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"Bettering Iowa since 1970"

June 29, 2026

RE: Drainage District Open Ditch Repairs
DD7 Main Open Ditch, DD18 Main Open Ditch, DD21 Lat 1 Open Ditch, DD23 Main Open Ditch, DD61 Main Open Ditch, DD62 Main Open Ditch, JDD63 (Palo Alto & Pocahontas) Main Open Ditch, DD80 Lower & Upper Main Open Ditches, DD80 Branch F Open Ditch, DD84 Main Open Ditch, DD106 Main Open Ditch, DD132 Main Open Ditch, DD175 Main Open Ditch, DD180 Main Open Ditch, DD923 Main Open Ditch
Palo Alto County, Iowa
JWA PROJECT NO: E24118

Dear Board members:

A. Introduction:
In June of 2024 large storm events caused widespread flooding in Palo Alto County which resulted in damages to several drainage district open ditches. State and presidential disaster declarations were issued for Palo Alto County, making drainage district open ditch damages sustained by this event eligible for state and federal cost-share funding (75% federal, 10% state, remaining 15% by the drainage district). The Palo Alto County Board of Supervisors, acting as trustees for drainage districts in the county appointed our firm on August 6, 2024. We shortly thereafter completed drone flights of all drainage district open ditches in Palo Alto County in order to determine the extent of damages. We found damages sustained during the disaster period and also pre-existing damages (which are not eligible for cost-share funding).

In general, damages include bank sloughing/blowouts and tile outlet & surface drain pipes.

We have been coordinating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Iowa Department of Homeland Security regarding the damages sustained during the disaster period. The disaster is named DR-4796. As of the writing of this report we are nearly through the process and expect funds to be obligated very soon.

B. Pre-Disaster Damages
In our investigations we found several open ditches with damages in need of repair that were sustained prior to the 2024 disaster. Examples are DD61, DD80 Lower, and DD84. Repairs to these damages are not eligible for state or federal funding. However, it is important for several reasons to complete these repairs.

1. To maintain funding eligibility for damages sustained in future disaster events. FEMA requires that drainage districts maintain their open ditches. If they find that the drainage district has not kept up with maintenance they may deny funding in the future.
2. Trustees have a legal obligation to keep drainage district facilities in good repair.
3. If not repaired, many of the damages will continue to worsen, will need to be repaired in the future, and will be more costly at that time.

C. Permitting
We are in the process of applying for permits from both the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). We have received the necessary approvals from the USACE, and are in the process with the Iowa DNR.

D. Cost Estimates:
See table below showing cost estimates for repairs to Palo Alto County drainage district open ditches.

Drainage District	Open Ditch	Repair Construction Cost Estimate		Anticipated Funding	Est. Total Assessable Cost
		FEMA Eligible	Not FEMA Eligible		
DD7	Main	$289.76	$4,150.74	$288.52	$4,151.98
DD18	Main	$7,351.60	$5,250.23	$6,764.46	$5,837.37
DD21	Lat 1	$1,789.68	$2,895.75	$1,655.24	$3,030.19
DD23	Main	$201.08	$2,965.82	$200.22	$2,966.68
DD61	Main	$135,295.91	$165,685.90	$116,473.38	**$184,508.43**
DD62	Main	$5,343.52	$3,391.60	$4,916.76	$3,818.36
JDD63	Main	$47,401.72	$20,965.48	$42,870.42	$25,496.78
DD80	Lower Main	$0.00	$130,484.44	$0.00	**$130,484.44**
DD80	Upper Main	$5,668.69	$5,836.32	$5,242.84	$6,262.17
DD80	Branch F	$0.00	$10,770.87	$0.00	$10,770.87
DD84	Main	$18,647.65	$61,152.33	$17,026.37	**$62,773.61**
DD106	Main	$2,187.10	$2,928.19	$1,937.48	$3,177.81
DD132	Main	$1,283.60	$5,281.79	$1,278.11	$5,287.28
DD175	Main	$23,560.12	$33,320.98	$23,258.83	$33,622.27
DD180	Main	$12,364.36	$8,221.70	$11,337.77	$9,248.29
DD923	Main	$3,049.34	$16,651.95	$2,701.30	$16,999.99
	Totals	$264,434.13	$479,954.09	$235,951.70	$508,436.52

E. Next Steps:
Iowa Code requires that a hearing be held for drainage district repairs estimated to be in excess of $50,000. Repairs less than $50,000 can be approved by the trustees without a public hearing. At a minimum, a hearing is required for proposed repairs to the DD61 Main Open Ditch, DD80 Lower Main Open Ditch, and the DD84 Main Open Ditch. If we do not consider state and federal funding, JDD63 and DD175 are above the $50,000 threshold as well. As we are not 100% assured of federal and state funding, in our opinion hearings should be held for all five of these drainage districts.

Once the proper hearings and approvals have occurred, the next step will be to finalize plans and specifications and put the work out for bid. We plan on doing a single round of public bidding, but grouping the work geographically into sections that could potentially be awarded to multiple contractors.

Sincerely,

JACOBSON-WESTERGARD & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Collin Klingbeil

Collin J. Klingbeil, PE

Encl: Preliminary Plans