

(USBR SOUNDER)

WELCOME TO THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION GREAT PLAINS REGION PODCAST:

THROUGHOUT THE AMERICAN WEST, THE ABUNDANCE OR LACK OF A DEPENDABLE WATER SUPPLY HAS MADE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A THRIVING COMMUNITY AND A BARREN LANDSCAPE.

FOR MANY RURAL TOWNS AND TRIBAL LANDS, THE COST AND COMPLEXITY OF BUILDING AND OPERATING THE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO PUMP AND TREAT WATER IS BEYOND AVAILABLE RESOURCES. FOUNDED BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT IN 1902, RECLAMATION HAS BEEN GIVEN THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN WATER PROJECTS FOR MUNICIPAL, INDUSTRIAL AND RURAL USES.

BUT TO BRING ANY SUCH UNDERTAKING TO FRUITION, IT TAKES MORE THAN MOVING TONS OF EARTH AND ROCK, LAYING MILES OF PIPELINE AND ELECTRICAL WIRE AND BUILDING TREATMENT PLANTS, IT ALSO TAKES THE COOPERATION OF A DIVERSE GROUP OF SPONSORS AND STAKEHOLDERS.

ONE SUCH ONGOING EFFORT IS THE GARRISON DIVERSION PROJECT, WHICH COVERS A MAJOR PORTION OF NORTH DAKOTA. FIRST CONCEIVED AS A MILLION-ACRE IRRIGATION SYSTEM, IN 1986 IT WAS REFORMULATED INTO A MULTIPURPOSE MUNICIPAL, RURAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROGRAM, OR M-R AND I.

TOM THOMPSON IS A CIVIL ENGINEER WITH RECLAMATION IN BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA:

(TOMTHOMPSON01 :10)

AND THEN THAT AUTHORIZATION ALSO INCLUDED RURAL WATER SYSTEMS ON THREE OF THE RESERVATIONS IN NORTH DAKOTA, SPIRIT LAKE, FORT BERTHOLD AND STANDING ROCK, AND STANDING ROCK IS ACTUALLY IN NORTH AND SOUTH DAKOTA.

THOMPSON SAYS LEGISLATION PASSED IN TWO THOUSAND AMENDED THE PROJECT ONCE AGAIN AS THE DAKOTA WATER RESOURCES ACT:

(TOMTHOMPSON02 :12)

AND THAT ACT ALSO INCLUDED THE TURTLE MOUNTAIN BAND OF CHIPPAWA WHICH IS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL PART OF THE STATE, AND THAT INCLUDED THE TRENTON INDIAN SERVICE AREA. SO THIS RURAL WATER PROGRAM IN GARRISON KINDA APPLIES TO RURAL WATER SYSTEMS ACROSS THE STATE.

ANOTHER LARGE PROJECT IN THE REGION IS THE MNI WICONI, WHICH BEGAN DELIVERING WATER IN THE SUMMER OF 2008. PRIOR TO THAT TIME, MOST PEOPLE IN SOUTHWESTERN SOUTH DAKOTA HAD SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF WATER RESOURCES.

BUD STILES WITH RECLAMATION IN PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA, CALLS THIS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF MULTIPLE LOCAL AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE WHAT THEY COULD NOT INDIVIDUALLY.

(BUDSTILES01 :37)

“WEST RIVER, AND LYMAN-JONES WERE TWO NON-INDIAN WATER DISTRICTS THAT HAVE BEEN TRYING TO GET A RURAL WATER SYSTEM SINCE CLEAR BACK IN THE SIXTIES. ALL ATTEMPTS FAILED UNTIL THIS PARTNERSHIP WITH – AT THAT TIME—JUST THE OGALA SIOUX RURAL WATER SYSTEM, DEVELOPED WHEN MNI WICONI WAS ORIGINALLY AUTHORIZED TO SERVE WEST RIVER, AND LYMAN-JONES... AND THE PINE RIDGE INDIAN RESERVATION, AND LATER, THE ROSEBUD AND LOWER GROVE TRIBES WERE ADDED TO THE PROJECT.”

STILES SAYS THAT WORKING ON MNI WICONI HAS BEEN A PLEASURE, AND THAT THIS PROJECT CAN SERVE AS A MODEL FOR COOPERATION AND TRUST BETWEEN AGENCIES TO REACH THE GOAL OF A CLEAN AND SAFE WATER SUPPLY FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN THE AREA:

(BUDSTILES02 :51)

IN MY CAREER I’D NEVER DEALT WITH A PROJECT THAT INVOLVED COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIANS AND NON-INDIANS, AND THAT CERTAINLY HAS BEEN AN INTERESTING AND SUCCESSFUL VENTURE. AND IT’S BEEN AN ADVENTURE BOTH IN LEARNING TO TRUST, BOTH FROM OUR STANDPOINT AS THE AGENCY, AS WELL AS THE TRIBES AND THE NON-INDIAN PORTIONS. THE WAY IT IS PUT TOGETHER TO WORK, ALL OF THE CORE SYSTEM THAT FEEDS EVERYONE IS DESIGNATED AS AN INDIAN PORTION OF THE PROJECT, AND WEST RIVER / LYMAN-JONES NEED TO DEPEND ON THAT. BUT THEY ARE CLOSER TO THE SOURCE THAN THE TRIBES AT THE FAR ENDS SO THE TRIBES NEED TO TRUST EVERYONE IN THAT EVEN THOUGH THEY DON’T GET WATER FIRST, THEY WILL EVENTUALLY GET IT, AND IT’S BEEN PROVED EVERYONE IS BEING SERVED.

RECLAMATION CREDITS TRIBAL, STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS AND AGENCIES WITH HAVING THE VISION TO BRING CLEAN AND ABUNDANT WATER SUPPLIES AND WORKING TOGETHER TO OVERCOME TECHNICAL AS WELL AS POLITICAL OBSTACLES AND DEVELOP SOLUTIONS THAT CAN BE APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE GREAT PLAINS REGION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC, VISIT RECLAMATION’S WEB PAGE AT W-W-W-DOT-U-S-B-R-DOT-GOV-FORWARD-SLASH-G-P.

THIS PODCAST WAS PRODUCED BY BELONGIE ENTERTAINMENT ENTERPRISES FOR THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION, GREAT PLAINS REGION, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

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RECLAMATION...MANAGING WATER IN THE WEST...