

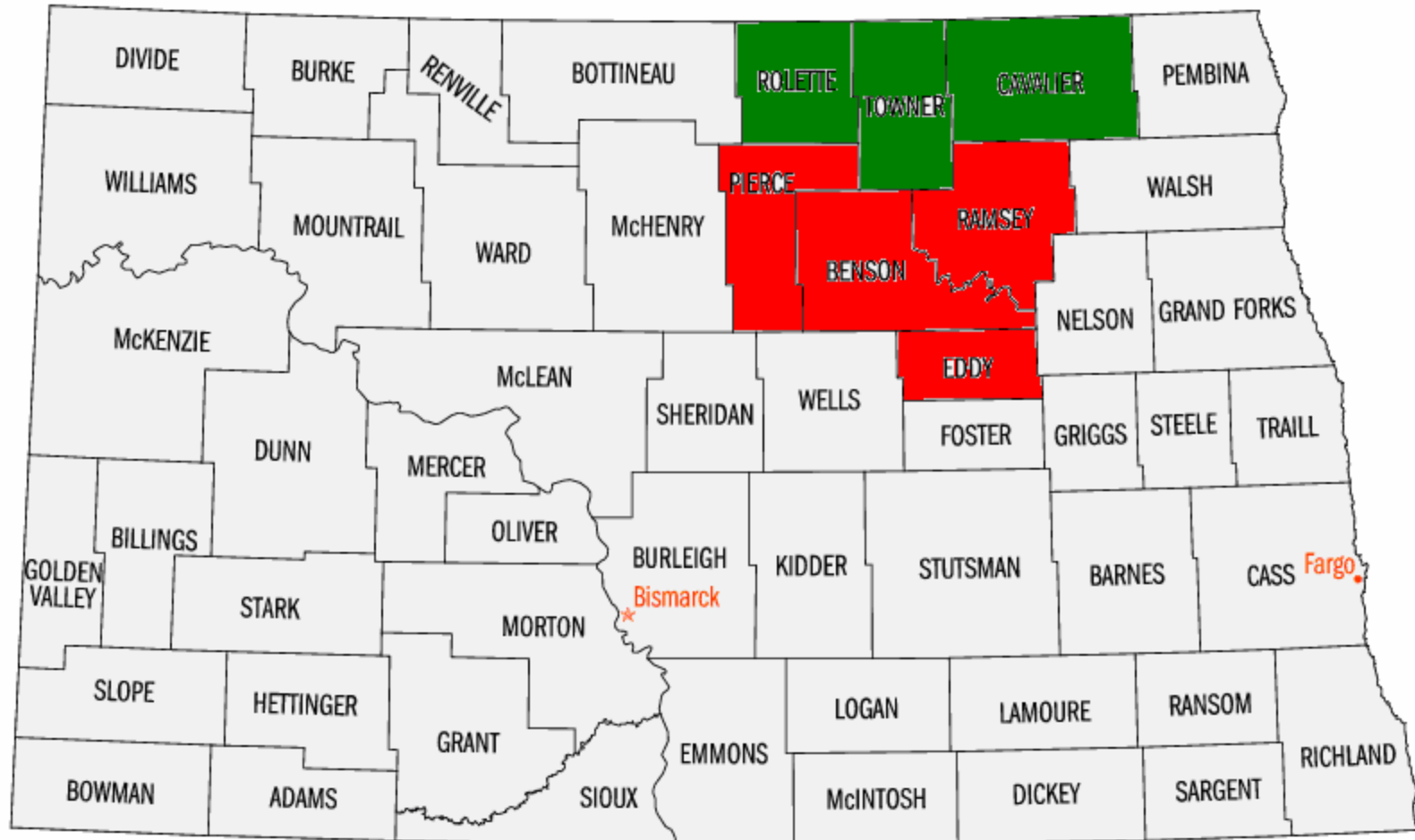
**Develop Long-Term  
Environmental Health  
Services For  
Three North East Counties in  
North Dakota  
2006-2007**

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Lake Region District Health Unit**

# Problem Statement

- Rolette, Towner and Cavalier Counties are three Counties that do not have Environmental Health Services Available.

# Rolette, Towner & Cavalier Counties Form Northern Border of



## **Methodology**

- **Educate & survey Public Health Nurse & Key decision makers on Environmental Health Services.**
- **Educate & survey partners, such as, bankers, realtors, sewer contractors, etc., on EH services.**
- **Perform the EH services identified in survey.**
- **Receive feedback from EH services provided.**
- **Use feedback provided, key decision makers and public Health Nurse to convince County Commissioners to fund long-term EH services.**

# METHODOLOGY

- **We used timely EH Problems to illustrate what Environmental Health Services are.**
- **Shigellosis outbreak that started with children swimming at a local recreational lake that cabin owners were dumping raw sewage into.**
- **Met with Cabin Owners Association.**
- **Cabin Owners Association testified in favor of onsite sewer regulations.**



# Methodolgy

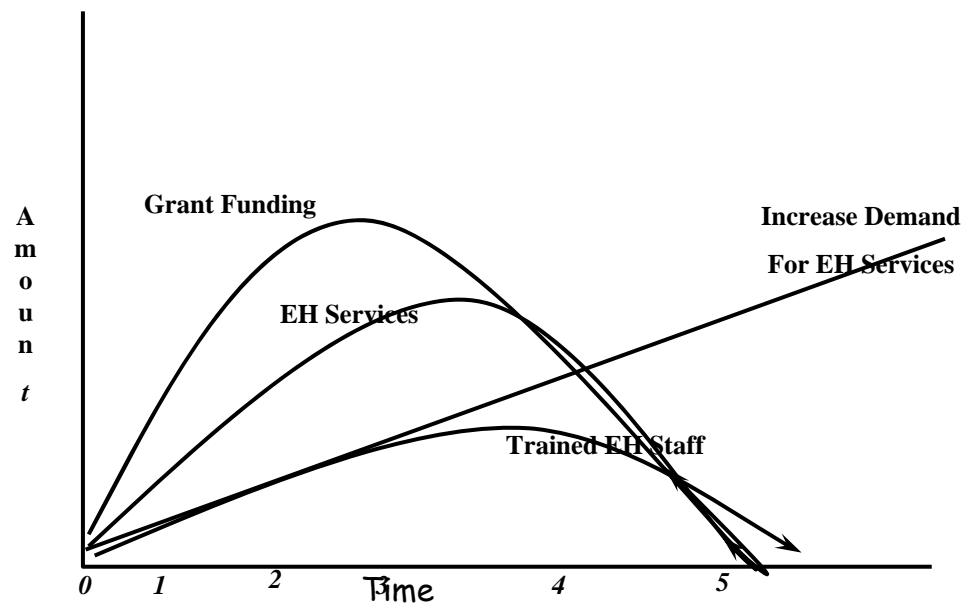
- Large Mold problem in Private and Rental Housing because of high water table.
- Demand for Inspections and Information.
- Provided Inspections & Information Pamphlets with assistance of NDSU Extension Service.





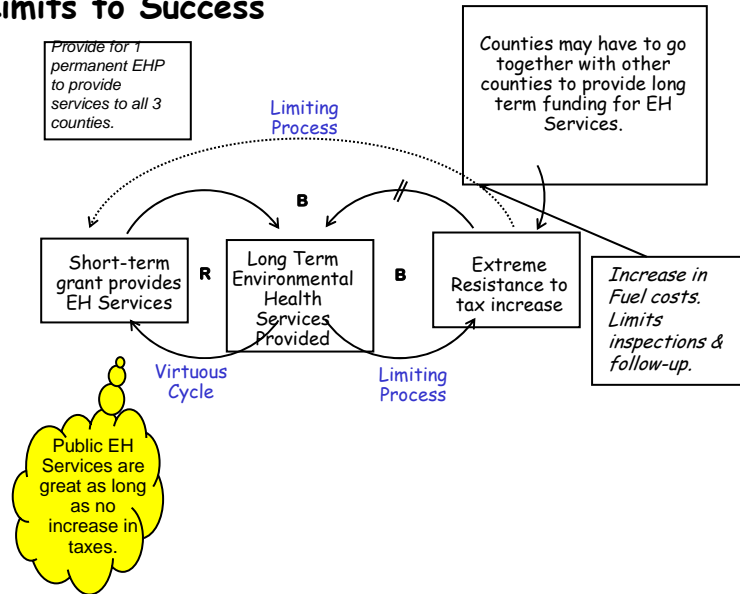
### **Behavior Over Time Graph:**

The behavior over time graph illustrates the usual progression of Environmental programs in the State of North Dakota. The State or the individual Health Departments receive grant funding for specific Environmental Health problems ( West Nile Virus, Bioterrorism, etc). New environmental health personnel are hired, trained and actually increase the demand for EH services by their activity. The grant ends the environmental health personnel are laid off and those services become unavailable. This is what we are working to avoid in the three counties by illustrating the need for long term basic funding to provide EH services. If enough people demand the EH services it may be possible to convince the politicians to provide long term support.



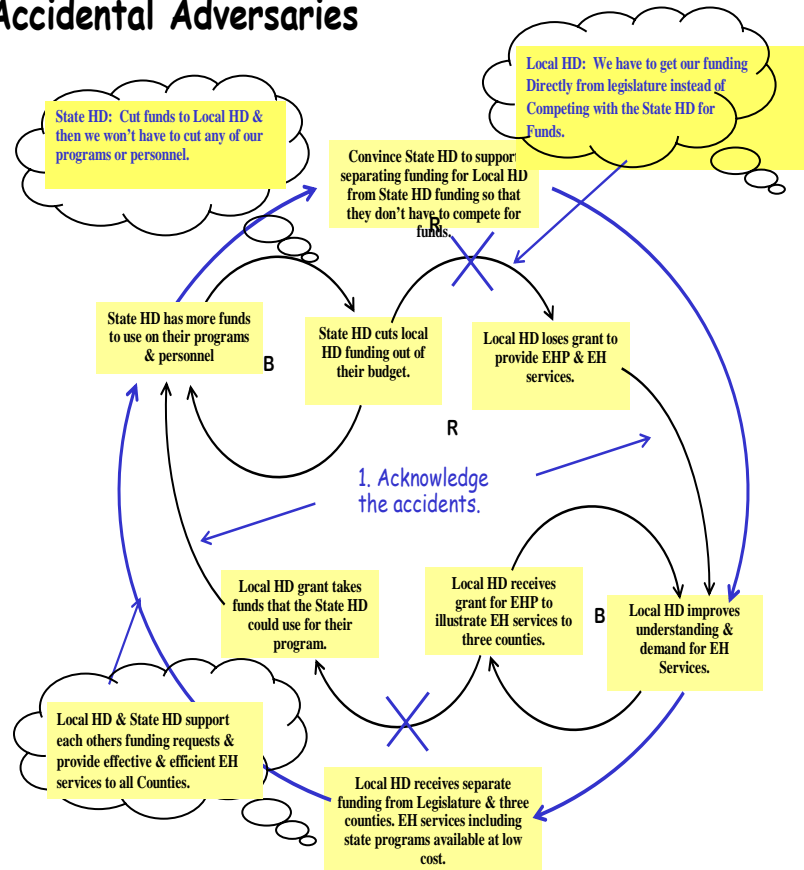
- Limits to Success

**Limits to Success**

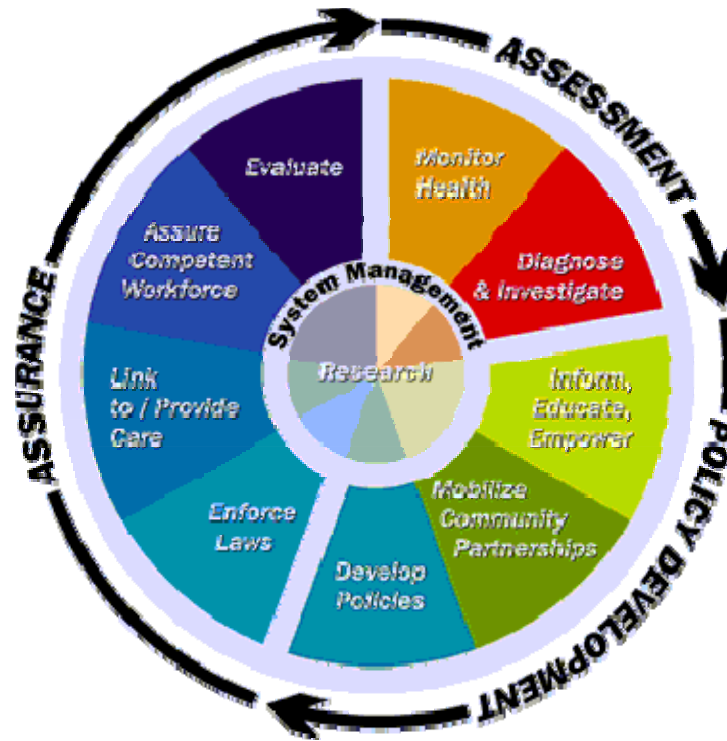


- ***Limits to Success/Growth:*** This project's goal is to build enough support from the people and the key decision makers to convince the County Commissioners to approve an increase in taxes to fund a permanent EHP position and to provide EH services. The Counties may have to combine resources so that they can fund one EHP for all three Counties instead of each having to provide their own.
- This year we also ran into another limiting factor and that was above \$3.00/gallon of gas this can really eat into a budget in a hurry. Extra time planning was necessary so that as many things as possible could be accomplished when in each county.

# Accidental Adversaries



- ***Accidental Adversaries:*** This project fell short of its goal because a grant, which the local health department was using to fund an EHP to provide EH services to the three Counties, was not renewed, due to competition with the State Health Department. All funding awarded from the State to the local Health Departments reduces the amount the State Health Department receives. This makes the local health departments competitors for State Health Department funds. The easiest way for the State Health Department to cut expenditures is to not award any funds to the local Health Departments.
- If the State Health Department could be convinced to support the local Health Departments request for direct funding from the State Legislature then we would not be direct competitors for the same money. This would allow the State Health Department to cooperate on programs with the local Health Departments and the public would benefit by receiving efficient, low cost Environmental Health Services. A committee comprised of the Environmental Health supervisors and administrators from the counties that were affected by the loss of grant funding was formed. The purpose of the committee is to pressure the Governor and the legislators to provide additional monies from the state surplus funds to fund EH services in all the counties of the state that do not have EH services available.



***Project used several facets of the Ten Essentials of Environmental Health.***

1. First, we informed and educated the people about what Environmental Health was and how it could help keep them and their communities a safer, healthier place to live and play. We gave presentations to several community groups; chamber of commerce, rotary and businesses, bankers, realtors and onsite sewer contractors. At each of these presentations we surveyed them as to what EH services they would like to have in their counties.

## ESSENTIAL EH SERVICES

- **2. Several partnerships were formed to help provide environmental health information to the public and to help provide pressure for EH services on the Health Boards, County Commissioners and State Legislators. North Dakota State University Extension service turned out to be an invaluable partner in providing printed materials on mold and mildew cleanup, pesticide handling and disposal and onsite sewer construction.**
- **The Realtors and Bankers have been a valuable source to provide educational pamphlets and EH contact information to the home buying public on wells, onsite sewers and indoor air problems.**
- **The EHP and I also provided training for new home buyers sponsored by the realtors and bankers.**

## ESSENTIAL EH SERVICES

- **The Public Health Nurses/Administrators were the most influential partners that we worked with.**
- **The Nurses had a tie into the county governments and the people. The Public Health Nurses introduced us to the public and the key decision makers. They also included us in their Health Fairs and School presentations.**
- **3. Using the support from the Public Health Nurses, realtors, onsite sewer contractors and key community people the Health Boards of two of the three Counties we were working with adopted sewer regulations and passed swimming pool ordinances. The EH staff and I enforced these new regulations with the assistance of the Health Boards creating an administrative hearing process.**



- **Results:**
- **2 out of 3 counties passed or adopted onsite sewer regulations, pool regulations and nuisance abatement procedures.**
- **Worked well with State Disease Control on tracing a Shigellosis outbreak back to a local lake that had sewage being directly discharged into it by cabin owners.**
- **Work on the Shigellosis outbreak also provided us with a new partner, the lake owners association, in asking for onsite sewer regulation.**
- **1 of 3 counties was not interested in any EH services at all.**

# Results

- Twenty Contractors attend Onsite Sewer Training.
- Sewer Contractor provides Testimony to pass Licensure Requirements and Onsite Sewer Regulations.

- **Next Steps:**
- **Work with NDEHA lobbyist to convince the State to use some of it's excess funds to fund EH services in all counties of the state.**
- **Work with Public Health Nurses, and Health Boards to convince County Commissions to approve long-term funding for EH Services.**
- **Keep partners informed so that they can provide support for long-term EH Services in the Counties.**