



## In This Issue

### **WAWSA Marks 4th Anniversary with Celebration at Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant**

### **WAWSA Prioritizes Rural Projects for 2015-2017 Biennium**

### **Surveying Project Wins Engineering Excellence Award**

## **WAWSA Marks 4th Anniversary with Celebration at Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant**

The Western Area Water Supply Authority (WAWSA) marked its fourth anniversary with a celebration at the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant, where the majority of the public water project's supply originates. "We have a lot to celebrate. Within the past four years, we've increased the capacity of the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant twice, installed 600 miles of pipeline, and constructed eight reservoirs with a combined storage of 11 million gallons. All of these successes allow us to bring drinking water to 11 cities and more than 2,400 rural residents," says Mark Owan, WAWSA Board Chairman.

"As the build out of WAWS continues, we plan to construct over 1,000 additional miles of pipe. In fact, during the current construction season, we are installing pipelines to deliver water to the rural areas of Burke-Divide-Williams (BDW) Rural Water, McKenzie County Water Resource District, R&T Water Supply Commerce Authority, and Williams Rural Water District," says Jaret Wirtz, WAWSA Executive Director.

Gov. Jack Dalrymple, Sen. Brad Bekkedahl of Williston, Rep. Denton Zubke of Watford City, Rep. George Keiser of Bismarck, and Gene Veeder who is the McKenzie County Development Director, were the featured speakers at the open house. In addition to celebrating the anniversary of Gov. Dalrymple signing HB 1206 four years ago to create WAWSA, the event formally recognized the Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant's increased capacity. A recently completed expansion project at the Plant increased its capacity from 14 million gallons per day (MGD) of high-quality drinking water to 21 MGD.

"The completion of this important project is the latest example of our ongoing commitment to expanding access to high-quality water supplies," says Gov. Dalrymple. "North Dakota's strong economy allows us to continue making major investments in water supply and many other statewide infrastructure improvements that support our continued progress and enhance our quality of life."

Gov. Dalrymple officially began the commissioning process of the Plant's 21 MGD capacity by remotely starting the softening basin through the Plant's control system. The Plant's increased capacity will allow WAWSA to serve an estimated 20,000 additional people. "Since its inception in 2011, WAWS has grown immensely. The importance of this Plant's ability to provide an adequate amount of water to the region cannot be understated. Without water, growth is impossible – housing developments cannot be built and new businesses cannot open," says Wirtz. *(Cont. page 2)*



## WAWSA Marks 4th Anniversary with Celebration at Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant (Cont.)

WAWSA currently serves the Cities of Williston, Watford City, Ray, Tioga, Stanley, Wildrose, Crosby, Fortuna, Noonan, Columbus, and Ross in Burke, Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail, and Williams Counties. In all, about 70,000 people currently receive high-quality drinking water from WAWSA.

The public drinking water project's service area is projected to reach 160,000 people by the year 2038, according to a 2014 study completed by the North Dakota State University Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics. ■

### Featured speakers at the 4th Anniversary Event



Jaret Wirtz, WAWSA Exec. Director



Gov. Jack Dalrymple



Sen. Brad Bekkedahl, Williston



Rep. Denton Zubke, Watford City



Rep. George Keiser, Bismarck



Gene Veeder, McKenzie County Development Director



### More Progress at the Williston Regional WTP

On the left, new tanks store lime and carbon dioxide used in the water softening process.

New backup power generators are shown on the right. They keep the WTP running during power outages, and can also supply power during peak electrical demand conditions through a cooperative agreement that allows Montana Dakota Utilities (MDU) to purchase power from the Plant.

## WAWSA Prioritizes Rural Projects for 2015-2017 Biennium

The North Dakota State Water Commission recently approved \$30 million in additional projects for WAWSA. “We’re thankful the State Water Commission approved our request for accelerated access to this funding. It will help us move the project forward in a timely manner. We have several projects that have already been bid and the longer we wait for funding, the more construction prices increase,” says Jaret Wirtz, WAWSA Executive Director.

Coming out of the legislative session, WAWSA leaders were concerned about the reduced funding levels the Western Area Water Supply Project (WAWSP) was allocated in the State Water Commission’s budget (SB 2020) for the next two years. Governor Jack Dalrymple signed SB 2020 on May 12.

“We are receiving \$60 million, which is 50 percent of our original request. We understand that budget cuts had to be made. Despite this temporary financial hurdle, WAWSA is grateful that legislators and Governor Dalrymple continue to support this necessary public water project

for the northwestern part of the State. The State Water Commission’s decision to release \$30 million to WAWSA will take some of the pressure off and will allow us to make good progress during the current construction season,” says Wirtz. “We’re identifying the projects that we can complete with the \$60 million WAWSA is slated to receive through 2017. There are many high priority projects that we need to make progress on, in order to provide water to rural residents who have been waiting for WAWSA service.”

The costs associated with building the project continue to increase due to the unprecedented number of requests for WAWSA service. Nearly 18,000 requests have been logged since 2010. Inflation and a tight construction market in the Bakken region have also contributed to increased costs. The total cost of the Western Area Water Supply Project is estimated to be \$470 million. WAWSA has received approval for \$289 million from the State since 2010. ■

## \$30M approved by State Water Commission to Fund Eight Rural Projects

1

### **Burke-Divide-Williams Rural Water Distribution**

Part 1 Alternate 1: Rural service areas between Crosby and Fortuna.

2

### **McKenzie County Water Resource District**

System I Expansion – Part 1 Base Bid: Rural service area between Watford City and Tobacco Gardens.

3

### **McKenzie County Water Resource District**

System I Expansion – Part 1 Alternate 1: Rural service area north of Arnegard.

4

### **R&T Water Supply Commerce Authority**

North Tioga Rural Distribution: Rural service area north of Highway 2, between Ray and Tioga.

5

### **Williams Rural Water District & R&T Water Supply Commerce Authority**

Epping Rural Distribution – Part 1 Alternate 2: Rural service area south of Ray.

6

### **Williams Rural Water District**

Epping Distribution – Part 1: Rural service area south of Highway 2 west of Ray.

7

### **Williams Rural Water District/R&T Water Supply Commerce Authority**

Epping Distribution - Part 1a: Rural service area north of Highway 2, west of Ray.

8

### **Williams Rural Water District**

Blacktail Dam Distribution – Part 1 Alternate 1: Rural service area north and south of Grenora.



## Surveying Project Wins Engineering Excellence Award

A unique WAWSA surveying project on the Missouri River received a 2015 Engineering Excellence award from the North Dakota chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) in the Surveying and Mapping Technology Category. The Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is the primary source of water for WAWSA. Historically, the WTP had three intakes on the Missouri River immediately downstream of the U.S. Highway 85 bridge. Over time two of the intakes became buried with sediment, leaving the third as the sole source of potable water for the city and the surrounding region.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) plans to expand the traffic capacity of U.S. Highway 85 by constructing a new bridge upstream and demolish the existing bridge.

WAWSA retained the team of AE2S, KBM Inc., and WEST Consultants to perform a survey of the bed of the Missouri River as well as an aerial Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) survey to evaluate the potential for increased risk of sedimentation due to the bridge project.

The Missouri River Bathymetric and LiDAR Survey project utilized a combination of methods to construct a complete topographic map for over 7.5 miles of the Missouri River and 20 square miles of adjacent land, as well as provide high-resolution photography of the same area. A survey of this size and complexity required a coordinated effort between several agencies for successful completion. The results of the survey will ultimately be used to make critical infrastructure planning decisions that will help ensure a reliable water supply source for WAWSA's service area. ■