

1/30/25
HB 1531

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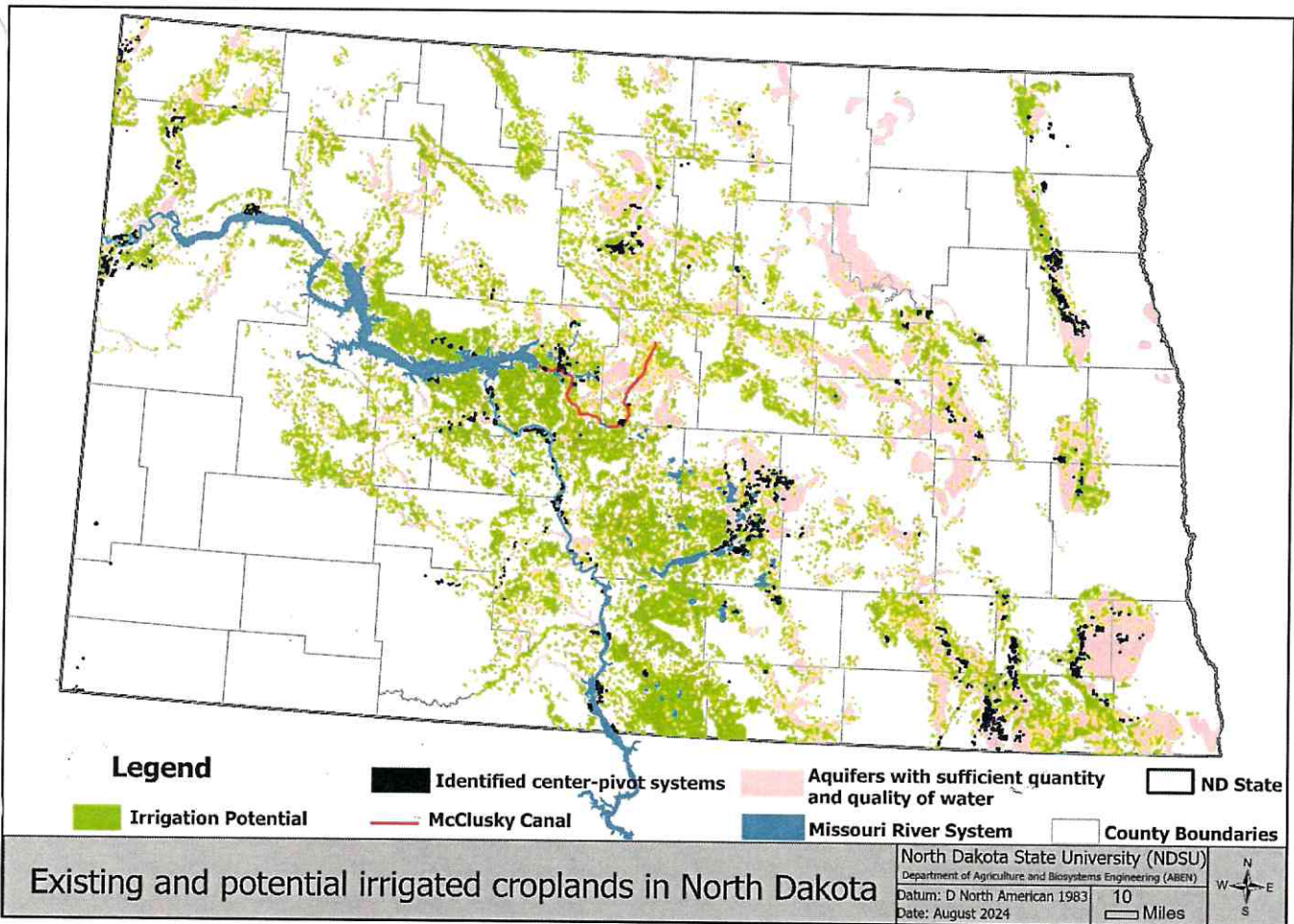


Irrigation Potential in North Dakota

The North Dakota Irrigation Association, in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District and North Dakota State University, undertook a study in 2024 to identify areas for potential irrigation development.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STUDY:

- According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service's Census of Agriculture, less than one percent of cropland in North Dakota was irrigated in 2022. It was the least among the ten states that are entirely or partially covered by the Missouri River Basin and below the US average irrigated cropland. To identify the locations and areas of the North Dakota croplands that have potential for future irrigation development, we conducted a statewide irrigation feasibility study.
- In summary, about 2.2 million acres of cropland in North Dakota have suitable soils and available water for irrigation. Among these croplands, approximately one-quarter (0.25) of a million acres have already been developed for irrigation, leaving approximately two million acres of cropland statewide for future irrigation development. About one million acres of such cropland are located around the Missouri River corridor and the other one million acres are spread across the state where good-quality groundwater is available.



Statewide, 37 counties have more than ten thousand acres of cropland potential for future irrigation development.

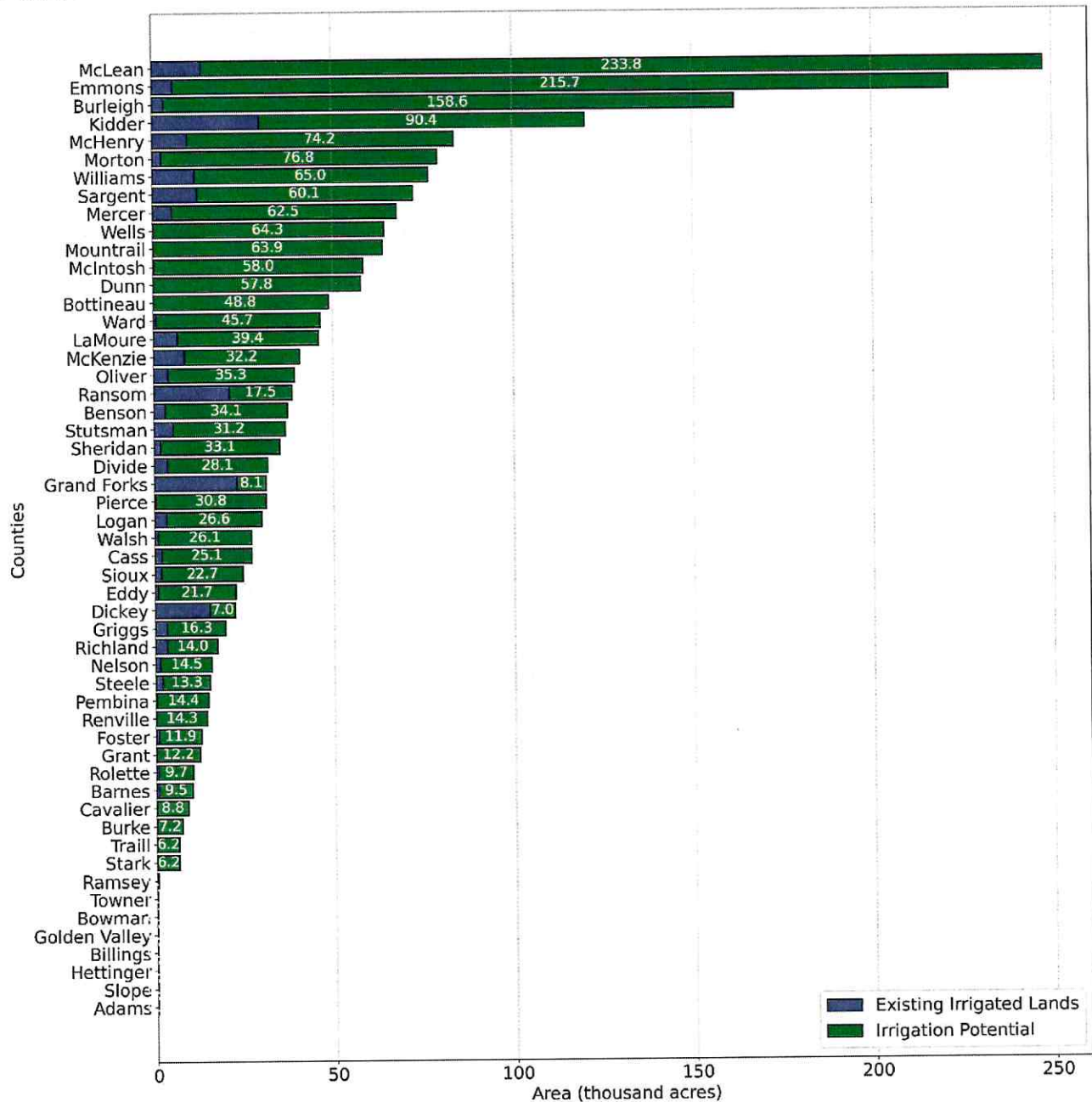


Figure ES.2. Areas of the existing irrigated and potentially irrigable croplands in North Dakota counties (The numbers in the green bars are thousands of acres of croplands with irrigation potential in each county).

NEXT STEPS

- NDSU is continuing to refine this data and create an online dashboard so individuals can more easily access data on a statewide level and in specific counties.

To view the full study
scan the QR code