

Stutsman Rural Water District Expansion Project

Poor water quality and a lack of water within the service area led to the incorporation of the Stutsman Rural Water District in 1987. Because many of the farms in its service area still used poor-quality well water, Stutsman Rural Water embarked on an expansion project in 2010 in an effort to supply these residents with the high-quality water its current customers have come to enjoy.

The first phase of its expansion project added 61 users and 18 miles of pipeline. A connection to purchase water from the City of Carrington, including a booster station, was also installed as part of this phase. Phase 1 was completed in May 2012 at a cost of \$1.2 million. It was funded through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency and a USDA Rural Development loan.

Phase 2 connected 329 users and added 281 miles of pipeline to the system, as well as two booster stations between Pingree and Woodworth. The city of Woodworth was also

added to the system as part of this phase. Phase 2 was completed at a cost of \$10.7 million, 70 percent of which was funded through a North Dakota State Water Commission cost-share grant, and the remainder through a USDA Rural Development loan.



Phase 2B was originally cut from the Phase 2 project, because grant funding was not available to construct the entire project. When it was later constructed, it connected 128 users, added 164 miles of pipeline, and constructed a 365,000-gallon standpipe tank near Woodworth. Phase 2B was completed at a cost of \$5.4 million. It was funded through a 70 percent cost-share grant from the State Water Commission and a USDA Rural Development loan.



Construction of Phase 2 and 2B was completed in October of this year.

Phase 3 of the expansion is currently under construction. This phase truly shows the cooperation between rural water systems and their dedication to getting water to those who need it despite system boundaries. "During Phase 3, we heard from a cattle producer in Kidder County who needed water. It turned out the customer was actually in South Central's service area, but South Central didn't have enough people along the way to make it feasible to bring water to this area. Distance between hookups needs to be less than two miles to make it feasible," says Geneva Kaiser, manager of Stutsman Rural Water. "But we had signups west of Medina, so it made sense to continue into Weisser Township in Kidder County."

This cattle producer and his son signed up six services of their own and heavily promoted rural water to their neighbors. Stutsman Rural Water has now installed service to 40 users, including other cattle producers in the Crystal Springs area. These people were very excited to have the opportunity to obtain good-quality, dependable water for the first time. Southeast Water Users District also allowed the town of Dickey and several other users in its district to connect to Stutsman Rural Water as part of the Phase 3 project. Stutsman Rural Water has also connected to users to the Greater Ramsey Rural Water and Barnes Rural Water for their expansion projects.

When Phase 3 is completed, it will add 384 miles of pipeline, and at least 392 users; Kaiser says she is receiving more sign-ups every week. It is scheduled to be completed August 2016 at a cost of \$13 million, which is being funded through a 75 percent cost-share grant from the State Water Commission and a USDA Rural Development loan.

Phase 4 of Stutsman's expansion includes the construction of a 600,000-gallon, 180-foot water tower west of Jamestown. The system's water treatment plant was also upgraded, increasing its capacity from 400 gallons per minute to 2,000 gallons per minute. A 312,000-gallon clear well addition was also constructed as part of this phase. Construction was completed earlier this year at a cost of \$7 million. It was funded through loans from the State Revolving Fund and the North Dakota Public Finance Authority's Industrial Commission.

Phase 5 is the last remaining phase of the Stutsman expansion, receiving final approval at the November 2015 State Water Commission meeting. Plans are to bid this project spring 2016. It consists of a 100,000-gallon underground storage addition to one of the system's reservoirs, a 500,000-gallon water tower east of Jamestown in the Spiritwood area, additional pipeline, and the addition of 65 users. Phase 5 will be funded with a 71 percent cost-share loan through the State Water Commission, and with loan dollars that have yet to be determined.

Stutsman Rural Water's expansion also included projects to provide water for industrial purposes, including a booster station and seven miles of pipeline to transport water from the City of Jamestown's Cavendish water tower to the Dakota Spirit Ag Ethanol Plant, as well



as a booster station, 1 million-gallon storage tank, and five miles of pipeline from Stutsman Rural Water's treatment plant to the Spiritwood Station Power Plant. These projects were completed in November 2014 at a cost of \$7.3 million. Funding was provided through the State Revolving Fund and Public Finance Authority Industrial Commission loans.

Kaiser says when the rural expansion project started five years ago, the cost of the entire project was estimated at \$14 million, but rising construction costs and the increased number of signups have brought the cost up to \$46 million.

"I'm happy the project is nearing completion, but some rural water managers say you're never truly done. When we started, I was very naive about construction projects and the amount of work it takes to complete them. That's probably a good thing, because if I would have known, I might not have done it," she laughs.

"It is hard to believe in this day and age there are still North Dakotans who do not have access to adequate drinking water," says Eric Volk, executive director of the North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association. "The large expansions of South Central and Stutsman Rural Water Districts bring excellent water to thousands of these deserving residents. Each of these systems should be commended for improving the quality of life for those they serve."

