



## Livestock Drought Program Reinstated

In response to the ongoing drought that is drying out portions of the state – particularly in western North Dakota, the Water Commission voted on May 14 to approve \$1 million in funding to reactivate the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program (Program). The Program is designed to provide 50 percent cost-share assistance to livestock producers with livestock water supply shortages caused by drought. The Program has been a great success, and was well received by livestock producers throughout the state in years past.

For the 2008 Program, producers should be aware of a few rule changes that became effective April 1. The most notable changes include:

- Construction on a project can begin immediately after submitting a completed application and prior to approval from the State Engineer.
- Projects located within Indian reservation boundaries are eligible.
- An applicant is limited to reimbursement for up to three livestock water supply projects.
- The list of eligible equipment was expanded to allow new technologies to be used.

As before, livestock producers must have been denied cost-share assistance from the federal Farm Service Agency's Emergency Conservation Program to be eligible for the Program. At this time, the FSA

does not have any funding sources identified.

In addition to Commission approval of funding for the Program, a governor-issued drought disaster declaration that identifies the disaster area counties is required to reactivate the Program. Though drought conditions are the most severe in western counties, the program will be available statewide.

The Program was originally cre-

ated in 1991 in response to a severe statewide drought, but it was only administered for a short period of time. Then, in the summer of 2002, the Program was reactivated following a Drought Emergency Proclamation issued by Gov. John Hoeven. At that time, only select counties throughout the state that were experiencing severe drought conditions were eligible for Program funding. But, as the drought continued to persist in subsequent years, nearly all corners of North Dakota were affected, and a statewide drought proclamation made livestock producers in all of the state's 53 counties eligible for assistance.

For additional information on the Program, go to the Water Commission's homepage at [www.swc.nd.gov](http://www.swc.nd.gov), contact Larry Knudtson at 701-328-4969, or e-mail [lknudtson@nd.gov](mailto:lknudtson@nd.gov).

## Devils Lake Board Hires New Manager



Jeff Frith

Connor who retired in April.

Over the last 10 years, the Joint Board has become increasingly active in water management, and that requires a position devoted full-time to aid in those efforts.

On May 12, Jeff Frith started in his new position as manager of the Devils Lake Basin Joint Water Resource Board, replacing Mike

Duane Hawk, chairman of the Joint Board said "The selection committee was very pleased with the excellent applicants for the position and I believe Jeff Frith will do an outstanding job for the Joint Board now and in future years."

Jeff brings a great deal of knowledge and experience to the Joint Board, having worked previously for the Ramsey County emergency management office, and having served on numerous civic organizations throughout the community over the years. Frith lives in rural Devils Lake, with his wife Shari, and son Spencer, 8.



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## ND WRRRI Sponsors A Day of Seminars on Water Resources



Dr. G. Padmanabhan, director (front, far right), student presenters, and other members of the WRRRI.

The North Dakota Water Resources Research Institute (WRRRI) was founded in 1965 by authority of Congress as one of the 54 Institutes throughout the nation and is administered through the United States Geological Survey. It is currently under the direction of Dr. G. Padmanabhan, of North Dakota State University's Department of Civil Engineering.

Each year, the North Dakota WRRRI, supplemented by 15 percent match from the North Dakota State Water Commission, grants fellowships to graduate students at North Dakota universities for research in water-resource related areas on a competitive basis. A detailed description of the Institute, fellowships, and publications resulting from Institute fellowships can be viewed at: <http://www.ndsu.edu/ndsu/wrrri/>.

One of the priorities of the WRRRI is the support of research likely to be useful for water-resource policy or management. Recognizing the importance of information dissemination, the WRRRI sponsored a day of seminars at the Russell Reid Memorial Auditorium at the North Dakota Heritage Center in Bismarck on April 15. All state and federal agencies involved in water resource management, local college science students,

and the general public were invited.

The day of seminars focused on a variety of topics impacting state water resources including: several presentations on the use of nanotechnology for assessing and treating drinking water for arsenic and organic contaminants; presentations characterizing the plant composition of restored wetlands, and the



### COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

The North Dakota State Water Commission (Commission) held a meeting at the State Office Building in Bismarck on April 23, 2008. In action items, the Commission:

- Authorized the State Engineer to award Northwest Area Water Supply project Contract 4-2A to John T. Jones Construction of Fargo, who submitted a base bid price of \$12.43 million.

The contract will involve the construction of a new 2 million gallon reservoir and 18 million gallon per

distribution of estrogens in soil and ground water of agricultural fields; and geological assessments of bed-rock minerals affecting water quality in North Dakota, and methods for improving the resolution of site water quality assessments.

The seminars provided a forum for professionals, students, and citizens interested in state water resources to become familiar with some of the "cutting edge" work being conducted by North Dakota's universities, and to receive first-hand exposure to some of the people and programs that are working to improve water resource management.

The seminars were recorded and are posted online for viewing on the North Dakota State Water Commission's webpage at <http://www.swc.nd.gov> under the heading, "North Dakota Water Resources Research Institute Sponsors a Day of Seminars."

day high service pump station that will be located near the Minot Water Treatment Plant. Demolition of the existing high service and backwash pumps, and the installation of new backwash pumps and controls are also included in the contract.

- Agreed to sign the Fargo-Moorhead and Upstream Feasibility Study Phase 1b project management plan and continue as the North Dakota non-federal partner.

In 2006, the Corps completed a Phase I Fargo-Moorhead and Upstream Feasibility Study that linked existing mainstem models, identified flood damage risks in urban areas, identified potential flood storage sites, and proposed details for a Phase II study. However, though the Phase I study was a success, there

was little interest in the Phase II effort.

More recently, Fargo has been in discussions with the Corps regarding the need for additional detailed hydrologic analysis on the Wild Rice River, and a tributary, Antelope Creek. This would support ongoing efforts related to Fargo's proposed south-side flood control project. Accordingly, the Corps developed a Phase Ib project management plan that will be an amendment to the original Phase I study. The Phase Ib study will involve the development of a hydrologic model for the Wild Rice River, calibrate the model to the 1997 flood, and compute 50-year and 100-year existing and proposed conditions hydrographs. It will also expand existing modeling efforts on the Wild Rice River and Antelope Creek, and it will complement existing models on the Red River. In addition, potential on-stream and off-stream flood storage sites will be identified and analyzed.

The total cost of the project is \$349,000, with the local share being \$204,000. The City of Fargo has offered to pay the entire non-federal share through cash and in-kind contributions. The Commission, who will serve as the project non-federal sponsor, will provide in-kind contributions through technical staff assistance.

Approved the use of new provisions in Commission contracts and agreements regarding indemnification. The first change is that the Commission will only require project sponsor endorsement through the construction of the project – not for the life of the project. The other change is that language was added saying the Commission is indemnified “except that where court proceedings, including any and all appeals, result in a final determination that the state is liable.”

## Bismarck Water Festival A Great Success

On May 13 and 14, the Bismarck Public School District and North Dakota's Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) sponsored a two-day water festival at the Bismarck State College campus.

Over the course of the two-day event, there were 743 third grade students from several different Bismarck elementary schools and 38 instructors who presented and operated the various activities. Many of the instructors were professionals from various natural resource-related agencies or offices, including five staff members from the Water Commission. Some of the students spent a half day at the event, while others spent an entire day, taking in up to eight different programs and activities.

The festival itself consisted of structured learning stations, demonstrations, and exhibits where students were actively engaged in hands-on water activities and investigations. In addition, the festival provided students with an opportunity to learn about water resources in a way that both complemented and reinforced their traditional classroom learning in a fun and informative manner.



**Bill Sharff, Project WET director, leads students through festival activities.**



**Michael Noone, State Water Commission, works with students at the festival.**