MOUSE RIVER PLAN

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PROGRESS

Mouse River Plan PROGRESS was developed by the Souris River Joint Board and its' partners to keep project stakeholders, constituents, and the region updated on the progress of the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project (MREFPP). The MREFPP is a basin-wide endeavor focusing on flood risk reduction along the Mouse River. The estimated $1 billion project was initiated following the devastating 2011 flood and is anticipated to be completed in 20 years.

NORTH DAKOTA SRJB SOURIS RIVER JOINT BOARD

THIS PUBLICATION IS A MONTHLY UPDATE PROVIDED BY THE SOURIS RIVER JOINT BOARD

DESIGN SET TO BEGIN FOR TIERRECITA VALLEJO LEVEE

The Souris River Joint Board has authorized the design of the levee system around Tierrecita Vallejo to begin in 2018. Tierrecita Vallejo is a rural subdivision in Ward County that is adjacent to the western edge of the city of Minot. The system around Tierrecita Vallejo will serve as a tieback to the west Minot system and includes earthen levees and a closure planned across the Canadian Pacific railroad tracks. The design phase of the project is expected to cost approximately $2 million and take 18 months to complete.

Dirt work in the Broadway Pump Station excavation on Phase MI-1 is ready for the next round of work, including poured concrete footings and box culverts.

PHASE MI-1 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

4TH AVE/PUMP STATION

For the Phase MI-1 Fourth Avenue project, work in July focused primarily on river bank stabilization and the Broadway Pump Station area. Within the pump station footprint, the sub-contractor set steel rebar, made forms and poured concrete to form various portions of the station. This work on the pump station will continue for multiple months as this structure is set to be one of the largest of it's kind in the state, and the largest in the City, by far. When finished, the Broadway Pump Station will be able to pump 180,000 gallons of water per minute.

Crews with the Phase MI-1 Fourth Avenue project are set to begin underground utility work in August, along Fourth Avenue. This work will start at the Walder's Street intersection, near Sammy's Pizza, and head east. Sanitary sewer lines will go in first, at a depth of about 20 feet, while water lines will go in second, at about eight feet deep. These same sub-contractors will also be working on the sanitary lift station just southwest of the Third Street NE/Fifth Avenue NE intersection in August. As the construction season continues work for the concrete floodwall along Fourth Avenue will also begin.

The closure of Fourth Avenue NE/NW is scheduled to last well in to 2019. The closure starts at Broadway and goes east until Second Street NE. A detour route is clearly marked that includes using Sixth Avenue NE/NW for through traffic.

PHASE MI-2 & MI-3 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

NAPA VALLEY/FOREST ROAD

Construction on Phase MI-2 and MI-3 continues to progress. The contractor, Wagner Construction, has completed levee fill between the US Highway 83 Bypass and the Perkett Ditch Pump Station which accounts for nearly 40% of earthen levee construction scheduled for the project. The contractor has since shifted their focus into Phase MI-3 which is the area east of 16th Street along Forest Road. Removal of existing levee, utilities, and abandoned structures is being completed in preparation for new levee construction.

Reconstruction of 7th Ave SW is also nearing completion. Following the installation of the new storm sewer system, concrete curb and gutter and driveway aprons have been replaced. The work along 7th Ave is anticipated to be fully completed by the end of August including asphalt paving, concrete sidewalk replacement, and landscaping restoration.

Anticipated upcoming construction work included placement of levee fill in MI-3, storm sewer installation in MI-3 near 16th Street and 2nd Ave SW, completion of the restoration to the Souris Valley Golf Course, and the completion of improvement to the Bark Park parking area. The storm sewer work along 16th Street and 2nd Ave SW will impact traffic throughout the duration of construction and traffic control will be installed, but a long term road closure is not anticipated at this time.

Concrete foundation walls will continue to be formed and poured for the Perkett Ditch Pump Station. Construction of the new Wee Links Irrigation building is also scheduled to begin. The large preconsolidation piles have approached design settlements which will allow for the Perkett Ditch Gatewell to begin construction in the near future.

STATE LEGISLATORS TOUR FLOOD PROTECTION PROJECT

On August 13th, several members of the North Dakota Legislature's Water Topics Overview Committee and Legislative Management toured the construction of several phases of the project in Minot that are currently under construction. Legislators were given a first-hand account of the progress associated with the funding appropriated in the State's current biennium for construction of the first three phases of the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project within the city of Minot.

On August 14th, the Water Topics Overview Committee met at the Grand Hotel in Minot to discuss progress related to several water projects throughout the region and to hear comments and concerns from local residents.

The Water Topics Overview Committee consists of 17 members of the North Dakota Legislature and is chaired by Representative Jim Schmidt. The committee meets between the regular biennial sessions of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly to work on water-related matters throughout the State.

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FEASIBILITY STUDY ENTERS FINAL PHASE

The federal feasibility study for the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project has been sent to Washington, DC for final approval by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) headquarters. This approval by the USACE will mark the final step in the feasibility study process prior to action by the United States Congress.

The Souris River Joint Board has been in regular contact with the North Dakota Congressional Delegation regarding the progress of the feasibility study. Timely completion of the feasibility study report is critical to ensuring that Congress acts to authorize a federal project in the Mouse River basin to reduce flood risk. In June 2018, the US House of Representatives passed Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) legislation that did not include authorization of a federal project in the Mouse River basin. This is due to the fact that the feasibility study report had not yet been completed by the USACE.

The US Senate is expected to act on the WRDA 2018 legislation sometime late this summer or early this fall. The SRJB remains hopeful that the Senate version of the bill will contain language to authorize a federal project in the Mouse River basin once the final feasibility study report is approved by the USACE headquarters.

Once the US Senate acts on a bill, the two congressional chambers will convene a conference committee to work out differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill prior to final passage. The conference committee also represents an opportunity to insert language in the final bill for the project to be authorized. The conference committee's version of the bill will be forwarded to both chambers for final passage and ultimately to President Trump for signature.

The federal interest in the Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project lies in the construction of the Maple Diversion in central Minot. The project is estimated to cost $88 million. If authorized and appropriated by Congress, up to $57 million in federal funding could be secured for the project.

Utilizing Vegetated Reinforced Soil Slopes (VRSS) for erosion control

If you have been through the Souris Valley Golf Course in Minot lately, you may have noticed some interesting work taking place along the existing river bank on the north side of the golf course, near the new levees. Because the river can erode the stream banks near the levee, it is important that the banks be reinforced to keep the erosion from impacting the levee structure. There are multiple methods to control stream bank erosion, with the preferred method being installation of rock riprap.

However, in certain areas where the river bank is not directly adjacent to the levee and there is a desire to have a more natural solution, Vegetated Reinforced Soil Slopes (VRSS) can be utilized. The VRSS system is an earthen composite structure made from living plant materials combined with geosynthetic fabrics and other soils. The resulting system strengthens the slope to reduce potential for erosion, while providing ecological benefits. Fisheries habitats benefit, as the VRSS system provides food and overhanging vegetation cover, which offers fish protection from predators and lowers water temperatures at the edge of the stream.

The system is suitable for installation in locations that are immediately adjacent to standing water, as the root system of the plants embedded in the system are integral to the overall performance of the structure.