



## DWR BENEFITS FROM NORTH DAKOTA'S SHARE OF THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) is an economic stimulus bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden in March 2021. North Dakota's ARPA allocation exceeded \$1 billion and has been received by the Bank of North Dakota.

On September 30, Governor Burgum unveiled his Accelerate ND plan containing his Executive recommendations to the state Legislature for strategically investing federal ARPA funds. As part of the plan, the Governor proposed using a portion of the state's allotment for workforce and economic development, infrastructure and capital improvements, emergency response, health care, and citizen service efficiency.

In November 2021, North Dakota held a Special Legislative Session to collaboratively approve strategic investments supported by the ARPA Funding. A key piece of legislation that directed funding towards water development. In addition to the \$75M appropriated for the purpose of water infrastructure projects, the Water Projects Stabilization Fund was also introduced which provides \$1M for defraying planning and construction expenses.

DWR Director, Andrea Travnicek, Ph.D., provided testimony to the Legislature's Interim House and Senate Appropriations



The State of North Dakota has made unprecedented progress on water development and water supply projects in the last several biennia.

Committees, outlining how the ARPA funds would help the DWR support Governor Burgum's Accelerate ND plan for smart, efficient water infrastructure projects. Travnicek discussed existing water development needs in North Dakota, as well as emerging economic development opportunities throughout the state.

Effective use of funding opportunities such as ARPA dollars have become increasingly important as the DWR focuses on a longer-term planning horizon. Water remains a central factor in many areas of the state's economic development initiatives. By presently investing in strategic water development, the DWR can help North Dakota secure similar projects in the future and develop a more sustainable approach to funding water projects.

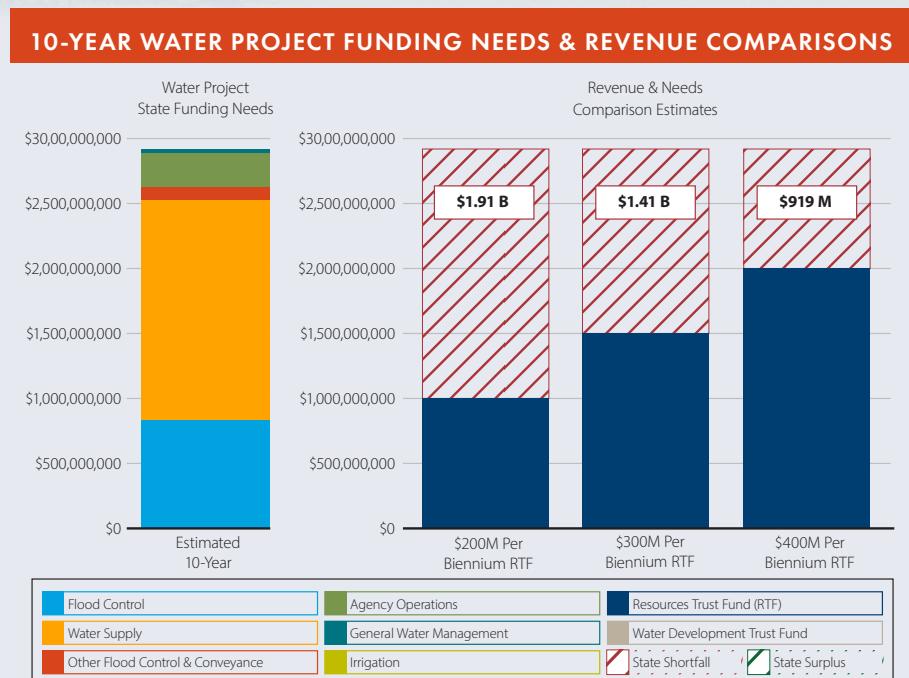
As members of Team ND, the DWR, and the State Water Commission will continue to work with Legislators, the Governor's Office, and local project sponsors to make the best use of ARPA Funds in support of strategic water infrastructure investments.

# A LOOK AHEAD: THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES' 2023 WATER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Completed ahead of each Legislative Assembly, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Water Development Plan (Plan) provides a complete picture of North Dakota's future water development needs. Planning and preparation for the next Plan will begin in January 2022 and will focus on the 2023-2025 biennium and beyond. Throughout the WDP process, DWR team members provide technical assistance, review submissions, organize data, and build a draft project inventory from January to June. The subcommittees review all submitted projects and assign them a priority in June.

Projects identified in the Plan are considered and prioritized for potential cost-share funding ahead of those that are not. The DWR and State Water Commission (Commission) value and rely on local sponsors and their participation in the planning process to help ensure taxpayer dollars are expended in a sensible and effective manner. Participation in the water development planning process is an important initial step toward becoming a cost-share partner.

North Dakota has seen varying and unpredictable oil revenues in recent years and these fluctuations can cause delay and uncertainty for project sponsors. The DWR's advanced preparation and collective planning efforts aim to assist project sponsors as early in the process as possible. Additionally, previous plans have revealed that North Dakota's water development funding



North Dakota's projected 10-year water project funding needs.

needs far exceed available funding under multiple revenue scenarios, as demonstrated by the incorporated graphic, which indicates that funding shortfalls are probable in both the short- and long-term.

Focusing on DWR's long-term funding sustainability, information gathered in the 2023 Plan will be used to recommend and support alternative methods of funding water projects. Multiple alternative funding methods are currently at varying stages of implementation after the passage of HB 1431 during the 2021 Legislative Assembly, including bonding and new loan opportunities - like the newly created Water Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund.

An interactive platform called the Water Development Dashboard is an additional resource developed by the DWR. The dashboard was created to better convey North Dakota's evolving water development efforts. The DWR recognizes that circumstances change frequently and sometimes without warning. The dashboard provides a robust platform that allows the Plan to remain a living document, which provides the most up-to-date water development information to stakeholders, legislators, the Governor's Office, and the far-reaching water community.