

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

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## **MEDIATION PROJECT TEAM MINUTES**

March 25, 2010

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) Mediation Project Team (PT) held a meeting on Thursday, March 25, 2010, at 1:30 PM at the Minnesota State University Moorhead Science Center, Glyndon, MN.

Attending were: Bruce E. Albright, Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) and BRRWD Administrator, Erik S. Jones, Engineer, and Zachary Herrmann, Engineer, H.E.; Curtis M. Nelson, John E. Hanson, and Breanna Paradeis Kobiela, BRRWD Managers; Lynn Foss, Clay Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD); Robert G. Merritt, Area Hydrologist, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Don Schultz, Area Wildlife Manager, DNR; Dave Barsness, Fisheries Specialist, DNR; Kevin Brennan, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Fergus Falls Wetlands Management District (WMD); Shawn May, Detroit Lakes WMD and USFWS; Brian Winter, Program Director, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); and Pete Waller, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

Members absent were: Audubon Dakota; Brian Dwight, Board Conservationist, BWSR; Craig O. Evans, PM-D, Army Corps of Engineers (COE); Leo Grabowski, Project Manager, COE; Robert Honeman, Area Resource Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Scott Kahan, Detroit Lakes WMD and USFWS; Richard Pemble, Citizen Advisory Committee, BRRWD; Gerald L. VanAmburg, Roger G. Ellefson, Managers, BRRWD; Robert A. Zimmerman, Engineer, City of Moorhead; and Wally Sparby, Staff Assistant, Congressman Collin Peterson's Office; Jack Fredrick, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA); Josh Kavanagh, Ducks Unlimited (DU); and Brad Grant, Becker SWCD.

Albright called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. He said the last PT meeting was held on 1/28/10 at the MPCA office in Detroit Lakes. Albright thanked the group for their attendance and noted that some members may be arriving later.

### **Business brought before the group included:**

**Meeting Minutes.** The 1/28/10 meeting minutes were distributed via e-mail with today's meeting notice. **Motion** by Barsness to approve the referenced minutes. **Seconded** by Schultz. **Approved.**

**Project No. 54 Whiskey Creek Tributaries.** Albright gave a brief update regarding this project. It appears to have functioned as designed once again this spring. The impoundment site did flow through the emergency spillway for the first time since the project was built in 2005, which gives an indication of the size of the 2010 spring flood. The project held water for approximately one week, as designed. The Nichol Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) site, east of Barnesville, also retained a significant amount of water. The Gilbertson ringdike also functioned well. BWSR is interested in the two-stage pilot channel design used on "east tributary". Albright noted that the meander channel shows up on the low altitude high resolution photography completed by Dave Friedl, DNR.

**Project No. 56, Manston Slough Restoration.** The BRRWD has received the BWSR Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) funds (\$326,603.00) for the former Holubok property this week. Albright also was notified that the DNR is ready to proceed with this land acquisition for approximately \$104,000. The RIM easement had to be in place prior to the DNR acquisition. Albright noted that there is an individual interested in cutting wood on the Holubok farmstead. The DNR indicated that they would be willing to work with the person in this regard when he returns from Guard duty in Kosovo.

Albright noted that the Manston project has legally been cleared by the Legislature for 75% state funding. He felt that we would need an additional \$1 million to complete the project. When the Governor signed the 2010 bonding bill, there were no changes to the Flood Damage Reduction allocation, so state-wide there is \$63.5 million in the budget for flood damage reduction projects. The DNR is still receiving more requests for projects than they have money. The Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LOHC) Conservation Partners Legacy Grants (CPLG) Program paperwork has been prepared and submitted. We will need to revise our easement language to reference this grant before mailing easement options. The BRRWD office has plans to get the landowner easements prepared for signing in the near future. Once the Appraisers start their work, it should proceed quickly, and we should be ready for the Final Hearing and bids by July 1, 2010. The BRRWD is anxious to complete this project, as it has been in the development stage for quite some time. Brennan noted that the site is holding water and there are a large number of birds in residence. Albright noted that the past-president of the Kent Rod and Gun Club has advised the BRRWD to start a friendly condemnation on their parcel for the easement, as it appears to be very difficult to identify all the owners. The group briefly discussed how the condemnation might work, regarding the parcel title.

Someone asked if the BRRWD had all the permits in order yet for the project. Jones is working on this item. Merritt advised that the permits should be in place prior to the bid letting. H.E. has the project design completed.

**Project No. 58 Riverton Township Retention.** Albright reported that Clay County Ditch No. 12 was full of snow this spring. Water came from the east and the project's emergency spillway worked in reverse and added more water to the site than the inlet did. Winter questioned if the outlet culvert was restricted. Jones thought that the gate closing procedure should be reviewed, and he added that the gate could have been closed more this spring. Currently, the gate, fully opened, is to 3', and during the spring runoff, the gate was opened at 1'. Since the vegetation isn't established yet, it was better that the outlet spillway wasn't as restrictive as it could be. The contractor still needs to come back and finish up a punch list of items this spring when conditions permit. H.E. will coordinate with Winter regarding the punch list cleanup items. Winter suggested that the inlet might need to be redesigned to allow more water in sooner. The group discussed local spring flooding conditions.

Albright discussed TNC's intentions regarding the Williams tract and their interest in restoring Hay Creek. He suggested that TNC could schedule a field meeting with the BRRWD and affected landowners and agencies to discuss the restoration of the channelized portion of Hay Creek back to a meandered watercourse. Winter showed photographs of the area in Section 1, Elkton Township, Clay County. The group discussed what would need to be done in this area. Jones noted that H.E. could easily generate a contour map with LiDAR for the area. Once a consensus is achieved regarding the restoration project design, then TNC would need a project cost estimate. Winter asked if the BRRWD expected him to submit this work as a project that would be reviewed by the PT and what the timing of the project development might be. Albright felt that the channel restoration was still part of the overall plan for the Riverton project. He questioned if there was funding for this work. Winter noted that TNC has a Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant for the channel restoration and some seeding. He wasn't sure if there would be time to complete project development before the grant deadline of 6/01/10. Jones thought it wouldn't take too much time to complete the project design.

TNC finished the wetland restorations on the Williams tract in 2009, and they had agreed to furnish monitoring data to address concerns from the Alm family regarding how the project might affect their homestead. Winter noted that he has sent the Alms the 2009 report, and he is waiting to hear back from them. Winter noted that there is still some wetland work and seeding left to complete.

**Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation.** The Oakport area still experienced some minor flooding in two of the buyout properties. No major property damage occurred from sewage back up or flooding. The COE had to do some emergency temporary diking. To date, the BRRWD has completed about 45 buyouts, and we continue to make progress on the development of this levee project, which is now estimated to cost \$24.5 million. The BRRWD is currently working with the legislature to secure an additional \$4-\$5 million in funding for construction in 2010.

The group discussed how the project might function when the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion project is completed. Albright said that projections indicate that there will still be backup water from the diversion coming into this area. The F-M Diversion would lower the projected 100-year flood elevation in the Oakport area by about 1' to 1.5'. Albright added that the BRRWD is anxious to get this project completed.

**Project No. 39, Georgetown Levee.** Albright noted that on Tuesday night, the BRRWD met with Georgetown residents to discuss their levee project update options. Albright noted that the plan that is finally selected will be contingent on how much funding the DNR is willing to provide for such a small community. The Cities of Pearly and Hendrum have indicated that they have the funding and are going ahead with the construction of certified levees. Because of Georgetown's location in relation to the Buffalo River, the set back from the river for levee construction is substantial. Our local Legislators have indicated that they will try to provide some funding to help Georgetown, but it is unclear as yet how much funding will be available.

**Project No. 60, Swede Grove Lake.** Josh Kavanagh, DU, attended the 1/28/10 PT meeting in Detroit Lakes. He followed up with a letter describing possible programs/funding that might be available for this project. He is interested in working with the BRRWD and the PT to develop this project. Albright noted that at a meeting a few years ago, there didn't appear to be much interest in a project from the local landowners. Most of the flood damage reduction benefits would be for the county road. The project was estimated to cost approximately \$285,000. The BRRWD hasn't had time to meet with Chuck Carlson, who owns most of the property along the proposed outlet. Once the BRRWD catches up with our workload, maybe something could be done regarding project development.

**Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee.** In the fall of 2006, the Clay and Wilkin SWCD applied for a CWL Grant to work on Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee. The \$289,000 Grant was approved on 11/21/06. To date, the majority of that funding has been spent on obtaining a channel survey, structure sizing, and outlet work west of T.H. No. 75. There is one small project left to complete on the outlet. The BRRWD let bids for the work two years ago, but the work was not done due to the high water conditions. A second CWL application was applied for last fall, totaling about \$200,000. The second phase application would look at small channel restoration projects in Clay County, buffer strip needs along the entire waterway in Clay and Wilkin Counties, and a possible channel restoration project design in Wilkin County. The general problems with this area are that the downstream end of the channel in Clay County is degrading and cutting deeper, and in Wilkin County, the channel is aggrading or filling in. Albright reported that the second CWL application was not funded for 2010. There is still some work to complete under the old grant on the outlet. This fall, another grant application will be submitted to continue work in this area in 2011.

Dave Barsness said that the DNR has submitted a grant application for \$10,000-\$20,000. If funded, the grant would be used for channel design/restoration. Albright explained that we would be interested in restoration instead of just a cleanout project.

**Lawndale Trout Stream Restoration.** Arlin Schalekamp, DNR, contacts the BRRWD on regular basis regarding the status of the BRRWD Order to allow them to move forward with the stream restoration. A meeting has been scheduled for 4/14/10 at 9:00 AM in the Barnesville office to review the project status. On 3/29/10, Albright plans to meet with the Wilkin County NRCS regarding Dave Yaggie's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) grant to update his irrigation systems to low flow. This EQIP money, together with a DNR grant for \$45,000 should cover most of the costs for Yaggie's irrigation retrofit. Albright feels that the Yaggies are in agreement with the project and will cooperate. Northern Irrigation in Perham, MN, provided a bid for the irrigation system. Albright would like to be able to identify what EQIP will pay for in regards to Yaggie's system. He has pointed out to Yaggie that the DNR's irrigation funding can be revoked if we can't reach a deal regarding his irrigation rights and the project. Albright suggested that the DNR draft a simple agreement with language indicating that Yaggie can't do anything to stop the project. DNR would like to have the BRRWD expedite their project Order, as soon as the Yaggie irrigation issue is addressed. The DNR has bonding money in place to build the project and would like to start the excavation this fall and finish up in 2011.

**Project No. 63, Grove Lake Outlet.** The project was stopped according to the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) plan about 7-10 days before downstream flooding was predicted to occur this spring. The lake is down approximately 3' with about 1.5' to go before we reach the Ordinary High Water (OHW) elevation. Albright thought that the project would be restarted in about another week. The project is working as designed. Shawn May, USFWS, has plans for a Waterfowl Management Area (WMA) project downstream of the outlet. There had been fish migration concerns regarding this area. The BRRWD will work with the USFWS on this issue.

Landowners on the upstream lakes (Pete, Helgeson, Businger, Seim, and Randkler) on the north side of Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 34, have contacted the BRRWD regarding a possible outlet for their lakes through Grove Lake. The BRRWD plans to schedule an informational meeting with the upstream landowners and Grove Lake landowners to discuss their request. Jones felt it wouldn't be hard to design an outlet for these waterbodies through Gove Lake, as it is downhill most of the way, and we have an established outlet on Grove Lake.

**Project No. 38, Kragnes Ringdike.** Albright reported that the Kragnes ringdike worked as designed during the spring flood. H.E. set up one pump to address some internal water issues. The Buffalo River did leave its banks, but did not reach Kragnes. The group discussed area flooding.

**Hay Creek/Stinking Lake CWL Project.** Albright noted that there is an article on BWSR's website regarding the Becker SWCD's project that used 2009 CWL grant funding to complete 27 sediment control basins and seeded approximately 100 acres of buffer strip. The BRRWD received about \$190,000 in CWL funding, which was matched with a \$25,000 allocation from the BRRWD to complete this work. To date, there is one more drop structure that will probably not be completed this year, as we are out of funding.

Albright mentioned that there is a severe erosion area near Pump Lake in Becker County. Rising water has created a 15' cut and is breaking out the southwest corner of the lake. With just 120' left before the erosion reaches Pump Lake, which is approximately 50 acres, it could be completely drained. The BRRWD is working with Brad Grant, Becker SWCD, and Scott Smith, NRCS, to do a field review and to find funding for a joint project to address this issue. Winter asked where the water would go. Albright said at this point all that we know for sure is that it is draining into a wetland basin that is full of sediment from the erosion action. Right now, the water goes to Ness Lake, which doesn't have an outlet either. Albright will forward an email regarding this problem to Winter with a map and photographs.

**South Branch of the Buffalo River.** For about a year, the BRRWD and PT have been using the Mediation process to look at potential projects to address flood damage reduction (fdr) and natural resource enhancement (nre) concerns along the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Wilkin County. In December 2008, the BRRWD held an informational meeting with landowners at the Eagle Café in Barnesville to hear their concerns and problems. H.E. conducted an investigation and prepared area maps for the PT's review. Herrmann made a presentation of the investigation results. He noted that a site in Section 7, Tanberg Township, Wilkin County, that they were looking at as a potential storage site was recently enrolled in the WRP, so they expanded their search to include Sections 10, 11, 14, and 15, Manston Township, Wilkin County. Herrmann's investigation yielded approximately 6,500 acre-feet of storage, which would provide storage to the 100-year flood event in this watershed. Another site he investigated was the Wilkin County Ditch No. 40 system. Using a hydraulic model and LiDAR information to estimate how much water is breaking out of the ditch, he could predict when water would overtop the ridge that separates County Ditch No. 40 from the Wilkin County Ditch No. 44 system. Albright noted that the County Ditch No. 40 system will be repaired, as part of the overall Lawndale Trout Stream Restoration project, which should eliminate some of the breakout flows. Herrmann said that their modeling actually takes into account the hydraulic affects of the restoration project. Jones explained that the potential retention sites would be operated in a series, so that one site would spill into the next. These proposed sites would outlet downstream into the South Branch of the Buffalo River. These sites would also be downstream of the Manston Slough Restoration project site. Robert Merritt commented that it would be necessary to determine that there were no calcareous fens in the wetland areas. Jones said that most of these areas are identified on the GIS maps. Jones noted that the BRRWD's Revised Watershed Management Plan (RWMP) calls for between 23,000-24,000 acre feet of storage for the Southern Planning Region. Herrmann and Jones have the hydraulic model completed from T.H. No. 9 to the Wilkin County line, and tied that model into the 2009 Flood Insurance Study (FIS) hydraulic model. They are calibrating this data with the 2009 flood to see the impact the proposed storage sites would provide. The final model will be used to determine impacts of setback levees along the South Branch of the Buffalo River channel. Albright asked if the inclusion of upstream storage has a significant impact on the efficacy of the setback levees. Jones anticipates that there could be some impact, but the investigation hasn't gotten far enough to provide an accurate value. Albright noted that there is land west of T.H. No. 9 where the landowners are willing storage participants. Jones commented that these sites might need to be diked to hold water. Herrmann said that they have inventoried other potential sites in the upstream area, but haven't had time to fully examine them. Jones discussed their plans to look at setback levies on the South Branch of the Buffalo River for the 25, 50, and 100-year events to see what the costs would be for each level of protection. After H.E. has compiled their information into a generalized concept report, the BRRWD plans to hold a landowner informational meeting.

Pete Waller, BWSR, mentioned that a Working Lands Initiative (WLI) project for this area might be a possibility to spark landowner interest in wetland restorations and bufferstrips. Albright agreed that this would be very useful to alleviate erosion/sedimentation in the upstream river channel. Jones noted that the other analysis that Herrmann conducted using LiDAR data was to identify where erosion allows water to enter the two main channels, where the high priority sites are located, and where side inlet controls could be placed to the reduce erosion. Herrmann also considered how sediment load reductions and benefits could be created for the various sites using the NRCS National Engineering Handbook. Using the 1-year, 24-hour event, as the basis, the ratio of the sediment loss to the total capacity of annualized runoff could be calculated using the RUSLE equation. Herrmann estimated that the sediment loss could be reduced by 75%-80% with side inlet structures. Albright questioned if culvert sizing in the side inlet structures could be utilized to create some water retention. Herrmann explained that the 75% sediment reduction at these structures assumes 50% of the total flow volume would pool up in the contributing waterway. Albright noted that it would be useful to have a culvert inventory of this area.

The group discussed the severe erosion problems on the Yaggie property along Wilkin County Ditch No. 44. They also discussed the proposed cleanout of Wilkin County Ditch No. 44. TNC is interested in

reviewing plans and the original grade information prior to work starting on the ditch along their property in Section 12, Manston Township.

Waller thought that the potential project for the South Branch of the Buffalo River might be a good candidate for WLI project funding. The WLI funding is targeted to encourage landowners to reestablish grasslands and wetlands on their property. The group discussed possible pools of funding for this type of project and how the WLI could be implemented. Currently Otter Tail County is approved for WLI, but Wilkin County is not. We could start the work in Otter Tail County, as this is the upstream end of the larger project for the South Branch of the Buffalo River. Don Schultz will schedule a meeting regarding a WLI project in West Otter Tail County, and DNR will explore the possibility of getting Wilkin County approved for the WLI funding.

**Water Pilot Program for the Buffalo River.** Jones discussed the progress being made on the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study for the Buffalo River. The project started about a year ago and is being done jointly with the MPCA. The watershed being studied is about 1,100 square miles (sq. mi.), and includes the Buffalo River, the South Branch of the Buffalo River, and several tributaries such as Whiskey, Deerhorn, Stony, and Hay Creeks. They are currently working on identifying stressors in the system. Jones noted that the monitoring data from the 33 sampling sites throughout the District shows that e coli, phosphorus, and turbidity are high all over the study area. This will be the second year (2010) of water quality sampling. Jones thought that we would have enough data after this year's sampling. The DNR has installed 12 gauging stations throughout the BRRWD, and there are also United States Geological Survey (USGS) stations placed in the lower reaches of the BRRWD, which provide flow/timing data to estimate sediment loading rates. Albright noted that the USGS and gauging stations are satisfying the Regional Assessment Locators (RAL) component of the BRRWD's RWMP.

Albright explained that part of the TMDL process involves the Civic Engagement feature, which is used to disseminate the water quality information. Part of this feature includes surveying the general population regarding water quality awareness. In this process, the BRRWD is working with Molly MacGregor, MPCA, and Dr. Carolyn Eckman, University of Minnesota (U of M) to distribute a Social Indicators Data Management and Analysis (SIDMA) survey to a random group of residents within the BRRWD. In the future, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may require that any new 319 Grant will have to include a SIDMA survey pre and post project implementation. Winter felt that there have been so many surveys done regarding peoples' opinions about water quality, he wondered what new information this survey could provide. Albright thought that just filling out the survey could be an educational experience for the general population. The EPA survey will be modified to fit the needs of the BRRWD. The survey will be targeted to three different populations: urban, non-agricultural rural, and agricultural rural. MacGregor is planning to have a booth at the Clay County Fair regarding water quality issues, and would include the Barnesville River Watch Team.

**Barnesville Township FDR Study.** The BRRWD has been working with landowners in the area southwest of Barnesville in Sections 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36, Barnesville Township, Clay County, which has a drainage area of approximately 21 sq. mi., and has had significant water problems along a DNR protected watercourse. Albright distributed handouts/maps of H.E.'s concept report. The group discussed the report to determine if this area could be developed as a Mediation project. Albright noted that in Sections 31/36, the waterway crosses the road four times in less than 0.5 miles. He said that the landowners have suggested the possibility of installing an overflow diversion channel to divert high water flows along the east/west quarterline of Section 36, Alliance Township, directly into the South Branch of the Buffalo River, which is less than 0.5 miles west. Another option would be to put the diversion channel on the line between Clay and Wilkin Counties. According to the RWMP, the goal is to hold approximately 2,500 acre-feet of storage in this particular watershed. Jones added that retention in this area would benefit the Whisky Creek watershed. Albright noted that this project could be similar to our Project No. 54, Whisky Creek

Tributaries. He commented that most of the land in the upstream drainage area should probably have been left in pasture, as there is a high water table and poor drainage.

Albright has suggested to landowner Frank Schindler, who owns most of Sections 33 and 34, Barnesville Township, that he might consider developing a retention site on his property. Schindler has indicated that he is not interested. Albright noted that there are other issues in this area, including the DNR protected waterway that could use buffers and cleaning, and township/county road washouts. The BRRWD Managers would like to have input from the PT regarding this proposal. At this time, the BRRWD is only interested in studying a project for this area. We are currently too busy to move forward with project development. Albright discussed our ongoing involvement with this issue since the 1980s. He asked the PT if they thought this would be a worthwhile project to develop. Waller said that if the BRRWD wants the PT to study this proposal, he thought they should. Albright thought that the project area is a good size to work with, and he felt that the area landowners would be interested in working with the BRRWD. Barsness commented that in terms of water quality issues, he thought the project should be developed. Albright noted that he will keep this project on the PT agenda for future discussion.

**Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Feasibility Study.** The Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) is the North Dakota 35,000 diversion. The local entities have raised \$1.3 million for the COE to work on studying this option between now and 12/31/10. The total cost for the study is \$2.6 million split on a 50/50 basis between the federal government and the local governments. The BRRWD contributed \$100,000. The Minnesota share of the study cost is \$400,000. The National Economic Development (NED) plan is the Minnesota 20,000 diversion. The group discussed how the Metro Task Force came to the decision to endorse the North Dakota Diversion as the LPP, costs associated with the project, and the downstream affects of either diversion. The entire project costs could be split 90/10 between North Dakota and Minnesota.

**Project No. 64, LaBelle/Boyer Lakes Outlet.** Albright gave the group an update of the outlet project. The Appraisers were out last week to start their work. The Boyer Lake landowners are very anxious for the BRRWD to get started on the project. H.E. is working on the permitting process. The BRRWD has declared this project an emergency, and they hope to get started on construction in late April or early May. The project is located between Lake Park and Audubon in Becker County on Labelle and Boyer Lakes. High water levels are affecting T.H. No. 10. Jones discussed features of the system design that should address the fish passage issues. There was some concern about the proposal to lower Boyer Lake a total of 6'. With the inline control structure, Jones explained that the elevation of the lakes can be manipulated depending on downstream conditions.

**Buffalo River Stabilization.** The Clay SWCD, BRRWD, and the City of Hawley initiated a project in late-summer 2009 regarding erosion on the banks of the Buffalo River within Hawley's City limits. A long-term plan is currently being developed to restore the natural channel alignment in this reach of the Buffalo River; however, immediate action was required to mitigate the rate at which the south bank was eroding. The Clay County Highway Department has received funding to replace a wooden bridge on an all-purpose road. The road to the west of this bridge will be abandoned, which diverted part of the Buffalo River.

This project was declared an emergency by the MN Recovers Task Force, and it received additional erosion, sediment, and water quality control cost share funding. The Clay SWCD received a \$22,000 grant from BWSR. Dave Friedl, DNR-Clean Water Specialist, designed the preferred alternative, which was a "Toe Wood-Sod Mat with Woody Debris". The project was completed in December 2009. Albright noted that the project worked well this spring. Some seeding and cleanup will be required this spring.

**2010 Spring Flood.** Albright commented that last year's flood caused fewer problems for the BRRWD than the 1997 spring flood. He felt that some of the flood damage reduction work the BRRWD has implemented is working. This year, the BRRWD's flood response work was probably about 10% of what we had to do in 1997, and the flood was supposed to have been comparable to 1997. Some of this improvement is due to projects the BRRWD has installed through the help of the DNR and others. He discussed an area south of the City of Sabin, referred to as the Sabin Coulee. This waterway drains water from areas as far south as Wilkin County and conveys it all the way to the Red River of the North, upstream of Moorhead. He explained that in the spring, the culverts draining this area don't open and there is a pool of water that is approximately 4 miles long by 0.5 miles wide and 4' deep. This pool of water usually drains out rapidly at the same time as the crest on the Red River. Albright talked to some of the area landowners to see if they would be interested in a retention site. With the addition of a couple of gates on the existing culverts, we could hold back this water when the anticipated Red River crest is 36' or greater. Bufferstrips and WRP sites could be incorporated in the site design.

**RWMP.** Albright summarized the BRRWD's efforts to complete the RWMP process. An informational meeting was held in Barnesville on 3/18/10 and another meeting is scheduled for Hawley on 3/30/10. The "Draft" RWMP is out for the 60-day public review and the comment period will run through March 29, 2010.

The City of Hawley has voiced concerns about the watershed management district (wmd) component of the Plan. It appears that they have misinterpreted the wmd process. Hawley has contacted other Cities and Townships within the BRRWD regarding their concerns, and Albright has been busy responding to phone calls regarding this issue. He explained that by including the wmds in the RWMP, we have covered Steps 1 & 2 of an 8 step process to use this taxing authority, which includes public hearings and the right of appeal to BWSR. Clay County and the City of Moorhead don't have concerns regarding the wmds. Albright also presented the RWMP to the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) in early March and received unanimous approval. The PT discussed Hawley's concerns. BWSR will hold a public hearing on the RWMP on 5/05/10 at 5:00 PM in Hildebrand Hall, Barnesville.

**Activities Update.** A copy of the 3/08/10 meeting press release was distributed to the group. Many of the projects referenced in the press release were already discussed during today's meeting. Albright noted that the BRRWD has agreed to be the host district for the BWSR Summer Tour in August. On May 2-9, 2010, River Keepers will be hosting a group from Moldova who will be visiting through the Sister River Program. River Keepers will be taking them on a tour of various points of interest in the area, including the BRRWD Office and a few of our projects.

**Next Meeting.** Albright said the next PT meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, June 17, 2010, at 7:00 PM in the MSUM Science Center.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business to come before the group, Albright adjourned the meeting at 4:25 PM.

Respectfully Prepared and Submitted by

Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator