

Speakers at the groundbreaking event signed the pipe ceremoniously before it was lowered into the trench. From left to right: Rep. Jim Schmidt; Sen. Rich Wardner; LAWA Chairman Tim Mahoney; Director of the Department of Water Resources Andrea Travnicek; Lt. Governor Brent Sanford; Garrison Diversion Chairman Alan Walter; Garrison Diversion General Manager Duane DeKrey.



## Garrison Diversion Celebrates Laying of Pipe

By Kimberly Cook

The Red River Valley Water Supply Project (RRVWSP) celebrated a historic milestone in early August when construction crews placed the very first length of pipe in the line that will deliver emergency and supplemental water from the Missouri River in central North Dakota to the Red River Valley in the east. The drought mitigation project is a concerted effort to ensure that public water systems in central and eastern North Dakota have adequate water supplies, especially during periods of moderate and severe drought.

The water also will provide opportunities for industrial development, as a current lack of industrial water supply has driven industries to obtain water through less-desirable means and/or relocation out of North Dakota.

The project's co-sponsors, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Garrison Diversion) and Lake Agassiz Water Authority (LAWA) hosted a celebration at a construction site one mile south of Carrington, N.D., on Highway 281. More than 100 people, including project organizers and lawmakers, gathered to ceremonially sign

the 72-inch pipe and witness it placed into the ground.

"Garrison Diversion board members and staff, as well as Lake Agassiz Water Authority board members, have been working toward this for several years. Getting the project to the point of construction is truly worth celebrating," Garrison Diversion General Manager Duane DeKrey said. Andrea Travnicek, North Dakota Department Water Resources Director; Tim Mahoney, LAWA chairman/Fargo mayor; Sen. Rich Wardner, Senate Majority Leader; Rep. Jim Schmidt, Water Topics Overview Committee chairman; and Alan Walter, Garrison Diversion Board chairman, were speakers at the ceremony, along with DeKrey.

"As the mayor of Fargo, I'm excited to see the first pipe going into the ground on this drought mitigation project. Our current drought conditions have led to water conservation measures being implemented across the state and underlines the importance of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project," Mahoney said.



Garrison Diversion General Manager Duane DeKrey signing the pipe.



Garrison Diversion Board Chairman Alan Walter addresses the crowd gathered for the celebration on August 3 at a construction site one mile south of Carrington on Highway 281, in the middle of a drought-parched field.

### CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECT FEATURES

Three major features of the RRWSP are under construction and include the Missouri River Intake, Sheyenne River Discharge and the initial pipeline segment installation. ICS, Inc. began construction on the Missouri River intake wet well approximately four miles south of Washburn in December 2020. The discharge structure is located six miles south of Cooperstown near the Sheyenne River. The construction contract for the discharge was awarded to Industrial Builders, Inc., construction began in early May and it is substantially completed.

The initial pipeline construction, located at the site of the groundbreaking event, involves the installation of 1.2 miles of 72-inch pipe about one mile south of Carrington on the east side of U.S. Highway 52/281 and the Red River Valley and Western Railroad.

As part of the pipeline installation near Carrington, Garney Construction will complete the open trench pipe installation east of the highway, with Minger Construction, the tunneling subcontractor, completing the tunneling underneath the railroad and highway. This section of pipeline construction is expected to be completed in October 2021, and future contracts will extend the pipeline east and west of Carrington. Overall project construction is anticipated to last 10 years.

## PROJECT NEED

According to the North Dakota Drought Monitor, all of North Dakota is currently experiencing moderate, severe or extreme drought conditions. The effects of the current drought were mentioned by speakers throughout the event.

“We don’t know how long the current drought conditions will last. People could walk across the Red River during the 1930s Dust Bowl. When the Red River Valley Water Supply Project is constructed, participating cities and rural water systems along the pipeline will have a safeguard during droughts like the one we’re experiencing right now and even worse droughts,” says DeKrey.

The \$1.22 billion RRVWSP is necessary to protect North Dakota’s communities and economy from the devastating effects of moderate and severe drought. The long-term effects of a severe drought would be financially devastating. A 10-year drought similar to the Dust Bowl of the ’30s would have a \$32 billion impact on the entire state’s economy. A moderate drought like what occurred in the 1980s would have more than a \$1 billion impact. Both scenarios would damage the state’s communities, industries and future economy. When completed, the RRVWSP project will benefit nearly 50% of North Dakota’s population.

“I’m really excited this is a state project. I think that’s what continues to move this project forward,” Travnicek said. “The fact that it’s going to serve half of the population of North Dakota. ... We’ve got permanent water for our industries, water supply to our individuals, our residents, our communities. It’s very significant.”

*50-foot sections of 72-inch-diameter pipe are strung out, waiting to be installed as the first 1.2-mile section of pipeline in Foster County.*

# PROJECT TIMELINE

## RRVWSP MISSOURI RIVER INTAKE PUMPING STATION WET WELL & SITE DEVELOPMENT

- Estimated completion: October 2021
- Improvements to the intake site located 4 miles south of Washburn and adjacent to the Missouri River include site work, access road improvements and installation of the secant piles for the wet well

## RRVWSP TRANSMISSION PIPELINE

- Estimated completion: October 2021 for pipeline and July 2022 for final restoration
- Construction of 1.2 miles of 72-inch pipeline 1 mile south and 1 mile east of Carrington, trenchless crossing of U.S. Highway 52/281, and a trenchless crossing of the Red River Valley and Western Railroad

## RRVWSP SHEYENNE RIVER DISCHARGE STRUCTURE & SITE DEVELOPMENT

- Estimated completion: October 2021 for structure and site work and July 2022 for final restoration
- Construction of a 3,330-square-foot concrete energy dissipation structure and flow apron, 100 feet of 54-inch pipe and site grading and access roads 6 miles south of Cooperstown near the Sheyenne River. In the future, this location will be the terminus of the RRVWSP pipeline, and the site will include a control valve structure building

## MISSOURI RIVER INTAKE, SCREEN STRUCTURE & TUNNEL

- Estimated start: August 2021
- Estimated completion: September 2022
- Installation of intake screens and tunnel 4 miles south of Washburn

## 2021-2023 CONSTRUCTION PLAN

- Transmission pipeline installation
- Additional land acquisition