

# The Current

2017 Issue I



Garland Erbele, P.E.  
State Engineer &  
Chief Engineer-Secretary

## A NEWSLETTER FROM NORTH DAKOTA'S OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER & STATE WATER COMMISSION

As I watched Governor Dalrymple chair his last Water Commission meeting on December 9 (having not run for re-election), it was quite apparent that he had established an exceptional and positive impact on water development across the state. Commissioners, agency staff, and members of the water community all took the opportunity before, during, and after the meeting to express their sincerest gratitude to Governor Dalrymple for his support of water over the years.

Since Dalrymple was sworn in as Governor in December 2010, he made it a point to be incredibly involved in the State Water Commission. Dalrymple oversaw a Water Commission budget that has grown exponentially since the years prior to his administration. And, he utilized these new allocations to become an even stronger advocate for water development efforts as he supported remarkable advancements in critical water supply infrastructure for people, agriculture, and industry.

In addition, with his expertise and direction, the agency approved and completed other types of projects at an unprecedented rate. More specifically, the East Devils Lake Outlet was constructed and the state made astounding advancements in permanent flood control projects in Valley City, Lisbon, Fargo, and Minot.

It has truly been a privilege working with Governor Dalrymple, and I would like to express my sincere thanks for his exceptional guidance, pivotal leadership, and immense support he provided to the State Water Commission and the water community during his tenure as Governor.

(continued)

Can You Find The Water Drop?



This water drop is hidden  
somewhere in this issue.

# PACZKOWSKI TO SERVE AS ASSISTANT STATE ENGINEER



John Paczkowski P.E., Assistant State Engineer

In November, John Paczkowski was promoted to North Dakota's Assistant State Engineer at the State Water Commission. His new role will be comprised of working with various water issues across the state, including appropriation, regulation, and development.

Paczkowski began his career with the State Water Commission in 1991 and has worked in most Divisions within the agency. In 2015, he was named the Director of the Regulatory Division, after serving as the Chief of the Regulatory Section since 2004. The Regulatory Division is responsible for reviewing permit applications for drains, dikes, dams, and sovereign lands; providing technical assistance to water resource district boards; administering North Dakota's Dam Safety Program; guiding the Silver Jackets Project; assisting communities in practicing floodplain management through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP); administering FEMA's Map Modernization project; and providing sovereign land management.

"John has demonstrated crucial leadership skills, provided vital knowledge and input on numerous projects, and brings a tremendous amount of experience to his new role," said State Engineer Garland Erbele. "He will be an incredible asset to the people of North Dakota and will continue to provide guidance and proficiency as the Assistant State Engineer."

Paczkowski started his employment with the Water Commission as a hydrologist in the Water Appropriation Division. During this seven year stint, he worked closely with the agency's comprehensive water use database, assisted with water permitting issues, and helped to develop technologies for tracking water resources.

In 1998, Paczkowski accepted a position as a water resource engineer with the Water Development Division's Investigations Section. He worked on numerous key projects, such as construction of the West Devils Lake Outlet, the Red River Valley Water Supply Study, Missouri River management, and conducted multiple technical reviews.

John grew up in Kensal, ND and spent many years working at a family-owned business. In 1990, he attended North Dakota State University and earned a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering. He received a Registered Professional Engineer License in 2001, and acquired a Certified Floodplain Manager designation in 2005. John has been married to his wife, Monica, for 24 years and they have three children, Nicholas, Tyler, and Kylie. He loves camping with family and friends, as well as taking wildlife photography. His photos have been featured in numerous publications throughout the state. He is also an avid sportsman and is extremely passionate about hunting and fishing.

"I look forward to serving the people and state of North Dakota in this new capacity. It's an honor and a privilege to fulfill my duties as Assistant State Engineer," said Paczkowski. "I'm excited to face new challenges, issues, and projects, and will continue to implement and achieve the goals of the State Water Commission and Office of the State Engineer."

# RETIREMENT

## JEFF BERGER Regulatory Division



Congratulations to Jeff Berger on his retirement. Jeff has admirably served the people of North Dakota for more than 30 years. He began his career with the state in 1986 at the North Dakota Information Technology Department. In 1992, he was employed with the Bank of North Dakota

and started his career at the State Water Commission in 2002. Jeff was employed in the Water Appropriations Division until 2007 and then moved into the dam safety section until his recent retirement.

We would like to congratulate Jeff on his well-deserved retirement and wish him the best of health and happiness in the future.

# NEW HIRE

## JENNIFER MARTIN Hydrologist II



Jennifer Martin joined the State Water Commission staff in November as a Hydrologist II in the Water Appropriations Division. She was born and raised in Fargo, ND and graduated from Northern Cass High School. Jennifer attended NDSU and graduated in 2013 with a Bachelor's

degree in Civil Engineering. She was previously employed at a consulting firm in Mandan as a Consulting Engineer.

Jennifer loves to travel and hopes to one-day visit Europe. She also enjoys spending time with her large extended family and friends, and most of all she loves playing with her yellow lab puppy, George.

# WINNERS

## SHOWCASE OF TREES AT CAPITOL State Water Commission



### MOST CREATIVE

The State Water Commission participated in the 2016 Showcase of Trees held at the North Dakota State Capitol.

The agency received the Most Creative award for their floating water tree display.

Ashley Persinger, Jessie Wald, and Sheila Fryer with the SWC tree.

Special thanks to Dan Bahm, Tom Banse, Sheila Fryer, Beth Nangare, Ashley Persinger, Jim Ternes, and Jessie Wald for participating in the design, decorating, construction, and assembly of the Water Commission's tree.

# CONTINUED



Governor Dalrymple receives a resolution of appreciation from State Engineer Garland Erbele at the Commission meeting in Bismarck, December 9.

On behalf of the Water Commission and staff, we would like to wish Governor Dalrymple and his wife Betsy many years of happiness in their future outside of public service.

Garland Erbele  
State Engineer and Chief Engineer-Secretary

# NORTH DAKOTA CLOUD MODIFICATION PROJECT OPERATIONS UPDATE

The North Dakota Cloud Modification Project (NDCMP) was conducted from June 1st through August 31st over Bowman, Burke, McKenzie, Mountrail, Ward, Williams, and six townships in Slope County, encompassing 11,554 square miles. Cloud seeding for hail suppression and rain enhancement has been ongoing continuously in western North Dakota since the late 1950s.

The 2016 season was conducted under the first of a three-year contract with Weather Modification, Inc. (WMI) to provide aircraft, seeding equipment and pilots. The North Dakota Atmospheric Resource Board (NDARB) employs six meteorological staff and nine pilot interns. Including NDARB personnel, county weather modification authorities, and WMI pilots, technicians and support staff, more than 60 people are directly involved in the NDCMP.

NDCMP flight hours totaled 606, which was slightly above the 10-year average. There were sporadic suspensions for rain enhancement operations at the request of county weather modification authorities and this did somewhat limit flight hours. District 1 (Bowman and Slope counties) flew 131 hours on 36 of 92 project days, while District 2 (Burke, McKenzie, Mountrail, Ward and Williams Counties) flew 466 hours on 53 of 92 days.

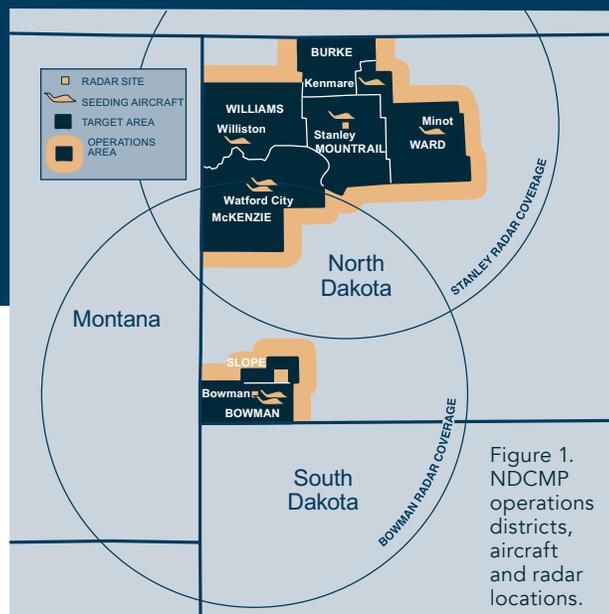


Figure 1. NDCMP operations districts, aircraft and radar locations.

During the summer, a petition was circulated in Bowman county on whether to abolish the weather modification authority. The petition achieved the required number of signatures and was placed on the ballot. On November 8, the voters in Bowman county resoundingly rejected the measure by a 70.13% to 29.87% margin. Including the vote that established the Williams county program in 2000, the last two county-wide votes on weather modification in North Dakota have enjoyed 70 and 80 percent majorities.

Long term evaluations of the NDCMP show rainfall increases in the range of 5-10 percent, reduced crop-hail losses of 45 percent and increased wheat yields of 5.9 percent. Economic benefit-to-cost ratios range from 12-20 to 1 for agricultural crop production.



## OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES

The State Water Commission would like to express our deepest sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Hans Ahlness. Hans passed away on December 1 when the aircraft he was piloting crashed near Fargo.

Hans Ahlness, Vice President of Operations at Weather Modification International (WMI) was the Primary Project Manager for the North Dakota Cloud Modification Project. He was responsible for hiring and training the project pilots, overseeing aircraft operations, aircraft and equipment maintenance, and providing relief pilot and mechanic duties. Ahlness had worked in the weather modification field since 1977, with duties including radar operator, mechanic, operational and research pilot, and manager. He had worked at WMI full-time since 1985.

Darin Langerud, Atmospheric Resource Board Division Director, shared these kind words about his friend and colleague, “Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Jane, his two kids and his friends and co-workers at WMI. I can say without hyperbole that Hans was one of the best cloud seeding pilots to ever fly an airplane. This is a tremendous loss not only personally for the ARB staff, but also for the weather modification program and industry. He will be greatly missed.”

# RIVERMAN AWARD



**PAT FRIDGEN**

Pat Fridgen, Director of the Planning and Education Division at the State Water Commission was honored with the 2016 Missouri River Joint Water Board's Riverman Award. The Riverman Award signifies appreciation for a lifetime of leadership, resource management, and water development in the Missouri River Corridor. Pat demonstrates commitment and instrumental involvement in representing the state of North Dakota's water issues. The awards ceremony took place at the 53rd Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention.

# STATE ENGINEER'S PROFESSIONALISM AWARD



**REX HONEYMAN**

Rex Honeyman was honored with the 2016 North Dakota State Engineer's Professionalism Award. Rex is a staff member of the Water Appropriations Division and is the groundwater project leader for Steele, Traill, and Cass Counties in eastern North Dakota and for Dunn

County in the heart of the Bakken region. He is also the manager of the subsurface exploration program.

Rex is known for being one of the hardest working individuals in the agency. He has authored and co-authored several studies and investigations, demonstrates high-quality work that supports the agency's mission and goals, and continuously volunteers for work outside of his assigned project area. Rex also maintains an open and constructive relationship with the public and agency staff.

# WATER WHEEL AWARD



**LINDA WEISPFENNING**

Linda Weispfenning was the proud recipient of a 2016 North Dakota Water Wheel Award for her continuous commitment to water resources. Linda began her esteemed career with the State Water Commission in 1979. She began her

employment as an Environmental Scientist within the Planning and Education Division. Linda successfully moved up the ranks in the Planning Division, and retired in August 2016 as a Planner IV. Her admirable career was filled with integrity and dedication while she served the people of North Dakota for 37 years.

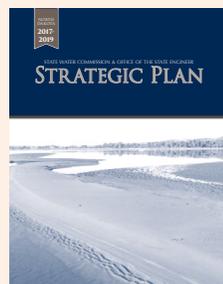
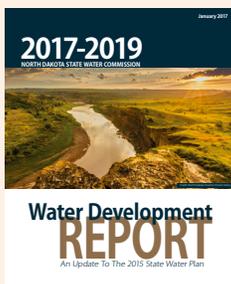
## SWC Meeting Highlights

At the Commission meeting held on December 9, 2016, the State Water Commission approved multiple cost-share requests.

Richland County Drain No. 14 Reconstruction	\$315,000
Sheyenne River Snag and Clear Reaches I, II, and III	\$294,000
Pembina County Drain No. 78 Outlet Extension	\$390,041
Pembina County Drain No. 79	\$875,428
City of Williston - West Flood Control	\$3,655,517
City of Lisbon - Floodway Property Acquisitions	\$307,500
Valley City Flood Protection Phase II	\$13,157,600
Valley City Flood Protection (Loans)	\$4,681,900

## LOOK FOR THESE UPDATED PUBLICATIONS

**COMING SOON**





**NORTH DAKOTA STATE WATER COMMISSION**

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A NEWSLETTER FROM NORTH DAKOTA'S OFFICE  
OF THE STATE ENGINEER & STATE WATER COMMISSION

# The Current

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