

The Oxbow

FROM THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE WATER COMMISSION

Leadership Workshop Trains Facilitators

By Bill Sharff

In mid-February, a Project WET facilitator leadership training workshop was held in Bismarck at the Comfort Inn. Project WET facilitators are formal and non-formal K-12 educators who, once trained and certified, are authorized to plan, promote, develop, and conduct a variety of Project WET teacher, youth, and community water resource educational programs and events. Twelve individuals from across North Dakota were trained and certified at the event to promote and deliver credit and non-credit programs to K-12 educators and students.

Eight people were seeking Project WET facilitator certification for the first time. The new facilitators were all K-12 formal educators. In order to

attend the training, the new facilitator candidates were required to submit a formal application explaining their qualifications and interests in becoming a facilitator. Each candidate was also asked to complete a Project WET Curriculum and Activity Guide activity with their classroom students and present the materials and a summary of the activity during the workshop. Finally, all attendees signed a "Certificate of Commitment" to promote and provide Project WET Explore Your Watershed opportunities. Each candidate met the necessary requirements, and following the training, all individuals received a certificate of completion acknowledging their certification and commitment to Project WET as facilitators.

Workshop training, using small and whole group methods, included:

- understanding, planning, and teaching activities from the Project WET Guide;
- understanding, planning, and teaching activities from five Project WET supplemental Guides;
- understanding and reviewing all components of the newly published Project WET Facilitator Handbook;
- learning methods for planning, promoting, facilitating, and conducting Project WET educational opportunities;
- developing programs for specified Project WET scenario options;
- explanation of the national and North Dakota Project WET K-12 curriculum and educational materials and resources.

Facilitators also received training using the liquid treasure and watershed pollution educational trunks. A great diversity of water education resource and educational materials, and a visit from a Norwegian immigrant (Ila LaChapelle) also were hits.

If you would like a Project WET educational program in your community, contact Bill Sharff, ND State Water Commission, (701) 328-4833. Bill can help you contact a facilitator near you.



First row (L to R): Virginia Deitz, Fargo; Ila LaChapelle, Wallhalla; Bill Sharff, Bismarck; Amber Mattson, Fargo; Melody Staebner, Fargo; Kim Belgarde, Fargo.

Second row (L to R): Amy Schimtz, Bottineau; Patricia Stein, Mandan; Cynthia Misner, Berthold; Darlene Boyle, West Fargo; Lori Clark, Fargo; and Sandy Wells, Glendive, MT.

Leland Krein Receives “Surveyor of the Year” Award

Water Commission staff member, Leland Krein, was recently presented with the “Surveyor of the Year” award by the North Dakota Society of Professional Land Surveyors.



Krein received the award in

recognition of his cooperative efforts with Water Commission IT staff to make GLO (General Land Office) plats and benchmark information available via the Water Commission’s website.

The North Dakota State Water Commission and the Office of the State Engineer are responsible for the preservation and dissemination of official government survey plats (GLOs) and notes for the State of North Dakota. Many of these docu-

ments are as old, or older than the state itself, dating back to the late 1800s through the early 1900s.

Because of the age of these materials, it is a relief to know that the originals are being safely preserved and stored, but the scans of their likeness can be reviewed and accessed any time of day, seven days a week, via the Commission’s website at <http://survey.swc.nd.gov>.

Congratulations Leland!

Devils Lake Upper Basin Irrigation Test Project Extended



By Mike Noone

At their February meeting in Cando, the Devils Lake Basin Joint Water Resource Board voted to extend the Upper Basin Water Utilization Test Project. This project seeks to determine the potential for using excess surface water in the Devils Lake basin for irrigation. The extension of the project through the 2008 growing season was made at the recommendation of NDSU due to the high variability in environmental conditions that the project experienced.

The Test Project is a cooperative effort that has upper basin water management and mitigation of the Devils Lake flooding problem as one of its main goals. The project is fund-

ed by a broad spectrum of local contributors, including the Joint Board, the Water Commission, and with federal money secured by Senator Byron Dorgan.

North Dakota State University, in cooperation with the Joint Board, is analyzing ten sites, covering over 900 acres. Each site uses surface water sources that meet

irrigation standards, and all have soils that have been determined to be marginally irrigable. The primary purpose of the study is to determine the feasibility of using these marginal soils for irrigation agriculture.

NDSU is looking at many different aspects of the projects, including how marginal soils are changed through irrigation, evapotranspiration variability in crops irrigated on such soils, and using remote sensing technologies to evaluate field conditions.

The Test Project was expected to take three years, and began in 2005. However, a wet growing season in 2005 led to delays in getting testing

equipment into the field.

Because 2006 was a dry year with high groundwater reserves, it led to significant water use by the project. In some cases, as much as an inch of water was applied per week during the growing season. However, 2007 was a wetter year, and there was less need for irrigation. It is hoped that the 2008 growing season will provide researchers with additional data to help answer some remaining questions.

If results are favorable for expansion, more irrigation sites can be developed where suitable across the basin, thus utilizing additional water that might otherwise make its way to Devils Lake. As such, the Joint Board has begun preparations for securing funding for a ‘Pilot Project’ with an additional 3,000 acres in the future, of which 1,000 acres would be marginal-type soils and the other 2,000 acres irrigable-type soils. As of last month, 31 sites had been identified, involving over 7,400 acres under consideration.

Operators involved in the original project will be able to buy the irrigation equipment at a reduced rate, should they choose at the end of the study period.

New North Dakota Administrative Code Rules Effective April 1

On April 1, a handful of new and amended rules related to state sovereign land management took effect. Sovereign land is another name for North Dakota's public lands in and around the state's major rivers and lakes. State law defines sovereign land as "those areas, including beds and islands, lying within the ordinary high water mark of navigable lakes and streams."

In addition to a few definition changes, there were other additions and amendments to the state's Administrative Code (N.D.A.C.) that more directly impact the State Engineer's management of sovereign land and the public's use of the resource. Some of those changes to N.D.A.C. 89-10 include:

Section 89-10-01-04 requires that any project on state sovereign land requires authorization by the State Engineer prior to construction or operation, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

Section 89-10-01-08 is amended to include the requirement that the State Engineer consider potential effects on cultural and historical resources when acting on a permit application for a project on state sovereign land.

Section 89-10-01-11 prohibits the construction or moorage of any residential structure or structure designed for human occupancy except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

Section 89-10-01-13 regulates the use of motor vehicles on state sovereign land.

Section 89-10-01-14 provides

that the State Engineer may cancel any project authorized under these rules.

Section 89-10-01-21 is created to require a permit from the State Engineer for organized group activities that are publicly advertised or are attended by more than 25 people on state sovereign land.

Section 89-10-01-22 is created to address control of pets on state sovereign land in and around the Missouri River between the railroad bridge near the south border of Fort Lincoln state park (approximately river mile marker 1,310) and the Interstate 94 bridge (approximately river mile marker 1,315.4).

Section 89-10-01-23 is created to prohibit camping for more than ten consecutive days or leaving a campsite unattended for more than 24 hours on state sovereign land.

Section 89-10-01-24 is created to provide that hunting, fishing, and trapping are open on state sovereign land, except as provided in other rules, regulations, or laws; and prohibits posting sovereign land with signage by anyone other than the state engineer.

Section 89-10-01-25 is created to prohibit leaving watercraft unattended or moored on state sovereign land for more than 24 hours.

Section 89-10-01-26 is created to prohibit unpermitted activities that remove or destroy natural resources on state sovereign land.

Section 89-10-01-27 is created to prohibit disturbance or destruction of cultural or historical resources on state sovereign land.

Section 89-10-01-28 is created

to prohibit littering, abandonment of property, dumping of holding tanks of campers or boats, and possession of glass containers on state sovereign land.

Changes to N.D.A.C. 89-11, related to the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program also came into effect April 1. Aside from some definition changes, some of the amendments/additions include:

Subsection 2 of Section 89-11-01-04 removes the requirement that cost-share assistance is available only for long-term immediate solutions.

Subsection 4 of Section 89-11-01-04 is amended to provide the following items are eligible for assistance - new water wells, rural water system connections, pipeline extensions, pasture taps, pumps, generators, electrical and solar hook-ups, stock water tanks; and labor, materials, and equipment rentals for work completed by the producer as items eligible for assistance.

Subsection 5 of Section 89-11-01-04 is amended to limit an applicant to three projects.

Subsection 2 of Section 89-11-01-05 is amended to provide that projects outside of North Dakota are not eligible for the program.

Subsection 6 of Section 89-11-01-05 is amended to provide that repairs due to damage to an existing water source are not eligible for the program.

Subdivision a of subsection 2 of Section 89-11-01-06 is amended to provide that the State Engineer may grant an extension of time to complete a project if a written request is submitted and just cause for an extension is provided.

The complete set of changes to N.D.A.C 89-10 and 89-11 are available on the Commission's website at www.swc.nd.gov.



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