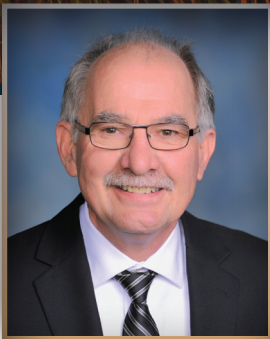




The Current

2017 Issue III



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

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

In our last issue of *The Current*, I talked about how quickly the state went from all the signs of a record snowfall winter to a dry spring. Today, North Dakota is facing its most serious drought in a decade.

In many ways, flooding is a lot easier to deal with than a drought. Dams, dikes, outlets, and drains are all tools the State Water Commission has used in its history to help the state contend with serious flooding challenges.

In terms of drought, we have committed hundreds of millions of dollars to ensure that people throughout the state are able to access the best quality and most reliable sources of drinking water through the development and improvement of regional, rural, and municipal water supply projects across the State.

But it is not only people that need water. Agriculture is the economic engine of North Dakota, and ranchers have been especially hard hit by this drought, with pastures that are short on grass to water supplies that are drying up much too quickly.

While we cannot make the grass grow, we can help with water supply. That is why I am pleased that the State Water Commission, along with Governor Doug Burgum, approved the reactivation of the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program. The Drought Program provides 50% cost-share, up to \$3,500 per project, with up to three projects per producer for projects that provide long-term, reliable sources of water for livestock in eligible counties.

For more information on the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program, including eligible counties, please go to www.swc.nd.gov.

Can You Find The Water Drop?



This water drop is hidden
somewhere in this issue.

186 YEARS OF SERVICE



The State Water Commission would like to congratulate five long-time staff members on their retirements. (from left to right) James T. Fay, Dwight Comfort, Sharon Locken, Bob White, and Mike Hove have admirably served the people of North Dakota for a combined 186 years of dedicated service.



26 YEARS

DWIGHT COMFORT - WATER RESOURCE ENGINEER

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT - I enjoyed all aspects of my career and really liked working with construction permits.

MEMORABLE MOMENT - The special bond and camaraderie I felt with staff members has been really memorable.

WHAT YOU'LL MISS THE MOST - I will miss the people at the Water Commission. Everyone has been so friendly and easy to work with.

FUTURE PLANS - I want to renovate my house that was built in 1905 and I hope to do some fishing. I'd also like to purchase a Kawasaki Versys 300 motorcycle.



28 YEARS

BOB WHITE - HYDROLOGIST MANAGER

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT - Being a part of the International Souris River Board (ISRB) has been a remarkable experience. I have greatly enjoyed my time as Secretary for the group. It's been quite an honor.

MEMORABLE MOMENT - There are too many to remember! Working on the ISRB has definitely been exciting. I loved being the liaison between the groups and forming a census through communication that has truly evolved before my eyes.

WHAT YOU'LL MISS THE MOST - I will definitely miss the people at the SWC. I've worked in the Appropriation Division for my entire career and will miss seeing all of the familiar faces. I've had a lot of fun in the office and outside of the office with my fellow co-workers.

FUTURE PLANS - Traveling to New York to visit my aunt and her family is on my list. I want to spend time at my cabin near Big McDonald Lake in Minnesota. And I'm looking forward to seeing my wife Debra and my kids Brittany and Matthew more. I also want to continue taking part in the annual turkey safari with fellow SWC staffers, John Paczkowski, and Craig Odenbach.

186 YEARS OF SERVICE



41 YEARS

(Spent 4 years at the State Lab and 37 years at the SWC)

JAMES T. FAY - CHIEF OF INVESTIGATIONS

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT - I've had a tremendous amount of gratitude working with the Southwest Pipeline Project and being a part of the Souris River Board. I've also really enjoyed my current position and managing my section.

MEMORABLE MOMENT - Time has gone by so fast and memories have flown by. I recall always having a slide-rule on hand and using a number two pencil to delineate a map, then technology swooped in and took over.

WHAT YOU'LL MISS THE MOST - It's been a great privilege working at the Water Commission and I will deeply miss the people. Supervisors and subordinates have always had my back. And I've always been impressed with the abundance of dedication and support the staff has shown to the people of North Dakota.

FUTURE PLANS - Every chance I get, I want to see my grandkids Zayne and Lilly. I enjoy volunteering at church and teaching faith formation classes too. And I hope to do some fishing and I am a gun enthusiast.



41 YEARS

MIKE HOVE - WATER RESOURCE PROGRAM ADMIN

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT - One of my greatest achievements was working with Chris Bader to build a cohesive functioning I.T. infrastructure within the agency. We worked diligently to build the framework and strived to furnish a culmination of cohesive data that enabled a more seamless work-flow for the staff.

MEMORABLE MOMENT - I've seen many things in my 41-year career. We used to plot hydrographs by hand and I can remember taping them together on the wall, piece by piece to get the manual scale completed. We literally had to cut and paste! I've certainly watched technology evolve.

WHAT YOU'LL MISS THE MOST - I will miss everything about the Water Commission. I'm a strong believer in the agency, its philosophy, and the people. It's been a great place to spend my entire career.

FUTURE PLANS - I'm looking forward to helping out on the family farm in Langdon, ND. Music is my passion and I can't wait to work on some recordings in my home studio. I'd also like to work on more music with my wife, brother, and musical brothers.



50 YEARS

SHARON LOCKEN - ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OFFICER

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT - I've been indirectly or directly involved in all of the Water Commission's major projects and accomplishments for the past fifty years. It's extremely gratifying to see a project from the very beginning to the completed outcome. It really gives me a sense of pride and satisfaction to know that my influence and guidance might have made an impact.

MEMORABLE MOMENT - I've had the pleasure of being the Administrative Staff Officer for six State Engineers. It was truly an honor working with each one of them.

WHAT YOU'LL MISS THE MOST - Serving the people of North Dakota for five decades is a great achievement, privilege, and blessing. I will sincerely miss the agency and the staff. I've always said that I excel at my job because the staff makes me look so good.

FUTURE PLANS - I will continue to work for the Bismarck Motor Company part-time. I have worked there for 18 years. I'm also looking forward to spending more time at my cabin in Pick City. And my brothers want to teach me how to fly fish, take me camping in the mountains, and possibly help me build my dream home near Makoti, ND, where I grew up. I would also like to travel to Hawaii with my son, Shawn.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH SCHEDULED FOR LARGE SCALE BASE LEVEL ENGINEERING

FEMA and State Water Commission staff are hosting a series of “Kickoff” meetings during the weeks of August 7th and August 21st. The meetings are related to a previously reported effort, headed by FEMA Region VIII, to provide base-level floodplain modeling in all counties in the state of North Dakota.

After this project is completed, mapping data will meet FEMA’s guides and specifications, improving the state’s ability to provide communities with flood risk information. Funding will be distributed as grant dollars through the Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) Program, which is a partnership between FEMA and the State Water Commission.

Meetings will be conveniently located throughout the project area and will provide an overview of project intent. Specific locations and times have not yet been decided, but look for announcements through mailings, articles, and social media such as the State Water Commission’s Facebook.

A second-round of Discovery meetings will take place in the fall of 2017 with dates and locations to be announced in the upcoming months.

Questions can be directed to Laura Horner at (701) 328-2759 or lmhorner@nd.gov; or Dionne Haynes at (701) 328-4961 or dfhaynes@nd.gov.

Missouri River Splash



Ashley Persinger and Jessie Wald represented the SWC at the Missouri River Splash event.

The State Water Commission participated in the annual Missouri River Splash event on Thursday, May 18. Several agencies and educators gathered to provide family fun activities that focused on the importance of water safety and water education.

The Water Commission encouraged attendees to “Keep Your Beaches Clean.” This public education campaign focuses on littering and possession of glass containers on sovereign lands. The fine for littering on beaches and sandbars carries a maximum penalty of \$250, while possession of glass containers carries a fine of \$100.

Educational signs have been installed at popular recreation access points and boat ramps along the Missouri River. People are reminded to please keep our recreation areas clean and safe for future generations.

SNAGGING AND CLEARING NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR SWC COST SHARE

During the 2017 legislative session, which concluded in April of this year, House Bill 1374 made an important change to the State Water Commission’s Cost-Share Policy.

The bill amended North Dakota Century Code § 61-02-01.4, and now requires the State Water Commission to “...exclude operations expense and regular maintenance, including removal of vegetative materials and sediment, for water conveyance projects...” House Bill 1374 also provided a definition of water conveyance projects – to include “surface or subsurface drainage works, bank stabilizations, or snagging and clearing of water courses.”

The purpose of the State Water Commission’s Cost-Share Program is to support local sponsors with development of sustainable water-related projects in North Dakota. For more information on the Cost-Share Program, please go to the Water Commission’s website at www.swc.nd.gov/project_development/cost_share.html, or contact Beth Nangare at (701) 328-4862, or bnangare@nd.gov.



NEW DRAIN TILE REGULATIONS

During the 2017 Legislative Assembly, a number of new statutory changes were passed as part of House Bill (HB) 1390 concerning drain tile. Specifically, HB 1390 resulted in the following changes to North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) § 61-32-03.01:

- Throughout NDCC 61-32-03.1, “drainage project” is replaced with “subsurface water management project.”
- Establishes a maximum drainage coefficient (depth of water removed in 24 hours) of three-eighths of an inch per day, or less, for surface intakes on subsurface water management systems. If surface intakes with a drainage coefficient of greater than three-eighths of an inch per day are used, the application must be processed using surface drainage law (NDCC 61-32-03).
- Sets an application fee (payable to water boards) of up to \$150, and requires that the water resource board send notice and a copy of the submitted application via certified mail to each landowner within 1-mile of the proposed project’s outlet.
- If the water resource board receives notarized letters of approval from all downstream landowners entitled to notice with the application, the water resource board must approve the application within 30 days of receipt of the last letter.
- Outlines the procedures to follow in case of application approval or denial of the proposed project. If an application is not acted on by a water board within 60 days, the application is deemed approved.
- Allows the water resource board of jurisdiction to place conditions on the permit, including conditions pertaining to rural water line setback requirements, if the proposed project outlets directly into a road ditch or assessment drain.
- Notes that all liability for the project lies with the project applicant, not the water resource board.
- States that any person who installs a subsurface water management system with a footprint of over 80 acres without acquiring the necessary permit is guilty of an infraction.
- Requires the State Engineer to develop an application form for a subsurface water management project, and requires applicants to submit a complete application to the water resource district board within which the majority of the proposed project is located.

SWC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At the Commission meeting held on June 22, 2017, the State Water Commission approved multiple cost-share requests.

City of Minot 2017 Levee Repair	\$950,254
Haas Coulee Legal Drain, Phase II – Bottineau County	\$86,361
Buffalo Lodge Outlet – McHenry County	\$134,915
Walsh County Drain No. 22 Improvements	\$266,086
Red River Basin Commission	\$200,000
Assiniboine River Basin Initiative	\$100,000
City of Lisbon Permanent Flood Control Project and Levee F Construction	\$3,800,000
Northeast Regional Water District Expansion (Federal MR&I Program Funding)	\$6,000,000
Southwest Pipeline Project (Federal MR&I Program Funding)	\$4,000,000
Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Assistance Program	\$250,000

Mouse River Enhanced Flood Protection Project

Approved use of acquisition funding already provided to Ward County to include the City of Minot acquisition list.



NORTH DAKOTA STATE WATER COMMISSION

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