

The Oxbow

FROM THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE WATER COMMISSION

More teachers and students “catch the wave” of water education at festivals

In May and September, thousands of individuals from North Dakota and west central Minnesota, participated in the annual Project WET water festivals. Involved in the festivals were 3,482 students (from third, fourth and fifth grades), 171 teachers, 298 volunteers, and 78 schools. The festivals were held in Bismarck (May 5-6), Dickinson (Sept. 22-23), Moorhead, Minn. (Sept. 27-30) and Grand

Forks (Sept. 30). The Dickinson water festival was held in conjunction with National Project WET’s Water Education Day, were over 57,000 students, volunteers and presenters, in 92 cities across the nation, took part in similar events.

International Project WET sponsored the national effort with extensive support from Nestle Waters of

North America. This was the sixth annual effort of this kind and is the nation’s largest single water education event. The North Dakota water festivals consisted of structured learning stations, demonstrations, and exhibits where students were actively engaged in hands-on water activities and investigations. And, the water festivals exposed students to water resources in a way that both complemented and reinforced their traditional classroom learning in a fun and informative manner. Students from all four festivals spent a half-day to a full day participating in activities.

Bill Sharff, the North Dakota Project WET director, believes that “through the educational efforts provided by the local water festival sponsors and attending volunteers and presenters, young people are

Project WET facilitators receive awards

Project WET facilitators are formal and non-formal educators who once trained and certified are authorized to plan and conduct a variety of Project WET teacher and youth educational programs and events. The following are award recipients for 2005:

Navigator Level (75 – 149 hours):

Virginia Dietz, Elementary Educator, Fargo
Dianne Ornberg, Elementary Educator, Fargo

Captain Level (150 – 300 hours):

Jackie Henderson, US Bureau of Reclamation, Bismarck

Project WET 2004 – 2005 Educator Facilitator of the Year:

Kim Belgarde, Elementary Educator, Fargo

It should also be mentioned that Ila LaChapelle, a secondary educator from Walhalla, is a nominee for the 2006 North Dakota National Presidential Science Award - a non-Project WET award.



Clockwise from top left: Virginia Dietz, Dianne Ornberg, Jackie Henderson, Kim Belgarde.

more likely to appreciate and be aware of their natural environment. This can help promote their water resource stewardship and increase the chance that these youth will become responsible citizens as adults.”

The festivals at Dickinson and Grand Forks also included a “Family Program of Exploration” where children, their parents, and the general public were invited to attend. Through many of the same hands-on activities and informational sessions, participants learned about the importance of using and protecting our water resources. Over 622 individuals attended the Family Programs at Dickinson and Grand Forks.

The festivals were coordinated and developed by: Bismarck Public Schools, Southwest Water Authority (Dickinson), River Keepers (Fargo), and the Dakota Science Center (Grand Forks). Project WET pro-

At the water festival held in Moorhead, MN, kids are participating in the transparency tube activity to learn about the Red River being muddy, and about citizen monitoring.



Bill Gion, American State Bank & Trust and Project WET facilitator, Dickinson, instructs students on the movement of water through the Missouri River and its watershed.

vided much of the curriculum and facilitators as presenters.

Each of the festivals was also co-sponsored by local water resource and soil conservation districts, local organizations, local business, and/or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Presenters and volunteers included individuals from local, regional, state, and federal natural resource agencies, local organizations, and public school systems.

Thanks to all the organizers, sponsors, contributors, volunteers, presenters, school personnel, and the participating students and teachers.



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

At the Dec. 9 meeting in Bismarck, the North Dakota State Water Commission (Commission) heard updates on several ongoing water projects and took action on several others. In action items, the Commission:

- Approved a cost-share request from the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust) in the amount of \$17,959. The Commission is one of three state entities providing the state’s 10 percent contribution to the Trust, per a 1991 agreement between the State of North Dakota, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the Trust. The other two contributing state entities are the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District, and the Game and Fish Department.

- Approved cost-share requests of \$21,875 and \$60,000 from the Traill County and Southeast Cass Water Resource Districts, for snagging and clearing projects.

- Conditionally approved a cost-share request in the amount of \$132,300 from the Steele County Water Resource District, for a Steele County Drain No. 3 improvement, reconstruction, and extension project. The conditional approval is subject to the availability of funds, attainment of a positive local vote, issuance of required permits, a sediment analysis, and final engineering and design.

- Approved a cost-share request from the Nelson County Water Resource District in the amount of \$67,171, for a construction project on the Central-Hamlin Rural Flood Control Drain.

- Conditionally approved a cost-share request from the Southeast Cass Water Resource District in the amount of \$70,875, for a Harwood Township Drain construction project. The conditional approval is subject to the availability of funds, attainment

of a positive local vote, issuance of required permits, and approval of the final engineering design.

- Approved cost-share in the amount of \$80,000 to pay for engineering costs associated with a major repair project at Sweetbriar Creek Dam.

- Approved a cost-share request from the North Dakota Irrigation Association (NDIA) totaling \$100,000, to help NDIA carry out the activities outlined in their strategic plan.

- Approved a cost-share request from the Red River Basin Commission in the amount of \$150,000.

- Approved a cost-share request from the Cass County Joint Water Resource District, in the amount of \$14,675,000, for work associated with the construction and development of Maple River Dam. The project consists of the construction of an embankment, principal spillway, an auxiliary chute spillway, and an emergency spillway. Other construction work associated with Maple River Dam includes an access road, clearing and grubbing, main channel creation, County Road 16 and 50th Street Southeast road raises, and Highway 46 embankment and slope protection.

- Approved the 2006 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program project priority and fundable lists, and authorized the Department of Health to administer the 2006 Intended Use Plan. The Commission's role in the DWSRF is two-fold. First, the Health Department must administer and disburse funds with the Commission's approval. And second, the Health Department must establish assistance priorities and expend grant funds pursuant to the priority list after consulting with, and obtaining approval

from the Commission.

- Concurred with the Southwest Water Authority's 2006 water rates for capital repayment of \$0.94 per thousand gallons for contract users, \$22.80 for rural users in the Morton County areas receiving water through the Missouri West Water System, and \$28.80 per month for other rural users, along with a rate for replacement and extraordinary maintenance of \$0.35 per thousand gallons.

- Approved and adopted the 2005 Series B resolution for the water development bonds that will be sold by the Commission to assist with funding the Southwest Pipeline's Beulah Interim Service Area. Approval of the resolution authorizes the sale of \$572,000 in bonds, with an interest rate not to exceed 4.125 percent.

- Prorated the City of Medora's Southwest Pipeline minimum water purchase for 2005 to 9.75 million gallons. Water use in excess of that amount will result in payment for actual water use.

- Approved an amendment to the Southwest Pipeline Project service contract (1736-30) with the City of Zap, for interim service from Beulah through the Southwest Pipeline.

- Approved cost-share in the amount of \$15,000 toward the Devils Lake Outlet Awareness Manager position held by Joe Belford. Other contributors to that position include the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District, the Devils Lake Basin Joint Water Resource Board, and the Forward Devils Lake Corporation.

- Approved cost-share in the amount of \$26,000 to help the Devils Lake Joint Water Resource Board pay for a full-time manager. That position is currently held by Mike Connor.

- Approved cost-share in the amount of \$100,000 for a project that involves the U.S. Geological Survey developing a two-dimensional unsteady flow model of Devils Lake. The model will include a program of instrumentation and measurement of flows and water quality, and once calibrated, could be used to analyze different approaches to many of the basins continuing problems, and refine the operating plan for the state's outlet to the Sheyenne River.

- Approved a grant in the amount of \$500,000 from the Commission, and \$500,000 from the Water Development and Research Fund, for the City of LaMoure to connect to a regional water supply system.

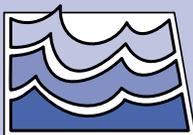
- Approved an additional \$91,750 from the Water Development and Research Fund for Traill Rural Water District to conduct a water supply study that looks at the possibility of having the system meet the water needs of Hillsboro, Mayville, Galesburg, Grandin, and new EPA water quality regulations.

- Approved a grant in the amount of \$750,000 from the Water Development and Research Fund to help Walsh Rural Water District connect to Park River's water system.

- Approved a partial advance of a grant up to \$1 million from the Commission for the City of Williston's water system improvement project.

- Approved a draft resolution from the Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition that demonstrates the Commission's support for the Coalition. The purpose of the Coalition is to work with government agencies, Congress, and the Administration to alleviate and mitigate sedimentation problems in the Missouri River mainstem reservoirs.

- Approved a resolution of appreciation to Jim Lennington, who will be leaving the Water Commission after 17 years of service. His last nine years at the Commission were spent as the project manager for the Southwest Pipeline Project. The Commission wished Jim and his wife, Barb, the best of health and happiness in their future endeavors.



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