The North Dakota State Water Commission (Commission), chaired by Governor John Hoeven, approved funding of up to $19 million to construct the final phases of North Dakota’s Devils Lake Emergency Outlet project.

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The Dakota Water Resources Act

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Governer Hoeven said “This is a critically important project for the people of the Devils Lake region and the State of North Dakota, we must move forward with our plans to provide flood relief that is so urgently needed.”

Joe Belford, a spokesperson for the basin area, said “despite the relatively dry weather of late, another major storm could result in an additional $100 million dollars in damages on top of the $400 million that has already occurred around Devils Lake. Devils Lake is in a vulnerable situation and we desperately need this help.”

The 2003 construction season marked the beginning of the final phase of the Southwest Pipeline Project—the Medora-Beach Phase. The first contract of this final phase, the Medora Beach Main Transmission Pipeline (Contract 2-5B), is for 46.4 miles of 12-inch through 6-inch diameter PVC pipe. This contract also includes two booster pump stations and several pressure reducing valve vaults. Contract 2-5B was awarded to Northern Improvement of Bismarck, June 4, 2003.

The remaining facilities to be constructed as part of the Medora-Beach Phase of the Southwest Pipeline during the 2003-2005 biennium include: the Medora-Beach reservoir, the First Phase of the Southwest Pipeline Project, will be completed in 2004.

The State Water Commission does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services.
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

The North Dakota State Water Commission (Commission), chaired by Governor John Hoeven, met on December 5, 2003, in Bismarck. The Commission was held at the Ramko Hotel in conjunction with the 40th annual North Dakota Water Convention and Irrigation Expo. In action items, the Commission:

- Approved a contract for the Red River Joint Water Resource District in the amount of $18,000 to help pay salary and expenses associated with the Red River Basin Coordinator position. The Red River basin is subject to severe and repeated flooding which has a dramatic impact on the lives of people living in that area. The Red River Basin Coordinator will be involved in developing plans and strategies to help alleviate flood-related impacts in that region. The Coordinator’s total annual salary for these efforts will be $50,000.

- Approved funding in the amount of $70,000 for Will and Carlson Consulting. Since 1991, Will and Carlson Consulting have provided services for the state in Washington DC for Garrison Diversion, Devils Lake, and the Dakota Water Resources Act.

- Approved the funding necessary to bid and construct the final phases of the state’s Devils Lake Outlet project in the amount of $19 million. (See related Oxbox article)

- Approved an allocation of $16,289 to the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust). The North Dakota Game and Fish Department and the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District also contribute equal amounts to the Trust annually.

- Approved a cost-share request from the Red River Joint Water Resource District in the amount of $100,000 for the Red River Basin Coordinator.

- Approved an allocation of $100,000 for the Red River Basin Coordinator.

- Approved a contract for the Devils Lake Basin Coordinator position. The Commission’s contribution will be in the amount of $26,000.

- Approved and adopted the 2003 Series A Resolution for the North Dakota State Water Commission Water Development Revenue Bond, Southwest Pipeline Project (SWPP), Medora-Beach Regional Service Area. This resolution will authorize the sale of $1.54 million in bonds with an interest rate not to exceed 4.5 percent for the SWPP.

- Approved funding in the amount of $100,000 for the Red River Basin Commission to: complete the drainage and flood damage reduction portions of their Natural Resource Framework Plan; assist with the Red River Valley Water Supply Study; and contribute to the Fargo-Moorhead Feasibility Study planned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Red River Basin Commission was formed in 2001 as a grass roots effort to address land and water issues in a Red River basin-wide context.

- Approved an allocation of $5,000 for the Park Construction during the Fall of 2003.

- Approved the funding necessary to bid and construct the final phases of the state’s Devils Lake Outlet project in the amount of $15 million for a Devils Lake Outlet Awareness Project Manager. In addition to the $15,000 provided by the Commission, contributions are also provided by the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District, the Devils Lake Joint Board, and the Forward Devils Lake Corporation.

- Approved funding in the amount of $15,000, $10,000, and $5,000, respectively.

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NAWS: Moving Forward in 2003

Construction on the Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) project has wrapped up for another year, bringing the promise of clean water to northwestern North Dakota a little closer to reality.

The NAWS project will be of sufficient size to deliver a maximum daily flow of 26 million gallons per day to the Minot Water Treatment Plant. The 45-mile pipeline will pump pretreated water from Lake Sakakawea to the treatment plant in Minot. This pipeline will include a 3 million gallon water storage reservoir and a booster pump station with pretreatment facilities.

In the summer of 2002, construction for contract 2-1A was completed, when 7.5 miles of 36-inch and 30-inch pipeline was put into place. The NAWS project was started at the Minot Water Treatment Plant, and proceeded south and east, until reaching U.S. Highway 83 at Ward County Road 16. Two additional miles of pipeline, including the highway crossing, were added to this contract with a change order. Construction on this addition was completed in July.

In 2003, construction began on contract 2-1B of the NAWS project. Phase II included approximately 9.5 miles of 30-inch and 36-inch ductile iron pipe running from the south end of the pipeline completed under contract 2-1A on the east side of U.S. Highway 83, to just south of State Highway 23. As of freeze up, approximately 64 percent of the pipe for Contract 2-1B had been placed. The remaining construction is expected to be completed in the summer of 2004.

In the coming years, construction on contracts 2-1C and 2-1D of the NAWS project will begin, placing the remaining 28 miles of pipeline all the way to the intake.

A lawsuit filed by the Canadian Province of Manitoba in 2002, challenging the adequacy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the NAWS project, and seeking an injunction requiring an Environmental Impact Statement, has been progressing. A hearing at the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., followed by a ruling on Manitoba’s challenge, is expected sometime in early 2004.

NAWS will eventually bring water from Lake Sakakawea to Minot, and to as far away as Sherwood in the north, Bottineau in the east, and Noonan in the west. Along the way, successive phases of construction will also connect the communities of Berthold, Mohall, Kenmare, Bowbells, Columbus, Westhope, and Souris. Smaller regional systems may also be considered as alternatives to the central supply from the Missouri River. These alternatives will be evaluated as they develop, and as the NAWS project progresses. Separate supplies will be developed for Grenora and Wildrose.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the NAWS project, please contact the NAWS Project Manager, Jim Lennington of the NDSWC, at (701) 328-2750, or you can find more information on the NDSWC website at www/swc/state/nd/us/projects/nwwatsup.html.