

Drainage Board Staff Report

TO: The Members of the Brookings County Drainage Board

DATE: 1/26/2026

SUBJECT: Departmental notes for the February 3, 2026, Brookings County Drainage Board meeting.

PREPARED BY: Robert W. Hill, County Drainage Officer

In the past, a drainage way diverted water from the Big Sioux River southward to water livestock in Medary Township. It is listed in the Water Rights paperwork created by the State of South Dakota in 1986. It was maintained in such a way as to allow water to enter the waterway when it was needed and was closed off periodically.

The waterway was left uncontrolled by a succession of different landowners, and it gradually grew to a larger size. It grew to the point where, at times, more water was being diverted away from the main Big Sioux Channel than was flowing in the channel.

In 2019, the Brookings County Drainage met with citizens from Medary Townships and started to discuss the matter.

In 2021, the Brookings County Drainage Board started to work with Banners Associates and Medary Township to study the area and develop a path forward.

The studies of the area were extensive, and a final report was presented at a Public Meeting on August 9, 2024. The public was invited to attend this, and the meeting was well attended.

There was a turnover with employees, and a new employee took over as the Lead Project Manager. On July 01, 2025, the Drainage Board authorized further expenditure of funds to continue studying the matter.

On November 17, 2025, Banner Associates, Inc. mailed out letters to several organizations and individuals discussing further steps that were being conducted.

On December 23, 2025, Banner Associates sent four letters that were received from landowners in the area of the project area. I have attached those letters to this staff report.

On December 30, 2025, Banner Associates sent a letter that they received from the Brookings County Conservation District, which I have also attached.

The meeting on February 03, 2026, was set up to allow anyone who would like to discuss the project to be able to interact with the Brookings County Drainage Board and get their voices heard.

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As stated previously, there are attached documents to this report for the Drainage Board to review.

My department is looking for the Drainage Board's recommendation on how to proceed in this matter in the future.

Any items received/accomplished after 12:00 PM on 1/26/2026 will be discussed in person at the Drainage Meeting.