

MEDIATION PROJECT TEAM MINUTES
January 25, 2007

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) Mediation Project Team (PT) held a meeting on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 1:30 PM at the Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) Science Center near Glyndon.

Attending were: Bruce E. Albright, Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) and BRRWD Office Administrator; Roger G. Ellefson, Curtis M. Nelson, John E. Hanson, E. Robert Olson, and Gerald L. VanAmburg, BRRWD Managers; Dave Barsness, Fisheries Specialist, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Shawn May, Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District (WMD) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); Scott Kahan, Detroit Lakes WMD and USFWS; Steve Hofstad, Clay County Water Planner and Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Administrator; Jack Frederick, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA); Erik S. Jones, Engineer, H.E.; Rick St. Germain, Engineer, H.E.; Pete Waller, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Brian Winter, Program Director, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); Bob Honeman, Area Resource Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Robert A. Zimmerman, Engineer, City of Moorhead; Doug Wells, Fergus Falls WMD and USFWS; Don Schultz, Area Wildlife Manager, DNR; Michael T. Murphy, Refuge Manager, Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge (NWR); and Don Buckhout, Red River Basin Coordinator, DNR.

Members absent were: Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD and USFWS; Brian Dwight, Board Conservationist, BWSR; Craig O. Evans, PM-D, United States Army Corps of Engineers (COE); Audubon Dakota; Leo Grabowski, Project Manager, COE; Brad Grant, District Administrator, Becker Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD); Robert G. Merritt, Area Hydrologist, DNR; Richard Pemble, BRRWD Citizen Advisory Committee; Maynard Pick, Staff Assistant, Congressman Collin Peterson's Office; and Kevin Kassenborg, District Manager, Clay SWCD.

Albright called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. He thanked everyone for their attendance. Our last meeting was held on 12/07/06. We'll discuss when to schedule the next meeting at the end of today's meeting. Depending on workload, and the number of projects being discussed, the BRRWD may consider scheduling meetings every other month rather than monthly.

Business brought before the group included:

Meeting Minutes. Draft minutes for the 12/07/06 PT meeting were distributed with today's agenda. **Motion** by Murphy to approve the minutes. **Seconded** by Waller. **Approved.**

Project No. 54, Whisky Creek Tributaries. Contractor Dennis Drewes did some work this fall on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) repairs to "east tributary" caused by the 2006 spring flood. He intends to return to the site this spring to complete the work. Waller said the Clay SWCD is working with landowners in Sections 14, Barnesville Township, regarding the use of Conservation Practice (CP)34 in relationship to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

(CREP) II. In order to qualify for CP34, the Mediation PT should give a recommendation to the SWCD as to what level of protection the group would like to see applied to the impoundment area. He distributed maps showing the 2, 5, 10, 25, 50, and 100-year rainfall events in relationship to the impoundment. Waller said some issues regarding the program had to be worked out at the State and Federal level, as one of the project landowners, Arvid Thompson, already has 24 acres in Section 14 enrolled in the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP). The 2-year event, which relates to 2.33" of rainfall, was shown on the map and covers approximately 50% of the entire impoundment. Hofstad said that Thompson enrolled his land in CCRP in 2006. The application was made just days before CREP II was announced. At the present time, the CCRP lands are ineligible for CREP II, unless Thompson add some additional acreage to the current easement area. In some initial conversations with Thompson, Hofstad said he is not interested in enrolling the entire impoundment area into CREP II. He may be interested in including the area up to the 2-year event.

Another landowner to the north, Max Peppel, has other issues to deal with since his land has been planted to alfalfa, and it does not qualify for the CRP cropping history. For that particular area, BWSR is interested in obtaining a Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) easement. Cropland near the borrow pit and east of that location, could be added in CREP II. CRP uses a cropping history of 1996 to 2001. Murphy referenced a United States Geological Survey (USGS) study that Victoria Christianson is doing that looks at water quality between 1970 - 1990 and 1990 - 2004. These studies show drastic changes regarding water quality. From a water quality standpoint, Murphy felt getting permanent grass established in the impoundment area up to the 5-year level would be beneficial. Hofstad has reviewed the data with the three landowners involved with the impoundment site. While the impoundment did hold water last spring, there were no summer rainfall events that affected crops in the easement area. The BRRWD has obtained easements from the affected landowners up to the 100-year level. Honeman said that the PT recommendation sets the minimum standard for use of CP34. CREP II is still a voluntary program, and if the landowners want to enroll less acreage than the minimum recommended by the PT, they will not qualify for CP34. Murphy said the runout or spillway elevation is 964.69, which equates to the approximate 25-year event. CP34 would be a perpetual easement. To date, none of the CP34 acreages in northwestern Minnesota have been used for CREP II.

Albright felt it was important for the group to understand that we were setting the minimum standard. Landowners could always enroll more acreage if they want and qualify. He felt the landowners' perspectives might be different had they experienced crop loss in 2006. The impoundment site has only been functional for one year. Winter said that from a water quality standpoint, the 2-year event, which equates to 2.33" of rain, is not that uncommon. The more area we can get the landowners to enroll in CP34, the better it will be in terms of controlling erosion and water quality. Hofstad has done the acreage calculations for the various rainfall events. For Arvid Thompson's property, the area between the 5-year and 10-year events only adds 5 more acres to the easement. The area between the 10-year and 25-year event only adds an additional 3 acres. Barsness felt it was important to equate the recommended areas for CP34 to the actual impoundment site design and operation.

Waller said right now, CREP II is scheduled to expire on 9/30/07, with expiration of the current Farm Bill. Whether or not the program is extended still needs to be determined. He felt if we were going to get these landowners to enroll land in CP34, now would be the time to meet with them. Murphy felt because the acreages get less for each affected landowner as you go to the higher rainfall events, we should look at doing at least a 10 or 25-year recommendation. Buckhout said there is currently funding available through CREP II for CP34. Landowners could always go greater than the PT's recommendation. Hofstad and Waller said that Arvid Thompson's grandsons are farming the property

and Thompson is concerned about losing crop acreage. Landowners would be allowed to square off the CP34 boundary to aid in future tract farming.

Albright asked for a show of hands regarding how many PT members felt we should recommend that the minimum standard be a 2-year rainfall event. The majority of the members agreed. Hofstad will set up a meeting in the next several weeks to meet with the landowners to discuss the program, payment rates, etc. Honeman thought another option would be to see that bufferstrips are installed along any inlet ditches that drain into the impoundment.

Spring Prairie Township Erosion. Albright discussed the status of the Clay SWCD contacts with landowners in this drainage area regarding CREP II. Hofstad said that the Clay SWCD's first contacts were landowners downstream of the Buffalo River/South Branch confluence to Georgetown. To date, they've made 70 contacts. Five landowners have contacted the Clay SWCD for more information. The SWCD will focus next on the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee. They would be working jointly with the Wilkin SWCD on this issue.

Project No. 56, Manston Slough Restoration. Albright said the main focus of today's meeting will be to discuss this project. Rick St. Germain, H.E., has completed the draft Engineer's Report and plans and will present them today. Copies of the report were distributed to the PT members. The report includes a computer compact disk, which includes 71 pages of the Preliminary Construction Plans. Albright said that on 12/07/06, a meeting was held with the various local, county, and state road authorities to discuss the project. Follow-up meetings will be held with the road authorities now that the Engineer's Report is completed. On 1/11/07, a permitting meeting was held in the BRRWD office in Barnesville. Albright said the BRRWD has determined that this project will not be ready for construction in 2007. They would like to complete the easement option negotiations with the landowners and move the project through the legal process as defined by Watershed Law in 2007. Hopes are that construction could begin in 2008.

St. Germain said he would just hit the highlights of the Engineer's Report. The Manston Slough Restoration Project is located in Wilkin County and covers an area of about 6.5 square miles (sq. mi.). The outlet for Manston Slough is a lateral to Wilkin County Ditch No. 13. Water eventually drains to the South Branch of the Buffalo River via the lateral and Wilkin County Ditch No. 13. The project has a contributing drainage area of 27.5 sq. mi. Precipitation amounts from various storm events are listed on Page iii. The dam embankment has a top elevation of 977.0. Embankment widths vary from 14'-24'. For the principal spillway, the Engineer is planning to use two lines of 48" dia. reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) with a drop inlet riser with stoplog bays for wetland level management. One of the 48" dia. culverts will be gated and only used when increased drawdown rates are needed. The structure flow line elevation is 967.0. The riser crest elevation will be set at 972.0. The riser will be 40' long. The emergency spillway is a 300' depressed overflow section on the north embankment of the dam in the township road. The emergency spillway crest elevation is 974.0. A full wetland pool at elevation 972 will store 588 acre/feet (a-f), which equates to approximately 0.4" of runoff. Temporary storage between elevations 972.0 and 974.0, which is the top of the emergency spillway crest, is 5,446 a-f, or approximately 3.71" of runoff. Temporary storage from elevation 974.0 to elevation 977.0, which is the top of dam, is 15,380 a-f, or approximately 10.49 inches of runoff. Inflow/outflow characteristics are listed on Page iv. The percent of flow reduction for the various 24-hour and 10-day storm events varies between 45% and 76%.

The project goals include a number of purposes, including natural resource habitat creation, flood control, and ground water recharge. Page 8 is a description of the various project features. The project

includes the north embankment, south embankment, principal spillway, emergency spillway, south side drainage, County State Aid Highway (CSAH) No. 26 improvements, and Township Road No. 203 improvements. St. Germain said that in Appendix E, Sheet 4, also shows the various project features.

St. Germain said part of the project design had to deal with the drainage of private agricultural lands south of the proposed south embankment. This area is extremely flat. Surface water in this area can go either north into Manston Slough, or south into Wilkin County Ditch No. 6A, depending on the conditions at the time. With the proposed restoration of Manston Slough and the construction of the south embankment, drainage to the north will no longer be possible. Drainage to the south will be improved with the construction of a drain along the south side of the south embankment and the continuation of this drain along the west side of Section 7, Meadows Township, to Wilkin County Ditch No. 6A. These lands are assessed for drainage into this ditch system. Some of the lands located south of the proposed south embankment that are currently in the BRRWD may want to petition to get out if the project is installed, as their water will no longer be allowed into the BRRWD. The primary areas of dike work will include the north and south embankments. The north dam alignment was adjusted during the project design to enclose wetlands located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 13, Mitchell Township. The dike alignment in this area will go through the field. The remainder of the north embankment levee will be placed on existing township roads. The embankment/roadway has a design speed of 55 miles/hour. Seepage through the embankment will be limited by facing the upstream side of the embankment with a 1' layer of clay fill. This layer will continue below the natural ground to the impervious native clay soils where necessary. Drainage along the upstream and downstream sides of the embankment will be maintained with drainage ditches. Downstream landowners have expressed seepage concerns to the BRRWD. The soils engineer does not expect excessive seepage with the extension of the clay liner because of the relatively flat area gradient. The extension of the clay liner was added as an extra precaution. BWSR also did a preliminary seepage evaluation in 2005. A copy of this evaluation is attached to the report in Appendix C. A copy of the Engineer's Report will be forwarded to Eric Mohring, BWSR, for further evaluation.

Ellefson questioned how deep the clay liner needs to be extended to meet the existing clay. St. Germain reviewed the soils investigation, which is included in the report as Appendix B. The depth to get to clay varies at each location, but the average is three to five feet below the natural ground elevation. Ellefson felt the seepage concern will have to be addressed to the BRRWD's and downstream landowners' satisfaction. Murphy said that a number of studies have been done regarding seepage in the Red River Valley. The University of Minnesota has maps that show seepage potential for various areas.

St. Germain said that the second major component was the south embankment. This dike is approximately 3.2 miles in length and will prevent flood waters from flowing uncontrollably to the south and west. Like the north embankment, this embankment will be mostly built on the alignment of existing roadways and is designed for traffic use. Along the west side of Section 31, Mitchell Township, there is no road in this area and the embankment width will be narrowed to 16'. The proposed south side drainage improvements in this area will be done in conjunction with the south embankment construction. Since there will be no holes in the embankment, existing culverts will be removed, and the drainage that formerly flowed north into this area will have to be rerouted south to Ditch No. 6A. The current area township roads do not meet Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) design standards. Murphy said when they completed the Bisson Lake Restoration, they used American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Standards for the improvements to Becker County Road No. 14.

At the 12/07/06 road authority meeting, Wilkin County representatives expressed concerns about the sideslopes along CSAH No. 26. The current proposal is to flatten these sideslopes in the vicinity of the Manston Slough Restoration Project. This modification will make the road safer. In addition to flattening the side lopes, a water level control structure will be installed. This control structure will consist of a concrete box on the south side of CSAH No. 26 and two lines of 48" dia. reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) through the roadway. The purpose of the structure is to allow for the passage of water through CSAH No. 26 and to maintain water levels south of the roadway during drawdowns on the north side, if desired. The Wilkin County Highway Department has future plans to regrade CSAH No. 26. Ellefson questioned if the road work will affect wetlands. St. Germain said this item was discussed at the road authority meeting. If the roadwork affects wetlands, BWSR is responsible for the required mitigation. More detailed wetland determinations will need to be made in the spring, when conditions permit. The BRRWD plans to discuss this part of the project with Thomas G. Richels, Engineer, Wilkin County Highway Department. The County may be asked for funding assistance to complete this portion of the project.

Murphy said that road safety concerns were a major part of their Bisson Lake Restoration Project. They were able to sell the project to the neighboring landowners by using AASHTO standards, which include a recovery zone should a vehicle traveling on the roadway leave the road surface and head towards the permanent pool. After Becker County Road No. 14 was rebuilt to those standards, there have been no complaints or problems. Murphy felt it wouldn't add that much more cost to the project design if the road incorporated some of their standards. St. Germain said that with his current design, the road still meets roadway standards. The MNDOT also expressed concerns about the proposed permanent and temporary pools, which could encroach along Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 9. H.E. has reviewed this issue in accordance with federal highway standards. In all areas, the water is shallow enough that guard rails are not required.

Another component of the project is the repairs to Township Road No. 203. This road is located north of CSAH No. 26 and traverses through the middle of the project for two miles between Sections 19 and 20, and Sections 29 and 30, Manston Township. Based on feedback from the 12/07/06 road authority meeting, stakeholders in this area desire that these two miles of township road be maintained. The current road has been subject to flooding and has overtopped in the past. The low points in this road would be repaired and additional culverts will be added to make the overtopping less frequent. Schultz commented that to do this roadwork, borrow areas will need to be identified. St. Germain said they have looked at this issue. Borrow areas will be taken from inside the pool area. Schultz didn't feel that opening up borrow pits on the DNR property would be a problem, as long as they were done to some set standard. Honeman felt the same would hold true for Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)/Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) lands. They would want irregular shaped areas opened up with tapered sideslopes, etc. Schultz said that all borrow pits will also need to be reviewed from an archeological standpoint.

St. Germain said he would not take time today to go through the entire Engineer's Report. However, he urged the PT members to review the study, which includes detailed sections regarding the existing conditions, proposed project design, required permits and environmental reviews, compatibility with existing plans and an Opinion of Probable Cost, Benefits and Funding. The Engineer's recommendations are that the proposed Manston Slough Restoration project is feasible and provides significant benefits. They recommend that the BRRWD continue to develop the project under Minnesota State Statutes.

Buckhout questioned if a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been developed between the various agencies involved with the proposed project. St. Germain noted that Appendix F is the MOU and Appendix H is the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan. Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD and USFWS drafted both documents. St. Germain said that the MOU and O&M talk about a fish barrier. At this time, the project design does not take this into account. Jones said that this issue was discussed with the PT. The use of drop tubes is not feasible because the outlet is too flat. The group felt they would still like to see some type of fish barrier installed at the north embankment and principal spillway. If minnows, such as bullheads were able to get into the impoundment area, they could be very detrimental to water quality.

St. Germain said the principal spillway design has been changed slightly since last discussed. Its required capacity is dependent on the amount of storage provided, the kind of emergency spillway, downstream channel capacity and stability, potential damage downstream from prolonged high outflow rates, possibility of substantial runoff from two or more storms in the time required to empty the reservoir, and flood flows during construction. The engineers are now planning a dual bay concrete riser, consisting of two separate bays. The west bay is a 21' x 21' (inside dimensions) and has a riser crest elevation of 972.0. This bay has a 40' crest length and will allow water to enter the bay on the south and west sides. One of the two 48" dia. RCP outlet culverts will serve as an outlet for this bay. This bay will function during all runoff events and has been designed to include a 4' stoplog bay to allow for wetland drawdown below the normal pool elevation of 972.0. The proposed east bay, which is the same size, has a riser crest elevation of 973.75. The riser crest elevation has been set above the 100-year, 10-day flood pool elevation and below the emergency crest elevation and therefore will function only during extreme runoff events. This bay was also designed to include a 4' stoplog bay to function during wetland drawdown cycles when increased drawdown rates are required.

Doug Wells said that the addition of the second bay was not part of the USFWS review. He questioned if the amount of bounce for the pool area would be reduced if the second bay were set at a lower elevation. Jones said that all of these issues were discussed with USFWS personnel at Fort Snelling. Because the area is unique due to its flat characteristics, and given the large upstream drainage area, it really doesn't change the amount of bounce experienced by the project.

Albright felt the O&M could be modified to reflect the change in the project design. Wells felt by modifying the O&M, we could add a factor of safety regarding bounce, especially during the nesting period. Wells questioned if the embankments will need to have riprap to control wind and wave action in relationship to erosion. Jones said that the embankment design recommends 3' of freeboard. The engineers used a NRCS program entitled "TR60". St. Germain said Page 16 of the Engineer's Report talks about the freeboard design storm. The freeboard design storm event corresponds to a 19.63" rainfall with a duration of 10 days. Routing this event through the structure serves to set a minimum top of dam elevation. The SCS Technical Release No. 60, "Earth Dams and Reservoirs", recommends that a minimum vertical separation between the top of dam and emergency spillway crest elevation should be 3'. From a DNR permitting standpoint, it is still expected that the north embankment will be a Class II dam. Because the proposed temporary pool is still quite shallow, the engineers will see if it can be classified as a Class III dam. This classification will also take into account downstream farmsteads and the ability for the lateral to Wilkin County Ditch No. 13 to handle flood flows.

St. Germain then spent some time going through Table 3, which is an Opinion of Probable Cost. He tried to break the cost down for the various project components. The section in blue at the top of the report is the land acquisition costs. The section in the middle of the report in yellow are the construction costs for the various components that were discussed. The section in green at the bottom

of the report are the engineering, soils investigation, legal, and administrative costs. The total estimated project costs at this time are \$3,826,878. St. Germain felt that the weather patterns being experienced at the time of construction will weigh heavily in terms of the construction bid. If we remain dry, it will definitely ease construction of the embankment levees. If conditions stay extremely wet, then contractors will be required to remove clay from the borrow pits that may be underwater, dry out this material, and place it in the embankment levees. St. Germain still wants to work with the soils engineers regarding the embankment levees design. He felt his design was very conservative. In all locations, a clay liner may not be required. At this time, he used a unit price of \$4.00/cubic yard (c.y.) for the embankment. He estimated that the clay liner would cost \$6.00/c.y. If he can change the project design, based on his discussion with the soils engineer, it will help lower project costs. Right now, the project budget includes 15% for contingencies (\$243,500). He said there are some power poles within the proposed permanent pool that will need to be relocated. The budget does not include that item at this time.

St. Germain noted that at this time, the Engineer's Report is still considered a draft. He is looking for feedback from the PT members. He felt he could add some more information regarding potential project benefits. DNR/USFWS officials may also have more information regarding natural resource enhancement (nre) benefits. Murphy is somewhat familiar with the proposed O&M. He felt the project would provide benefits for both nre and flood damage reduction (fdr). The ability to manage both a north and south pool will enhance project features. He felt the proposed water depth will provide a good mix to manage for wildlife. St. Germain agreed and felt this was a "great" project. Albright will contact Kent Lokkesmoe, Director, DNR Waters, about the revised cost estimate. To date, the BRRWD has secured \$1.5 million in FDR funding through the 2006 bonding bill. With the proposed increased project cost, the BRRWD may try to seek additional State funding. St. Germain said he is still waiting for some soils information from Midwest Testing. Once that information is available, it will be added to the report.

Albright said one of the next project development steps will be to get the Exhibits for the easement options. The BRRWD will develop an easement and easement option agreement. Ellefson suggested that BRRWD Attorney Tami Norgard, Vogel Law Firm, should review this document.

Albright did contact Jon Schneider, Manager, Minnesota Conservation Programs and Ducks Unlimited (DU) on 1/19/07 regarding the Engineer's Report and the status of this project. The area was a former DU project. Schneider was glad to hear the great news about the Manston Slough Restoration project. However, although DU continues to endorse good wetland restoration projects that provide quality habitat for waterfowl and other migratory wetland-dependent birds, they won't be able to actively participate or offer cost-share for the Manston Slough Restoration project at this time. DU Biologist Bob Usgaard, will still remain their primary contact, given his role in coordinating WRP/WREP. DU's current conservation programs have evolved into their Living Lakes Initiative, and their focus is now on restoring, protecting, and enhancing shallow lakes, especially those within one of their 21 emphasis areas. The Manston Slough project lies outside of their Fergus Falls emphasis area. At this time, DU just can't afford the staff time, nor cost-share to be directly involved. They do support the efforts and want to be kept informed about the project status.

Buckhout felt that a time frame should be set for supplying comments to St. Germain regarding the draft Engineer's Report. The group agreed on 30 days. Waller said that one of the legal requirements in accordance with Minnesota Watershed Law, Minnesota Statutes Annotated (M. S. A.) 103D.711, is for the Engineer's Report to be submitted to the DNR and BWSR for advisory comments. St. Germain will forward the report for their review. Albright said that Allan M. Keane, Chief Engineer, BWSR,

always does a very thorough review, and we always welcome his comments. Albright said that while we still have a long way to go before we can actually construct this project, completion of the draft Engineer's Report has been a major accomplishment.

Project No. 58, Riverton Township Retention. The draft Engineer's Report, dated 5/08/06, was submitted to TNC for their review and comment. We received TNC Project Director Brian Winter's comments on 12/06/06. The BRRWD intends to meet with Winter after today's meeting to discuss the comments. The BRRWD remains optimistic we can still construct this project in 2007. The BRRWD would like to open construction bids for the project around 5/15/07. This means the project hearing will need to be held around 4/15/07. The next step will be for TNC to sign the easement option. It doesn't appear at this time that any of the issues raised by TNC that are insurmountable.

Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation Project. A Technical Committee meeting has been scheduled for 2/08/07. The primary issues to be discussed include the "Oakport Coulee" and wetland issue in this area. A landowner informational meeting has been scheduled for 2/13/07 in the Oakport Town Hall. Several landowners attended the 1/08/07 BRRWD meeting and expressed concerns regarding the buyout process. They feel that the dike alignment should be changed to include their properties. They are located west of the Oakport Coulee, and modifying the dike alignment to include protection for their homes could change project impacts in relationship to the Red River of the North. Buckhout has discussed the project with Senator Keith Langseth. At this time, Langseth feels that there has been \$8 million allocated to the project through the 2005 and 2006 bonding bills. The total estimated project costs are \$18 million. Albright said that to date, the BRRWD has expended approximately \$3 million, which is primarily for the 12 homes that have acquired. Ulteig Engineers, Inc. (UEI), is the project engineer. They remain optimistic that some dirt could still be moved in 2007.

Buckhout questioned if the BRRWD is aware of, or has been involved with the City of Fargo proposed Southside Flood Control project. Albright said BRRWD representatives attended the 12/12/06 informational meeting. Since then, the City of Fargo has formed an Advisory Committee comprised of local agency and jurisdictional representatives to provide comments and recommendations on current alternatives or possible additional alternatives. The BRRWD has designated representatives to serve on that committee. Albright said the area has been under study since the 1997 spring flood. They currently have four alternatives under consideration, including Wild Rice River levees, 70th AVE S outlet, Rose Coulee outlet, and Wild Rice River diversion. Project costs for the various alternatives range from \$45-\$100 million. All of the alternatives have varying effects on the Red River of the North. The City of Fargo is the last Red River Valley community to receive federal and state funding for completion of flood control improvements in response to the 1997 spring flood. The City Commission would like to select a preferred alternative by May 2007. Zimmerman felt we needed more information on the preferred alternative before commenting on the possible effects to the Minnesota side of the river. Greg Thielman, H.E., is also working with the City of Fargo regarding modeling of the potential impacts.

Project No. 60, Swede Grove Lake Outlet. The BRRWD held an informational meeting in Hawley on 7/13/06. Clay County petitioned for an outlet project in 2003, and since then the project design has changed dramatically. Initially, all the County wanted to do was to maintain an outlet that they had operated for approximately 4 years to protect their county road system on the east side of the lake. Since then, ndr and nre benefits have been proposed for the project area, which have increased project costs. The BRRWD wants to meet with the County Commissioners to discuss the project status and to determine their interest in progressing forward.

Buffalo River Levees. Albright said there was no new information to report regarding this potential project. He felt the Comprehensive Planning effort will identify the need to address problems in the Glyndon area on the Buffalo River mainstem.

Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Restoration. The Clay and Wilkin SWCDs have received a Clean Water Legacy (CWL) grant in the amount of \$289,000 to work on this project. Of that amount, \$71,000 is for technical assistance and the grant amount is \$218,000. Hofstad said the two SWCDs initially submitted two pre-proposal application forms. The two applications were combined. One of the proposals was to provide cash incentives to establish riparian buffers and/or filterstrips over and above CREP II payment rates. The other proposal was to provide incentives to landowners who establish field windbreaks; provide cost-share incentives to install erosion control measures on inlet ditches; and to survey and design outlet improvements west of T.H. 75. An agency meeting was held on 12/08/06 in the BRRWD office. At that time, and because of the nice weather, the group decide to go ahead and survey the outlet. The BRRWD contacted the affected landowners for permission to survey. The survey has now been completed. Jeff Haverland, JPA Technician, conducted the survey, which he completed on January 3-4, 2007. Albright said the BRRWD was not successful in securing CWL funding for Volunteer Monitoring Surface Water Assessment proposal for this waterway. The project did not score high enough to be funded. Albright said a meeting was held yesterday in the Barnesville office with Luther Aadland, DNR, to discuss possible projects for the outlet area. The recent survey will be forwarded to H.E. for them to compile the Global Positioning Station (GPS) data with the LiDAR mapping. Aadland will provide the project design, which will include rock riffles and rock vanes. A workplan will be developed. Hofstad felt that the BRRWD should consider scheduling another subcommittee PT meeting so that we can inform landowners of the grant. Hofstad said they did tour the project site with Aadland following the meeting. Frederick felt that the proposed project will have a water quality component. Hofstad said Aadland would like to walk the coulee between T.H. 75 and the outlet to determine where the rock riffles should be installed. Frederick said Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee will be added to their impaired waters list in 2008.

Molly McGregor, MPCA, has secured funding to do a Surface Water Assessment Tool (SWAT) model for the upper Red River watershed, including Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee. The Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC) will conduct the study, which has to be completed by 6/30/07. EERC is estimating that each subwatershed will cost approximately \$47,500 to model. Albright said the BRRWD has secured a 319 Grant for a computer model consisting of a modified NRCS annualized Agricultural Non-Point Source model (annAGNPS). It will be interesting to compare the results of the two models. Hofstad said some of the grant funding could also be used to complete a study of the coulee. H.E. compiled a listing of the existing data, and there are some gaps that need to be filled. Frederick said that while the first project will work on the outlet, there is merit to consider doing the upstream area first.

Lawndale Trout Stream Restoration. Albright has not heard recently from Arlan Schalekamp, DNR Fisheries, Fergus Falls, about the status of their project. Schultz felt that they were now working on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). It appears that project construction may now have been delayed until 2008. Schultz will have Schalekamp contact the BRRWD to furnish a project status update.

South Branch of the Buffalo River. Albright said there was nothing new to report regarding this potential project. The Comprehensive Planning process should identify problems in this area that will need future PT involvement and work.

Pete/Grove Lakes Highwater Investigation. Jones noted that H.E. has been on site surveying a potential outlet for Grove Lake during the last two days. An informational meeting was held on 10/30/06 with landowners around the lakes. They wanted the BRRWD to continue with the project development.

Kragnes Ringdike. Based on the 10/19/06 landowner informational meeting, the Kragnes residents are interested in developing two of the three proposed projects. The next step will be for the BRRWD to work with the DNR in St. Paul regarding project funding.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA). Scott Kahan and Shawn May wanted to take some time at today's meeting to discuss the grant program. This is a competitive granting program, which leverages eligible non-federal funds to bring large sums of federal dollars (\$1 million or more) to a specific project area. Successful proposals require a 2:1 match of non-federal dollars to requested NAWCA grant dollars. The grants are focused on providing on the ground habitat work/protection for migratory birds and other wetland dependent wildlife to help achieve goals set forth in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Grants need to focus on long-term wetland protection, restoration, and creation. The USFWS is seeking new/additional partnerships to make this proposal a success. NAWCA dollars can help leverage the BRRWD match to do additional conservation work in a project area. Eligible match dollars need to be spent from January 1, 2005, through January 1, 2009. Albright plans to meet with Kahan and May in the next several weeks to discuss the proposal and application. Projects for match consideration include Riverton Township Retention, Whisky Creek Tributaries, Manston Slough Restoration, and Swede Grove Lake Outlet. Congress appropriates the funding for NAWCA. The grant application is due at the end of February 2007. Another part of the application could include TNC and their Williams property acquisition and proposed wetland restorations.

Ellefson felt that Albright should continue to work with USFWS in this regard. Honeman questioned if the grant could include funding in the upland areas, such as the upstream drainage area in the Manston Slough Restoration project. Kahan felt that it could. We need to have some level of certainty that a specific project referenced in the grant application will be developed. He wasn't sure if we could include Manston at the present time. However, there will be other NAWCA grant opportunities in the future and Manston, which is a good project, could be included then.

Comprehensive Planning. The BRRWD has scheduled the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Kickoff meeting for 2/27/07 at 7:00 PM in the Wells Fargo Bank Upstairs Meeting Room, Barnesville, MN. Notices will be sent to the committees. The BRRWD will also be sending letters in the near future regarding a questionnaire for the best meeting dates and times. We're still looking for several representatives to serve on the CAC/TAC.

CREP II. Waller said there have been some technical changes to the various programs offered under CREP II. To date, interest in CREP II has not been very good around the state. We've already talked about marketing efforts being conducted by the Clay and Wilkin SWCDs.

Activities Update. Albright distributed a copy of the 1/22/07 meeting press release. Mark Dittrich, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, attended the meeting to give an update regarding their Conservation Drainage Study. Brad Pake, who owns property in Section 5, Morken Township, Clay County, is participating in the study. The area is located within the BRRWD. Six control structures were placed in the fall of 2006 to hold water back to varying levels during the growing season. Controlled Drainage has been shown to reduce water volumes and nitrate losses by 25%-40%. The

Department of Agriculture intends to hold a field tour of the project site this spring. The group asked that the PT be informed about the tour, as some would like to attend. The BRRWD is preparing for a bond sale for Project Nos. 51 and 57. The total estimated costs are \$440,000. The BRRWD is working with local auctioneers regarding the sale of home acquired for the Oakport Flood Mitigation project.

Murphy said it was recently released in the Detroit Lakes Newspaper that the USFWS plans to close the Hamden Slough NWR headquarters on 2/19/07. The staff from the headquarters will be moved to the Detroit Lakes WMD office. USFWS funding nationwide has been cut back. This particular region will lose 71 positions. Kahan said the Detroit Lakes WMD is currently short three or four positions. Hamden Slough NWR will still be operated as an active refuge. The Detroit Lakes WMD will need to sort out their staffing priorities. The BRRWD questioned who would operate the water control structures. Kahan said this still has to be determined. The BRRWD has sent letters to Congressman Peterson, as well as Senators Klobuchar and Coleman regarding increased funding for the USFWS and the possibility of keeping the refuge headquarters open.

Next Meeting. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 2/22/07; however, this coincides with a DNR workshop in Detroit Lakes, entitled "Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Clarity for Local Units of Government". The workshop begins at 9:00 AM and is scheduled to conclude at 2:45 PM. Albright suggested that we consider moving the next meeting date. The Ninth Annual Joint Conference of the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction WorkGroup (RRBFDRWG) is scheduled for Thursday, March 29, 2007, at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN. The Conference will begin at 9:30 AM and is scheduled to conclude at 3:30 PM. Registrations can be made by contacting Naomi Erickson, RRWMB. Because of the workshop, Albright felt we should look at having one meeting for the months of February/March. The group agreed on Thursday, March 1, 2007, at 1:30 PM at the MSUM Science Center.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the group, Albright adjourned the meeting at 4:35 PM.

Respectfully Prepared and Submitted by

Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator