitions to Clay County Commissioners.
- Met with officials from the City of Moorhead, Clay County, and the FM DA to discuss BRRWD Permit No. 19-003 for the FM Diversion project.
- Appointed BRRWD President Jay Leitch to serve on the DA's Minnesota Land Acquisition oversite committee but declined a full membership in the MCCJPA.
- Approved HEI's 2019 contract for engineering services and Barnesville office staff.
- Approved a motion to submit a DNR Stream Restoration Priority List application for the Whiskey Creek Restoration project near Kent, MN.

March 2019

- Attended RRWMB/RRBFDRWG Joint Conference in Moorhead.
- Administrator Albright, Assistant Administrator Kathy Fenger, and Vice President Fjestad attended MAWD Legislative Reception, Breakfast, and Day at the Capitol in St. Paul.
- Hosted nearly 100 attendees at regular meeting to discuss the FM DA's permit application, the BRRWD's request for a contested case hearing regarding the DNR's Diversion permit, and statements from a variety of interested parties regarding the Diversion project.
- Met with the DNR regarding their Diversion permit conditions and to discuss the BRRWD's contested case.
- Awarded Project No. 78, Clay/Wilkin J.D. No. 1-Improvement, construction contract to Dennis Drewes, Inc. for their low bid of \$937,590. Total project cost is estimated to be \$1,662,408.
- Approved the 2019 revised BRRWD Bylaws.
- Approved additional temporary construction easement payments on an annual basis for the Wolverton Creek Restoration project to landowners in areas where construction is not completed.
- Clay County Commissioners approved a bond sale resolution for the Project No. 78, Clay/Wilkin J.D. No. 1-Improvement at their 3/19/19 meeting.
- Norby Lawsuit Judge upheld BRRWD Motion for Summary Judgement.

- Approved the acquisition of R/W for the Wilkin-Otter Tail J.D. No. 2 outlet repair project at the rate of \$275/acre. BWSR grant secured for repair project.

April 2019

- Held special meeting on April 23, 2019, at 7:00 PM in the Dilworth Community Center to take public comment regarding the FM DA's permit application with approximately 200 attendees. Met with the Cities of Comstock and Wolverton and Holy Cross Township to discuss possible Diversion project impacts.
- Approved signature of the construction contract with Dennis Drewes, Inc., for Project No. 78, Clay/Wilkin J.D. No. 1-Improvement. The temporary construction R/W has been staked.
- Held the BRRWD Advisory Committee's Annual meeting on 4/26/19 in Barnesville.

May 2019

- Received an extension of the 60-day permit rule deadline from the DA to give the Board time to meet with the DNR and the COE to discuss the DNR's maximum flood pool elevations and potential impacts to Minnesota properties, to finalize the BRRWD's permit conditions, and to meet with the BRRWD's attorney regarding the status of the DNR contested case hearing.
- Awarded the construction contract for the Wilkin-Otter Tail Judicial Ditch No. 2 repair to States Borders Construction, Inc., Graceville, MN, with the low bid of \$228,884. The Engineer's project cost estimate was \$375,000. The contractor plans to start work in late July/early August.
- Approved the 2019/2020 Barnesville River Watch water monitoring budget, totaling \$5,537.68, and allocated \$1,500 to Lowell Deedee to pay for the chemical analysis of his citizen water sampling efforts in Becker County.

June 2019

- BRRWD representatives met with DA, DNR, COE, and the City of Moorhead to discuss Diversion permit conditions.
- Held the Preliminary Resolution hearing for the proposed Stony Creek Restoration project on Tuesday, June 25, 2019, at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD office.
- Approved a motion to deny the Fargo Moorhead Diversion Authority's Permit No. 19-003 on a roll call vote with Managers Hanson, Larson, Affield, and Fjestad voting in favor, Managers Leitch and Van Amburg voting against, and Manager Anderson abstaining on advice from counsel regarding a possible conflict of interest.
- Harold J. Rotunda, Certified Public Accountant, presented the draft 2018 audit.
- Authorized signature of the construction contract with States Borders Construction, Inc. for the Wilkin/Otter Tail J.D. No. 2 repair.

July 2019

- Adopted the Preliminary Resolution Order to move forward with the development of the Stony Creek Water Resource Management Project. HEI was designated as the project engineer and was directed to prepare the Detailed Engineer's Report.
- Approved an Order to adopt the BRRWD's revised Rules, which is an expansion of the original 1979 Rules, and includes two new Sections on subsurface tile drainage and Buffer Rule regulations.
- The pre-hearing DNR contested case conference was held 7/2/19.
- Wilkin County Manager Catherine L. Affield was reappointed for a three-year term 9/1/20-8/31/23.

August 2019

- Drewes Construction, Inc. began work on the Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1-Outlet Repair project.
- Approved a motion to increase the BRRWD Manager per diem rate from \$75/day to \$125/day, according to 2019 State Legislation, and to amend Article III, Section 7, Compensation, of the BRRWD Bylaws to reflect the rate increase, effective 8/12/19.
- Held the BRRWD annual budget hearing on 8/26/19: The 2020 administrative levy set at \$250,000, plus an annual administrative fee to be assessed to projects, based on a project's account expenditures (\$100,000). Insurance fund levy set at \$22,000. The total General levy was approved for \$714,862, as was a second special levy for Pj. No. 79, Wolverton Creek Restoration (\$500,000). Board also set 2019 project/ditch system levies, totaling \$1,074,407.
- Welcomed RaeAnn Berg, the new Administrative Assistant, who started work on 8/19/19.
- Approved a motion to contribute up to \$41,400 in technical assistance, as a 25% match for a CWF grant application to be used to address sedimentation in 30 priority sites within the Whiskey Creek watershed in partnership with the Wilkin SWCD and the NRCS.
- Approved the 2018 Annual Report, which will be filed with BWSR and posted on the BRRWD's Website.
- Authorized a NWQI program application to help fund a project to restore approximately 13 miles of channel along Whiskey Creek in partnership with the NRCS and the Wilkin SWCD.

September 2019

- Met with City of Georgetown representatives to discuss several issues regarding the Georgetown Levee project.
- Authorized a re-evaluation of the Stony Creek WRMP's purpose and needs and to conduct another investigation of project alternatives and potential benefits.
- Held a landowner informational meeting to discuss the proposed Wilkin C.D. No. 27 Retrofit project on 9/20/19 at 8:00 AM in the Wilkin County Environmental Office in Breckenridge.
- Held the BRRWD's Fall Tour on 9/19/19.

October 2019

- Clay County Commissioners decide not to approve petitions for the BRRWD's 2020 general district-wide tax levies. Managers and Staff attend the 10/15/19 Wilkin County Board of Commissioners' meeting, where the County Board unanimously approves the 2020 petitions.
- Held a 1W1P Advisory Committee meeting.
- Received an update from Rob Sip, Executive Director, RRWMB, regarding their activities, including their 2018 Annual Report, 2020 Operating and Project Budget, and Progress Indicators handout.

November 2019

- Authorized HEI to work with agency partners to prepare a NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program funding application for work on Clay C.D. No. 34/Whisky Creek near Barnesville for submission in July 2020.
- Approved Pay Request No. 3 in the amount of \$315,825.41 to Sellin Brothers, Inc. for their work on Pj. No. 79, Wolverton Creek Channel Restoration.
- Appointed Managers John Hanson and Mark Anderson to be delegates to the MAWD annual meeting in December. Manager Van Amburg was appointed to be the alternate delegate.

- Approved contract extensions for three 2019 BRRWD projects that were delayed this fall due to wet conditions. Dennis Drewes, Inc., Project No. 78, Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch (J.D.) No. 1-Improvement, and Sellin Brothers, Inc., Project No. 79, Wolverton Creek Restoration, were both granted extensions until 6/22/20 to complete site cleanup and seeding next spring. States Borders Construction, Inc. was granted a contract extension until 6/8/20 to finish the topsoil leveling and seeding for the Wilkin/Otter Tail J.D. No. 2 outlet repair.

December 2019

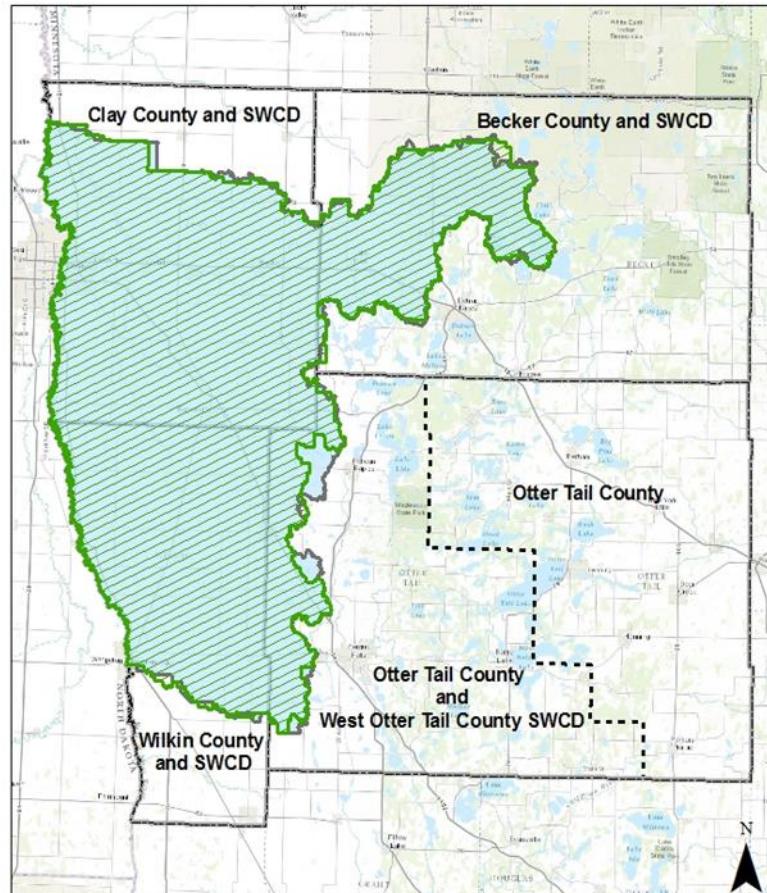
- Received the MAWD "2019 Project of the Year" award for Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation, during their Annual Meeting and Trade Show on December 4-7, 2019, in Alexandria.
- Received a petition from the USFWS for a wetland modification associated with Hamden Slough/Becker County Ditch No. 15.
- Authorized the purchase of a new vacuum pump for the Project No. 46, Turtle Lake Outlet system.
- Held a Mediation PT meeting on 12/19/19.

2019 Project Highlights

One Watershed, One Plan

The BRRWD's One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) effort was nearing completion in 2019. As one of seven areas participating in the second round of BWSR's approved 1W1P effort, we are working with local government agencies from Becker, Clay, Wilkin, and Otter Tail Counties, local government officials and regular citizens to create a single plan for the three watersheds within the BRRWD: the Red River, Otter Tail River, and the Buffalo River. Cooperation throughout multiple, connected jurisdictions is important because water management in one county affects the waters of all the other counties. Combining multiple water planning efforts will create a more efficient and cooperative plan for water management. The Plan will include goals and implementation actions that are prioritized and targeted on a watershed basis with measurable results, instead of the present individual plans that are restricted to political boundaries.

Three groups will be tasked with developing the 1W1P: The Policy Committee, Planning Team, and Advisory Committee. The Policy Committee is made up of County Commissioners, SWCD Board Supervisors, and one Watershed District Manager. They are responsible for reviewing and approving the draft components and the final, completed 1W1P, and will provide consensus direction on Plan development matters to the Planning Team. The Planning Team, comprised of one staff lead from each of the local Counties, Watershed District, SWCDs, and BWSR, will guide the planning process and review draft material. They are responsible for providing information for the planning process, reviewing draft Plan related information, and assisting in the Plan development. The Advisory Committees will be made up of members from the Planning Team, local government staff, state agencies, main water agencies/plan review agencies, the general public/landowners, trade organizations, nonprofit organizations, and special interest groups. They will make recommendations on Plan content and communicate concerns during Plan development. In addition, public meetings/hearings will be held as part of the Plan development process to ensure that a complete list of priority resources and concerns is compiled regarding issues impacting the community and watershed. The Initial Planning Kickoff Meeting was held on 9/28/19, following the 60-day stakeholder notification comment period. The Public Open House will be held early in 2019 to inform the public about the 1W1P planning process. A final public hearing will be held prior to the 1W1P adoption.



Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project

WHISKEY CREEK ENHANCEMENT PROJECT WILKIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA



Background

Whiskey Creek, a tributary of the Red River of the North, is located in Wilkin County, MN. The creek is one of many natural waterways within the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD).

The creek is experiencing poor water quality due to agricultural practices and channel bank erosion, which led to sediment build up and caused flooding. In 2016, Wilkin County and the BRRWD secured a Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation Grant (AIG) to study the creek and investigate how to stabilize the stream.

The Project

The BRRWD developed project alternatives to stabilize the stream. To do this, the existing conditions of Whiskey Creek were evaluated, and problem areas along the stream were identified.

Hydraulic modeling of Whiskey Creek's existing conditions was used to determine the watershed's flooding conditions for more common flood events.

Once the modeling was completed, the BRRWD held an informational meeting with landowners to gain their insights into what areas needed attention. The informational meeting corroborated the findings of the hydraulic model.

With technical and landowner information in hand, HEI was able to begin developing components for the Whiskey Creek stabilization. These components include:

- channel restoration,
- expanded buffer areas,
- side inlets and sediment best management practices (BMPs),
- a beaver management plan, and
- streambank stabilizations.

These components will enhance water quality and habitat as well as reduce flood damage.

To determine which alternatives should be implemented in the area, the BRRWD held another public informational meeting to gain landowner feedback and opinions. This and previous meetings helped the project partners gauge landowner interest and determine which alternatives will best solve their pain points.

The BRRWD is beginning the process of project development using Minnesota Watershed Law and will soon begin permitting and environmental review to complete this project.

The estimated construction cost for this project is \$9.9 million. BRRWD has applied for and obtained significant project grant funding to begin construction likely in 2021. Funding search will continue in

» Location

Wilkin County, Minnesota
Buffalo-Red River Watershed District

» Project Benefits

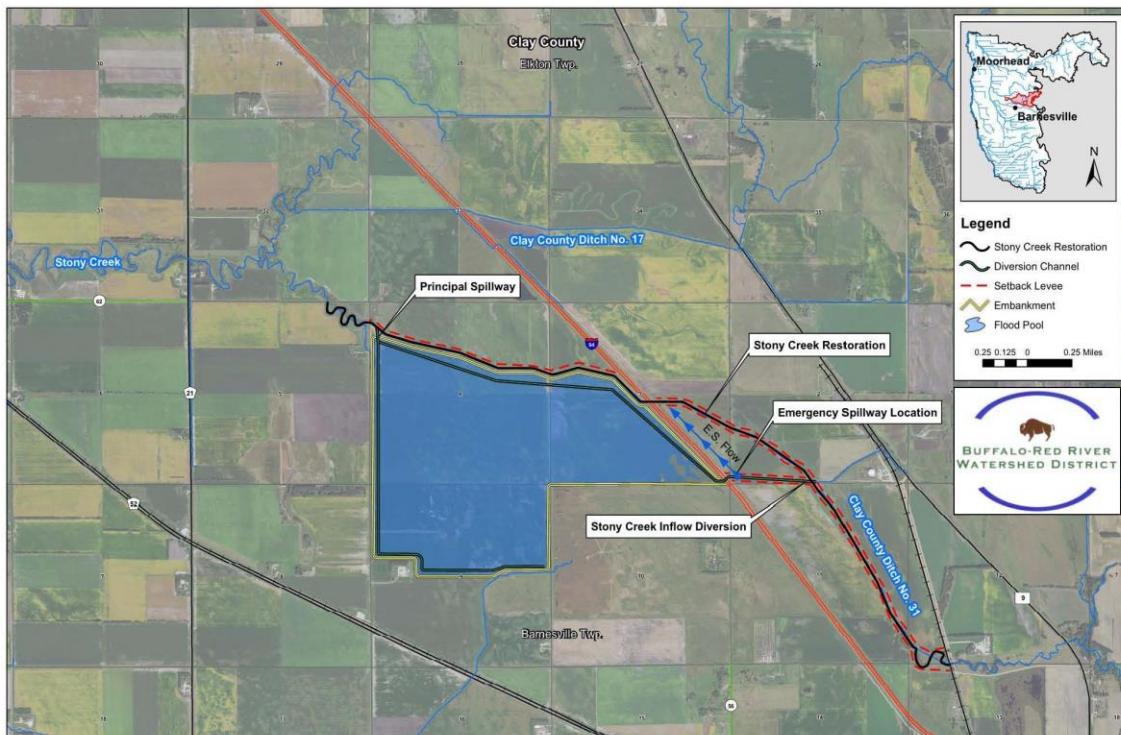
- Hydraulic modeling determined flood reduction benefits.
- Several project alternatives were explored to reduce flooding and/or improve water quality.
- Significant Grant funding Obtained/Anticipated
 - \$300,000 Clean Water Funds
 - \$2.9 Million National Water Quality Initiative
 - \$1.6 Million Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
 - \$2.0 Million Outdoor Heritage Fund
 - \$270,000 Section 319 MPCA
- Partnership with the Wilkin SWCD

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Stony Creek Water Resource Management Project

Stony Creek Water Resource Management Project

Proposer: Buffalo-Red River Watershed District



Description/Location:

The project area is located approximately 5 miles to the northwest of Barnesville, MN and is located on Clay County Ditch No. 31 (also known as Stony Creek). The watershed is steep and flashy and has a drainage area of 35 square miles. The project is located in the BRRWD's Central Planning Region. The project is currently in its study phase. **The project consists of numerous features: 4.5 mile long river corridor restoration enclosed by setback levees, a floodwater impoundment and expansion of buffers along Stony Creek and its tributaries.** The proposed 7,000 acre-feet of gated storage will provide more than 80% in reduction to the peak flow contributed by Stony Creek. Reductions to peak flows downstream on the South Branch Buffalo River are expected to be around 5%.

Project Benefits

Flood Control Goal	80%+ reduction in the 10-yr & 100-yr spring flood discharges from contributing drainage area
Habitat Restoration	Reduced turbidity, enhanced fish habitat, stream restoration along Stony Creek and riparian buffer corridor.
Erosion Reduction	Reduction in riverbank erosion and bank sloughing; buffering (89 acres) along the stream restoration reach, reduction of overland flooding and reduction in turbidity and suspended solids thereby improving water quality.

Project Cost: \$16.3 Million State DNR (\$6.7M) / LSOHC (\$2.0M) / WD (\$5.45M) / USDA (\$0.50M) / FMDA (\$1.65M)

Key: WD=Watershed District; DNR=Minnesota DNR HMGP; LSOHC=Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Outdoor Heritage Fund; USDA=Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; FMDA=Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Authority

Status: Currently in Design Phase, Land Acquisition in 2020, Construction Ready in 2021

