



East Dakota Water Development District
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MINUTES
June 18, 2025

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on June 18th, 2025, at the EDWDD office in Brookings. Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.. The following persons attended:

Directors Present

Mark Anderson
Jeff Barth
Rick Bonander
Debra Elofson
Spencer Hawley
Bob Kappel
Troy Larson
Julie Loveland-Swanstrom
John Moes*

Others Present

Reed Andries, Brookings-Deuel Rural Water System
Makenzie Huber, South Dakota Searchlight*
Nurul Islam, South Dakota State University
Kurt Pfeifle, Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System
Chris Schmit, South Dakota State University
Travis Steffensen, Sioux Rural Water System
Eric Witt, Brookings Municipal Utilities

Staff Present

Jaelynn Dreckman*
Jay Gilbertson
Deb Springman

Directors Absent

- none -

* - participated via video-conference

Administrative Items

Approval of Agenda - Director Kappel asked to have the State Wetland Protection Policy discussion, deferred from the May meeting, added to the Agenda. The Manager asked to have an amendment to the District's assessment of PFAS in the Big Sioux River being conducted by the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology added to the Agenda.

Motion by Hawley, seconded by Kappel to approve the agenda as so amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the May 15th, 2025, meeting.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Kappel to approve the Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports - The Board reviewed the May 2025 financial statements.

Motion by Barth, seconded by Loveland-Swanstrom to approve the May 2025 financial statements. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Anderson directed that the approved financial statements be placed in the District files.

Report of Meetings and Conferences - The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he attended:

1. **May 21st** - Brookings. South Dakota Lakes & Streams Association (SDLSA) Board of Directors.
2. **June 3rd** - Ellendale, North Dakota. Tour of Applied Digital's Ellendale Data Center.
3. **June 9th** - Sioux Falls. Minnehaha Conservation District Board of Supervisors.
4. **June 11th** - Brookings. SDLSA Board of Directors.
5. **June 16th** - Arlington. Kingbrook Rural Water System Board of Directors.
6. **June 17th** - Clear Lake. Deuel County Commission - Applied Digital update.
7. **June 17th** - Baltic. SDSU Willow Creek Watershed Project update.

Upcoming Meetings -

1. **June 18th - 9:30 a.m.** - Good Earth State Park, DeSmet. South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts (SDACD) Vermillion-Big Sioux Area meeting.
2. **June 23rd - 9:00 a.m.** - Fort Sisseton State Park, Lake City. SDACD Coteau Area meeting.
3. **June 25th - 8:30 a.m. (MST)** - Deadwood. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) Board member training.
4. **June 25th - 9:00 a.m.** - Minnehaha Community Water Corporation Office, Dell Rapids. Big Sioux River Project Steering Committee.
5. **June 26th - 8:30 a.m. (MST)** - Deadwood. SDARWS Rural Water Center and Board of Directors.
6. **June 26th - 4:30 p.m.** - Sioux Falls. Lewis & Clark RWS 34th Annual Membership Banquet.
7. **June 26th & 27th** - Pierre. South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources.
8. **July 1st - 1:00 p.m.** - Webster. USACOE Waubay Chain of Lakes Existing Conditions Analysis & Preliminary Alternatives presentation.
9. **July 8th - 3:00 p.m. (MST)** - Rapid City. July West Dakota Water Development District meeting.
10. **July 9th - 9:00 a.m.** - Pierre. South Dakota water Management Board.
11. **July 10th - 9:00 a.m.** - Yankton. July James River WDD Board of Directors meeting.
12. **July 16th - 3:00 p.m.** - Salem. July Vermillion Basin Water Development District meeting.
13. **July 17th - 9:00 a.m.** - EDWDD Office, Brookings. July EDWDD Board of Directors meeting.
14. **July 22nd** - Sioux Falls. Rural Water Open Golf Tournament.
15. **July 23rd - 8:00 a.m.** - Sioux Falls. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems Manager's Group meeting.

Payment Requests - The Manager presented one (1) payment/reimbursement request that required Board action. He noted that the request was in order, and consistent with conditions established at the time of the awards. It was also noted that these payments would complete the District's obligation to these efforts.

<u>Grant Recipient/Activity</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
SDSU - Economic Assessment of the SRAM Program (Mehan)	\$ 20,551.89
Total	\$ 20,551.89

Motion by Kappel, seconded by Hawley, to authorize payment of \$20,551.89 as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Project Assistance Requests

Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System - Kurt Pfeifle, Executive Director for the Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System (DMRWS) presented the Board with a request for \$50,000 in District cost-share assistance. Mr. Pfeifle thanked the Board for their prior support, awarded in March 2023 and August 2024. He reviewed the progress made by the organization. The organization became an 'official' entity in June 2023, has established and populated a Board of Directors, and hired a part-time Executive Director, along with legal, accounting and engineering assistance. DMRWS currently has 56 members from four (4) states. Similar to the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System, membership is limited to public water suppliers, with a majority of the members from South Dakota, but entities in Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska are interested.

DMRWS was the recipient of \$1,000,000 State Water Resources Management System grants from the South Dakota Legislature in 2024 and 2025. They will be pursuing a \$750,000 award in 2026. The funds are being used to develop a survey of member needs (appraisal study), which will lay the groundwork for a subsequent feasibility study and eventually construction design.

Motion by Kappel, seconded by Hawley to award \$50,000 in District cost-share assistance to the Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System in support of its developmental efforts, and to authorize distribution as requested. Motion carried unanimously, with Director Larson abstaining.

2025 International Legislators Forum - The Manager presented a request for support on behalf of the 2025 International Legislators Forum. He noted that each year, legislators from South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and Manitoba meeting to share ideas and learn about regional issues of common interest. South Dakota is hosting the 2025 gathering, which will be held in Deadwood on September 9-12. In 2021, the event was held in Sioux Falls, and District staff met with the group to talk about watershed restoration efforts in general, and the Big Sioux River Project in particular. The Manager recommended support at the Forum Sponsor level, which amounts to \$500.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Bonander to award District cost-share assistance in the amount of \$500 in support of the 2025 International Legislators Forum, and to authorize distribution of the funds. Motion carried unanimously.

2025 Tri-State Drainage Research Forum - The Manager presented a request for assistance from South Dakota State University (SDSU) on behalf of the 2025 Tri-State Drainage Research Forum. He noted that each fall, people involved in agricultural drainage research and management in Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota meet to discuss ongoing and developing research activities and related issues. The Manager has attended the event off and on over the past few decades. The Forum rotates between the

three states, and the 2025 event will be held in Brookings on September 9th and 10th. I am scheduled to speak at the event, and will be a co-leader on a field excursion. The request is for \$1,500, to be applied toward general event activities.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Elofson to award District cost-share assistance in the amount of \$1,500 in support of the 2025 Tri-State Drainage Research Forum, and to authorize distribution of the funds. Motion carried unanimously.

South Dakota School of Mines & Technology - At it's August 2024 meeting, the Board awarded \$99,514 to the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology to conduct a baseline survey of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the Big Sioux River. The budget included support for sample collection and analyses at ten (10) locations along the river. One sampling round occurred in September 2024, and four are scheduled for 2025. Following the first round of tests, the Board requested that two additional sampling sites be added to the study. The Manager presented a proposal from SDS&T to fund the additional sample analyses at a cost of \$5,509.

Motion by Hawley, seconded by Larson to award District cost-share assistance to SDSM&T in the amount of \$5,509 in support of the expanded PFAS sampling as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Preliminary Discussion of Expanding District Future-Use Water Permits

The Manager reviewed the District's Future Use Water Right (#3754-3, which currently reserves up to 91,500 acre-feet per year of water from the Missouri River. In that the District is not a public water supplier (PWS), the water held in reserve is intended to ultimately be used by the residents of the District. He noted that under Administrative Rule of South Dakota 74:02:004:24.01, the South Dakota Water Management Board can issue future use permits for up to twice the 'current' water usage by a given PWS. In our case, this would involve all of the PWSs providing service within District boundaries. In 2003, after a survey of water usage by the PWSs within the District, along with a guess as to what Lewis & Clark Regional Water System (LCRWS) would need, the projected use was roughly 72,000 ac-ft/yr. Twice that is 144,000, and that is the amount we held under 3574-3 until the 2022 transfer of 52,500 ac-ft/yr to LCRWS.

The Manager has begun the process of reviewing current water use within the District, with an eye toward revisiting the adequacy of District future use reserves. He described several options for moving forward. First, request a new Future Use Permit for Missouri River water so that we have the full 2x coverage available. As this is likely to exceed 10,000 ac-ft/yr, the application would need to be approved by the State Legislature at some point. Another option is to consider targeted requests from specific aquifers. These future use permits would not be intended to provide District-wide support, but would be predicated on backstopping PWSs in the northern part of the District. It is a far distance from the Missouri River to Brookings, Milbank and Watertown, and while getting river water to these communities might be theoretically possible, a more proximal source, or sources, might present practical and financial advantages. Again, details at the meeting.

The Board discussed the matter, and agreed it was something to consider at future meetings.

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State Wetland Protection Policy

The Manager reviewed ARSD 74:51:01:11, which describes how the state protects wetlands. In plain terms, it prohibits the “destruction or impairment of wetlands,” unless the action is otherwise sanctioned by a federal agency. A recent change in the federal definition of the waters of the United States (WOTUS) has created conditions under which federal permits are not an option, and ARSD 74:51:01:11 is the sole regulation on the management of certain wetlands.

The problem is that under the established administrative rule, there is no exception to the stated prohibition of loss, beyond a federal finding. A change to the language that might allow consideration of wetland loss if offset by some level of mitigation, could address the problem.

District Updates

SDSU PFAS Testing Lab - Drs. Christopher Schmit and Nural Islam, South Dakota State University, updated the Board on their efforts to establish a laboratory capable of testing for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in environmental samples. District support for this effort, awarded in March of this year, amounts to \$53,134, which is being used to complete the necessary steps to gain certification in the USEPA 1633 Methodology for PFAS analyses.

2025 Big Sioux Water Festival - Deb Springman provided a summary of the 33rd Annual Big Sioux Water Festival, which was held on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, on the campus of South Dakota State University. There were 1,098 fifth grade students from 53 classrooms in attendance from 24 area schools as well as 150 volunteers at this year's event. The festival theme was "Water, Water, Everywhere - The Water Cycle". The water festival provided 26 hands-on activities, two assemblies (Zoo Man and the Science Museum of MN), and 21 Exhibit Hall exhibits. Activities were led by professionals in the environmental and water resource fields, as well as volunteers from the Mickelson Middle School Enrichment Group. Attending students learned about various water topics, conservation, and how they could take an active role in protecting the environment. The Teacher Resource Room provided posters, activities, and door prizes related to the festival theme, sign-ups for classroom educational trunks for next school year, and professional development opportunities coming up this summer. Student contests included a festival trivia contest the week prior to the event with 24 classrooms participating and a poetry contest where students were asked to write a poem that was related to the festival theme with 133 entries from 12 classrooms. Prizes were given out to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners of each contest. The next Big Sioux Water Festival will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026.

Adjournment

There being no further District business, Chairman Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at +:45 p.m.

Spencer Hawley, Secretary