



DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

2025-27 OPTIONAL REQUESTS

ONGOING REQUESTS

OTHER COST TO CONTINUE ADJUSTMENTS

- **State Water Commissioners (SWC) Budget** – As a result of the significant increase in funding available for water projects, the SWC has implemented pre-commission meetings the month prior to regular SWC meetings where funding is approved for projects. This process allows Commissioners to be briefed by Department of Water Resources (DWR) team members, as well as project sponsors, regarding the details about projects seeking cost-share assistance. By being more informed about projects, Commissioners can more effectively and efficiently allocate public tax dollars. Furthermore, the number, extent, and complexity of water development and management issues across the state necessitates that Commissioners remain engaged with the water community and local constituents. This includes attendance at local government meetings, conferences, or workshops to stay informed.

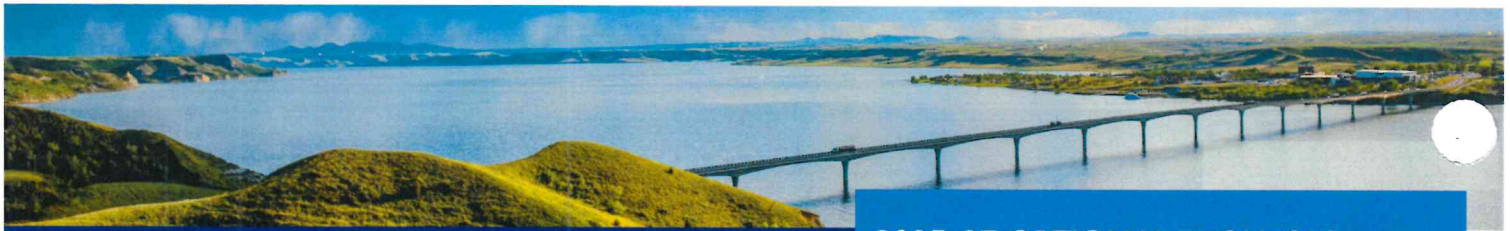
In addition to expanding responsibilities, an increase in funding for increased commissioner pay is necessary as they are paid the same rate as Legislators and funding had not been adjusted to reflect the change over several biennia. The DWR is also looking to establish a biennial budget for each SWC member to better facilitate their awareness of what financial resources are available to them to complete their duties. The request is for an increase of \$53,760 in temporary salaries and \$85,200 in operating expenses.

- **Overtime Pay** – As a result of the equity adjustments and legislative increases that have occurred during the 2023-25 biennium, it is necessary to increase funding for overtime to accommodate those adjustments. The request is for an increase of \$36,000 in overtime and \$24,000 in temporary salaries.

Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) On-call Pay – Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) On-call Pay – The DWR is responsible for the construction and operations of the critical water supply project. To maintain 24/7 operations NAWS team members are expected to be on call to cover evenings and weekends. To ensure team members are being properly compensated for their time, the DWR has implemented an on-call policy, which is like the North Dakota Department of Transportation's on-call policy. In implementing this policy, the DWR is requesting an increase of funding in the overtime line item to accommodate this operational change. These increased costs are paid through revenues generated by the users of the water system. The request is for an increase of overtime expense which is necessary to ensure 24/7 coverage of operational on-call duties.

BOARD OF WATER WELL CONTRACTORS

The Board of Water Well Contractors (BWWC) is responsible for registering, licensing, and overseeing well contractors across the state. Since its establishment in 1971, the BWWC has partnered with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to manage certain operational aspects, as the data collected from well contractors has been valuable to the State. Historically, a DWR team member has provided accounting and administrative services to the BWWC during their personal time. However, increasing demands have made it challenging to maintain a clear distinction between the team member's roles. To ensure transparency and simplify the working relationship between the BWWC and DWR, the DWR is requesting additional funding for salaries and wages, to be covered by revenues generated through a contract with the BWWC for accounting and administrative services. This will allow the team member currently serving the BWWC part-time to continue fulfilling these responsibilities without needing to balance duties between the DWR and BWWC. The request is for an increase of \$46,954 in salaries and wages.



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ONGOING REQUESTS CONTINUED

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

It has been challenging to recruit qualified and experienced individuals for Hydrologist, Hydrogeologist, and Engineering positions at the DWR. The technical demands of these positions, combined with the limited candidate pool with the necessary expertise, make it increasingly difficult to fill these essential roles. To address this issue, the DWR plans to establish an internship program to engage potential candidates before graduation and provide training opportunities and experience thereby bridging the gap between academic learning and the practical skills needed in these fields. Funding for the internship program, in addition to the FTE request for a Team Development Coordinator, will help the DWR build a robust program to attract and retain talented team members, and develop a pipeline of skilled professionals to address the State's future water resource management challenges. The request is for a \$100,000 increase in temporary salaries.

FEDERAL SPENDING AUTHORITY

FEMA's Cooperating Technical Partner grant program is anticipated to have increased grant funding levels than previously assumed for the 2025-27 biennium. This increase would enable the DWR to access this additional federal funding to advance projects that benefit all North Dakotans. These additional FEMA grant funds require no state matching funds. An example of such project would be the update of the North Dakota base level engineering data currently housed in the North Dakota Risk Assessment Map service. The request is for an increase in federal spending authority of \$2,051,788.

ONE-TIME REQUESTS - TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT

Emergency Water Pumps – Development Division

The DWR needs to replace four inefficient and inoperable water pumps purchased in the early 2000s. These pumps are essential for the Construction Section's operations, including dewatering during construction; dewatering Devils Lake Outlets at the end of the operation season; stormwater management; and are also used during flood-fighting efforts. Due to their age, the pumps have become unreliable, prone to breakdowns, and inefficient, leading to increased downtime and repair costs. Replacing them with modern 6-inch pumps, capable of handling 500-600 gallons per minute, will improve operational efficiency, reduce maintenance costs, and ensure reliable performance. This would allow for the agency to be responsive to critical water resource management needs. The cost of the proposed replacement pumps is \$120,000 each.

Excavator – Development Division

The current Volvo excavator, purchased in 2015, has incurred increased repair costs due to its age and service requirements. With regards to the service requirements, the local Volvo dealership is no longer available. Service must now be performed in either Fargo or Williston or service calls must come from those locations. This creates an additional expense of \$1,000 to \$1,500 for each service call, even for minor repairs. Moreover, parts are becoming harder to source and more expensive, further driving up maintenance costs. To ensure efficiency and reduce downtime, the DWR is requesting one-time funding to replace the excavator with a more cost-effective solution. The budgetary cost for the replacement of the excavator is \$400,000.

Data Logger – Water Appropriation Division

The geophysical logging system, purchased and installed in early 2008, is essential for collecting subsurface data critical to hydrogeologic investigations. It provides detailed information about the geological formations encountered in boreholes, aiding in the identification of the most productive zones within an aquifer for well placement. Additionally, this data supports the calibration of Airborne Electromagnetic Survey equipment. Given that the current system is over 15 years old and has been operating beyond the typical 7-to-15-year life cycle for geophysical and surveying equipment, we are requesting funding for its replacement. The original system was acquired for approximately \$30,000, and based on a June 10, 2024, quote, the cost for a replacement is \$60,000.