

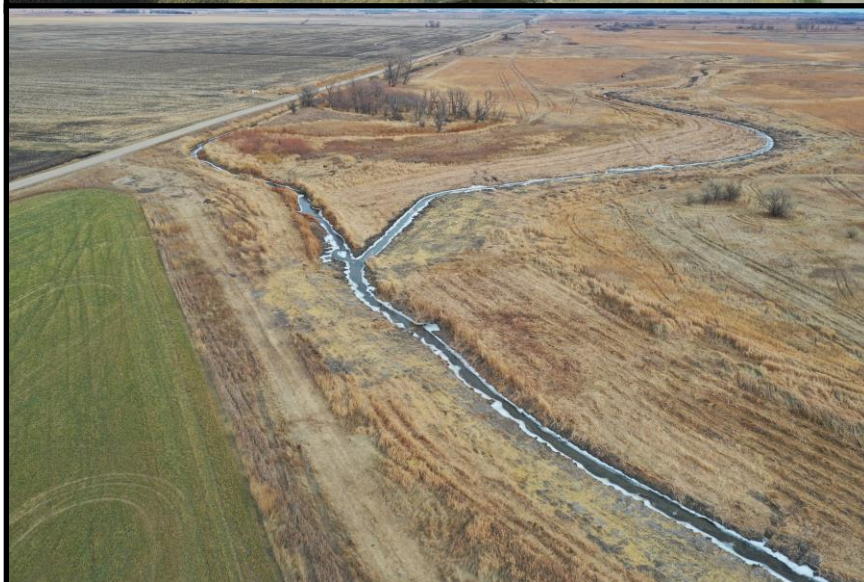


BUFFALO – RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT



2025

ANNUAL REPORT



1303 4th Ave. NE
Barnesville, MN 56514
Phone: 218-789-3100
www.brrwd.org

Office Hours:
Monday-Thursday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM
Friday
8:00 AM-2:30 PM

Board of Managers



Peter Fjestad—Board President
Otter Tail County
Term Expires: August 31, 2027



Catherine Affield—Vice President
Wilkin County
Term Expires: August 31, 2028



William Davis—Manager
Clay County
Term Expires: August 31, 2027



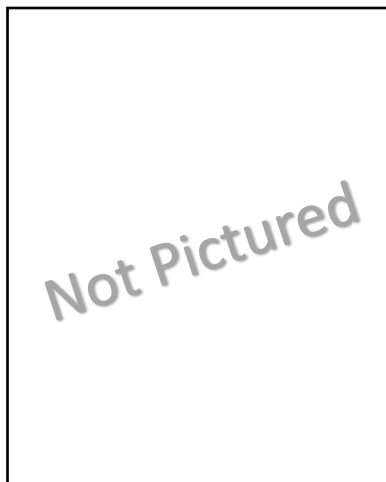
Troy Larson—Treasurer
Wilkin County
Term Expires: August 31, 2027



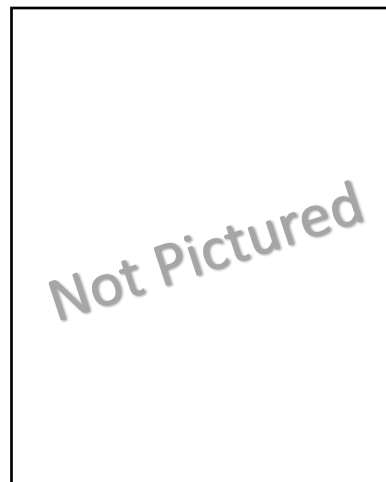
Gerry Van Amburg—Manager
Clay County
Term Expires: August 31, 2026



Curtis Stubstad—Manager
Clay County
Term Expires: August 31, 2026



Todd Andresen—Manager
Becker County
Resigned: March 2025



William Steffl—Manager
Becker County
Term Expires: August 31, 2027

Buffalo-Red River Watershed District

History

BRRWD, originally named South Buffalo Watershed District, was established on August 31, 1960. The District encompassed 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 the District needed to include all land contributing runoff to the Buffalo River to address flooding in the watershed. By Order on September 17, 1976, the State of Minnesota expanded the District and changed the name to Buffalo-Red River Watershed District. The Order expanded representation on the Board of Managers to five Managers. In 2011, Wilkin and Otter Tail Counties petitioned Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to expand BRRWD to include lands between the south border of BRRWD and Bois de Sioux Watershed District. The State of Minnesota expanded BRRWD to its current size by Order on April 25, 2012. The Order expanded representation on the Board to include seven Managers: three from Clay County, two from Wilkin County, one from Becker County, and one from Otter Tail County.



Today, BRRWD covers an area of approximately 1,780 square miles in Becker, Clay, 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 in Wilkin County; and the Otter Tail River in Otter Tail and Wilkin Counties.

Buffalo-Red River Watershed District is committed to serving the residents of the District to provide efficient management of our water resources.

Mission Statement

To alleviate flooding and to manage water resources of the District in a manner that best protects this valuable resource.



Goals

- Reduce or alleviate damage caused by floodwaters.
- Administer and maintain drainage systems.
- Develop programs and projects that will help to sustain an adequate supply of high-quality surface and groundwater for public and private use.
- Protect and/or improve water quality of the surface and groundwater resources.
- Cooperate and support viable projects that have the purpose of reducing erosion.
- Actively pursue a program of erosion control and sediment management within all ditch systems.
- Promote maintenance of biotic diversity.
- Incorporate recreational opportunities into District projects whenever feasible.
- Maximize potential cooperative opportunities available with all government levels.
- Endeavor to keep all residents informed of its duties, authorities, activities, and projects.
- Endeavor to inform and educate residents about water and soil resource issues and the importance of protecting these crucial resources.



2025 in Review

January

- **Annual Meeting** – Held Annual Meeting.
- **Lobbying Services** – Approved proposal from Joel Carlson, Inc for 2025-2026 lobbying services.
- **Clay County Ditch No. 9** – Accepted Petition and Findings and Order to Appoint Engineer to investigate proposal to impound, reroute, and divert ditch.
- **South Branch Buffalo River Restoration** – Approved methodology for determining temporary and permanent easement payment rates. Decided to move forward with stream restoration on Phase 2 of the project. Approved grant agreement with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for \$1,313,300.00 for Phase 2.
- **Upper Buffalo River Restoration** – Approved moving forward with only the upstream portion of proposed project and authorized development of water management district to reflect decision. Approved methodology for determining temporary easement payment rates. Approved grant agreement with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for \$1,718,224.00.
- **City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation** – Approved payment rates for permanent and temporary easement payments.
- **Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM)** – Approved Memorandum of Understand with Board of Water and Soil Resources to utilize RIM lands for stream restoration projects.
- **2024 Annual Report** – Approved 2024 Annual Report.
- **Red River Basin Commission Annual Conference** – Attended by Managers Fjestad and Affield.

February

- **Upper Buffalo River Restoration** – Approved paying landowners for two years of crop loss for Temporary Easements and Approved proposal from In Situ Archaeological Consulting to complete Archaeological Investigation.
- **Funding for Fargo-Moorhead Area Diversion Project** – Approved Resolution to support Clay County's efforts to pursue funding from Minnesota State Legislature.
- **Citizen Advisory Committee** – Appointed Citizen Advisory Committee Members.
- **Minnesota Watersheds Legislative Event** – Attended by Manager Fjestad.

March

- **South Branch Buffalo River Restoration-Phase 2** – Approved Engineer's Report. Accepted Water Management District. Set time and date for Hearing.
- **Upper Buffalo River Restoration** – Accepted Water Management District. Set time and date for Hearing.
- **Turtle Lake Outlet** – Approved updated Appraisal Report using 2023 property values.

April

- **South Branch Buffalo River Restoration-Phase 2** – Held Hearing. Approved Findings and Order to establish project.
- **Upper Buffalo River Restoration** – Held Hearing.
- **Clay County Ditch No. 9** – Accepted Report of Findings from Engineer. Set time and date for Hearing in the matter of the Petition to impound, reroute, and divert ditch.
- **Human Resources Contract** – Renewed contract with HighRoad Partners for Human Resources Services.
- **Water Quality Monitoring** – Approved contract with International Water Institute to complete water quality monitoring for 2025.
- **Citizen Advisory Committee** – Held Annual Meeting.

May

- **Clay County Ditch No. 5** – Accepted Petition. Set time and date for Hearing in the matter of the Petition to use Clay County Ditch No. 5 as an outlet.
- **Clay County Ditch No. 9** – Held Hearing. Approved Findings and Order to impound, reroute, and divert ditch.
- **Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration** – Approved Amended Findings and Order.
- **Upper Buffalo River Restoration** – Denied motion to approve Findings and Order due to negative landowner feedback at Hearing.
- **Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)**—Approved providing Wilkin SWCD \$25,000.00 for funding technical assistance for Soil Health Program.
- **Project Team** – Held Project Team Meeting.

2025 in Review

June

- **Clay County Ditch No. 5** – Held Hearing. Approved Findings and Order to add land to use Clay County Ditch No. 5 as an outlet.
- **Funding for Fargo-Moorhead Area Diversion Project** – Approved Resolution to support efforts to pursue funding from Minnesota State Legislature for City of Georgetown Flood Mitigation Project and City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation Project.
- **Upper Buffalo River Restoration** – Approved honoring incentive payments for landowners that enrolled land in Reinvest in Minnesota Program.
- **Audit Report** – Accepted Audit Report conducted by Brady Martz & Associates.
- **Minnesota Watersheds Summer Tour**—Attended by Managers Fjestad and Affield.

July

- **Glyndon East Tributary Restoration** – Construction complete, approved Change Order No. 3 for \$23,710.00 and closed contract.
- **Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration** – Approved Change Order No. 2 for \$33,725.30 for Phase 1.
- **Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration** – Awarded Phase 2 construction contract to Comstock Construction for \$1,532,400.00.

August

- **Whiskey Creek and South Tributaries Restoration** – Approved proposal from In Situ Archaeological Consulting to complete Archaeological Investigation.
- **Whiskey Creek Restoration** – Construction of repair complete, closed contract.
- **Clay County Ditch No. 47**—Award contract to Key Contracting for concrete liner repair for \$67,704.00.
- **Budget Hearing** – Held 2026 Budget Hearing.

September

- **Clay County Ditch No. 67** – Accepted Petition. Set time and date for Hearing in the matter of the Petition to use Clay County Ditch No. 67 as an outlet.

October

- **Clay County Ditch No. 11** – Accepted Petition. Set time and date for Hearing in the matter of the Petition to use Clay County Ditch No. 11 as an outlet.
- **Clay County Ditch No. 67** – Held Hearing to add land to use Clay County Ditch No. 67 as an outlet.
- **Wilkin County Ditch No. 3** – Approved cost share request for culvert with Akron Township for \$5,000.00
- **Wilkin County Ditch No. 12** – Approved Order to remedy buffer non-compliance.
- **Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project** – Approved Change Order No. 2 for \$476,350.00.
- **City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation Project** – Approved purchase agreement to purchase wetland credits.
- **Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System** – Approved updating rules to comply with MPCA requirements and time and date for hearing.
- **International Water Institute** – Approve require for cost share on update to map portal for \$2,689.00.
- **1099s** – Approved contracting with Brady Martz to complete 2025 1099s.

November

- **Clay County Ditch No. 11** – Held Hearing. Approved Findings and Order to add land to use Clay County Ditch No. 11 as an outlet.
- **Whiskey Creek and South Tributaries Restoration** – Approved hiring appraiser to determine land values for easements.
- **Employee Handbook** – Approved updates to comply with Minnesota Law for Paid Family Medical Leave.

December

- **Clay County Ditch No. 33** – Approved payment methods for expanded easements for outlet repair.
- **Clay County Ditch No. 47** – Approved Change Order No. 1 for -\$15,404.00 for channel liner repair.
- **Whiskey Creek and South Tributaries Restoration** – Approved hiring Natwick Appraisals to complete appraisal reports.
- **City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation Project** – Approved amended purchase agreement to purchase wetland credits.
- **Rules** – Held Hearing to amend Rules to comply with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's MS4 requirements.
- **Minnesota Watersheds Annual Conference** – Attended by Managers Fjestad, Affield, and Van Amburg.

2025 Highlights

Board Meetings

BRRWD held their monthly Board Meeting on the second Monday of each month unless the second Monday of the month fell on a holiday when the BRRWD office is closed. In 2025, BRRWD held 12 Board Meetings. The annual meeting was held on January 9 and the budget hearing was held on August 11.

January 9
February 10
March 10
April 14
May 12
June 9
July 14
August 11
September 8
October 13
November 10
December 8

Informational Meetings and Hearings

In 2025, BRRWD held 2 Informational Meetings and 8 Hearings.

South Branch Buffalo River Restoration – Hearing, April
Upper Buffalo River Restoration – Hearing, April
Clay County Ditch No. 9 – Hearing, May
Clay County Ditch No. 5 – Hearing, June
Whisky Creek and South Tributaries Restoration – Informational Meeting, July
2026 Budget – Hearing, August
Clay County Ditch No. 67 – Hearing, October
Clay County Ditch No. 11 – Hearing, November
Rule Change – Hearing, December
Wilkin County Ditch No. 3 – Informational Meeting, December

Permits

Permit Applications: 104
Permits Brought to Board: 103
Permits Withdrawn: 0
Permits Approved: 101
Permits Denied: 2

Drainage Repairs

Board of Managers approved 32 repairs on public drainage systems regulated under Minnesota Statute 103E.

Board Education

January: Red River Basin Commission Annual Conference, Moorhead, MN – Attended by Managers Fjestad and Affield
February: Minnesota Watersheds Legislative Event, St. Paul, MN – Attended by Manager Fjestad
February: Board of Water and Soil Resources Manager Orientation Training, Detroit Lakes, MN – Attended by Stubstad and Andresen.
March: Flood Damager Reduction Workgroup & Red River Watershed Management Board Annual Joint Conference, Moorhead, MN – Attended by Manager Van Amburg
March: Minnesota Watershed Special Meeting on Bylaws, Waite Park, MN – Attended by Managers Fjestad and Affield.
April: Citizen Advisory Committee, Barnesville, MN – Attended by Managers Fjestad, Affield, and Davis
May: Project Team, Barnesville, MN - Attended by Managers Affield, Davis, and Steffi
June: Minnesota Watersheds Summer Tour, St. Paul, MN – Attended by Managers Fjestad, Affield
August: Minnesota Watersheds Annual Meeting on Resolutions and Petitions, Virtual – Attended by Managers Fjestad, Affield, and Davis
December: Minnesota Watersheds Annual Conference, Nisswa, MN – Attended by Managers Fjestad, Affield, and Van Amburg

2025 Highlights

Drainage & Project Maintenance & Repairs

System	Location	Repair	Estimated Cost	Approval Date
Clay County Ditch No. 35	Sec. 31, Moland Twp, Clay County	Scour hole and plugged culvert. Haul in 60' of clay and remove sediment in culvert.	\$2,000 - \$2,500	March 10
Clay County Ditch No. 36	Sec. 10, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	18" flapgate fell off. Cut off 1' cmp and remount flapgate.	\$500	April 14
Clay County Ditch No. 41	Secs. 24, 25, 36, Moorhead Twp, Clay County	Brush/willows growing in channel. Three miles of brush mowing in channel	\$3,000 - \$4,000	April 14
Clay-Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1	Sec. 1, Wolverton Twp, Wilkin County & Secs. 30, 31, Alliance Twp, Clay County	Cattails and minor sediment in channel. Clean out 2 miles.	\$15,000 - \$18,000	April 14
Wilkin County Ditch No. 41	Sec. 15, Atherton Twp, Wilkin County	Brush/willows growing along ditch. 3/4 mile of brush mowing along spoilbank.	\$500 - \$1,000	April 14
Pj. No. 80 - Stony Creek Restoration	Secs. 3, 4, 11, Barnesville Twp, Clay County	Brush/willows growing along channel. 1.5 miles of brush mowing along channel.	\$1,000 - \$1,500	April 14
Becker County Ditch No. 5	Sec. 22, Audubon Twp, Becker County	Washout along ditch spillway. Haul in 30 yards class three rip rap to keep washout from expanding.	\$4,000 - \$5,000	May 12
Clay County Ditch No. 2	Sec. 28, Spring Prairie Twp, Clay County	Collapsed side inlet culvert end. Cut off 12' and reinstall 18"x12' corrugated metal pipe (cmp) with band and flapgate. Haul in two loads of clay and one load of rip rap..	\$4,000 - \$5,000	May 12
Clay County Ditch No. 2	Sec. 30, Spring Prairie Twp, Clay County	Missing flapgate. Cut off 1' cmp and install new 24 flapgate.	\$1,500 - \$2,000	May 12
Clay County Ditch No. 9	Sec. 6, Elmwood Twp, Clay County	Damaged side inlet. Cut damaged cmp and add 18"x8' cmp and remount flapgate.	\$1,000 - \$1,500	May 12

2025 Highlights

Drainage & Project Maintenance & Repairs

System	Location	Repair	Estimated Cost	Approval Date
Clay County Ditch No. 47	Sec. 15, Moorhead Twp, Clay County	140' concrete liner has fallen into channel. Need to put repair plans together to solicit bids	\$5,000	May 12
Clay County Ditch No. 69	Sec. 35, Glyndon Twp, Clay County	Three damaged 18" flapgates. Cut off 1' cmp, clear one side inlet, and clean two outlets to allow flapgates to open.	\$4,500 - \$5,500	May 12
Pj. 16, Stinking Lake Detention	Sec. 30, Cuba Twp, Becker County	Debris plugging water control structure. Hire contractor to remove debris.	\$2,000 - \$3,000	May 12
Pj. 16, Stinking Lake Detention	Sec. 36, Highland Grove Twp, Clay County	Scour hole along approach. Haul in fill material.		May 12
Pj. 79, Wolverton Creek	Various - Wolverton, Holy Cross, & Roberts Twps.	Brush mow and spray several locations for willows growing along channel.	\$2,500 - \$3,000	May 12
Pj. 79, Wolverton Creek	Sec. 10, Wolverton Twp, Wilkin County	Seven standing dead trees in buffer and four more that have fallen down. Knock down trees and haul or burn in field.	\$4,000 - \$6,000	May 12
Various	Various	Ditches sprayed for woody debris, cattails, leafy spurge, and poisonous plants	\$73,000	June 9
Becker County Ditch No. 15	Sec. 8, Hamden Twp, Becker County	Brushmow willows and trees along spoilbanks of ditch.	\$3,000 - \$4,000	July 14
Becker County Ditch No. 15	Sec. 10, Audubon Twp, Becker County	Spray 1.5 miles of cattails in channel.	\$1,500	July 14
Clay County Ditch No. 11 South	Secs. 4, 5, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	Two mile ditch cleanout.	\$24,000 - \$30,000	July 14
Clay County Ditch No. 11 South	Sec. 32, Kurtz Twp, Clay County	Brushmow willows and trees near outlet of ditch.	\$2,000 - \$3,000	July 14
Clay County Ditch No. 21	Secs. 5, 6, Elkton Twp, Secs. 1, 2 Elmwood Twp, Clay County	Spray 1.5 miles of cattails in channel.	\$1,500	July 14
Clay County Ditch No. 36	Sec. 8, 9, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	1.5 mile ditch cleanout	\$18,000 - \$23,000	July 14
Pj. 16, Stinking Lake	Sec. 33, Highland Grove Twp, Clay County	Brushmow willows along Hay Creek.	\$2,000 - \$3,000	July 14

2025 Highlights

Drainage & Project Maintenance & Repairs

System	Location	Repair	Estimated Cost	Approval Date
Becker County Ditch No. 9	Sec. 9, Cuba Twp, Becker County	Brushmow trees and willows on sideslopes.	\$3,000 - \$4,000	August 14
Clay County Ditch No. 60	Secs. 14, 15, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	Sediment in channel. Channel cleanout of 0.75 miles.	\$8,000 - \$10,000	August 14
Wilkin County Ditch No. 6A	Sec. 8, Nordick Twp, Wilkin County	Brush mow dead trees on side slopes.	\$1,500	September 8
Clay County Ditch No. 11-S	Sec. 3, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	No flapgates on side inlets. Install three 24" gates and one 36" gate.	\$8,500.00	October 13
Clay County Ditch No. 53	Sec. 19, Alliance Twp, Clay County	Add two sections of 36"x20' cmp to field approach and fill to compensate for narrow access. Haul out crushed concrete dumped in ditch.	\$6,000.00	October 13
Wilkin County Ditch No. 13 - Lateral 1	Sec. 26, Deerhorn Twp, Wilkin County	Straighten bent culvert end to allow drainage.	\$500.00	October 13
Clay County Ditch No. 11S	Sec. 4, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	Flapgates missing on two culverts. Install two 24" flapgates.	\$3,500.00	November 10
Wilkin County Ditch No. 3	Sec. 21, Nilson Twp, Wilkin County	Ditch cleanout.	\$5,000.00	November 10
Pj. 80, Stony Creek	Sec. 3, Barnesville Twp, Clay County	Fallen dead trees in ROW. Remove and burn trees.	\$2,500.00	November 10
Project No 49 – Oakport Flood Mitigation	Southwest Lift Station	Reset tilting light/antennae pole.	\$2,500.00	November 10
Project No 49 – Oakport Flood Mitigation	Water Tower Lift Station	Replace damaged manhole casting.	\$1,500.00	November 10
Project No 49 – Oakport Flood Mitigation	Southeast Corner of Brentwood Levee	Pocket gopher activity needs to be controlled	\$800.00	November 10
Project No. 71 – 50th Ave S	Various	Tree and cattail spraying	\$4,000.00	November 10
Project No. 71 – 50th Ave S	Ditch Outlet	Remove trees	\$8,000.00	November 10
Project No. 71 – 50th Ave S	Along 50th Ave. S. ditch	Remove sediment blocks at culvert ends and replace damaged 18" flapgate.	\$9,000.00	November 10
Project No. 71 – 50th Ave S	Along south side of property	North ditch of County Road 12 doesn't drain properly and has sediment for approximately 500' downstream of the levee/culvert.	\$7,000.00	November 10

2025 Highlights

Drainage & Project Maintenance & Repairs

System	Location	Repair	Estimated Cost	Approval Date
Clay County Ditch No. 11S	Sec. 3, Holy Cross Twp, Clay County	Sediment in channel. Ditch cleanout of one mile.	\$12,000 - \$15,000	December 8
Clay County Ditch No. 21	Secs. 1, 2, Elmwood Twp, Secs. 5, 6, Elkton Twp, Clay County	Sediment in channel. Ditch cleanout of four miles. Seed spoil material after spread out.	\$65,000 - \$70,000	December 8
Clay County Ditch No. 40	Secs. 18, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, Kurtz Twp, Clay County	Sediment in channel. Cleanout whole ditch system (five and a half miles). Seed spoil material after spread out.	\$87,000 - \$95,000	December 8
Clay County Ditch No. 58	Sec. 12, Elmwood Twp, Clay County	Sediment in channel. Ditch cleanout of one mile. Seed spoil material after spread out.	\$13,000 - \$17,500	December 8
Wilkin County Ditch No. 2	Secs. 5, 8, Sunnyside Twp, Wilkin County	Sediment in channel. Ditch cleanout of one mile. Seed spoil material after spread out.	\$13,000 - \$17,500	December 8
Wilkin County Ditch No. 43	Secs. 26, 27, Atherton Twp, Wilkin County	Sediment in channel. Ditch cleanout of one and a half miles. Seed spoil material after spread out.	\$19,000 - \$25,000	December 8
Pj. 79, Wolverton Creek	Sec. 17, Mitchell Twp, Wilkin County	Clean approximately 460 feet of ditch within BRRWD ROW, from road culvert to a side inlet	\$3,000-\$4,000	December 8
Total Annual Estimated Repair Costs			\$534,300.00	

Project Highlights

Glyndon East Tributary Restoration

The Glyndon East Tributary is a tributary to the Buffalo River located in Clay County. The Glyndon East Tributary subwatershed is approximately 9.5 square miles. The stream has a total length of 9.2 river miles starting at MN State Highway 9 and extending downstream to the Buffalo River.

Project proposed to improve channel conveyance for agricultural drainage and lagoon discharge from the City of Glyndon, improve water quality, restore conveyance through historic meanders, and improve wildlife habitat.

The hearing to establish the Glyndon East Tributary Restoration as a project was held in May 2022. With the approval of the Findings and Order, temporary and permanent easements were acquired for construction and long-term maintenance of the project. Contract was awarded to States Borders Construction, Inc. in November 2022. Construction commenced in May 2023 and continued through 2025. Contract was closed in July 2025. Total construction cost was \$1,297,075.50.

Glyndon East Tributary Restoration was funded by:

- Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Clean Water Fund, Watershed-based Implementation Fund
- Glyndon East Tributary Water Management District
- BRRWD basic water management fund



Glyndon East Tributary Restoration under construction.



Glyndon East Tributary Restoration after construction.



Glyndon East Tributary Restoration after construction.

Project Highlights

Stony Creek Restoration

Stony Creek is a tributary to the South Branch Buffalo River in Clay County. The Stony Creek subwatershed is approximately 131 square miles.

Project proposed to restore 4 miles of channel, construct setback levees, install sediment BMPs, and establish buffers along the channel. Project proposed to address agricultural flooding, sedimentation in the channel, poor water quality, and improve habitat.

Project Hearing was held in June 2023. With the approval of the Findings and Order, easements were acquired for construction and long-term maintenance of the project. Contract was awarded to ACM, LLC in August 2023. Construction commenced in September 2023 and continued through 2025. Contract was closed in June 2025. Total construction cost was \$1,134,762.06.

Stony Creek Restoration was funded by:

- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Stream Habitat Program funded through Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Flood Hazard Mitigation Program
- Stony Creek Water Management District
- BRRWD basic water management fund



Stony Creek Restoration before construction.



Stony Creek Restoration after construction.



Stony Creek Restoration after construction.



CLEAN
WATER
LAND &
LEGACY
AMENDMENT

m
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Project Highlights

Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project

Whiskey Creek is a tributary of the Red River of the North located in Wilkin County, MN. Whiskey Creek is one of many natural waterways within the BRRWD that has poor water quality due to agricultural practices and channel bank erosion. Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project is a multi-phase project, restoring the channel in Sections 5, 8, 9, 10, and 15, Connelly Township, Sections 19, 29, 30, 31, and 32, Nordick Township, and Section 24 McCauleyville Township.

Project proposed to improve water quality, promote stable stream conditions, improve aquatic and wildlife habitat, and provide significant flood damage reduction.

A hearing was held April 2021 to establish the Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project. Contract for Phase 1 was awarded to Ehlert Excavating, Inc. in June 2021. Construction of Phase 1 was completed in November 2021. Ehlert Excavating, Inc. completed Phase 2 of construction in September 2022. Contract for Phase 1 and 2 closed in July 2023. Total construction cost for Phase 1 and 2 was \$1,328,409.22.

Contract for Phase 3 was awarded to Ehlert Excavating, Inc. in April 2023 and construction began in June 2023. In August 2023, Contract with Ehlert Excavating, Inc. was extended to include Phase 4. Phase 4 construction continued through 2025. Contract expected to close in 2026 once vegetation is established. Total expected construction cost for Phase 3 and 4 is \$3,049,431.50.

BRRWD continue to acquire permanent easements for the project area in 2026.

Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project was funded by:

- Natural Resource Conservation Service, National Water Quality Initiative Grant
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership Grant
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Section 319 Funds
- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Department of Natural Resources Stream Habitat Program through Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
- Board of Water and Soil Resources, Clean Water Fund
- Reinvest in Minnesota
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- Whiskey Creek Water Management District
- BRRWD basic water management



Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project before construction



Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project after construction.



DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

m BOARD OF WATER
AND SOIL RESOURCES

m MINNESOTA POLLUTION
CONTROL AGENCY

Project Highlights

Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration Project

South Branch Buffalo River is a tributary to the Buffalo River, located in Wilkin and Clay Counties. Phase 1 of South Branch Buffalo River Restoration is located in Sections 9, 10, and 11, Manston Township, Wilkin County. The project has a subwatershed of approximately 27 square miles.

There are two legal public drainage ditches located within the South Branch Buffalo River—Phase 1 subwatershed: Wilkin County Ditch No. 44 Lateral A and Wilkin County Ditch No. 44 Lateral B. Phase 1 will reroute Wilkin County Ditch No. 44 Lateral A in Sections 9, 10, and 11, Manston Township back into the historic channel.

A Hearing to reroute and partially abandon Wilkin County Ditch No. 44 was held in February 2022. Construction contract for Phase 1 was awarded to Minnesota Native Landscapes in June 2022. Construction commenced in September 2022 and continued through 2025. Contract for Phase 1 was closed in November 2025. Total construction cost for Phase 1 was \$837,311.56.

A Hearing for Phase 2 was held in April 2025. An Order to establish the project approved in April 2025 and amended in May 2025. Construction contract for Phase 2 was awarded to Comstock Construction, Inc. Expected project cost is \$1,532,400.00. Construction is expected to commence in 2026. BRRWD began obtaining easements for Phase 2 in 2025. BRRWD will continue to obtain easements in 2026.

Upper South Branch Buffalo River is funded by:

- Natural Resource Conservation Service, National Water Quality Initiative Grant
- Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Clean Water Fund
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Stream Habitat Program funded through Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Reinvest in Minnesota
- Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup
- Upper South Branch Buffalo River Water Management District
- BRRWD basic water management fund



South Branch Buffalo River Restoration before construction.



South Branch Buffalo River Restoration after construction.



South Branch Buffalo River Restoration after construction.

m BOARD OF WATER
AND SOIL RESOURCES

m
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service



RED RIVER BASIN
FDRWG

**CLEAN
WATER
LAND &
LEGACY
AMENDMENT**

Project Highlights

City of Wolverton Flood Protection

BRRWD will design, construct, operate, and maintain a flood protection project for the City of Wolverton to provide the City with 100-year FEMA Accredited Flood Protection.

In 2022, BRRWD signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MFDA to support project. Houston Engineering, Inc. completed survey work to inform project design. BRRWD met with the City to begin project development. BRRWD continued coordinating with landowners, City, Railroad, and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) and finalize levee design in 2023, 2024, and 2025. In 2024, BRRWD hired Crown Appraisals, Inc to determine land values for easement acquisition. BRRWD also held a landowner meeting to discuss project design. BRRWD established City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation Project by resolution in December 2024. BRRWD continued to work on project design, permitting, and land acquisition coordination in 2025. Land acquisition is expected to commence in 2026. Construction is expected to commence in 2026 and continue through 2027.

City of Wolverton Flood Protection is funded by:

- Metro Flood Diversion Authority



Map of City of Wolverton Levee

Map of City of Georgetown Levee

Project Highlights

Lower Otter Tail River Restoration

Otter Tail River watershed encompasses approximately 1,952 square miles of drainage from Clearwater, Becker, Otter Tail, and Wilkin Counties. The river outlets in the City of Breckenridge, MN, where its confluence with the Bois de Sioux River forms the headwaters of the Red River of the North

Project proposes to restore the Lower Otter Tail River by reconnecting oxbows to remainder the channel. This project will improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

In 2025, BRRWD began acquiring easements through Reinvest in Minnesota. BRRWD continued landowner outreach and project design. In 2026, BRRWD anticipates continuing land acquisition efforts, holding a project hearing, and beginning construction.

Lower Otter Tail River Restoration is funded by:

- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Clean Water Fund
- Reinvest in Minnesota
- Metro Flood Diversion Authority.



Straightened portion of Lower Otter Tail River Restoration before construction.



mn BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Whisky Creek & South Tributary Restoration

Landowners along Whisky Creek in Barnesville and Alliance Townships, Clay County expressed concerns about flooding. Board of Managers completed survey to design project to address concerns. In 2025, BRRWD continued working on project design.

In 2026, BRRWD plans to continue working on project design, hold Hearing, acquire easements, and commence construction.

Whisky Creek and South Tributary is funded by:

- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, Outdoor Heritage Fund



Whisky Creek before construction.

Project Highlights

Oakport Flood Mitigation

The spring flood of 1997 was devastating for the entire Red River Basin. In the Oakport project area, over 150 homes were damaged, and over 200 homes isolated from public safety and services. Similar events in 1969, 2000, and 2001 prompted the Oakport residents to seek permanent flood control. In November 2002, the Township asked the BRRWD to develop a project in accordance with Watershed Law. BRRWD began construction of the \$36 million project in 2008. The seven phases of the project were completed in 2016.

In 2021, BRRWD began discussions with the City of Moorhead to transfer the project area to the City. In 2022 an agreement was drafted and BRRWD and the City began addressing items to complete prior to the transfer. BRRWD continued to work on the transfer in 2025. Property transfer is expected to occur in 2026.



Oakport Levee.

2026 Budget

Administrative Budget

	Budget
Staff Compensation + Benefits	\$ 280,000.00
Manager Vouchers	\$ 15,000.00
Payroll Taxes	\$ 50,000.00
Human Resources Services	\$ 3,000.00
IT Services/Computer & Software Upgrades	\$ 25,000.00
Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 5,000.00
ATV and Trailer	\$ 2,000.00
Phone/Communication	\$ 150.00
Office Supplies	\$ 6,000.00
Office Maintenance	\$ 8,000.00
Utilities	\$ 8,000.00
Audit	\$ 9,000.00
Legal Fees	\$ 6,100.00
Direct Deposit Banking Fees	\$ 250.00
Budget Hearing Ads	\$ 2,500.00
Total Levy	\$ 350,000.00

Liability Insurance

	Budget
Total Levy	\$ 22,000.00

Survey & Data Acquisition

	Budget
Total Levy	\$ 100,000.00

2026 Budget

District-wide Programs & Practices #1

	Budget
SWCD Conservation Programs & Practices	\$ 150,000.00
Conservation Marketing	
Landonwer Incentive Program	
Soil Health Practices	
Technical Assistance	
Education & Outreach	\$ 140,000.00
River Keepers	\$ 65,000.00
Red River Basin Commission	\$ 25,000.00
Memberships and Education	\$ 25,000.00
Other	\$ 25,000.00
Programs & Watershed-wide Activities	\$ 210,000.00
Water Quality Monitoring	\$ 75,000.00
USGS- BRRWD Stream Gaging Operation & Maintenance	\$ 5,000.00
DNR Stream Gaging Buffalo River	\$ 25,000.00
Permitting	\$ 30,000.00
Website & Database Maintenance	\$ 5,000.00
Miscellaneous Investigations	\$ 50,000.00
Lobbying	\$ 10,000.00
Consultant Meeting Attendance	\$ 10,000.00
Construction & Maintenance	\$ 50,000.00
Log Jam Removals	
Ring Dikes	
Other	
Total Levy	\$ 550,000.00

District-wide Programs & Practices #2

	Budget
Projects	\$ 400,000.00
South Branch of the Buffalo River	
Whisky Creek and South Tributary Restoration	
Lower Otter Tail River	
Other	
Grant Match	\$ 300,000.00
Stream Habitat Program LSOHC Grant	
Clean Water Fund	
Other	
Total Levy	\$ 700,000.00

2026 Budget

Projects & Ditches

	Budget
Pj.01-Wilkin Co Ditch No. 22	\$ 50,000.00
Pj.02-Wilkin Co Ditch No. 13	\$ 30,000.00
Pj.03-Clay Co Ditch No. 65	\$ 30,000.00
Pj.04-Clay Co Ditch No. 51-Lat	\$ -
Pj.07-Clay Co Ditch No. 39	\$ 30,000.00
Pj.14-Clay Co Ditch No. 10	\$ 100,000.00
Pj. 16 - Stinking Lake Detention	\$ 20,000.00
Pj.19-Becker Co Ditch No. 21	\$ 10,000.00
Pj.20-Clay Co Ditch No. 12	\$ 15,000.00
Pj.21-Wilkin Co Ditch No. 13-Lat	\$ 30,000.00
Pj.23-Becker Co Ditch No. 15	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.24-Wilkin Co Ditch No. 44	\$ 20,000.00
Pj.25-Wilkin Co Ditch No. 42	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.27-Clay Co Ditch No. 55	\$ 15,000.00
Pj.28-Clay Co Ditch No. 2	\$ 20,000.00
Pj.32-Hawley Flood Contr	\$ 6,000.00
Pj.33-Clay Co Ditch No. 50	\$ 150,000.00
Pj.34-Clay Co No. 41/41-Lat 1	\$ 60,000.00
Pj.35-Clay Co Ditch No. 47	\$ 35,000.00
Pj.36-EDA Clay Co No. 41-Lat 2	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.38, Kragnes Ringdike	\$ -
Pj.38, Anderson Acres	\$ -
Pj.39-Georgetown Levee	\$ -
Pj.40-Clay Co No. 41-Outlet	\$ 25,000.00
Pj.42-Clay Co Ditch No. 67	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.43-Clay Co Ditch No. 30	\$ 10,000.00
Pj.46-Turtle Lake Outlet	\$ 75,000.00
Pj.47-Clay Co Ditch No. 53	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.48-Clay Co Ditch No. 59	\$ 25,000.00
Pj.49-Oakport Township	\$ 75,000.00
Pj.50, Cromwell High Water	\$ -
Pj.51, Clay Co Ditch No. 68	\$ 15,000.00
Pj.52, Clay Co Ditch No. 69	\$ 10,000.00
Pj.54, Whisky Creek	\$ 30,000.00
Pj.55, Clay Co Ditch No. 51-Imp	\$ -
Pj.56, Manston Slough	\$ 65,000.00
Pj.57, Mhd I-94 Drainage	\$ -
Pj.58, Riverton Storage Invest	\$ -
Pj.61, Clay Co Ditch No. 11	\$ 35,000.00
Pj.63, Grove Lake	\$ -
Pj.64, LaBelle/Boyer Lakes	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.65, Clay/Wilkin Cty Line	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.67, Pete/Randkler/Helgeson	\$ -
Pj.68, Lake Jacobs Outlet	\$ 5,000.00
Pj.70, Crystal Creek/Oakport	\$ -

2026 Budget

Projects & Ditches

	Budget
Pj.71, 50th AVE S	\$ 10,000.00
Pj.73, Country Heritage Ditch	\$ -
Pj. 78, Clay-Wilkin J.D. No. 1	\$ -
Pj.79, Wolverton Crk Rest	\$ -
Pj. 80-Stony Creek Restoration	\$ 50,000.00
Pj. 81 Whiskey Crk Enhancement	\$ 149,916.38
Pj. 82, Glyndon East Tributary	\$ 40,000.00
Pj. 85, Upper South Branch	\$ 121,480.00
Becker Co Ditch No. 05	\$ 15,000.00
Becker Co Ditch No. 06	\$ -
Becker Co Ditch No. 09	\$ 25,000.00
Becker Co Ditch No. 10	\$ 3,000.00
Becker Co Ditch No. 19	\$ 5,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 03	\$ 60,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 05	\$ 25,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 09	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 16	\$ 20,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 17	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 20	\$ 30,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 21	\$ 30,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 22	\$ 15,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 23	\$ 25,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 28	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 32	\$ 20,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 33	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 34	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 35	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 36	\$ 15,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 40	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 49	\$ 5,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 51	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 54	\$ 10,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 57	\$ 5,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 58	\$ 40,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 60	\$ 15,000.00
Clay Co Ditch No. 63	\$ 5,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 01A	\$ 5,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 01B	\$ 5,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 01C	\$ 15,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 02	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 03	\$ 30,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 04	\$ 20,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 05A	\$ 5,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 06A	\$ 100,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 07	\$ 5,000.00

2026 Budget

Projects & Ditches

	Budget
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 12	\$ 20,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 15	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 23	\$ 20,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 26	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 27	\$ 20,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 28	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 29	\$ 20,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 31	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 34	\$ 5,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 37	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 40	\$ 10,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 41	\$ 15,000.00
Wilkin Co Ditch No. 43	\$ 5,000.00
Wilkin/Otter Tail JD No. 2	\$ 75,000.00
Total Levy	\$ 2,280,396.38

2026 Work Plan

	Effort
All Projects & Ditches	Continue general efforts of inspection, repair and, maintenance
Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project	Vegetation Establishment
Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration	Phase 2 land acquisition and construction
City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation	Land acquisition, permitting, and construction
City of Georgetown Flood Mitigation	Land acquisition, permitting, and construction
Lower Otter Tail River Restoration	Finalize project design, hold hearing, land acquisition, permitting, construction
Whisky Creek and South Tributaries Restoration	Finalize project design, hold hearing, land acquisition, permitting, construction
Oakport Flood Mitigation	Transfer property to City of Moorhead
Clay County Ditch No. 33	Outlet Repair
Ditches	Redetermination of Benefits coordination
Water Quality Monitoring	Continue existing efforts

For additional questions regarding BRRWD and their projects please contact:

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