



## **Benefits and Damage Statement for the Redetermination of Benefits Nobles County Ditch JD 5**

In accordance with Minnesota Statute (MS) 103E.351, we the viewers, submit the following Viewers' Report:

The fundamental principle for the determination of benefits and damages is based upon a comparison of the conditions prior to the construction of the ditch system with the conditions that exist after the implementation of the ditch system or proposed drainage project.

The undersigned viewers, pursuant to the order of the Nobles County Drainage Authority, did meet prior to commencing duties on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2020 at the Nobles County office in Worthington, Minnesota. Having taken the oath as required by MS 103E.305, did view, all lands affected by said proposed drainage system and further, we did determine the damages to lands affected by establishment of a grass strip, permanent and temporary damages.

We were able to determine the boundaries of the benefited area by processing and analyzing maps using "Light Detection and Ranging" (LiDAR) along with visually viewing the project area. Meetings were held with landowners, and Nobles County staff. We viewed each County Assessors' records to determine the number of acres of land in each parcel of each 40-acre tract of land. Other sources of information used were USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, 12 years of USDA satellite imagery, US Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, and Nobles County Assessors' sales data and annual report.

We have determined the extent and basis of benefits and damages as prescribed under MS 103E.315 and MS 103E.321. We have indicated in tabular form, for each lot, 40-acre tract, and fraction of a lot or tract under separate ownership that is benefited or damaged (see Exhibit A).

Right of way damages, having been determined and paid in the original proceedings for establishment of the drainage system, based on the area contemplated and included in the proceeding for the establishment or subsequent improvement of the drainage system, were not considered.

We have determined the following direct drainage benefits and indirect (outlet) benefits on and related to the redetermination of benefits for Nobles County JD 5. Benefits were determined based on the drainage system operating in its as constructed condition.

### Direct Benefits – Class 1 (Mapped as Red)

Using the direct market value approach, giving consideration for the lands' geographic

location in the watershed, location relative to the outlet, proximity to the ditch bottom elevation, soil types, as well as analyzing direct sales data for competitive properties in the marketplace, we determined the existing market values of land in an unimproved condition as well as in an improved condition. Though this description may not describe your lands exactly, your lands fell broadly under this category.

Class 1 lands, prior to the existence of the drainage system, had a value range of \$1671 to \$1847 per acre. They consisted mostly of lowlands that may have been farmed, but not without substantial risk. With the establishment of adequate drainage to these lands, the production value and/or market value has increased. These lands consist of soils that benefit greatly from good drainage. These lands are now more suitable for intense crop production.

The viewers have determined based on these values, along with allowances for private improvement costs, that Nobles JD 5 provides for an increased market value/benefit to agricultural/cropland acres in Class 1 by the rate of \$3515 per acre.

#### Direct Benefits – Class 2 (Mapped as Yellow)

Using the direct market value approach, giving consideration for the lands' geographic location in the watershed, location relative to the outlet, proximity to the ditch bottom elevation, soil types, as well as analyzing direct sales data for competitive properties in the marketplace, we determined the existing market values of land in an unimproved condition as well as in an improved condition. Though this description may not describe your lands exactly, your lands fell broadly under this category.

Class 2 lands, prior to the existence of the drainage system, had a value range of \$2802 to \$3096 per acre. Although some row crops were grown in this land class, it was not without substantial risk of loss to the grower. Now that adequate drainage has been established through these lands, the production value and/or market value has increased. These lands typically consist of soils that benefit from good drainage to increase crop production.

The viewers have determined based on these values, along with allowances for private improvement costs, that Nobles JD 5 provides for an increased market value/benefit to agricultural/cropland acres in Class 2 by the rate of \$3337 per acre.

#### Direct Benefits – Class 3 (Mapped as Green)

Using the direct market value approach, giving consideration for the lands' geographic location in the watershed, location relative to the outlet, proximity to the ditch bottom elevation, soil types, as well as analyzing direct sales data for competitive properties in the marketplace, we determined the existing market values of land in an unimproved condition as well as in an improved condition. Though this description may not describe your lands exactly, your lands fell broadly under this category.

Class 3 lands, prior to the existence of the drainage system, had a value range of \$6572 to \$7263 per acre. These lands were mostly utilized for the production of row crops, although

over saturation of the soil and surrounding lands did not allow for these lands to realize their full production potential. Now that the drainage system has been established, the land is able to utilize the system as an outlet to drainage tile systems and increased the production potential. As a result, the production value and/or market value has increased.

The viewers have determined based on these values, along with allowances for private improvement costs, that Nobles JD 5 provides for an increased market value/benefit to agricultural/cropland acres in Class 3 by the rate of \$1374 per acre.

#### Indirect Benefits – Class 4 (Mapped as Blue)

Class 4 lands are lands which have not had an increase in market value after the construction of the drainage system. However, they have been altered from their pre-settlement state in such a manner that they are now tilled and farmed. As a result, they burden the drainage system's capacity, thus increasing a sediment load and causing a need for increased maintenance. Taking into consideration the percentage of Class 4 acres in the watershed, regular ditch maintenance, and sediment loading, we determined the rate per acre that Nobles JD 5 provides as an outlet or contribution benefit to these lands. Though this description may not describe your lands exactly, your lands fell broadly under this category. The viewers have determined the Class 4 outlet benefit rate to be \$412 per acre.

Example of how benefits were calculated:

Production and/or Market Value Before Project:	\$1,000
Production and/or Market Value After Project:	\$3,000
Increase in Production and/or Market Value:	\$2,000
Less Private Improvement Costs:	\$1,000
Net Benefits:	\$1,000

#### Road Benefits

The viewers have determined outlet as well as reduced maintenance cost benefits for all State, County, and Township roads located within the boundary of Nobles JD 5 at a rate of \$2670 per acre.

#### Residential Land Benefits

Outlet benefits were applied to residential lands within the watershed of Nobles JD 5. The outlet benefit was calculated based on runoff burden to the drainage system and use of the drainage system as an outlet. The viewers have determined the outlet benefits for residential lands at the rate of \$165 per acre.

#### Woodlot Benefits

Benefits were applied to woodlot lands within the watershed of Nobles JD 5. These lands receive a benefit because the ditch conveys their water burden away from adjacent

landowners and adds to the need for system capacity and system maintenance. The viewers have determined the benefit for woodlot lands at the rate of \$149 per acre.

#### Benefit Variables

Based on criteria used to determine the likelihood of future improvements, each sub catchment within the watershed of the public drainage system has been given a grade of its as constructed condition relative to its ability to utilize the public drainage system efficiently. This grading system varies the benefit amount according to aforementioned ability within each sub catchment.

#### Non-benefiting Acres

Based on current land use and regulatory restrictions, permanent program restrictions (i.e. RIM or CREP) or other permanent restriction and restoration to pre-settlement landscape conditions or creation of wetland areas, we determined some areas to be non-benefited from the drainage system and restricted from taking future benefit from the drainage system. For example, we determined that lands restored to pre-settlement conditions and permanently restricted from future modification would not drain in any altered manner such that the drainage system would be burdened by the land other than such burden as nature would have provided. Further, for example, nonconverted wetlands that are so restricted from conversion by regulation that conversion is unlikely, were not determined to benefit from the system.

At the completion of our examination, we did sum up the total benefits for Nobles JD 5. We found that the total benefits are \$1,460,761.73. (See Exhibit A for tabular report of benefits.)

We recommend that the Nobles Drainage Authority hold a final hearing on the report and confirm the benefits and damages for Nobles JD 5.

Dated this 1<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2021

*[Signature Page to Follow]*

Respectfully submitted,

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Bryan Murphy

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Shantel Hecht

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