

**2025 HOUSE AGRICULTURE**

**HB 1531**

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Agriculture Committee**  
Room JW327C, State Capitol

HB 1531  
1/30/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

10:28 a.m. Chairman Beltz opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Beltz, Vice Chairman Hauck, Representatives Anderson, Dobervich, Henderson, Holle, Hoverson, Kiefert, Nehring, Rios, Schreiber-Beck, Tveit, Vollmer

Member Absent: Representative Olson

## **Discussion Topics:**

- \$75,000 request
- Statewide study
- Pick-Sloan Act
- Policy changes federally
- Irrigation development

10:29 a.m. Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck, District 25, Wahpeton, ND, introduced, testified and submitted testimony #32423, #32424 and #32796.

10:34 a.m. Dani Quissell, ND Irrigation Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32999.

10:38 a.m. Lesley Icenogle, ND Corn Growers Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32792.

10:39 a.m. Lance Gaebe, ND Farmers Union, testified in favor.

10:40 a.m. Zachery Cassidy, Dakota Resource Council, testified in opposition.

10:47 a.m. Andrew Nygren, Division Director, Water Appropriations, ND Department of Water Resources, testified as neutral favor and submitted testimony #32467

10:52 a.m. Steve Hansen, Chairman, ND Irrigation Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32736.

## **Additional Written Testimony:**

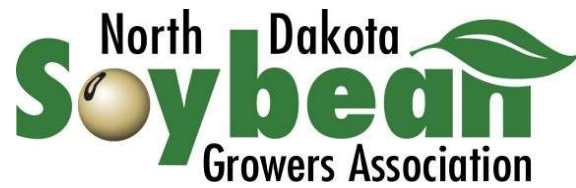
Duane DeKrey, General Manager, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District, submitted testimony in favor #32700.

Samuel A. Wagner, Ag and Food Field Organizer, Dakota Resource Council, submitted testimony in favor #32766.

Parrell Grossman, Legislative Director, ND Soybean Growers Association, submitted testimony in favor #32117.

11:15 a.m. Chairman Beltz closed the meeting.

*Diane Lillis, Committee Clerk*



HOUSE BILL NO. 1531  
AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE  
MIKE BELTZ, CHAIR  
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1531

Chairman Beltz and members of the House Agriculture Committee. I am Parrell Grossman, and it is my privilege to be the Legislative Director for the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association. I appear on behalf of the Association in support of House Bill 1531.

The Association advocates for more than 8,900 operations that raise soybeans in North Dakota. In 2024, North Dakota farmers planted 6.6 million acres of soybeans, producing over 245 million bushels of soybeans.

According to a 2022 North Dakota Agriculture Industry Economic Contribution Analysis conducted by NDSU, the economic contribution to North Dakota is \$30.8 billion, including \$18.8 billion from direct output and \$12 billion from secondary output.

The provisions and purpose of this legislation are clear and the need for this study and information should be equally clear.

Some quick research reveals that benefits of irrigation on farmland could include increased crop yields, improved crop quality, reduced reliance on rainfall, and expanded crop options. Less than one percent of soybean acreage is currently irrigated. Some years, the right moisture during pod fill in August would significantly improve yield.

By providing a consistent and controlled water supply, irrigation can significantly boost crop production, resulting in higher yields and potentially increased revenue for farmers. Consistent moisture levels can enhance overall quality in many crops, supporting higher prices in the market. Irrigation can minimize the impact of

unpredictable or unreliable rainfall patterns, ensuring a more stable and reliable crop production. Irrigation ultimately could allow farmers to cultivate a broader variety of crops, which could increase crop diversity and profitability.

This legislation would fund a study that could confirm or quantify these irrigation benefits in terms of potential economic benefits of increased irrigation and water conveyance in rural North Dakota. In addition, the study would provide the economic distribution between irrigated and non-irrigated land, which will be helpful information.

Connecting the likely or commonly understood benefits of irrigation to study results or conclusions is analogous to an academic instructor not accepting a student's correct answer without showing their work. If the study confirms or reveals the economic contributions, then the state can decide whether or how to implement expanded irrigation in North Dakota. That ultimately could benefit our farmers and crop production. This in turn would increase the agricultural economic contribution in this state.

For the reasons stated, the Association respectfully asks the House Agriculture Committee to give House Bill 1531 a "Do Pass" recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration.

House Bill No. 1531

House Agriculture Committee Hearing

January 30, 2025

10:30AM

Chairman Beltz

The reason for House Bill No. 1531:

Data is necessary to continue advocating for irrigation and water conveyance for production agriculture in North Dakota. As an example: a study was completed in Nebraska targeting the lack of irrigation; the state was leaving \$11Billion on the table.

The Bill: (amended version 25.1245.01001)

- Directs the Commissioner of Agriculture to contract with a consultant to study the potential benefits of:
  - Increased irrigation
  - Improved water conveyance
  - Ramification of failing to construct and implement irrigation infrastructure as originally designed under the Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1944
  - Economic contribution between irrigated land and nonirrigated land
  - The economic contribution between using subsurface water management systems and land not using subsurface water management systems
  - And any other additional factors that would improve and expand irrigation

Funding Requested:

\$75,000

I am requesting your favorable consideration of House Bill No. 1531.

25.1245.01001  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council  
staff for Representative Schreiber-Beck  
January 23, 2025

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO**

### **HOUSE BILL NO. 1531**

Introduced by

Representatives Schreiber-Beck, Beltz, Fisher, Hagert, Kiefert, Monson

Senators Luick, Myrdal, Wanzek, Weber

1 A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an  
2 irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION - GENERAL FUND - AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER -**  
5 **IRRIGATION EXPANSION STUDY - ONE-TIME FUNDING - REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE**  
6 **MANAGEMENT.**

7 1. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not  
8 otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$75,000, or so much of the sum as may be  
9 necessary, to the agriculture commissioner for the purpose of contracting with a  
10 consultant to study the potential benefits of expanding irrigation throughout the state,  
11 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The funding is  
12 considered a one-time funding item.

13 2. The consultant shall study:

14 a. The potential economic benefits of increased irrigation and improved water  
15 conveyance in rural communities of the state;

16 b. The ramifications of failing to construct and implement irrigation infrastructure as  
17 originally designed under the Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1944 [Pub. L.  
18 78-534; 58 Stat. 887];

19 c. The economic contribution between irrigated land and nonirrigated land;

- 1           d.    The economic contribution between using subsurface water management
- 2                systems and land not using subsurface water management systems; and
- 3           e.    Any other factors that would improve and expand irrigation in the state along with
- 4                any perceived benefits from expanded irrigation.
- 5           3.    The agriculture commissioner is exempt from the state purchasing practices under
- 6                chapter 54-44.4 when contracting for services to accomplish the study.
- 7           4.   Before July 1, 2026, the agriculture commissioner shall present the findings and
- 8                recommendations of the study, and any proposed legislation necessary to implement
- 9                the recommendations, to the legislative management.



TESTIMONY OF

**Andrew Nygren, Division Director, Water Appropriation Division**

Chairman Beltz, and members of the House Agriculture Committee, I am Andrew Nygren, the Water Appropriation Division Director of the Department of Water Resources. I'm here today to provide additional information for House Bill 1531.

The bill's study aims in part to evaluate the economic benefits of irrigation, subsurface water management, and ramifications from changes to the original Pick-Sloan plan. The Department has several resources potentially relevant to the proposed study, which we wanted to provide to the Committee:

**Irrigation**

- An Inventory of Potential Irrigation Development in Central North Dakota printed in June 1996
- Assessment of Potentially Irrigable Land in Eastern McLean County printed in January 1999
- Assessment of Potentially Irrigable Land in the Area of the Warwick Aquifer in Benson, Eddy, and Nelson Counties, ND printed in July 1999

**Subsurface Drainage**

- Potential Effects of Subsurface Drainage on Water Appropriation and the Beneficial Use of Water in North Dakota, which completed under Senate Bill 2020 of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and printed in 2008
- Potential Effects of Subsurface Drains on the Beneficial Use of Water in North Dakota. Addendum: Special Cases printed in 2018

**The Pick-Sloan Plan**

- A literature review by NDSU Professor Hearne with the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics, and presented to the Water Topics Overview Committee at their December 2021 meeting.

### **Managed Aquifer Recharge**

- Assessment of Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Potential for Glacial Drift Aquifers in North Dakota printed in early 2024. This publication also references Department of Water Resources publications on the matter of Managed Aquifer Recharge.

Lastly, the Department has collaborated with NDSU, the ND Irrigation Association, and Garrison Conservancy District to update irrigated acreage potential in North Dakota, with publication expected soon.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

**Testimony of Duane DeKrey, Garrison Diversion General Manager  
HB 1531  
House Agriculture Committee  
Bismarck, North Dakota – January 30, 2025**

Chairman Beltz and members of the House Agriculture Committee; I am Duane DeKrey, General Manager of the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Garrison Diversion), testifying in support of HB 1531.

Garrison Diversion supports the proposed irrigation expansion study that could play an important role in realizing the full irrigation potential in North Dakota. Our roots are in agriculture and, though Garrison Diversion is now a multipurpose project, irrigation remains a top priority. Through several initiatives, Garrison Diversion works to develop and enhance irrigation in North Dakota. The benefits seen across the state as a result of crop irrigation are numerous.

Irrigation provides the opportunity for producers to grow high-value crops that meet high-quality standards and market requirements. Without irrigation, meeting market standards would not be feasible due to the need for consistent high levels of moisture on high-value crops.

A carefully managed water supply offers opportunities for farm families and rural communities to build better lives for themselves, as the availability of reliable, high quality and affordable water can help families stay on the farm and not only survive, but prosper.

Irrigation investment will generate one-time and long-term economic benefits for the state, bringing opportunity to build a stronger North Dakota.

Thank you for your consideration.



# North Dakota Irrigation Association

P.O. Box 2254  
Bismarek, ND 58502  
701-223-4615  
701-223-4645 (fax)

Dedicated to strengthening and expanding irrigation to build and diversify our economy

## **House Agriculture Committee Hearing for HB 1531 January 30, 2025**

### **Testimony of Steve Hansen, Chairman, ND Irrigation Association**

Chairman Beltz and Members of the Committee, my name is Steve Hansen, and I serve as Chairman of the North Dakota Irrigation Association (NDIA) in addition to being a farmer and irrigator from Ludden, ND, in Dickey County. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill 1531.

HB 1531 would provide an appropriation to the Ag Commissioner to support an economic study looking at the impact that irrigation and drainage practices can have on agricultural productivity and in turn on state and local economies. As an irrigator who also uses tile drainage, I can tell you that implementing these practices on my farm has had a significant economic impact when it comes to productivity. However, as Chairman of the Irrigation Association, I can't tell you what the impact of those practices are on my local area or on the state as a whole. Having that information would be helpful as we look at future development of these practices and state investment in that development.

One of the questions specifically called out in this bill that I am especially excited to get an answer on is this:

What is the lost economic activity incurred by the state of North Dakota due to the federal government not building out irrigation infrastructure as promised through the Pick Sloan plan?

When the Garrison and Oahe dams were built by the federal government, 584,000 acres in North Dakota were inundated. In exchange for the loss of that land, the federal government promised to develop more than 1 million acres of irrigation throughout the state. Due to changes in federal government policy shortly after the dams were completed, that development was in large part unrealized. Over the last few decades, the state and the federal government have negotiated alternative compensation for the state. Having a number what the state has lost because of the loss of land and lack of irrigation development would be very beneficial as we advocate for federal funding in DC.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, Mr. Chairman. I'd be happy to stand for any questions you may have.

Testimony HB1531

Sam Wagner  
 Ag and Food Field Organizer  
 Dakota Resource Council  
 1902 E Divide Ave  
 Bismarck ND 58501  
 Testimony in Support for 1531

To the House Agriculture Committee,

Mr Chairman,

Increased irrigation in ND has been discussed for decades. This bill has, as one of its focuses in section b.)the failure to implement Garrison Diversion, under the Pick Sloan Act (1944). or under the Dakota Water Resources Act in the early 2000's and its 2024 amendments under Sen. Hoeven. Expanding irrigation has always run into the same problem to make it feasible, federal reimbursement. While MR&I water has received a substantial endowment from the Federal Government, below:

The beginning of the Municipal Rural and Industrial Water Supply Program (MR&I Program) In the 1986 Garrison Diversion Unit Reformulation Act, the federal government authorized a change in the Garrison Diversion Unit project that gave responsibility for delivering water to North Dakota cities, towns, rural communities and growing industrial users. The 1986 Reformulation Act authorized \$200 million for the MR&I Program. An additional \$200 million was authorized in the Dakota Water Resources Act of 2000 to help meet statewide water needs.

The Oaks test Area is the only zone authorized for reimbursement in "Garrison diversion" in all it's formulations

Section d must also be addressed, as it may assume that there is an unlimited supply of water in subglacial aquifers, that are currently used for MR&I water for so many cities and towns, rural water systems, and individual wells utilized for human and livestock use. Irrigation is an exponential user of water compared to MR&I.

Levels in aquifers are monitored for depletion, and aquifers cannot be "mined" Pre-existing water rights must be adhered to, as there are currently no other water delivery systems to supply MR&I water, should irrigation begin to deplete ND's Subglacial aquifers. Alternative water supply schemes would require users, cities, towns, rural water systems and individual wells to pay expensive federal reimbursement for Missouri water. If that is what the future holds, such as supplying the RM&I through, for example, the Red River Valley water supply scheme, then we cannot just then hand over increased volume of water in permits through the state, de facto giving the subglacial aquifer water to irrigators. This would result in giving irrigators free, high quality water that is now under the pre-existing water rights for existing MR&I Users, cities towns

and individuals, and making the MR&I users,(cities towns and individuals) have to pay for federal reimbursed water.

We understand that this is a study, but it would seem that the people that would be investigating this either don't remember the past well enough to know that the conclusion is you can't do this responsibly and waste time in resources once again stating that this is not possible to do responsibly. Or the other end result could be that we make short sighted decisions that could put our water resources in jeopardy.

In short this leads us to believe that we should keep the status quo.

Thank you for your Consideration and we urge a DO NOT PASS



**In Favor of HB 1531**  
**House Agriculture**  
**January 30, 2025**

Chairman Beltz and Committee members:

For the record, my name is Lesley Icenogle. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association (NDCGA) in favor of House Bill 1531.

NDCGA supports research to inform policymaking on irrigation and water conveyance in North Dakota. The study proposed in HB 1531 will quantify the economic impact of increased irrigation and improved drainage in rural communities. This data will benefit producers and landowners along with legislators and state agencies.

NDCGA urges a Do Pass recommendation on HB 1513. Thank you for your consideration.

## HB 1531 – information regarding Sloan-Pick Act

The Sloan plan pushed for reservoir storage in upper tributaries of the Missouri River located in smaller dams, which would provide irrigation for 4.8 million acres in areas where the land suffered from drought. The Sloan plan allotted 1.3 million acres of irrigated land in North Dakota.

North Dakota water folks are well aware of the Pick Sloan Act – the basis of the Flood Control Act of 1944 that applies directly to our present-day use and management of the Missouri River System in North Dakota. A full understanding of the history of Pick Sloan requires a general sense of the history of the Missouri River Basin. The Missouri River, at nearly 2,540 miles in length, is the longest river in the United States. It is a recipient of water from the largest basin in the country (528,000 square miles), which is comparable to one-sixth of the size of the 48 lower states. But even though it is the longest river and in the largest basin, it is one of the lowest-yielding rivers in terms of water runoff and conveyance in the country. This is so because it exists, to a large part, in the great American West, which is notable for generally low rainfall and ongoing and recurring periods of drought. Combining low-water yields and large land areas has led to conflicts, especially between the two major federal agencies with authority to manage such large rivers and watersheds and who, in a general sense, have conflicting water management policies and principals. The Army Corps of Engineers has a water policy based on water abundance, so its historical emphasis is how to manage and use such abundance. Its policies, therefore, revolve to a large part around flood control and navigation. Conversely, the US Bureau of Reclamation has a water policy based on water scarcity. From that perspective, the Bureau of Reclamation focuses on using all available water for consumptive purposes, such as irrigation and water supplies, and for power generation (particularly as power is needed to support irrigation). Early congressional actions set the stage for the federal management of the river system. In 1824, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized navigation as a federal commerce issue; thereby authorizing and directing the Corps of Engineers to pursue programs to assist and promote river navigation

However, Congress also enacted the Reclamation Act of 1902, which provided a federal focus and direction to create and support irrigation projects, particularly in the Midwest and West. The Buford Trenton Irrigation Project in northwest North Dakota was a child of that legislation. The competing interests of the two federal agencies (the Corps and the Bureau) paralleled the competing interests of the basin states of the Missouri River. Upstream states Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado favored the programs pursued by the Bureau. They wanted secure water supply sources, irrigation development and power generation. Downstream basin states Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri had a focus on flood control and navigation support. The competition of these interests led to conflicting programs and plans of management of the river system. In the early parts of the 20th century, devastating floods which mostly affected the highly populated areas of the downstream states led Congress to request an overall river management plan that would satisfy all the needs of the system, both upstream and downstream, and both Corps focused and Bureau focused. Entering the picture at this point were Gen. Lewis Pick of the Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau District Engineer Glenn Sloan. Both gentlemen had strong feelings and very defined ideas on how to achieve river management. The Corps submitted the Pick Plan in 1939, which envisioned a focus on new levees to support both flood control and navigation in the southern basin. The Pick Plan called for 1,500 miles of such levees, with 18 tributary dams and five mainstem dams. The cost of the Pick Plan, in 1944 dollars, was expected to be near \$490 million. The Sloan Plan developed in 1944 had a different vision; calling for dams and river management to support 5.3 million acres of irrigation, with 85 tributary dams and only three mainstem dams. Embedded in the Sloan Plan were 17 power plants to support the anticipated irrigation. The cost of the Sloan Plan, in 1944 dollars, was expected to be near \$1.26 billion. With a nudge from Congress, and to circumvent the government creating yet another federal agency based on the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Corps and Bureau agreed on a joint plan, soon to be named the Pick Sloan Plan. The Pick Sloan Plan provided authorization for approximately 100 dams (both tributary and mainstem) and for irrigation of 1.7 million acres (mostly promised to the upstream states of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota), and for extensive channelization of the river for navigation support downstream of Sioux City, Iowa. The full list of benefits included what is now commonly known and referred to as the Authorized Purposes that include Water Supply, Irrigation, Power Generation, Flood Control, Recreation, Navigation, and Fish and Wildlife support. The cost of the combined



programs was estimated in 1944 at \$1.2 billion. Also important in the combined plan was an agreement between the Corps and the Bureau on the issue of river and dam management and operations. The Corps obtained the operational authority of the dams and the Bureau secured the ability to issue irrigation and water use permits and contracts and control power allocations from the dams. However, the creation of the Western Area Power Authority in 1977, under the Department of Energy, diluted the Bureau control of power. Today, nearly 75 years after the Pick Sloan Act was adopted, North Dakotans are still either reaping the benefits from the decisions made in 1944 or feeling the consequences. Please watch for future articles from the Missouri River Joint Board that will further discuss those benefits and consequences.

1/30/25

Dani Quissell

HB 1531

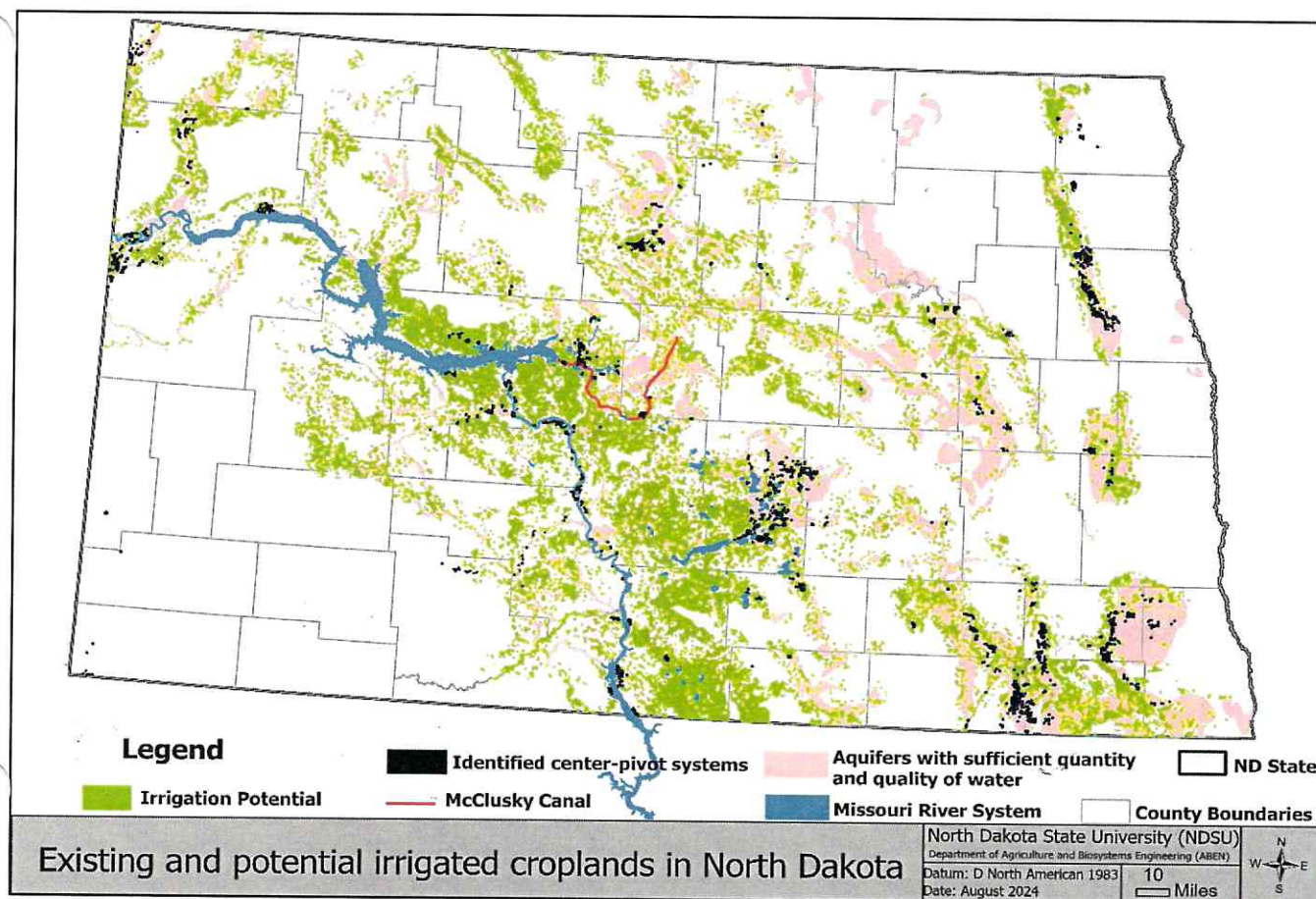
# Irrigation Potential in North Dakota



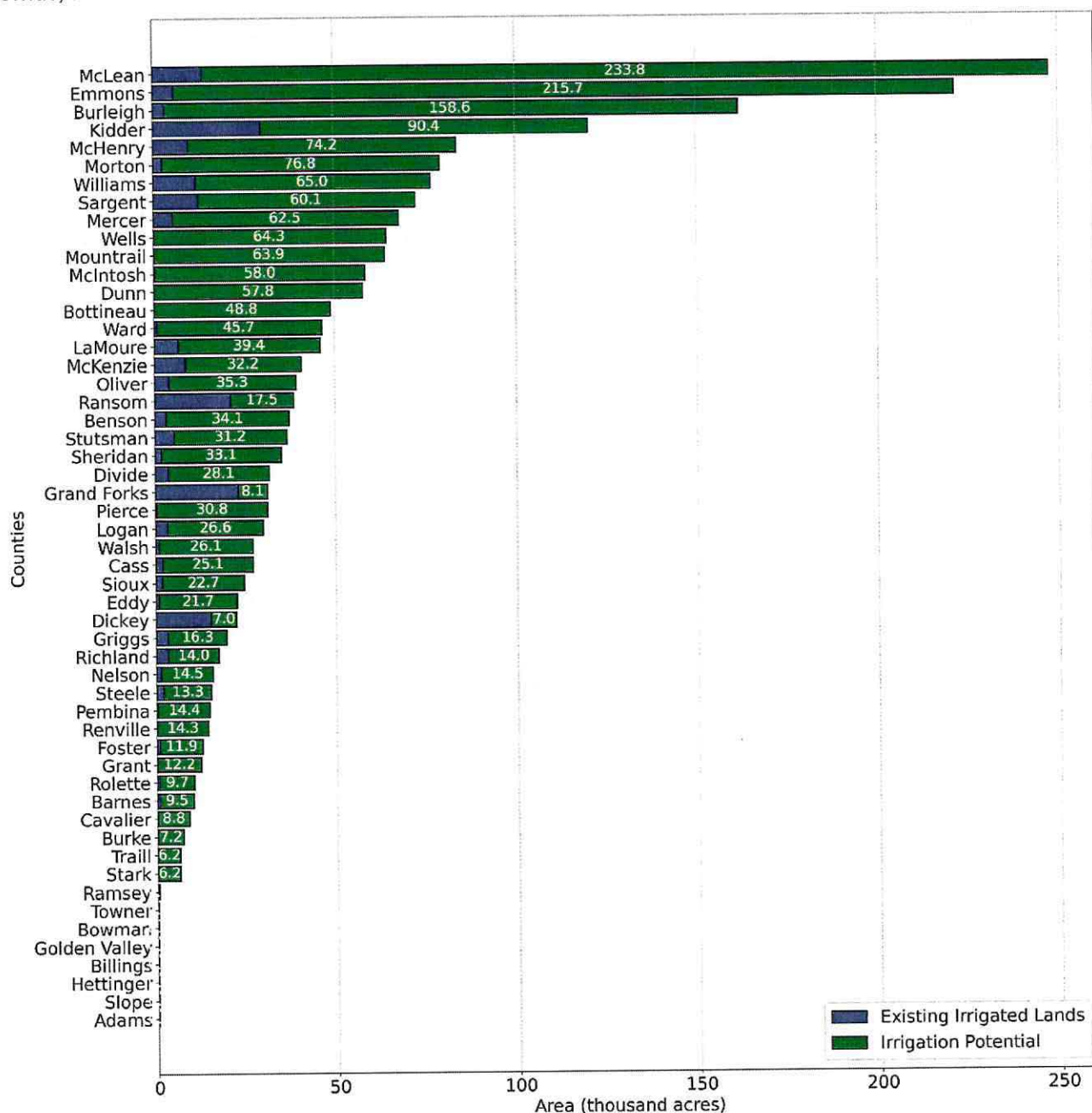
The North Dakota Irrigation Association, in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District and North Dakota State University, undertook a study in 2024 to identify areas for potential irrigation development.

## 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



# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Agriculture Committee Room JW327C, State Capitol

HB 1531  
2/20/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

9:34 a.m. Chairman Beltz opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Beltz, Vice Chairman Hauck, Representatives Anderson, Dobervich, Henderson, Holle, Hoverson, Kiefert, Nehring, Olson, Rios, Schreiber-Beck, Tveit, Vollmer

### Discussion Topics:

- Northwest irrigation

9:34 a.m. Representative Schreiber-Beck moved Do Pass.

9:34 a.m. Representative Dobervich seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Dori Hauck	Y
Representative Karen A. Anderson	AB
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Donna Henderson	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	Y
Representative Jeff Hoverson	Y
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Dennis Nehring	Y
Representative SuAnn Olson	Y
Representative Nico Rios	Y
Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck	Y
Representative Bill Tveit	Y
Representative Daniel R. Vollmer	Y

Motion passed 13-0-1.

Representative Hauck moved to Place on Consent Calendar.

Representative Holle seconded the motion.

Voice vote.

Motion failed.

House Agriculture Committee

HB 1531

02/20//25

Page 2

9:36 a.m. Representative Tveit will carry the bill.

9:36 a.m. Chairman Beltz closed the meeting.

*Diane Lillis, Committee Clerk*



**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1531 ([25.1245.01000](#))**

**Agriculture Committee (Rep. Beltz, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1531 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2025 SENATE AGRICULTURE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**HB 1531**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1531  
3/20/2025

A bill for an act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

3:15 p.m. Chairman Luick opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Luick, Vice-Chair Myrdal, Senator Marcellais, Senator Weston, Senator Weber, Senator Lemm

### Discussion Topics:

- Potential benefits
- Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1994
- Economic contribution study
- One time appropriation
- Future development and county breakdown
- Subsurface drainage
- Managed Aquifer Recharge
- Benefits of pastureland irrigation

3:14 p.m. Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck, District 25, testified in favor, introduced the bill, and submitted testimony #41961, #41962, and #41963.

3:17 p.m. Dani Quissell, Executive Director, ND Irrigation Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #43112 and #43113.

3:21 p.m. Lance Gaebe, ND Farmers Union, testified in favor.

3:22p.m. Rachel Gross, ND Farm Bureau, testified in favor.

3:24 p.m. Andrew Nygren, Division Director, Water Appropriations, Department of Water Resources, testified in neutral and submitted testimony #43052.

3:28 p.m. Senator Weber moved to adopt Amendment LC# 25.1245.01001.

3:28 p.m. Senator Myrdal seconded the motion.

3:29 p.m. Voice Vote on Amendment - Motion passed.

3:29 p.m. Senator Weber moved a Do Pass As Amended.

3:29 p.m. Senator Myrdal seconded the motion.



Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Richard Marcellais	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Senator Weber will carry the bill.

**Additional written testimony:**

Lesley Icenogle, ND Corn Growers Association, submitted testimony #43170 in favor.

3:30 p.m. Chairman Luick closed the hearing.

*Audrey Oswald, Committee Clerk*

Reconsidered HB 1531 on 3/20/25 at 3:35 p.m.

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO**

VC 3/20/25  
1 of 2

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1531**

Introduced by

Representatives Schreiber-Beck, Beltz, Fisher, Hagert, Kiefert, Monson

Senators Luick, Myrdal, Wanzek, Weber

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25.1245.01001  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council  
staff for Representative Schreiber-Beck  
January 23, 2025

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO**

### **HOUSE BILL NO. 1531**

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Senators Luick, Myrdal, Wanzek, Weber

1 A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an  
2 irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION - GENERAL FUND - AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER -**  
5 **IRRIGATION EXPANSION STUDY - ONE-TIME FUNDING - REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE**  
6 **MANAGEMENT.**

7 1. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not  
8 otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$75,000, or so much of the sum as may be  
9 necessary, to the agriculture commissioner for the purpose of contracting with a  
10 consultant to study the potential benefits of expanding irrigation throughout the state,  
11 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The funding is  
12 considered a one-time funding item.

13 2. The consultant shall study:

14 a. The potential economic benefits of increased irrigation and improved water  
15 conveyance in rural communities of the state;

16 b. The ramifications of failing to construct and implement irrigation infrastructure as  
17 originally designed under the Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1944 [Pub. L.  
18 78-534; 58 Stat. 887];

19 c. The economic contribution between irrigated land and nonirrigated land;

- 1           d.   The economic contribution between using subsurface water management
- 2           systems and land not using subsurface water management systems; and
- 3           e.   Any other factors that would improve and expand irrigation in the state along with
- 4           any perceived benefits from expanded irrigation.
- 5           3.   The agriculture commissioner is exempt from the state purchasing practices under
- 6           chapter 54-44.4 when contracting for services to accomplish the study.
- 7           4. Before July 1, 2026, the agriculture commissioner shall present the findings and
- 8           recommendations of the study, and any proposed legislation necessary to implement
- 9           the recommendations, to the legislative management.

House Bill No. 1531

Introduction and Support Testimony

Senate Agriculture & Veterans Affairs Committee Hearing

March 20, 2025, 3:15PM

Chair: Senator Luick

The reason for House Bill No. 1531:

Data is necessary to continue advocating for irrigation and water conveyance for production agriculture in North Dakota. As an example: a study was completed in Nebraska targeting the lack of irrigation; the state was leaving \$11Billion on the table.

The Bill: (amended version 25.1245.01001)

- Directs the Commissioner of Agriculture to contract with a consultant to study the potential benefits of:
  - Increased irrigation
  - Improved water conveyance
  - Ramification of failing to construct and implement irrigation infrastructure as originally designed under the Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1944
  - Economic contribution between irrigated land and nonirrigated land
  - The economic contribution between using subsurface water management systems and not using subsurface water management systems
  - And any other additional factors that would improve and expand irrigation

Funding Requested:

One-time funding for up to \$75,000 for the Commissioner of Agriculture for the purpose of contracting with a consultant for the study.

Mr. Chair and Committee members, I am requesting your favorable consideration of House Bill No. 1531 with the proposed amendment (version 25.1245.01001).

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Schreiber-Beck, District 25 Representative

## HB 1531 – information regarding Sloan-Pick Act

The Sloan plan pushed for reservoir storage in upper tributaries of the Missouri River located in smaller dams, which would provide irrigation for 4.8 million acres in areas where the land suffered from drought. The Sloan plan allotted 1.3 million acres of irrigated land in North Dakota.

North Dakota water folks are well aware of the Pick Sloan Act – the basis of the Flood Control Act of 1944 that applies directly to our present-day use and management of the Missouri River System in North Dakota. A full understanding of the history of Pick Sloan requires a general sense of the history of the Missouri River Basin. The Missouri River, at nearly 2,540 miles in length, is the longest river in the United States. It is a recipient of water from the largest basin in the country (528,000 square miles), which is comparable to one-sixth of the size of the 48 lower states. But even though it is the longest river and in the largest basin, it is one of the lowest-yielding rivers in terms of water runoff and conveyance in the country. This is so because it exists, to a large part, in the great American West, which is notable for generally low rainfall and ongoing and recurring periods of drought. Combining low-water yields and large land areas has led to conflicts, especially between the two major federal agencies with authority to manage such large rivers and watersheds and who, in a general sense, have conflicting water management policies and principals. The Army Corps of Engineers has a water policy based on water abundance, so its historical emphasis is how to manage and use such abundance. Its policies, therefore, revolve to a large part around flood control and navigation. Conversely, the US Bureau of Reclamation has a water policy based on water scarcity. From that perspective, the Bureau of Reclamation focuses on using all available water for consumptive purposes, such as irrigation and water supplies, and for power generation (particularly as power is needed to support irrigation). Early congressional actions set the stage for the federal management of the river system. In 1824, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized navigation as a federal commerce issue; thereby authorizing and directing the Corps of Engineers to pursue programs to assist and promote river navigation

However, Congress also enacted the Reclamation Act of 1902, which provided a federal focus and direction to create and support irrigation projects, particularly in the Midwest and West. The Buford Trenton Irrigation Project in northwest North Dakota was a child of that legislation. The competing interests of the two federal agencies (the Corps and the Bureau) paralleled the competing interests of the basin states of the Missouri River. Upstream states Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado favored the programs pursued by the Bureau. They wanted secure water supply sources, irrigation development and power generation. Downstream basin states Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri had a focus on flood control and navigation support. The competition of these interests led to conflicting programs and plans of management of the river system. In the early parts of the 20th century, devastating floods which mostly affected the highly populated areas of the downstream states led Congress to request an overall river management plan that would satisfy all the needs of the system, both upstream and downstream, and both Corps focused and Bureau focused. Entering the picture at this point were Gen. Lewis Pick of the Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau District Engineer Glenn Sloan. Both gentlemen had strong feelings and very defined ideas on how to achieve river management. The Corps submitted the Pick Plan in 1939, which envisioned a focus on new levees to support both flood control and navigation in the southern basin. The Pick Plan called for 1,500 miles of such levees, with 18 tributary dams and five mainstem dams. The cost of the Pick Plan, in 1944 dollars, was expected to be near \$490 million. The Sloan Plan developed in 1944 had a different vision; calling for dams and river management to support 5.3 million acres of irrigation, with 85 tributary dams and only three mainstem dams. Embedded in the Sloan Plan were 17 power plants to support the anticipated irrigation. The cost of the Sloan Plan, in 1944 dollars, was expected to be near \$1.26 billion. With a nudge from Congress, and to circumvent the government creating yet another federal agency based on the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Corps and Bureau agreed on a joint plan, soon to be named the Pick Sloan Plan. The Pick Sloan Plan provided authorization for approximately 100 dams (both tributary and mainstem) and for irrigation of 1.7 million acres (mostly promised to the upstream states of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota), and for extensive channelization of the river for navigation support downstream of Sioux City, Iowa. The full list of benefits included what is now commonly known and referred to as the Authorized Purposes that include Water Supply, Irrigation, Power Generation, Flood Control, Recreation, Navigation, and Fish and Wildlife support. The cost of the combined

programs was estimated in 1944 at \$1.2 billion. Also important in the combined plan was an agreement between the Corps and the Bureau on the issue of river and dam management and operations. The Corps obtained the operational authority of the dams and the Bureau secured the ability to issue irrigation and water use permits and contracts and control power allocations from the dams. However, the creation of the Western Area Power Authority in 1977, under the Department of Energy, diluted the Bureau control of power. Today, nearly 75 years after the Pick Sloan Act was adopted, North Dakotans are still either reaping the benefits from the decisions made in 1944 or feeling the consequences. Please watch for future articles from the Missouri River Joint Board that will further discuss those benefits and consequences.





Water Resources

Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee

Neutral Testimony for

**HB 1531**

March 20, 2025

## TESTIMONY OF

**Andrew Nygren, Division Director, Water Appropriation Division**

Chairman Luick, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee, I am Andrew Nygren, the Water Appropriation Division Director of the Department of Water Resources. I'm here today to provide additional information for House Bill 1531.

The bill's study aims in part to evaluate the economic benefits of irrigation, subsurface water management, and ramifications from changes to the original Pick-Sloan plan. The Department has several resources potentially relevant to the proposed study, which we wanted to provide to the Committee:

**Irrigation**

- An Inventory of Potential Irrigation Development in Central North Dakota printed in June 1996
- Assessment of Potentially Irrigable Land in Eastern McLean County printed in January 1999
- Assessment of Potentially Irrigable Land in the Area of the Warwick Aquifer in Benson, Eddy, and Nelson Counties, ND printed in July 1999

**Subsurface Drainage**

- Potential Effects of Subsurface Drainage on Water Appropriation and the Beneficial Use of Water in North Dakota, which completed under Senate Bill 2020 of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and printed in 2008
- Potential Effects of Subsurface Drains on the Beneficial Use of Water in North Dakota. Addendum: Special Cases printed in 2018

### **The Pick-Sloan Plan**

- A literature review by NDSU Professor Hearne with the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics, and presented to the Water Topics Overview Committee at their December 2021 meeting.

### **Managed Aquifer Recharge**

- Assessment of Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Potential for Glacial Drift Aquifers in North Dakota printed in early 2024. This publication also references Department of Water Resources publications on the matter of Managed Aquifer Recharge.

Lastly, the Department has collaborated with NDSU, the ND Irrigation Association, and Garrison Conservancy District to update irrigated acreage potential in North Dakota, with publication expected soon.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

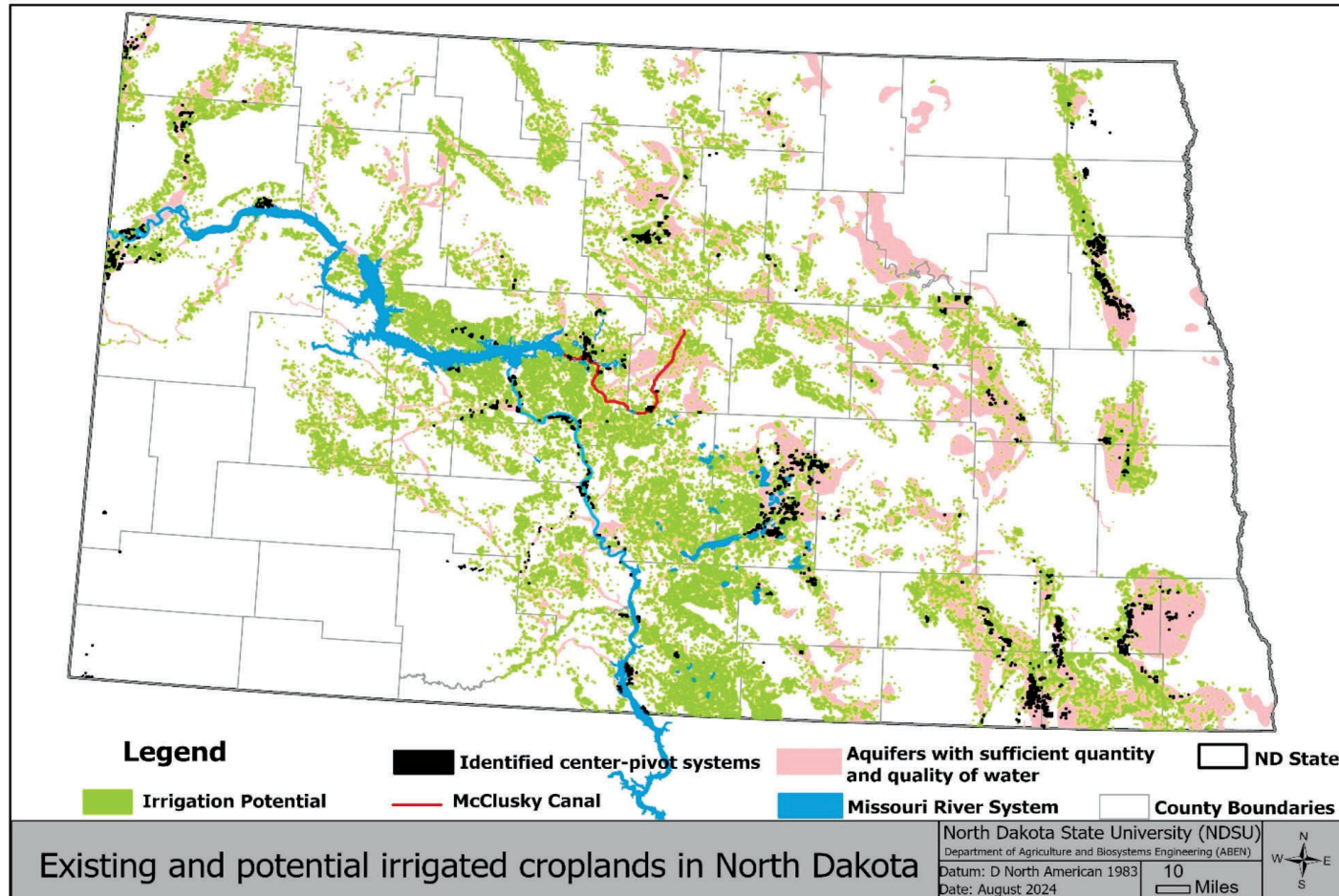
# Irrigation Potential in North Dakota



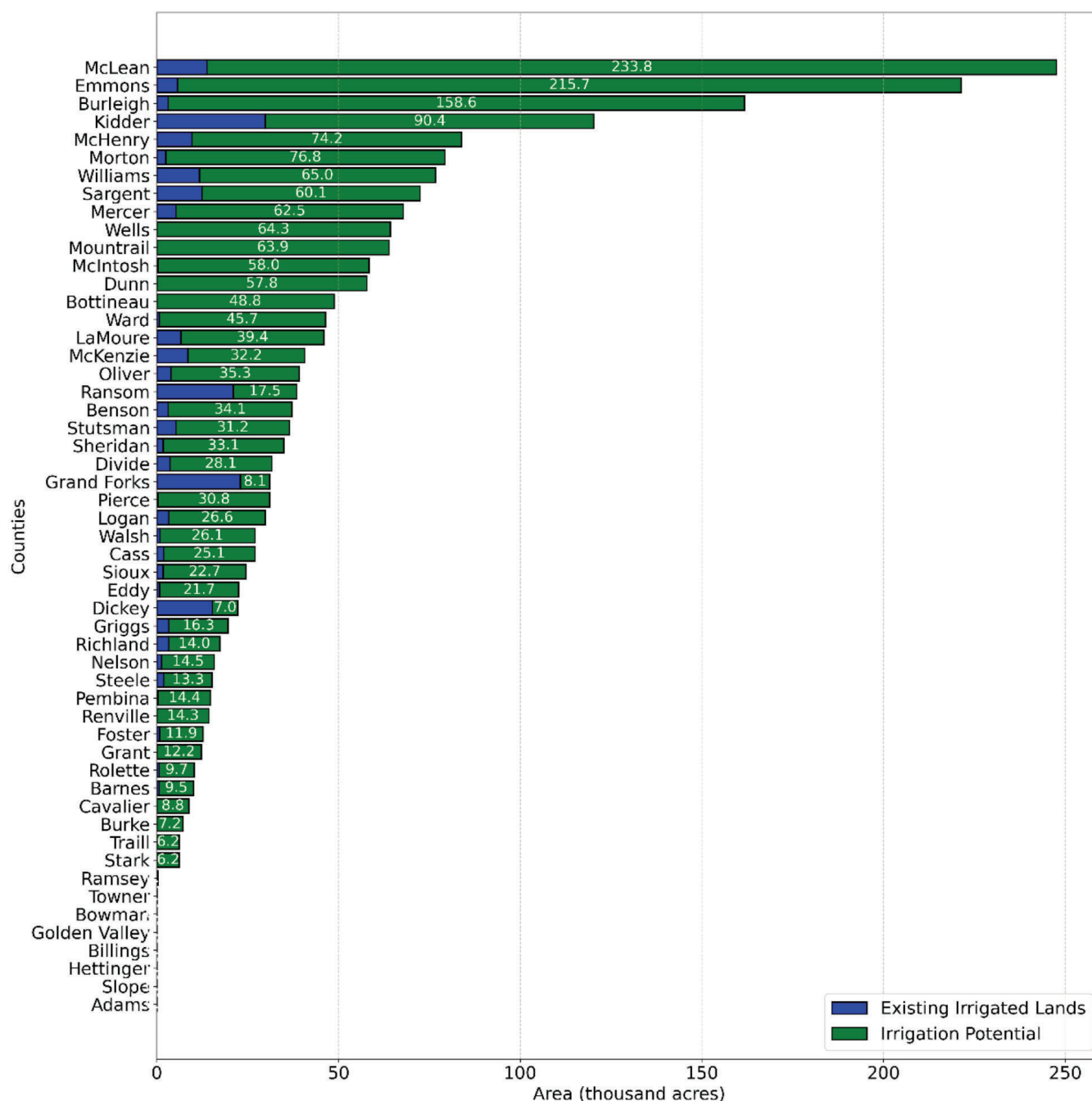
The North Dakota Irrigation Association, in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Water Resources, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District and North Dakota State University, undertook a study in 2024 to identify areas for potential irrigation development.

## 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





# North Dakota Irrigation Association

P.O. Box 2254  
Bismarek, ND 58502  
701-223-4615  
701-223-4645 (fax)

Dedicated to strengthening and expanding irrigation to build and diversify our economy

## **Senate Agriculture Committee Hearing for HB 1531 March 20, 2025**

### **Testimony of Dani Quissell, Executive Director, ND Irrigation Association**

Chairman Luick and Members of the Committee, my name is Dani Quissell, and I serve as the Executive Director of the North Dakota Irrigation Association (NDIA). Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill 1531.

HB 1531 would provide an appropriation to the Ag Commissioner to support an economic study looking at the impact that irrigation and drainage practices can have on agricultural productivity and in turn on state and local economies. When I talk to individual producers who use irrigation and drain tile to maximize yields on their farm, they point to the significant economic impact those practices have for their operation. However, as Executive Director of the Irrigation Association, I can't tell you what the impact of those practices are on the state as a whole. Having that information would be helpful as we look at future development of these practices and state investment in that development.

One of the questions specifically called out in this bill that I am especially excited to get an answer on is this:

What is the lost economic activity incurred by the state of North Dakota due to the federal government not building out irrigation infrastructure as promised through the Pick Sloan plan?

When the Garrison and Oahe dams were built by the federal government, 584,000 acres in North Dakota were inundated. In exchange for the loss of that land, the federal government promised to develop more than 1 million acres of irrigation throughout the state. Due to changes in federal government policy shortly after the dams were completed, that development was, in large part, unrealized. Over the last few decades, the state and the federal government have negotiated alternative compensation for the state. Having a number of what the state has lost because of the loss of land and lack of irrigation development would be very beneficial as we advocate for federal funding in DC.

In discussions with the Ag Commissioner's office, it was suggested that a simple amendment be made to the bill to clarify the procurement process for this study. This would require the addition of the following language:

The commissioner is not subject to chapter 54-44.4 when contraction for services under this section.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, Mr. Chairman. I'd be happy to stand for any questions you may have.



**In Favor of HB 1531**  
**Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs**  
**March 20, 2025**

Chairman Luick and Committee members:

For the record, my name is Lesley Icenogle. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the North Dakota Corn Growers Association (NDCGA) in favor of House Bill 1531.

NDCGA supports research to inform policymaking on irrigation and water conveyance in North Dakota. The study proposed in HB 1531 will quantify the economic impact of increased irrigation and improved drainage in rural communities. This data will benefit producers and landowners along with legislators and state agencies.

NDCGA urges a Do Pass recommendation on HB 1513. Thank you for your consideration.

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee

Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1531

3/20/2025

A bill for an act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

3:34 p.m. Chairman Luick opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Luick, Vice-Chair Myrdal, Senator Marcellais, Senator Weston, Senator Weber, Senator Lemm

### Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

3:34 p.m. Senator Weber moved to Reconsider.

3:35 p.m. Senator Myrdal seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Richard Marcellais	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

3:35 p.m. Senator Weber moved a Do Pass as amended and rerefer to appropriations.

3:35 p.m. Senator Myrdal seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Richard Marcellais	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Senator Weber will carry the bill.

3:36 p.m. Chairman Luick closed the hearing.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE  
HB 1531**

**Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee (Sen. Luick, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1245.01001](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1531 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.



**2025 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS**

**HB 1531**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations - Government Operations Division Red River Room, State Capitol

HB 1531  
3/31/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

11:34 a.m. Vice-Chair Dwyer opened the hearing.

Members Present: Vice-Chair Dwyer, Senator Burckhard, Senator Erbele, and Senator Sickler. Member absent: Senator Wanzek.

### Discussion Topics:

- Economic impacts of irrigation
- Technological advances in irrigation methods
- Productivity of irrigated cropland and dryland fields
- Drainage practices
- Subsurface water management
- Compensation for land inundated by Garrison Dam
- Revenue generated by hydropower

11:34 a.m. Representative Schreiber-Beck introduced HB 1531, responded to committee questions, and referenced testimony #44466, produced by Grant Gader, LC Fiscal Analyst.

11:38 a.m. Dani Quissell, Executive Director, ND Irrigation Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony #44398.

11:42 a.m. Parrell Grossman, Legislative Director, ND Soybean Growers Association, testified in favor.

11:43 a.m. Lance Gaebe, ND Farmers Union, testified in favor.

11:44 a.m. Vice-Chair Dwyer closed the meeting.

*Carol Thompson, Committee Clerk*



# North Dakota Irrigation Association

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Dedicated to strengthening and expanding irrigation to build and diversify our economy

## **Senate Appropriations—Government Operations Division Hearing for HB 1531**

**March 31, 2025**

### **Testimony of Dani Quissell, Executive Director, ND Irrigation Association**

Chairman Wanzek and Members of the Division, my name is Dani Quissell, and I serve as the Executive Director of the North Dakota Irrigation Association (NDIA). Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill 1531.

HB 1531 would provide an appropriation to the Ag Commissioner to support an economic contribution study looking at the impact that irrigation and drainage practices can have on agricultural productivity and in turn on state and local economies. When I talk to individual producers who use irrigation and drain tile to maximize yields on their farm, they point to the significant economic impact those practices have for their operation. However, as Executive Director of the Irrigation Association, I can't tell you what the impact of those practices are on the state as a whole. The contribution study contemplated in HB 1531 would tell us what impact utilization of these practices have on local economies and the state economy. Having that information would be helpful as we look at future development of these practices and state investment in that development.

One of the questions specifically called out in this bill that I am especially excited to get an answer on is this:

What is the lost economic activity incurred by the state of North Dakota due to the federal government not building out irrigation infrastructure as promised through the Pick Sloan plan?

When the Garrison and Oahe dams were built by the federal government, 584,000 acres in North Dakota were inundated. In exchange for the loss of that land, the federal government promised to develop more than 1 million acres of irrigation throughout the state. Due to changes in federal government policy shortly after the dams were completed, that development was, in large part, unrealized. Over the last few decades, the state and the federal government have negotiated alternative compensation for the state. Knowing what the state has lost because of the loss of land and lack of irrigation development would be very beneficial as we advocate for federal funding in DC.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, Mr. Chairman. I'd be happy to stand for any questions you may have.

25.1245.02000

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1531  
with Senate Amendments**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1531**

Introduced by

Representatives Schreiber-Beck, Beltz, Fisher, Hagert, Kiefert, Monson

Senators Luick, Myrdal, Wanzek, Weber

1 A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an  
2 irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION - GENERAL FUND - AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER -**  
5 **IRRIGATION EXPANSION STUDY - ONE-TIME FUNDING - REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE**  
6 **MANAGEMENT.**

- 7 1. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not  
8 otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$75,000, or so much of the sum as may be  
9 necessary, to the agriculture commissioner for the purpose of contracting with a  
10 consultant to study the potential benefits of expanding irrigation throughout the state,  
11 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The funding is  
12 considered a one-time funding item.
- 13 2. The consultant shall study:
- 14 a. The potential economic benefits of increased irrigation and improved water  
15 conveyance in rural communities of the state;
- 16 b. The ramifications of failing to construct and implement irrigation infrastructure as  
17 originally designed under the Pick-Sloan Flood Control Act of 1944 [Pub. L.  
18 78-534; 58 Stat. 887];
- 19 c. A comparison of the economic contribution between irrigated land and  
20 nonirrigated land;

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly

- 1           d.   A comparison of the economic contribution between using subsurface water
- 2           management systems and land not using subsurface water management
- 3           systems; and
- 4           e.   Any other factors that would improve and expand irrigation in the state along with
- 5           any perceived benefits from expanded irrigation.
- 6        3.   The agriculture commissioner is exempt from the state purchasing practices under
- 7           chapter 54-44.4 when contracting for services to accomplish the study.
- 8        4.   Before July 1, 2026, the agriculture commissioner shall present the findings and
- 9           recommendations of the study, and any proposed legislation necessary to implement
- 10       the recommendations, to the legislative management.

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations - Government Operations Division Red River Room, State Capitol

HB 1531  
4/2/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

4:39 p.m. Chairman Wanzek opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Wanzek, Vice-Chair Dwyer, Senator Burckhard, Senator Erbele, and Senator Sickler.

### Discussion Topics:

- Need for current data on economic impacts of irrigation
- Hydropower

4:39 p.m. Senator Dwyer moved a Do Pass for HB 1531.

4:39 p.m. Senator Sickler seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y

Motion passed 5-0-0.

Senator Dwyer will carry this bill.

4:44 p.m. Chairman Wanzek closed the meeting.

*Carol Thompson, Committee Clerk*

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

HB 1531  
4/3/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the agriculture commissioner to conduct an irrigation expansion study; and to provide for a report to the legislative management.

8:48 a.m. Chairman Bekkedahl opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Bekkedahl, Vice-Chairman Erbele, and Senators Burckhard, Cleary, Conley, Davison, Dever, Dwyer, Magrum, Mathern, Meyer, Schaible, Sickler, Sorvaag, Thomas, Wanzek.

### Discussion Topics:

- Necessity of Studies
- Ramifications of Garrison Diversion

8:48 a.m. Senator Dwyer introduced the bill

8:51 a.m. Senator Dwyer moved a Do Pass.

8:51 a.m. Senator Wanzek seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Sean Cleary	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Jeffery J. Magrum	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Paul J. Thomas	Y
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion Passed 16-0-0.

Senator Weber will carry the bill.

8:56 a.m. Chairman Bekkedahl adjourned the meeting.

Senate Appropriations Committee

HB 1531

04/03/2025

Page 2

*Elizabeth Reiten, Committee Clerk*



**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE  
AMENDED HB 1531 ([25.1245.02000](#))**

**Appropriations Committee (Sen. Bekkedahl, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (16 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1531, as amended, was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.