

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact

Kimberly Cook

kimberlyc@gdcd.org

Garrison Diversion Reps Meet With ND Congressional Delegation about MR&I Funding

(April 25, 2018) Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Garrison Diversion) sent representatives to Washington D.C. this month to meet with North Dakota's congressional delegation. Duane DeKrey, Garrison Diversion General Manager, and Merri Mooridian, Garrison Diversion Administrative Officer, traveled with Garrison Diversion Directors from Eddy, Grand Forks, Ransom, and Ward Counties to the nation's capital.

The group met with Senators John Hoeven and Heidi Heitkamp, as well as Representative Kevin Cramer's staff about the ongoing importance of the Municipal, Rural and Industrial (MR&I) Water Supply Program. Garrison Diversion helps bring North Dakota communities a high-quality, reliable water source using federal MR&I funds. There is currently no MR&I funding in President Donald Trump's proposed budget for fiscal year 2019.

"MR&I funding is very important to Garrison Diversion because it funds projects that deliver drinking water to homes, businesses, farms, and Tribes across the state. This is an important source of funding for water projects in North Dakota. We hope that it is ultimately included in the FY19 budget," says DeKrey.

To date, more than \$339 million in MR&I funding has been awarded for water system expansions and improvements through Garrison Diversion. Some of the projects that have benefited from MR&I funding include the Southwest Pipeline Project, Southeast Water Users District, All Seasons Rural Water, South Central Regional Water District, North Central Regional Water District, Cass Rural Water Users District, Northeast Rural Water District, and the Northwest Area Water Supply.

The Garrison Diversion group also attended the National Water Resources Association's (NWRA) Federal Water Issues Conference in Washington D.C. The annual event focused on Members of Congress and federal agency leaders' 2018 priorities, such as infrastructure and the federal budget.

"The NWRA conference is a great opportunity to learn more about federal priorities, update the congressional delegation about our current projects such as the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (RRVWSP), and hear about other states' priorities and our common goals," says Mooridian.

The RRVWSP is a supplemental water supply project designed to deliver Missouri River water to central and eastern North Dakota during times of drought. It will transport water from the Missouri River near Washburn, ND to the Sheyenne River just north of Lake Ashtabula through 165 miles of buried pipeline. Currently, 35 communities and water systems are involved in this project. When it is complete, the RRVWSP will benefit about half the population of North Dakota.

While at the NWRA conference, Garrison Diversion representatives had the opportunity to hear from speakers including Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman and Representative Rob Bishop (R-UT), Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources.