



NEWS RELEASE

North Dakota State Water Commission

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State Engineer testifying tonight at public hearing regarding NAWS project

The Bureau of Reclamation is holding a public hearing on the Northwest Area Water Supply Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Draft SEIS) tonight in Minot. State Engineer Todd Sando will be testifying on this important issue at the hearing.

"Publication of this Draft SEIS represents an important milestone in the ongoing efforts to address the water needs of our citizens in the northwest region of our state," said State Engineer Todd Sando.

The purpose of the hearing is to seek public comment regarding the Draft SEIS. The public hearing provides an opportunity for both verbal and written comments. The Draft SEIS evaluates the estimated future water needs of the area through 2060, develops a full range of reasonable alternatives to meet this future need, and evaluates the potential environmental effects of the proposed alternatives.

Sando also stressed, "This document confirms the pressing need for reliable, high quality drinking water in this area, and it demonstrates that the NAWS project can be designed in a way to maximize effectiveness of the project, while presenting extremely low risk, if any, to the environment."

Since 2007, infrastructure has been installed in a large portion of the NAWS service area, and an interim water supply from the city of Minot has been partially addressing average day water demands in Burlington, Berthold, Kenmare, Sherwood and Mohall; as well as West River, Upper Souris, and All Season rural water systems, numerous connections to North Prairie Rural Water, two connections to Minot, and the Minot Air Force Base. This interim water supply, however, does not meet the full needs of the region and is not sustainable as the city of Minot's groundwater source continues to decline.

The public hearing will be held tonight from 6:30-8:30 p.m. CST at the Comfort Inn, 1515 22nd Ave SW in Minot.