

Manager's Message # by Ray Christensen, Manager/CEO

Legislative session brings opportunities, challenges for water development

Every legislative session brings exciting opportunities and challenges for water development projects. The 59th Legislative Assembly is no different. This session includes three bills that will impact the Southwest Water Authority (SWA) including HB 1021, HB 1153 and HB 1274.

HB 1021 - ND State Water Commission (SWC) Budget

As always, funding determines the rate of construction along the Southwest Pipeline Project (SWPP). A total of \$15.5 million is needed to complete Phase II of the Medora, Beach, Morton Service Area, which will serve the community of Golva and over 430 customers in Stark, Billings, Golden Valley and Morton

Counties. The amount of funding secured through the North Dakota Legislature, in HB 1021, will influence our rate of construction over the next two years. The Governor's proposed budget included \$2.6 million for the SWPP, approximately \$12.9 million short of our needs.

As a member of the North Dakota Water Coalition, we are well aware of North Dakota's critical water needs: Grand Forks flood control, Devils Lake outlet, Fargo flood control, rural water projects and others. The North Dakota Water Coalition members identified a list of critical statewide water needs totaling \$13.6 million. These needs were presented to both the House and Senate. If fully funded, this request would increase state funding for the SWPP from \$2.6 to \$7.6 million.

While the House amended HB 1021 by cutting

\$2.1 million out of the Governor's budget, we are hopeful that the Senate amendments to restore funding and increase bonding limits will be passed.

A key issue in the SWC funding discussion is how to utilize the Water Development Trust Fund (WDTF). This fund was formed through tobacco settlement money and is earmarked for water development, i.e. rural water projects, irrigation, flood control and other water projects. The debate is whether or not to fund the SWC operations entirely from WDTF, as they have the last two sessions, or fund SWC operations from the general fund and utilize WDTF monies for water development.

Under the current House amendment, the SWC would be funded mainly through the WDTF. The Water Coalition, however, is asking the Senate to fund the SWC through the general fund and to increase the SWC bonding limit from \$60 to \$74 million. Either option (funding SWC through the general fund and/or increasing the bonding limit), or a combination of the two, would enable the SWC to meet the \$13.6 million critical needs request.

HB 1153 - SWC Bonding Authority

This bill provides additional authorization for the SWC to bond for water projects. This bill was passed by both the House and Senate.

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Messer is outstanding



Congratulations to Southwest Water Authority's Water Distribution Manager, Lee Messer, on receiving the Outstanding Water Works Employee Award from the North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association. Great job, Lee!

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HB 1274 - SWPP Water Delivery Rates and Charges for Large Industrial Users

The North Dakota Century Code currently limits the amount of water the SWPP can provide for industrial use. This limitation was applied by the legislature when SWPP was first formulated. Its intent was to prevent large industrial users from becoming customers without paying a prorated share of construction costs up front based on their needs. However, mainline construction is now complete and additional capacity is available on a first come first serve basis.

HB 1274 evolved from Red Trail Energy's request to utilize raw water from the SWPP for their proposed ethanol plant. A hydraulic review of their needs indicates the SWPP has the capacity to provide service. When Red Trail Energy becomes operational, they have the potential to become one of the system's largest users. Large users in the

Congratulations!
Terry Eckelberg and Andrew Erickson recently tested and passed Grade 03 and Grade 02 Water Distribution Certification, respectively! Congratulations, gentlemen!

system help stabilize water rates and improve the efficiency of the system. This bill was passed by both the House and Senate.

Spending time with our legislators, especially those that represent southwest North Dakota, provides a much better understanding of the huge task they face in trying to meet all statewide needs that enhance our quality of life. I commend all of them for their past and current support of the SWPP.

I would also like to thank current and future customers for your support, as well. Your contribution and dedication play an important role in the project's success. Through your continued effort and support, we will be able to reach out to those patiently waiting for quality water.

Vickie's Water Notes # by Vickie Franchuk, Customer Service Representative

Billing explanation, addresses requested

Southwest Water Authority customers who received service after October 1, 2004, can expect their first monthly billing in May. This bill provides a credit of 1,000 gallons of water to flush your system. Every month thereafter, a minimum, based upon your signup, will be posted to your account. It includes 2,000 gallons of water. If you signed up for a pasture tap, your first bill will be prorated from May to October, 2005. Please call our office if you

have any questions, or if you would like further information regarding your billing.

In the event you need to be contacted due to an emergency, updated information is critical to avoid delays. If you have a new telephone number or 911 address, please notify us. Thank you in advance! With your cooperation we will be able to maintain accurate records.



Vision Statement:
People and business succeeding with quality water.

Mission Statement:
Providing quality water for southwest North Dakota.

Editor LoAnn Wegh
Assistant Editor Sheyna Strommen
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SOUTHWEST PIPELINE PROJECT

Southwest Water Authority
4665 2nd Street Southwest, Dickinson, ND 58601-7231
Telephone 701-225-0241 or Toll-Free 1-888-425-0241
Fax 701-225-4058
www.swa.swc.state.nd.us swa@swwater.com

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Medora, Beach, Morton Phase II Construction Status

By Joe Bichler, Bartlett & West Engineers

If you have driven along Highway No. 10 east of Belfield to Beach in recent months, you probably noticed quite a bit of construction activity, including three new water tanks dotting the landscape. The largest of these tanks, 750,000 gallons, is located 1.5 miles east of Belfield. The second largest tank, holding 480,000 gallons, is southwest of Fryburg, and the third tank, located four miles east of Beach, holds 420,000 gallons. These tanks provide water storage and gravity service to rural customers and communities in the Medora, Beach, Morton Service Area.

You may have also noticed black lettering on the tanks, such as "Southwest Water" on the Belfield and Fryburg tanks or "SW Water" on the Beach tank.

From Belfield to west of Medora, substantial construction occurred. One pipeline contractor installed about 46 miles of PVC pipe and service lines to 70 rural water customers. Approximately 37 of those customers now enjoy quality water from the Southwest Pipeline Project (SWPP). The remaining 34 customers will connect to the pipeline this spring. This contract also

provides domestic water service (not irrigation) to Bully Pulpit golf course, the new Badlands Ministry resort area, West Medora Campground, Buffalo Gap and Eagles Ridge Lodge and the Painted Canyon Rest Area.

SWPP crossed a major milestone in the Medora-Beach area late last year – installation and operation of the main transmission pipeline. Northern Improvement Company, Bismarck, North Dakota, successfully installed 48.9 miles of pipe from Belfield to Beach. They also installed two booster pump stations and several pressure reducing valve vaults, three tank control vaults and meter vaults that serve Medora, Sentinel Butte and Beach. Service to the cities of Beach and Sentinel Butte began in October, 2004, while Medora began taking water in February, 2005.

With Phase I complete, SWA and the ND State Water Commission are focusing on securing funding for Phase II of the Medora, Beach, Morton Service Area. However, the level of funding is still unknown. Construction cost of Phase II is estimated at \$15.5 million.

SWA commits to exceptional service, water quality

In an effort to enhance customer service and maintain water quality, Southwest Water Authority (SWA) management and staff routinely participate in continuing education activities. The following classes were attended this past quarter by SWA staff and management:

CPR/First Aid: Russ Kostelecky, Terry Eckelberg, Lee Messer, Dan Roller, Allen Hecker, Andy Erickson, Jim Dworshak, Guy Mischel, John Nadvornik, Mary Massad and Sandy Burwick

Defensive Driving: Terry Eckelberg, Russ Kostelecky, Clint Scott, Glenn Eckelberg, Sandy Burwick and Carol Schmaltz

Lockout/Tagout: Andy Erickson, Todd Gordon, Clint Scott and Marty Heid

Confined Space Training: Terry Eckelberg, Andy Erickson, Clint Scott and Marty Heid

State Health Department – Water Operator Training: Dale Binstock, Andy Erickson, Lee Messer, Steve Reis, Guy Mischel, Todd Gordon and Marty Heid

Membrane Technology Conference: Roger Dick

Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification: Terry Eckelberg

Excellence in Water Quality Distribution Teleconference: Dan Roller and Dale Binstock

North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association Operator Certification Math Exam Training: Andy Erickson, Terry Eckelberg, Clint Scott and Marty Heid

North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association Water Expo: Terry Eckelberg, Andy Erickson, Clint Scott, Lee Messer and Mary Massad

The Political and Economic Situation in Russia: Mary Massad

Living Leadership Seminar: Mary Massad and Sandy Burwick

North Dakota Water Convention: Mary Massad

Punctuate Your Life by Greg Efta: Mary Massad

Human Resources Training: Mary Massad

North Dakota Water and Pollution Control Conference: Jim Dworshak

Tested and Passed Water Distribution Certification: Andrew Erickson, Grade 02; Terry Eckelberg, Grade 03



SOUTHWEST WATER AUTHORITY

Southwest Pipeline Project Building
4665 2nd Street Southwest
Dickinson, ND 58601-7231

Return Service Requested

Southwest Water Authority Board of Directors

ADAMS

Leonard Jacobs (2008)*
401 Highway 22 N
Reeder, ND 58649
853-2219

BILLINGS

James Odermann (2008)
2767 129th Ave SW
Belfield, ND 58622
575-4767

BOWMAN

Don Flynn (2006)*
PO Box 531
Scranton, ND 58653
275-6351

DUNN

Emanuel Stroh (2008)
101 Eger St
Manning, ND 58642
4552-4552

GOLDEN VALLEY

Darrel Oech (2006)
16690 40th St SW
Beach, ND 58621
872-4807

GRANT

Brian Roth (2008)
7260 77th Ave SW
New Leipzig, ND 58562
584-2470

HETTINGER

Ray Bieber (2006)
PO Box 125
Mott, ND 58646
824-2712

MERCER

John Klein (2006)
PO Box 56
900 Cypress Drive
Beulah, ND 58523
873-2162

MORTON

Steve Tomac (2006)
2498 59th St
St. Anthony, ND 58566
445-7364

OLIVER

Duane Bueligen (2008)
4251 29th St
New Salem, ND 58563
843-7239

SLOPE

David Juntunen (2008)
6205 145th Ave SW
Amidon, ND 58620
879-6372

STARK

**Loren Myran (2006)*
9440 32nd St SW
Taylor, ND 58656
974-3644

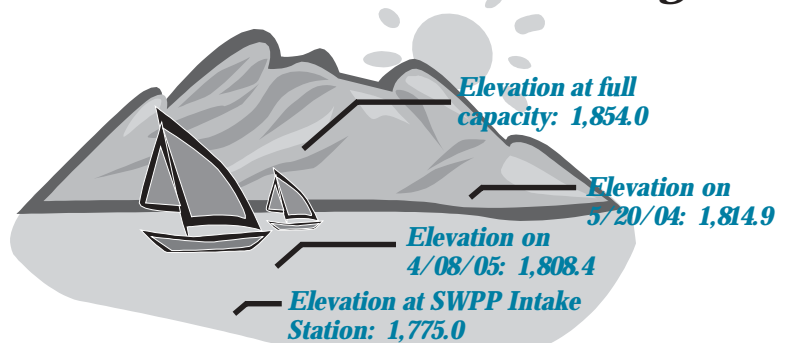
DICKINSON

Larry Ziegler (2008)
887 13th St W
Dickinson, ND 58601
483-3054

DICKINSON

Larry Bares (2006)
1131 Senior Ave
Dickinson, ND 58601
225-2030

Lake Sakakawea - Elevation Gauge



*Executive Committee
**Chairperson