

Eric Volk, Executive Director

ND Rural Water Systems Association

In Support of House Bill 1353

Senate Energy & Natural Resources

March 18, 2021

Chairman Kreun and members of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, my name is Eric Volk. I am the executive director of the North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA). Our vision is to ensure all of North Dakota has access to affordable, ample, and quality water. NDRWSA is committed to completing and maintaining North Dakota's water infrastructure for economic growth and quality of life. Today, I am submitting testimony in support of House Bill 1353.

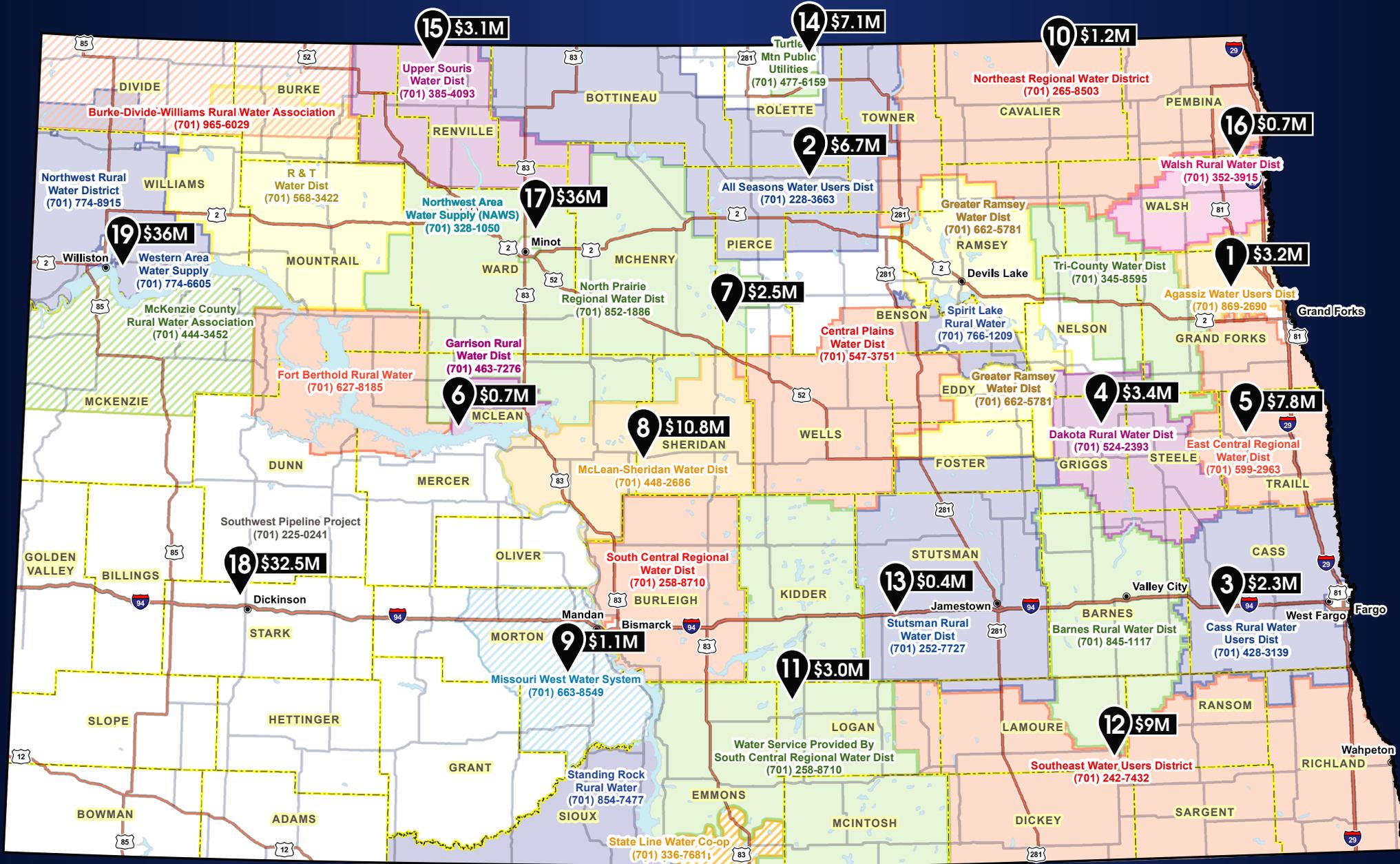
Rural/Regional Water Summary:

- Serve over 160,000 rural residents (59,000 connections).
- Provide water to 268 (75%) of North Dakota's 357 incorporated cities.
 - Furnish water to over 295,000 North Dakota residents.
 - Provide service through over 40,000 miles of pipe.
 - See the [21-23 Project Funding Map](#) for reference.

From a project sponsor perspective, we feel HB 1353 will increase the agency's overall effectiveness with the addition of a director position. To be clear, the bill does not eliminate the state engineer position. We have to recognize that water projects, small, medium, or larger, are just not technical in manner. These projects also include financial, managerial, and political (state/federal/international) components. The creation of the director position would allow for the state engineer position to focus their expertise on the technical issues (permitting, design, environmental concerns, life cycle analysis and a list that would go on and on). The director would focus on such things as state, tribal, federal & international issues, project funding & appropriations, human resources, the State Water Commission/Governor (meet every month),

other politics, strategic planning, and administration of the department. Again, this list could go on and on.

The size of the agency budget, the volume of project development each biennium (new & carryover), the 10-year funding need (see attached), and the overall complexity of water projects/regulations warrant an additional, high-level director. With that said, the NDRWSA supports HB 1353 which will help meet the critical water needs of North Dakota. This will help take water development in the state to another level. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the NDRWSA. Eric Volk, ericvolk@ndrw.org.



ESTIMATED 10-YEAR WATER PROJECT FUNDING NEEDS (2021-2031) & REVENUE COMPARISONS

PROJECT	STATE	LOCAL	FEDERAL	TOTAL 10-YEAR COST
Agency Operations	\$320,000,000	\$-	\$-	\$320,000,000
Water Supply	\$2,029,100,000	\$781,800,000	\$30,000,000	\$2,840,900,000
Southwest Pipeline Project	\$206,000,000	\$-	\$-	\$206,000,000
Red River Valley Water Supply Project	\$892,000,000	\$298,000,000	\$-	\$1,190,000,000
Western Area Water Supply	\$93,000,000	\$38,000,000	\$-	\$131,000,000
Northwest Area Water Supply*	\$69,200,000	\$9,300,000	\$82,000,000	\$160,500,000
Municipal Water	\$537,400,000	\$358,200,000	\$-	\$895,600,000
Rural Water	\$229,700,000	\$76,600,000	\$-	\$306,300,000
Flood Control	\$952,400,000	\$929,000,000	\$737,000,000	\$2,618,400,000
Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection	\$418,000,000	\$216,400,000	\$40,000,000	\$674,400,000
Valley City	\$66,400,000	\$16,900,000	\$-	\$83,300,000
Fargo-Moorhead Area Diversion Project	\$435,500,000	\$687,000,000	\$697,000,000	\$1,819,500,000
Lower Heart (Mandan) Flood Risk Reduction	\$13,000,000	\$8,700,000	\$-	\$21,700,000
Other Flood Control & Conveyance	\$98,300,000	\$121,800,000	\$8,000,000	\$228,100,000
General Water	\$50,000,000	\$35,000,000	\$74,000,000	\$159,000,000
TOTAL	\$3,428,500,000	\$1,865,900,000	\$901,000,000	\$6,195,400,000

At \$200 Million Per Biennium		At \$300 Million Per Biennium		At \$400 Million Per Biennium	
Resources Trust Fund	\$1,000,000,000	Resources Trust Fund	\$1,500,000,000	Resources Trust Fund	\$2,000,000,000
STATE SHORTFALL	\$2,428,500,000	STATE SHORTFALL	\$1,928,500,000	STATE SHORTFALL	\$1,428,500,000

Updated March 2021