

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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MEDIATION PROJECT TEAM MINUTES

July 23, 2009

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) Mediation Project Team (PT) held a meeting on Thursday, July 23, 2009, at 7:30 PM at the Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) Regional Science Center, east of Glyndon.

Attending were: Bruce E. Albright, Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) and BRRWD Administrator; Erik S. Jones, Engineer, and Zachary Herrmann, Engineer, H.E.; Roger G. Ellefson, Curtis M. Nelson, Gerald L. VanAmburg, and E. Robert Olson, BRRWD Managers; Paul Wannarka, Red River Basin Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Dave Barsness, Fisheries Specialist, DNR; Kevin Brennan, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Fergus Falls Wetlands Management District (WMD); Bob Honeman, Area Resource Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Pete Waller, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); and Shawn May, Detroit Lakes WMD and USFWS.

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; Brad Grant, District Manager, Becker Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD); Michael T. Murphy; Refuge Manager, Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and USFWS (retired); Richard Pemble, Citizen Advisory Committee, BRRWD; Maynard Pick, Staff Assistant, Congressman Collin Peterson's Office; Kevin Kassenborg, District Manager, Clay SWCD; Robert G. Merritt, Area Hydrologist, DNR; Don Schultz, Area Wildlife Manager, DNR, Brian Dwight, Board Conservationist, BWSR; John E. Hanson, Manager, BRRWD; Brian Winter, Program Director, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); and Robert A. Zimmerman, Engineer, City of Moorhead.

Albright called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM. He said the last PT meeting was held on 5/28/09 in Barnesville. The PT continues to meet as needed, or approximately every two to three months. The Watershed remains very busy with work on the 2009 Spring Flood and the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project, as well as the Overall Plan.

Business brought before the group included:

Meeting Minutes. Albright said the office has gotten behind on preparing minutes for the PT meetings. At the present time, we are missing minutes from the following meetings: 10/25/07, 7/17/08, 10/23/08, 12/11/08, and 5/28/09. We'll try to get these minutes done prior to our next meeting. Albright apologized for not getting out the information. He noted that he's taping tonight's meeting to assist BRRWD secretary, Julie Jerger, in preparing the minutes.

Project No. 54, Whisky Creek Tributaries. With the heavy rainfall in June, the retention pool functioned well and is currently empty. Dave Friedl, DNR, coordinated the low level/high resolution aerial photography flight last spring. Jones said that the meanders in the channel of the "east tributary" can still be seen. Hopefully, the aerial photography for the entire BRRWD can be completed this fall.

Project No. 56, Manston Slough Restoration. At their 7/20/09 meeting, the Board of Managers, BRRWD, indicated that they would like to see this project develop at a faster rate. Tom Arnhalt and C & H

Farms have signed their easement options. The BRRWD has signed our easement for the sale of the Holubok property to the DNR. The Board authorized H.E. to prepare demolition plans and specification for the former Holubok building site. Rick St. Germain, Engineer, H.E., is working on the Engineer's Report. Albright noted that we are still looking for 25% of the necessary funding. There is a workshop regarding the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LOHC) grant application process scheduled for 8/17/09 in Detroit Lakes. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed by all participating agencies. The Operation and Maintenance (O&M) is in place. St. Germain has the revised structure design completed in accordance with the agreement with USFWS, which includes bays and stop logs to allow for pool operation flexibility.

Bob Honeman, NRCS, mentioned that there are two parcels in their Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) for which the BRRWD will need to acquire right-of-way (r-o-w) on the south side of the project, west of Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 9. Albright will provide documentation regarding this r-o-w for these parcels.

Kevin Brennan questioned if the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) had approved language for 75% funding for the Manston project. Albright said that at this time the RRBFDRWG had not approved the language for this project, but has approved 75% funding for the North Ottawa project in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District and for the Roseau project. Albright noted that according to the Mediation Agreement, those projects that meet the requirements of the Mediation process should qualify for 75% funding. There is some question as to whether or not the Manston project has already been approved by the RRBFDRWG. Ron Harnack, RRWMB, thinks it was approved, but there doesn't seem to any documentation. VanAmburg felt that this funding issue should be addressed at the next RRBFDRWG meeting in August. Albright mentioned that Tom Arnhalt, who is a major landowner in the project area, is involved in a 1031 land exchange, so he needs to close on the his easement sale to the BRRWD by 9/01/09. He will only be able to received 90% of the easement value, or about \$257,500. Since the BRRWD has not completed the project development process, there is a concern that if, for some reason, the project development fails, the BRRWD will be left owning an easement that we technically don't need. However, this transaction with Arnhalt is necessary to accommodate his land exchange timeline.

The Board authorized H.E. to work on easement option acquisition for the project. Ellefson questioned if the BRRWD's eligibility for reimbursement for project expenses, like the Arnhalt easement, would be affected if the project development process hasn't been completed. Albright didn't think it would and suggested that it would be best to complete the legal process this fall and winter and let bids for the project in the spring of 2010.

Brennan pointed out that the Manston Slough project is a good fit for the LOHC grant program. He noted that the LOHC has changed from funding primarily projects to funding programs for the development of projects. Albright said the state assistance through BWSR for SWCDs was cut back nearly half this year from approximately \$45,000 to about \$25,000. Most of the remaining funding will be used for the SWCD tree planting program. When the SWCDs had full funding, they used to use the extra funding to install sediment control basins, etc. Albright suggested that there should be a program that could be developed through LOHC funding that could fund County projects like the SWCD sediment control basins.

The group discussed who would be attending the LOHC meeting on 8/17/09. Brennan felt that the Manston project should be represented. He noted that Les Bensch, who sits on the LOHC Council, is very interested in finding natural resource enhancement (nre) projects and would be a good advocate for the Manston project. VanAmburg asked if it would be appropriate to lobby the council members on behalf of our project prior to the meeting. Brennan thought it would be proper to give the Council members information regarding the project. VanAmburg suggested that the office could forward a Manston Slough factsheet to the Council members.

Project No. 58, Riverton Township Retention. This is another project that has gone through the Mediation PT process. The BRRWD opened bids for the project on 4/24/08. The site is located on property owned by TNC in the E½, Section 28, Riverton Township, Clay County. The contractor, Nanik Construction, Staples, MN, did not start work on the project until early August last year. Almost immediately after he started, we started to get heavy rainfall events, and the contractor finally quit work on the project in early November, after the area had received a total of approximately 25" of rain in 2008. The project was scheduled for completion on 10/01/08. Nanik has submitted and obtained a time extension until 8/01/09 to complete work on the project, which will probably have to be extended again because of the wet site conditions. Albright said that the BRRWD has a DNR Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) grant for this project, which has also been extended until 12/31/09.

TNC has completed the weed control measures as discussed at the 5/28/09 PT meeting. TNC is working on a 100-acre wetland restoration project on a 1,320 acre parcel (Williams Tract) that they own in Sections 25 and 36, Riverton Township, and Section 1, Elkton Township, Clay County. The restorations will be completed by filling shallow ditches that were created by the previous owner in the 1980s. The wetland restorations are part of a larger ecological restoration on the site that will consist of roughly 800 acres of upland and wetland restoration work. Work on the site began in 2008 with measures to control invasive species and prepare the 800 acre site for restoration activities, but because of the wet conditions, this project is also delayed. Funding from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant for this site also ends on 12/31/09.

Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation Project. Bids for Phases 1B and 2 will be opened at the BRRWD's 8/10/09 meeting. Albright estimates that each phase of construction will cost approximately \$2 million. Bids will also be authorized for Phase 3A at our 7/27/09 meeting for opening at our 8/24/09 meeting. Now that the geotechnical survey has been completed, we have about 20 more buyouts to complete in two new areas that can't be protected by the levee. There is also an area along the west edge of the project that is located on an active slide where the road/dike alignment will have to moved further east, putting about 5-7 more homes in the way of the dike. Albright noted that following the 2009 spring flood, many homeowners in the Oakport area are more interested in taking a buyout than last year.

Albright noted that so far the only wetland mitigation will be for Phase 1B, and Ulteig Engineers, Inc. (UEI) has submitted the application to Lynn Foss, Clay SWCD. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has issued the required stormwater permits. Albright briefly discussed the Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) process to make it possible for homeowners in the project area to have lower flood insurance rates. UEI has submitted the CLOMR to the COE and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other agencies for review.

The House Bonding Committee will be meeting with the BRRWD on September 2, 2009. They plan to tour the Oakport, Georgetown, and Kragnes projects. On September 3, the Committee will also be attending a Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) meeting in Moorhead.

Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Restoration. The Clay and Wilkin SWCDs received a Clean Water Legacy (CWL) grant in the amount of \$289,000 to work on this project in the fall of 2006. Since then, the funding has accrued approximately \$18,000 in interest. The BRRWD also agreed to contribute \$20,000 to the project. The funding has been used for outlet structures, septic system inspections in Wilkin County, side inlet controls, and conservation practice incentives. Last fall, the WorkGroup approved a survey of the entire channel. Jones is working with Michele Walker, DNR, regarding the required DNR permits for some additional work by Pete Livdahl's farmstead on the outlet. There might be a way to amend the existing permit already obtained for work west of T. H. 75 to allow for additional grade stabilization structures.

The funding was set to expire on 6/30/09, but we recently learned that BWSR granted a three-year extension. Jones noted that we will be opening bids for the installation of inlet structures along the waterway by Livdahl's on 8/10/09.

There is another CWL Grant application opportunity coming up in October. The SWCDs will prepare an application for further work on Wolverton Creek. Kevin Brennan asked if the Legislature had targeted funding from the LOHC grants for individual projects. Waller said that generally, he didn't see that in the grant legislation. Dave Barsness noted that the LOHC council members make recommendations for grant recipients. He questioned if there was an advisory committee that makes the CWL grant recommendations. Waller said currently, it appears that the Governor makes the final recommendations. He noted that it would be nice if the CWL grants were awarded according to a council recommendation, using the same method as the LOHC. Someone explained that the proceeds from the sales tax referendum that was passed in 2008 are appropriated for two years and are divided into three categories: CWL funding (\$80 million), LOHC (\$80 million), and Parks/Arts (\$20 million). The LOHC council recommendations are closely followed. Allocations may change in the second half of the biennium.

Albright said that the SWCDs would like to complete work on the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee project this fall, weather permitting.

Lawndale Trout Stream Restoration. Albright and Julie Klocker, BWSR, took a tour of the project yesterday. The BRRWD and DNR plan to meet with landowner Dave Yaggie to discuss the DNR's plan to address Yaggie's irrigation/pumping concerns. The proposal includes buying back Yaggie's irrigation rights to pump out of the Trout Stream. The value of the buyback would equal the cost of retrofitting his existing irrigation well to a low flow system. The Environmental Assessment (EA) has been completed for the Trout Stream, but it hasn't gone through the public review process yet. Arlin Schalekamp, DNR, has indicated that it is unlikely that this project will be started in 2009.

Albright discussed the severe erosion problems in the area near the trout stream. On Terry Czichotzki's property, there were cuts nearly 30' across and 6' deep. Ellefson commented that most of this sediment ends up in the South Branch of the Buffalo River where it was cleaned about two years ago. Albright said that when Czichotzki asked the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Breckenridge for assistance/suggestions regarding possible programs for this parcel of land, he was told that the damages weren't substantial enough to qualify for any of the current programs. Honeman thought that he might qualify for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) or a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grassed waterway. Czichotzki could also consider enrolling the acreage in the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program if funding is available. The group briefly discussed state program allocations and the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP).

Honeman discussed the use of EQIP funding for rural ringdike construction. Waller noted that most likely the amount of funding available will match the demand for dikes. Honeman commented that there will be "scoring" criteria for fund allocation.

Project No. 63, Grove Lake Outlet. The project has been completed, and the outlet is flowing. Albright estimated that the lake is down about 18" from its all time high with about 18" to go before it reaches the design drawdown elevation. The water quality looked good at the outlet. No downstream problems have been reported. Ellefson noted that the Lass driveway is out of the water. Albright noted that the BRRWD will need to work with the USFWS regarding the project's impact on their Waterfowl Production Area (WPA).

Project No. 38, Kragnes Ringdike. Ziegler Construction, Inc., has basically finished work on this project with seeding to be completed this fall.

According to Albright, the BRRWD has approximately 35 farmstead ringdike applicants for funding this year, which includes landowners who applied for the EQIP funding through the NRCS. Approximately 20 of the applicants are non-agriculture producers. The popularity of this program stems from the record setting 2009 spring flood. There will be a conference call tomorrow at 11:00 AM to discuss the ringdike program/funding.

Hay Creek CWL Project. The BRRWD received a grant in the amount of \$185,000 to work on this project between 2/01/08 and 6/30/10. The Becker SWCD is involved with the implementation of this project and received an additional \$10,000 to establish native grass buffers along Hay Creek in Becker County. The project has also accrued some interest. The BRRWD agreed to contribute \$50,000 towards the cost of the project through their M.S.A. 103D.905, Subd. 3, funds. A year ago, the Becker SWCD sent letters to all of the landowners in the drainage area upstream of Stinking Lake to inform them about the project and to determine their interest in installing either grassed bufferstrips or sediment control basins. To date, we have seeded 99.3 acres of bufferstrips and have signed up approximately 32 sediment control basins. The Becker SWCD has an additional 73.3 acres of bufferstrips that will be enrolled and another 22 sediment control basins to be installed. Albright felt that landowners were more interested in this program because it paid for the bufferstrip seeding and maintenance for three years, plus an incentive payment.

South Branch of the Buffalo River. At the last meeting, the group discussed retention sites off channel near the middle of the drainage area. Jones has expanded his investigation to include upstream off channel wetland restoration sites in Otter Tail County. He and Zach Herrmann, H.E., used the restorable wetland basins layer from the GIS database and the National Wetland Inventory (NWI), developed by the USFWS. Jones noted that Wilkin County doesn't have a restorable wetland basin layer to reference.

Herrmann discussed an example of a restorable wetland as shown on a handout distributed for the group's reference. He explained that there are two potential restoration sites in Section 33, Norwegian Grove Township, as shown on the restorable wetland basin map. They investigated the site based on topographical and soil type criteria. The outlet on the southwest corner of the site would require less excavation because there is good grade to the channel. Herrmann explained that they would set the pool's maximum elevation at approximately 1315. At that elevation, there would be about 430 acre-feet (a/f) of storage. In the fall, the basin could be drawn down about 3' to 1312, which would provide approximately 350 a/f of storage. The drainage area to the site is approximately 1,000 acres. This site would provide retention in excess of the 100-year rainfall event. Herrmann explained that while this site alone is not the cure for all the problems on the South Branch of the Buffalo River, it gives the group an idea of the potential retention possibilities in the upstream reaches of this watershed. Albright noted that the WRP/USFWS might be a funding source for the necessary easement acquisitions.

Someone questioned what type of event would bring the pool to its maximum elevation. Jones explained that it would be in excess of the 100-year event. The group discussed the map and diagrams regarding the example site. Ellefson discussed the area drainage patterns and the cropping history. Albright mentioned that Otter Tail County used to have a legal ditch system in this area, which they abandoned in the 1970s. The main and south branch of Wilkin County Ditch No. 44 are actually draining parts of the existing Rothsay Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in the upper reaches of the South Branch of the Buffalo River watershed, which shouldn't be the purpose of a legal ditch system. There was a discussion about how to address this problem. Brennan mentioned that possibly Ducks Unlimited (DU) might be interested in assisting with design and installation of projects of this type.

Albright discussed the RIM bufferstrip initiative and distributed a map showing the area involved with the South Branch of the Buffalo River project. He noted that almost all the landowners signed up for the program. Pete Waller, BWSR, noted that Craig Lingen, Wilkin SWCD, and Albright did a good job in working with the landowners to encourage participation. Albright said that landowner Jim Haick, who has

property involved in the proposed project area, expressed his appreciation for the BRRWD's interest in developing a project for this area.

Jones would like to do some hydraulic modeling on the stream before developing any levee design for the South Branch. At this time, there is not sufficient LiDAR data for Wilkin County to complete the channel cross sections.

Buffalo River Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Albright commented that this year, several different groups are involved with water sampling within the BRRWD. He explained that 2009 and 2010 are designated as the intensive monitoring phases. At a recent meeting with MPCA, the group discussed the need to provide existing hydrology and loading conditions throughout the watershed by establishing sites to collect stage data for each subwatershed in the BRRWD. No definite decision was made at the meeting, and we will continue to search for additional funding for this water quantity component.

Two public informational meetings were held on June 23 and 30, 2009, in Barnesville and Hawley. Public surveys were distributed at the meetings to solicit the attendees' thoughts on water quality. Molly McGregor, MPCA, organized the responses and provided a summary, which Albright distributed for the PT members to review. McGregor has indicated that there may be an attempt to poll all the watershed district residents. A person from the University of Minnesota has expressed an interest in this work and a grant might be available to do a water quality survey of all the district's residents.

Henry VanOffelen, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA), will be attending the 7/27/09 BRRWD meeting to present his work on strategic placement of wetland restorations. He has prepared a Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) application for funding this work.

Barnesville Township FDR Study. Because of the wet conditions in the past several years, 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 square miles (sq. mi.), has had significant water problems. Jones distributed maps of the study area for review and discussed the drainage patterns. Albright 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 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.

Ellefson suggested that landowner Frank Schindler, who owns most of Sections 33 and 34, Barnesville Township, might be interested in developing a retention site on his property. In the early 1980s, a similar study was done, and there had been a suggestion at that time to install a retention site in the northwest corner of Section 35, Barnesville Township. Jones questioned the usefulness of the Section 35 site as there is a ridge in this area that divides flows to the north and south. Albright noted that in recent years, landowners have installed ditches through the ridge. Jones thought that cuts through the ridge would alter his study results because the ridge limits the amount of water that can flow through Section 35. With the cuts, maybe more water could be diverted west to a possible storage site.

Albright noted that in Sections 31/36, the waterway crosses the road four times in less than 0.5 miles. Ellefson said that Schindler has proposed the replacement of a 36" dia. corrugated metal pipe (CMP) in 140th ST S, between Sections 32 and 33, Barnesville Township, Clay County, with a 48" dia. CMP. The downstream landowners are opposed to that proposal as they already have too much water. Albright said that if we could reduce flows at the outlet of this subwatershed by 30%, landowners further downstream on Whisky Creek and the northern reaches of South Branch of the Buffalo River would be very supportive, as they have three waterways draining into their area. Ellefson noted that a number of farmers in the study area were not able to plant crops this spring because of the wet conditions. The group discussed area drainage patterns. Albright said that we will continue to investigate various plans for this area.

Fargo South Side Flood Control (FSSFC). The project is not progressing as quickly as the City of Fargo had hoped. The COE's Metro Flood Control Feasibility Study has contributed to the slowdown, as it is as yet unknown how this project will affect the FSSFC plans. The Southeast Cass Water Resource District attended the 7/13/09 BRRWD meeting to request that the BRRWD enter into a Joint Powers Agreement with them to develop the FSSFC project. The Board felt it would be best to see what the COE proposes for the Fargo-Moorhead area in terms of possible flood control this fall. Diversions, levees, or a combination of structures could be incorporated into the project design. The BRRWD has agreed to help the engineer (Ulteig Engineers, Inc. (UEI)) gain access to the properties on the Minnesota side of the Red River of the North in order to proceed with the EA.

LaBelle Lake Outlet. Using maps provided by H.E., Jones discussed various routes for a possible LaBelle Lake outlet. There is no viable channel for a natural outlet to the north. There are old remnants of a ditch in the southeast corner of East LaBelle Lake that could bring water into Warling Lake and then into the public water that eventually outlets to Becker County Ditch No. 9. This appears to be the most feasible outlet. Non-perforated tile could be used to get water east to Warling Lake. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) has concerns about Boyer Lake overtopping T.H. 10. Becker County and MNDOT have officially requested that the BRRWD study an outlet for Boyer Lake in the plans for the LaBelle Lake Outlet project. The current plan is to outlet Boyer Lake to Little Boyer Lake via a pipe in the north ditch of T.H. No. 10 that would extend from MNDOT's existing centerline pipe to the west and through an existing driveway. Currently, Boyer Lake has no natural outlet. If the Lake rose approximately 5', it would inundate T.H. No. 10 and flow into Little Boyer Lake. Jones noted that Boyer Lake is approximately 15' higher (elevation 1325) than what is shown on the quad maps (elevation 1310). Both outlet proposals are similar. They are both designed to provide approximately 1' of drawdown per month, which is dependent on groundwater inflow and precipitation. Jones noted that since Warling Lake is a DNR walleye rearing pond, the design calls for a high velocity culvert with a 3' vertical drop to the ditch bottom in 138th ST to prevent upstream fish passage. The LaBelle Lake outlet pipe would be a 24" dia. culvert and the Boyer Lake outlet would be an 18" dia. pipe. Both outlets would be inline control structures with stoplogs that can be used to set the lake elevation so that the outlet system can operate without constant supervision. Waller asked if County Ditch No. 9 was under BRRWD jurisdiction. Albright said it was.

Someone questioned if the BRRWD has been in contact with the landowners involved with the project. Albright noted that the LaBelle Lake residents came to the BRRWD for help last summer, and they are familiar with the current project development. He has also talked with the Township officials involved with Boyer Lake. Jones commented that we hope to get feedback from the landowners regarding project development at the upcoming landowner informational meeting that has been scheduled for Monday, August 31, 2009, at 7:00 PM in the Lake Park Community Center. Agency personnel who have a stake in the project will also be invited to this public meeting. Albright questioned if there was any USFWS easements involved with the proposed outlet routing. Kevin Brennan, USFWS, pointed out that they have a habitat just east of Boyer Lake. Jones' cost estimate for the project is approximately \$272,000, which includes outlet structures, permanent right-of-way (r-o-w), bufferstrips, and maintenance.

The next steps will be to send out Viewers to determine local benefits for the project and start the search for funding. The project could possibly be started this fall, depending on how quickly project development goes and the fall weather conditions.

Revised Watershed Management Plan (RWMP). The BRRWD signed a deadline extension with BWSR on 7/20/09 that gives us until 12/31/09 to complete the plan update. Mark Deutschman, H.E., has completed his portion of the plan that addresses our attempt to use the plan to satisfy the COE concurrence points. Points 1 and 2 have been covered and Point 3 has been started. Jones will complete the first draft, Albright will do the final proof, and then the BRRWD Board will review it.

Henry VanOffelen has finished the natural resource section for the RWMP, which will be included as an appendix to the plan.

Activities Update. Albright distributed a copy of the 7/13/09 meeting press release. Albright noted that the BRRWD has held several meetings the past several weeks regarding water issues. A special meeting is scheduled for 7/20/09 to cover the agenda items that weren't dealt with at the 7/13/09 meeting because most of that meeting was taken up by discussion with citizens regarding water issues and the Oakport Flood Mitigation project.

The group briefly discussed the inclement weather conditions this year with the spring flood and untimely summer rainfalls. Many are already expressing concerns regarding the potential for another spring flood if we go into fall with the current wet soil conditions. Albright noted that the Buffalo Aquifer has been selected by the DNR as one of two pilot areas to do a ground water study in the State of Minnesota. The project is estimated to cost about \$1 million. The BRRWD has agreed to participate in the project and to send a letter in support of the project to the LCCMR. The group briefly discussed some of the ongoing highwater problems/investigations within the BRRWD, including the Wilkin/Clay County Line Outlet and Ranum/Tansem Lakes Outlet projects. The Board made emergency declaration for these areas to facilitate project development.

The Turtle Lake Association held their Annual Picnic/Meeting on 7/18/09. Managers Ellefson, Nelson, and Hanson attended, and they were given a plaque commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Outlet installation and the BRRWD's efforts in implementing the siphon system. The BRRWD Managers appreciated the recognition.

Ellefson noted that the Turtle Lake residents questioned the need for the DNR to use Long Lake for a walleye rearing pond every spring. The residents think that the project gets behind in the spring when the siphon system is down for two weeks. Dave Barsness noted that DNR plans to continue to use Long Lake as a fish rearing pond in the spring.

Next Meeting. The BRRWD Fall Tour is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2009, at 1:30 PM at the Galaxie Supper Club in Barnesville. Albright thought that a trip to view the Orwell Dam might be included on the tour itinerary.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the group, Ellefson adjourned the meeting at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully Prepared and Submitted by

Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator