

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT Glyndon Waterway Minutes for Landowner Informational Meeting March 27, 2018

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held a landowner informational meeting regarding the Glyndon Waterway on Tuesday, March 27, 2018, at 7:00 PM in the Glyndon Community Center. BRRWD Managers present were Mark T. Anderson, Jay A. Leitch, and Peter V. Fjestad. Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI) staff attending included: Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, and Erik S. Jones, Engineer. Others attending included: Cecil Johnson, Mayor, and Wendy Affield, Clerk/Treasurer, City of Glyndon; and landowners: Kemp Lass, Terry Thomason, Kirk Watt, LeRoy Babolian, Russel Crume, Stan Crume, Jim Kapitan, Tory Jacobson, and Wade Savageau.

Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He introduced the BRRWD Board and Staff and announced that the proceedings were being recorded to aid in the preparation of the minutes. A sign-in sheet was circulated to record attendance.

Albright began the meeting by going over some of the history of the project area. He explained that the BRRWD, through the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) Mediation Project Team (PT) process, has identified a potential project for the waterway passing through Sections 1, 2, and 12, Glyndon Township, Section 7, Riverton Township, and Section 35, Moland Township, Clay County. For years, the BRRWD has been aware that there are problems along this waterway, and we have worked with the City of Glyndon in this regard to address beavers and drainage of water from the City's lagoon system. The area in question was identified in the mid-1980's by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as "protected waters", so a DNR permit would be needed before any work could be done on this waterway. The waterway used to be dry most of the year, but now because of channel sedimentation, beaver dams, and blockages, it remains wet year-round with ponding and stagnant water.

One of the main problems is north of Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 10. During the 1997 and 2009 spring floods, water broke out of the Buffalo River in Section 6, Riverton Township, and Section 1, Glyndon Township, and flowed cross-country west into the protected waterway. This caused significant erosion and carried considerable sediment, which partially filled the waterway, causing water to back up and stand in the two lines of 10' x 6' box culverts in T.H. No. 10 on the line between Sections 1 and 12, Glyndon Township. Albright explained that the BRRWD would like to find out if the City and landowners recognize that there is a problem with the waterway and if they are interested in a project. One of the first things that would need to be done would be to get the waterway surveyed so a plan could be developed as to what needs to be done to correct the problems. A secondary issue would be to find a way to stop future breakout flows on the Buffalo River from entering this area and filling it back up with sediment.

Glyndon Mayor Cecil Johnson commented that he didn't remember that waterway north of the "trestle" over the railroad tracks ever being cleaned. He said that it plugs up with beaver dams on a regular basis, according to the City Maintenance Department. Surrounding landowners must put up with the smell, cattails, and ponding water. He has never seen the area dry. Johnson feels something needs to be done to address the problem.

Wade Savageau, who is a landowner on the south end of the waterway, discussed the waterway conditions and its impacts on the neighboring properties. The group commented on waterway impacts on individual properties in the area: beaver dams, standing water, and river bank breakouts. The landowners thought that the waterway might eventually dry up if the beaver dams and debris were removed. Albright talked about BRRWD efforts during the 1997 spring flood to protect the waterway. Water was coming out of the Buffalo River, threatening the upstream dike on the Jacobson property (Section 9, Riverton Township), which the BRRWD repaired after the event to prevent future breakouts.

Kemp Lass noted that he has hired a trapper to remove beavers in the Glyndon area for several years.

Jim Kapitan lives on the north end of the waterway near 15th AVE. The waterway in his area is mostly a "slough" or wetland. The only time his area gets any water is when the City opens their lagoons. Beaver dams block any water trying to move through his area on the north end.

Albright commented that DeKalb Genetics plans to clean 1,000' of the waterway coming from the south to where it converges with the DNR protected waterway on the west side of the City's lagoon. They won't need a BRRWD permit to clean the existing waterway, but they will need to work with the City. He noted that since the waterway is blocked downstream, the water still might not flow north.

Johnson pointed out that the soil in this area is sandy loam, and it just filters back into the waterway. Kemp Lass commented that the trees are now so thick it's difficult to see where the channel should be. Someone added that about 20 beavers were removed last year in the area from T.H. No. 10 upstream to the lagoons.

Albright brought up the issue of funding for a project to repair the waterway. Savageau said that he mows the "railroad ditch" to keep down the grass and trees. Albright noted that the BRRWD could furnish a channel survey just to get an idea of the scope of a potential repair project to establish a waterway gradeline. After gathering the necessary information, we could open negotiations with the DNR regarding their guidelines for work in protected waters and develop a project cost estimate. The project would need to address City and landowner problems. There are funding sources for projects that are comprehensive in scope. He added that comprehensive projects like this take time to develop, but if nothing is done, the problems will just get worse.

Someone asked how it would be determined where the project would stop downstream. Albright explained that a survey would answer this question. The survey would start at the Buffalo River, which is the outlet of this waterway, and continue upstream. More discussion followed about area drainage. Stan Crume noted that nearly 70 years ago, the railroad ditch was built on the east end of Tally Ho Road, but it was never opened to allow the water to flow into it. Savageau noted that water doesn't stand on his property. During the 1997 spring flood, he had water 1' over his driveway, but within three hours the water was gone. His neighbor, Dustin Brennan, had water right up to his door, and he had to sandbag his patio to keep water out of his basement.

Johnson asked if there were any grant programs for the City to secure funding for a project. Albright noted that the drainage concerns could also affect the new subdivisions in Glyndon. The group discussed the Clay County Ditch (C.D.) No. 12 improvement project south of Glyndon, constructed in the early 1980s, and the Riverton Township Retention project (2010), which have all helped reduce flooding in the City of Glyndon.

The group discussed historic flooding and breakouts in the Glyndon area/T.H. No. 10 and the dikes that were constructed on the Buffalo River on the former Bob Jacobson property in Section 9, Riverton Township, and on Wayne Kirmis's property in Section 1, Glyndon Township. Albright noted that the Jacobson structure should be inspected this year, as it hasn't been checked for many years.

There was also some discussion regarding possible project designs to keep water in the Buffalo River during highwater events when breakouts are the most prevalent. Albright noted that the breakout/sedimentation problems in this area are like the problems on Stony Creek, Whisky Creek, or the South Branch of the Buffalo River. The soils are light, and when the river breaks out, water moves cross-country at high velocity, causing severe washouts and erosion on downstream cropland and deposits sediment back into the channel further downstream. Albright noted that the washouts on the Oberg property during the 2009 flood were nearly 6' deep and several yards wide.

Someone commented that having a survey of the channel would be the place to start to address these problems. Albright said that HEI could also take test pits to get an idea of the channel elevation prior to the sediment loading over the past several years. Jones suggested that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) might be a source of information regarding the past channel elevations. Someone noted that when MNDOT installed the box culverts in T.H. No. 10, they must have had a reference point of the river bottom grade. Jones said that MNDOT has some survey data from the 1970s going north from T.H. No. 10 for a few hundred feet, which could give an indication of how much sediment has been deposited since then. He estimated it would cost approximately \$5,000 to conduct a survey of this area, including plan sheets and test pits. He advised that the work should be done before summer vegetation is on the landscape.

Albright discussed the process to conduct the survey, which would include a landowner notice with a request to allow the survey crews access to the properties, and then another landowner informational meeting would be held to review the survey results.

Savageau suggested that we should consider just walking the channel to determine if there would be a simple, cheap fix. Maybe there are just one or two beaver dams that could be removed that would take care of the majority of the problems. Albright suggested that a drone flyover might be useful, instead of a field review because of the rough terrain. He added that the DNR will want to review survey data if we get to the point of submitting a DNR permit for work in the protected waters. Manager Anderson commented that the BRRWD might be able to cover the cost of the survey, as a District expense. Albright mentioned that the BRRWD could have funding available to assist with the survey expenses. He noted that landowner Rodney Wyland has been trying to address the Buffalo River breakout problems in this area for several years. Albright discussed a project on Wayne Kirmis's property along the river where the BRRWD installed a rubber block wall to keep water in the river during high water events.

Albright explained that the next steps would be to refer this potential project to the BRRWD Managers and their Mediation PT for review and analysis. He discussed the agency PT mediation process to review potential project permitting concerns and solutions. The group briefly discussed the scope of a possible survey.

Albright encouraged the landowners to contact the BRRWD with their questions or comments regarding this issue. At 8:00 PM, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted and prepared by

John E. Hanson, Secretary