



Eric Volk, Executive Director

ND Rural Water Systems Association

In Support of Senate Bill 2020

Senate Appropriations Committee-E&E Div.

January 19, 2023

Chairman Sorvaag and members of the Senate Appropriations - Education and Environment Division, 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 (see attached system map). Today I am submitting testimony in support of a Department of Water Resources (DWR) budget that allows for adequate funding to meet the critical water needs of Rural North Dakota.

In addition to the Southwest Pipeline Project, Northwest Area Water System, the Red River Valley Water Supply Project and the Western Area Water Supply Project, there are currently many other rural and regional projects in various stages of development across the state. Some examples of these projects are the completion of the large expansion of the McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District, the further development of the East Central Regional Water District, and the start of a large user expansion for All Seasons Water Users District, in addition to several others; many of them located in the energy impacted areas of our state. All of the systems are key players in the state's Agriculture Industry. The total cost of these rural and regional projects for the next biennium is \$125 million (**\$91 million state grant is needed**) (see attached funding map).

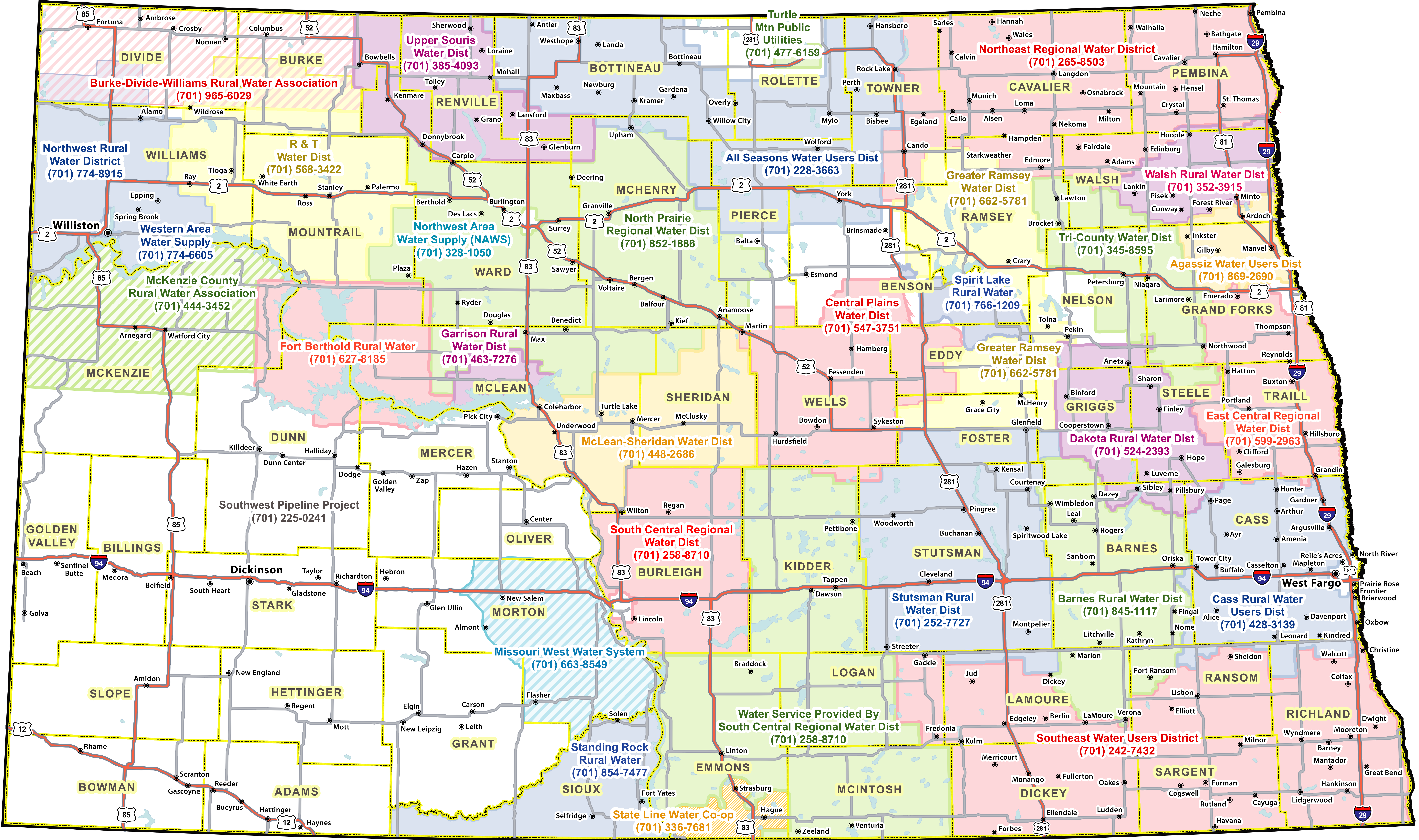
These projects are designed to meet similar needs. Those needs include water quality and quantity. On the water quality side, the projects will help communities comply with federal mandates required by the Safe Drinking Water Act, including arsenic levels, nitrates, disinfection by-products, and total coliform bacteria. Quality issues also include water extremely high in sodium, sulfates, iron, and manganese. On the quantity side, many families do not have a potable source of water and even in this day and age must haul water for their families and livestock.

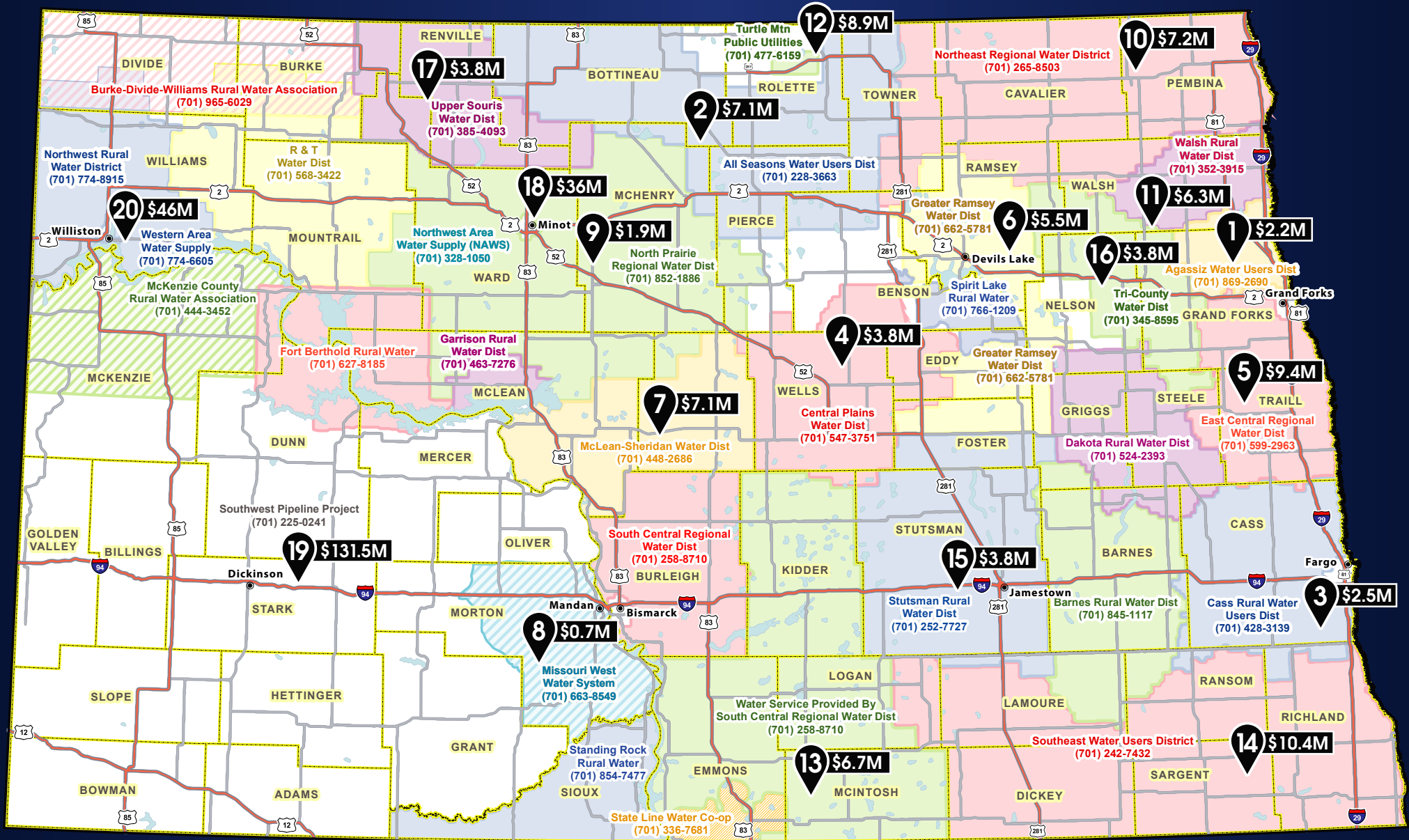
Meeting the demands of repairing & replacing aging infrastructure and complying with rules & regulations are taking its toll on many small and rural water systems. A study completed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency revealed the rates needed to cover future infrastructure repair and replacement for small systems will be four times as high as their larger counterparts. Another major challenge facing rural and small water systems is the ever increasing rural to urban migration, which continues to decrease the population base, and which adds to the cost to the individual consumer. This does offer a challenge in finding affordable ways to bring quality water to rural areas. Without significant state grant funding, the cost to the consumer is just too much for the average family to afford.

The money spent on water projects in the past has been an investment in the future of North Dakota – an investment in economic development and quality of life for our citizens (see attached 23-25 project funding). Every rural water system that has been built in our state is still operating. They are providing safe, clean water to their customers, reducing their debt, putting money in reserve, complying with every state and federal regulation, and doing so with a prudent rate structure; albeit higher than most municipalities charge (see attached rate schedule). Not only do rural & regional water systems serve over 170,000 rural residents, they also provide water to 266 (75%) of the state's 355 incorporated cities (see attached map of cities not served by RW).

With that said, the NDRWSA supports a Department of Water Resources budget that allows for adequate funding to meet the critical water needs of Rural North Dakota. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the members of the NDRWSA. Eric Volk, ericvolk@ndrw.org.

Incorporated Cities on a Rural or Regional System





- 1 **AGASSIZ WATER USERS DISTRICT – GILBY**
Reservoir 1 to 3 Transmission Expansion
- 2 **ALL SEASONS WATER USERS DISTRICT – BOTTINEAU**
System 1 Expansion - Phase 2
- 3 **CASS RURAL WATER DISTRICT – KINDRED**
County Road 17 Improvements, System Wide Improvements
- 4 **CENTRAL PLAINS WATER DISTRICT – FESSENDEN**
Connection to the city of Maddock
- 5 **EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT – THOMPSON**
Individual Service to Galesburg, Hillsboro WTP Expansion, Wellfield, Transmission & User Expansion
- 6 **GREATER RAMSEY WATER DISTRICT – DEVILS LAKE**
North System Capacity Improvements
- 7 **MCLEAN-SHERIDAN RURAL WATER DISTRICT – TURTLE LAKE**
Phase 2 WTP Construction, Phase 3 Expansion
- 8 **MISSOURI WEST WATER SYSTEM – MANDAN**
Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park Improvements
- 9 **NORTH PRAIRIE REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT – MINOT**
Reservoir 3 to Max Transmission Line
- 10 **NORTHEAST REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT – CAVALIER**
Bulk Cities to Individual Services, WTP and Wellfield Expansion
- 11 **NORTHEAST, WALSH, AGASSIZ, TRI-COUNTY, & EAST CENTRAL RWDS**
Northeast North Dakota Long-Term Groundwater Supply
- 12 **ROLETTE COUNTY - TURTLE MOUNTAIN – BELCOURT**
Highway 43 Reservoir & Pump Station Improvements, Three Mile Road Rural Water Main Replacement, Highway 3 and BIA 8 Water Main Replacement
- 13 **SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT – BISMARCK**
Service to the city of Ashley
- 14 **SOUTHEAST WATER USERS DISTRICT – MANTADOR**
West System Water Treatment Plant Improvements
- 15 **STUTSMAN RURAL WATER DISTRICT – JAMESTOWN**
Raw Water Facilities Improvement, Service to the city of Streeter
- 16 **TRI-COUNTY WATER DISTRICT – PETERSBURG**
Phase 6 Expansion, Phase 7 Expansion - McVillie Area
- 17 **UPPER SOURIS RURAL WATER DISTRICT – KENMARE**
Improvements & Expansion - Phase 2
- 18 **NORTHWEST AREA WATER SUPPLY PROJECT (NAWS) – MINOT**
2023-25 Treatment & Distribution Improvements
- 19 **SOUTHWEST PIPELINE PROJECT (SWPP) – DICKINSON**
2023-25 Treatment & Distribution Improvements
- 20 **WESTERN AREA WATER SUPPLY (WAWS) – WILLISTON**
2023-25 Treatment & Distribution Improvements

OUR VISION

All of North Dakota has access to
affordable, ample, and quality water.



| Local Sponsor | Project Name | SWC 23-25 Grant | Local Share | Total Project Cost |
|--|---|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Agassiz Water Users District | Reservoir 1 to 3 Transmission Expansion | \$2,150,550 | \$716,850 | \$2,867,400 |
| All Seasons Water Users District | System 1 Expansion - Phase 2 | \$7,125,000 | \$2,375,000 | \$9,500,000 |
| Cass Rural Water District | County Road 17 Improvements | \$891,675 | \$297,225 | \$1,188,900 |
| Cass Rural Water District | System Wide Improvements | \$1,575,000 | \$525,000 | \$2,100,000 |
| Central Plains Water District | Connection to the city of Maddock | \$3,750,000 | \$1,250,000 | \$5,000,000 |
| East Central Regional Water District | Individual Service to Galesburg | \$1,337,737 | \$445,913 | \$1,783,650 |
| East Central Regional Water District | Hillsboro WTP Expansion | \$2,124,513 | \$708,171 | \$2,832,684 |
| East Central Regional Water District | Wellfield, Transmission & User Expansion | \$5,954,906 | \$1,984,968 | \$7,939,874 |
| Greater Ramsey Water District | North System Capacity Improvements | \$5,521,522 | \$1,890,507 | \$7,412,029 |
| McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District | Phase 2 WTP Construction | \$4,800,000 | \$1,600,000 | \$6,400,000 |
| McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District | Phase 3 Expansion | \$2,300,000 | \$800,000 | \$3,100,000 |
| Missouri West Water System | Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park Improvements | \$744,000 | \$248,000 | \$992,000 |
| North Prairie Regional Water District | Reservoir 3 to Max Transmission Line | \$1,918,000 | \$639,000 | \$2,557,000 |
| Northeast Regional Water District | Bulk Cities to Individual Services | \$2,698,986 | \$899,662 | \$3,598,648 |
| Northeast Regional Water District | WTP and Wellfield Expansion | \$4,500,000 | \$1,500,000 | \$6,000,000 |
| Northeast, Walsh, Agassiz, Tri-County, & East Central RWDs | Northeast North Dakota Long-Term Groundwater Supply | \$6,255,647 | \$2,085,215 | \$8,340,862 |
| Rolette County - Turtle Mountain | Highway 43 Reservoir & Pump Station Improvements | \$3,000,000 | \$2,000,000 | \$5,000,000 |
| Rolette County - Turtle Mountain | Three Mile Road Rural Water Main Replacement | \$1,125,000 | \$875,000 | \$2,000,000 |
| Rolette County - Turtle Mountain | Highway 3 and BIA 8 Water Main Replacement | \$4,822,500 | \$3,607,500 | \$8,430,000 |
| South Central Regional Water District | Service to the city of Ashley | \$6,655,440 | \$2,218,480 | \$8,873,920 |
| Southeast Water Users District | West System Water Treatment Plant Improvements | \$10,350,000 | \$3,450,000 | \$13,800,000 |
| Stutsman Rural Water District | Raw Water Facilities Improvement | \$3,203,250 | \$1,067,750 | \$4,271,000 |
| Stutsman Rural Water District | Service to the city of Streeter | \$582,000 | \$194,000 | \$776,000 |
| Tri-County Water District | Phase 6 Expansion | \$1,350,000 | \$450,000 | \$1,800,000 |
| Tri-County Water District | Phase 7 Expansion - McVile Area | \$2,464,500 | \$821,500 | \$3,286,000 |
| Upper Souris Rural Water District | Improvements & Expansion - Phase 2 | \$3,750,000 | \$1,250,000 | \$5,000,000 |
| Totals: | | \$90,950,226 | \$33,899,741 | \$124,849,967 |
| Northwest Area Water Supply Project (NAWS) | 2023-25 Treatment & Distribution Improvements | \$36,000,000 | \$16,200,000 | \$77,200,000 |
| Southwest Pipeline Project (SWPP) | 2023-25 Treatment & Distribution Improvements | \$131,500,000 | \$0 | \$131,500,000 |
| Western Area Water Supply (WAWS) | 2023-25 Treatment & Distribution Improvements | \$46,000,000 | \$24,000,000 | \$70,000,000 |
| Totals: | | \$213,500,000 | \$40,200,000 | \$278,700,000 |

Rural Water System Rates - January 2023

| SYSTEM | # of Users | Minimum Cost | \$/1000 Gal. | \$/6000 Gal. | Miles of Pipe |
|---|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Agassiz Water Users District | 1,400 | \$27.50 | \$8.50 | \$78.50 | 400 |
| All Seasons Water Users District System 1-4 | 908 | \$40.00 | \$7.50 | \$85.00 | |
| All Seasons Water Users District System 4 Phase 1&2 | 124 | \$48.00 | \$7.50 | \$93.00 | |
| All Seasons Water Users District System 5 | 538 | \$48.00 | \$7.50 | \$93.00 | 1,700 |
| Barnes Rural Water District #1 | 1,400 | \$50.00 | \$5.50 | \$83.00 | |
| Barnes Rural Water District #2 | 274 | \$60.00 | \$6.00 | \$96.00 | |
| Barnes Rural Water District #3 | 350 | \$56.00 | \$5.50 | \$89.00 | 1,200 |
| Belcourt Public Utilities | 3,500 | \$20.50 | \$5.75 | \$55.00 | 245 |
| Cass Rural Water District | 8,017 | \$27.00 | \$5.40 | \$59.40 | |
| Cass Rural Water District - Leonard Project | 140 | \$40.00 | \$5.40 | \$72.40 | 2,400 |
| Central Plains Water District (Old) | 790 | \$30.00 | \$6.50 | \$69.00 | |
| Central Plains Water District (New) | 340 | \$56.00 | \$7.25 | \$99.50 | 1,266 |
| Dakota Rural Water District Expansion | 1,035 | \$53.00 | \$6.50 | \$92.00 | 1,200 |
| East Central Regional Water District | 2,310 | \$40.00 | \$7.00 | \$82.00 | |
| East Central Regional Water District | 2,469 | \$60.00 | \$7.00 | \$102.00 | 2,200 |
| Fort Berthold Rural Water | 2,500 | \$25.00 | \$5.00 | \$55.00 | 650 |
| Garrison Rural Water District | 822 | \$62.00 | \$8.00 | \$110.00 | 162 |
| Greater Ramsey Water District | 1,011 | \$35.00 | \$5.50 | \$68.00 | |
| Greater Ramsey Water District | 1,132 | \$40.00 | \$5.50 | \$73.00 | |
| Greater Ramsey Water District | 385 | \$45.00 | \$5.50 | \$78.00 | 1,650 |
| McKenzie County Water Resource District | 1,260 | \$45.90 | \$7.02 | \$88.02 | 1,530 |
| McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District #1 | 696 | \$62.00 | \$7.40 | \$106.40 | |
| McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District #2 | 174 | \$65.00 | \$6.54 | \$104.24 | |
| McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District #3 | 113 | \$76.00 | \$7.80 | \$122.80 | 700 |
| Missouri West Water System | 2,005 | \$40.00 | \$6.29 | \$77.74 | 650 |
| North Prairie Regional Water District (Existing) | | \$54.00 | \$9.83 | \$112.98 | |
| North Prairie Regional Water District (New) | 4,788 | \$65.00 | \$9.83 | \$123.98 | 2,500 |
| Northeast Regional Water District/Langdon Branch | 1,299 | \$63.00 | \$6.10 | \$99.60 | |
| Northeast Regional Water District/North Valley Branch | 1,372 | \$50.00 | \$6.10 | \$86.60 | 2,512 |
| Northwest Rural Water District | 2,600 | \$45.00 | \$8.80 | \$97.80 | 1,200 |
| R&T Water District | 825 | \$50.00 | \$7.70 | \$96.20 | 514 |
| South Central Regional Water District (Includes 500 gals) | 6,260 | \$34.00 | \$7.50 | \$75.25 | |
| South Central Regional Water District | 1,780 | \$40.00 | \$6.00 | \$76.00 | 5,000 |
| Southeast Water Users District Central | 623 | \$50.00 | \$5.75 | \$84.50 | 547 |
| Southeast Water Users District Central-New | 138 | \$55.00 | \$5.75 | \$89.50 | 147 |
| Southeast Water Users District East | 1,810 | \$31.00 | \$4.50 | \$58.00 | 1,372 |
| Southeast Water Users District East-New | 252 | \$55.00 | \$4.50 | \$82.00 | 201 |
| Southeast Water Users District West | 732 | \$50.00 | \$3.50 | \$71.00 | 743 |
| Southeast Water Users District West-New | 136 | \$55.00 | \$3.50 | \$76.00 | 166 |
| Southwest Water Authority | 7,465 | \$55.32 | \$6.47 | \$94.14 | 5,260 |
| State Line Water Cooperative (includes 1000 gals) | 452 | \$40.00 | \$6.25 | \$71.25 | 200 |
| Stutsman Rural Water District | 1,222 | \$43.00 | \$5.35 | \$75.10 | 1,100 |
| Stutsman Rural Water District Expansion Project | 1,347 | \$48.00 | \$5.35 | \$80.10 | 1,090 |
| Tri-County Water District | 1,200 | \$54.00 | \$6.00 | \$90.00 | 1,200 |
| Upper Souris Water District | 650 | \$35.00 | \$10.00 | \$95.00 | 600 |
| Walsh Rural Water District R1 | 1,232 | \$36.00 | \$7.75 | \$82.50 | |
| Walsh Rural Water District R3 | 155 | \$48.00 | \$7.75 | \$94.50 | |
| Walsh Rural Water District R4 | 142 | \$55.00 | \$7.75 | \$101.50 | 700 |
| | 70,173 | | | | 41,005 |
| Median | | \$48.00 | \$6.38 | \$85.80 | |
| Average | | \$47.15 | \$6.57 | \$86.36 | |
| Yearly Average | | | | \$1,036.38 | |

