



## NORTH OTTAWA PROJECT UPDATE

*By Jon Roeschlein, Administrator  
Bois de Sioux Watershed District*

The North Ottawa Impoundment Project is progressing towards Phase III. The contract was awarded to Riley Brothers Construction of Morris, Minnesota with a bid of \$1,656,319.30 for Phase III (a). Funding is available from the State of Minnesota to bid Phase III (b), however, due to wet weather conditions it is unknown when advertising for bids on this phase will occur.

The Project Team conducted several meetings discussing various alternatives prior to selecting Option H. This option maximizes flood damage reduction (FDR) benefits as well as incorporates the development of nine or ten internal cells for the natural resource enhancement (NRE) components. These internal cells will include low and medium head dikes along with control structures on each cell. This portion of the project was originally to be constructed utilizing funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) through Continuing Authorities Program No. 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration. Prior to completing the study to determine the qualifications of the project for the USACE program, the funding source was exhausted.

Following discussions between the Project Team and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the District agreed to pursue other funding sources to implement the NRE components of the project. The State of Minnesota committed 75% funding

for the NRE components, with the Bois de Sioux Watershed District (BdSWD) responsible for securing the remaining portion of the local share.

Construction of the internal NRE components are referred to as Phase V. The BdSWD submitted a funding request of \$1 million to the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) at their regular monthly May board meeting, to provide the local share of the \$4 million estimated cost of Phase V. In a unanimous decision by the Board of Managers, the RRWMB authorized the \$1 million funding request. The BdSWD

will request bonding in next year's state bonding bill to see the project through to completion.

Phase V will be implemented after the project is essentially complete and already providing FDR benefits. This is possible due to the controls built within the impoundment to control summer runoff to keep the construction areas fit for work.

The BdSWD anticipates that the project will be completed by the spring of 2009. Currently, construction has not started on Phase III (a) due to wet weather.



*Double box culvert under Grant County Road No. 40 on the inlet channel.*



*Inlet channel construction and placement of topsoil for seeding.*

*The next scheduled meeting of the RRWMB will be held at the City Council Chambers, Warren, MN, on June 19th, starting at 9:30 a.m. A tour of the Brandt/Angus Flood Control Project will be conducted following the board meeting.*

**RED LAKE WD**

The Red Lake WD reported on the Brandt Channel Outlet Restoration Project. The District has started advertising for bids for the construction of the project. The project involves a channel restoration to the coulee downstream of the Brandt Impoundment which includes a realignment of the original channel which was filled in approximately 40 years ago. This will be the District's first attempt to implement a CREP II sign-up as part of the project, which will allow the project to recognize a savings in land acquisition costs. A requirement of CREP II calls for a federal environmental review which will determine whether the project will adversely affect existing wetlands. It is antici-

pated that the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will complete the review in June or early July. Bids are scheduled to be opened at the May 24, 2007 board meeting.

A hearing was conducted on May 9, 2007 at Youngquist Auditorium at the University of Minnesota - Crookston to hear evidence regarding a petition to abandon a 2 1/2 mile ditch system in Tilden Township in Polk County. The petition was submitted to the District from the Nature Conservancy (TNC) which owns approximately 72% of the benefited properties of this system. The Board of Managers decided to recess the hearing to their regularly scheduled May board meeting in order to review additional information.

**SAND HILL RIVER WD**

The Sand Hill River WD reported that bids were opened at the May 1, 2007 board meeting for Project No. 20 - Polk County Ditch No. 46. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$1,161,280, with the low bid of \$1,020,355.90 from R.J. Zavoral of East Grand Forks, MN. The District is in the process of paying for permanent and temporary easements.

The Sand Hill River WD and the Red Lake WD, along with area landowners, have agreed on a boundary revision in Section 23 of Russia Township. The two districts are each working on culverts and dirt work in their respective districts to correct the water flow.

**PROPOSED RULES GOVERNING DRAINAGE PROJECTS IMPACTING STATE-OWNED LANDS IN CONSOLIDATED CONSERVATION AREAS**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) intends to adopt rules that govern the criteria and procedures for determining drainage benefits to state-owned lands in consolidated conservation areas administered under Minnesota state law.

Drainage concerns removing water from the land by methods such as open ditch, subsurface drainage tile, filling, diking or pumping. The drainage would be done under the authority of a county board or joint county drainage authority.

Consolidated conservation areas are found in parts of Aitkin, Beltrami, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomon, Marshall and Roseau counties. Such lands are contained within state forests, wildlife management areas, state parks and scientific and natural areas.

The DNR will use the adopted rules to determine drainage benefits and the amount the DNR will pay. The rule hearings are not the determination of what specific drainage projects will be paid by the DNR. The rules are establishing the criteria and procedures that will be used by the DNR to determine drainage

benefits for each drainage project.

The public hearings will be at the following locations:

- June 26: 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. at Aitkin High School auditorium; 306 Second St. NW, Aitkin
- June 27: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Bemidji State University - Beaux Arts Ballroom, Hobson Memorial Union; 1500 Birchmont Drive, Bemidji, (street parking or Bangsberg Hall lot available)

- June 27: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. at Grygla High School gym; 114 N. Fladland Ave., Grygla

- June 28: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Warroad Middle School lunchroom; 510 Cedar Ave., Warroad.

Copies of the notice, rules, and Statement of Need and Reasonableness (SONAR) documents are available on the DNR Web site at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us).

**RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

*At it's regularly scheduled May meeting, the RRWMB:*

- Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.
- Discussed scheduling a meeting with Commissioner Brad Moore of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to discuss alternatives to provide for sustainable funding for the River Watch program.
- Received a report from Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator.
- Received a report from Chuck Fritz regarding the Basin-wide Digital Elevation Model funding status.
- Received a report from Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator.
- Authorized a \$1 million funding request from the Bois de Sioux Watershed District to provide for the local share of the natural resource enhancement components of the North Ottawa Impoundment project.

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Your comments and contributions are always welcome. If you are receiving this newsletter and are not currently a member of a governing unit in the Red River Basin, please notify us and provide the name of the appropriate person to be added to our mailing list. News & Views, c/o RRWMB, P.O. Box 763, Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-0763, Phone: (218) 844-6166; Fax: (218) 844-6167.