

## APPENDIX 2: DSID REQUEST LETTER AND CHECKLIST

May 23, 2022

Mary Podoll  
State Conservationist  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
220 E. Rosser Ave, PO Box 1458  
Bismarck, ND 58502-1458

Dear Ms. Podoll:

We request NRCS Watershed Program planning assistance for a potential Public Law (PL) 566 project with the Oakes Irrigation District in Dickey County [HUC 10 #101600031403 James River]. The project would address seepage on approximately 6 miles of main district canal, through either canal lining or conversion to pressurized pipeline. Dependent upon economic analysis results, the most efficient solution to address water conservation may also necessitate modification and/or decommissioning of three existing pump stations and related control systems.

We are a political subdivision of a State with a legal interest in or responsibility for the watershed project proposed. We understand, as sponsors of a PL-566 planning effort, that our responsibilities will include:

- Assisting in the locally led planning effort, and making timely decisions to guide the work of NRCS technical staff as planning proceeds,
- Contributing a share of the project costs, as determined by NRCS, by providing funds or eligible services necessary to undertake the activity,
- Before being credited with the value of any in-kind contributions for in-kind services and/or acquisition of land rights, Sponsor will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NRCS,
- Obtaining any necessary real property rights, by eminent domain, if necessary,
- Obtaining any needed water rights, and regulatory permits at the Sponsor's cost,
- Agreeing to provide for any required operation and maintenance of the completed measures.

We look forward to working with NRCS staff to complete a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) to provide reasonable assurance that a potential watershed project can be developed that addresses a PL-566 purpose and that there are no apparent insurmountable obstacles to the completion of that project. We have agreed to a testing plan with NRCS, and plan to work cooperatively with NRCS, as outlined in the plan, to complete seepage measurements during the 2022 irrigation season. We understand that NRCS will then utilize the collected information to develop a PIFR by the end of January, 2022. At that point, if the PIFR

indicates the pursuing a full watershed plan is feasible, we will work with NRCS to develop a Plan of Work for an in-depth planning effort.

The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the administrative and technical contact persons in our organization are as follows:

Dale Esser — secretary for Board, 360 8th Ave N, Carrington ND 58421, sec.dsid@gmail.com, 701-652-5558

Charnell Haak — systems operator, PO Box 531, Oakes, ND 58474, charnell@drtel.net, 701-710-0106

Please contact them for any additional information that you might need in assessing our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dale Esser', written in a cursive style.

Dale Esser

Secretary for Board

State: ND County: Dickey Watershed: Irrigation District

Project Name: Dickey-Sargent Irrigation District Modernization

<b>Sponsor's Name:</b>	Dickey-Sargent Irrigation District		
<b>Sponsor's Mailing Address:</b>	PO Box 531, Oakes, ND 58474		
<b>Contact Name:</b>	Dale Esser	<b>Phone:</b>	701-652-5558
<b>Title:</b>	Secretary for Board	<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:sec.dsidd@gmail.com">sec.dsidd@gmail.com</a>
<b>Sponsor Website:</b>			

**Description of the existing condition in the watershed that would be addressed through a Watershed Flood Prevention Operations program project.**

The Dickey-Sargent Irrigation District is a legal irrigation district organized and existing pursuant to the laws of North Dakota Century Code, Chapter 61-05. The five member board of directors are owners of irrigation land in the Oakes Test Area and are elected for four year terms. The Board has authority to enter into contracts and agreements related to operating, maintaining and improving their facilities. In 2020 Dickey-Sargent negotiated a transfer of ownership from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and are solely responsible for the operation and administration of the Oakes Test Area.

The Oakes Test Area was developed as a feature of the Garrison Diversion Unit. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation constructed the facilities from 1982 to 1987. The OTA was intended to be the first phase of developing about 44,000 acres of irrigation in Dickey and Sargent counties. The OTA was meant to utilize temporary water supplies until the GDU Principal Supply Works were completed, bringing water from the Missouri River. The supply works were not completed and all Oakes area irrigation, except for the OTA, was deauthorized via Federal legislation. Two existing facilities, the Oakes Pumping Plant and the canals were constructed for a larger project and are over-sized for the needs of the OTA. With the current quantity of irrigation, about 4,500 acres, irrigation demand peaks at 50 to 55 cubic feet per second (cfs). At the upper end the canal is sized for 320 cfs. Each of the downstream canal pools has less capacity, however, the final pool still has a capacity of 150 cfs (the canal would have been extended with delivery of Missouri River water).

During construction the canal was lined with 20 mil thick PVC. A 16-inch earth cover was placed over the liner. The design life was predicted to be 40 years. By the mid-2000's examining the liner after intentional and accidental exposure showed the liner to be brittle and the liner was not likely to last for 40 years. During the late 1990's and early 2000's an explosion in the muskrat population resulted in migration from outside the OTA into the canal. One irrigation season the muskrats removed by operation and maintenance staff equated to one muskrat per 39 linear feet of canal. It is Dickey-Sargent's belief that due to the brittle lining and burrowing damage from muskrats significant seepage is occurring.

Aquatic weeds, including pondweeds, coontail and filamentous algae, are a significant issue and left unchecked have grown to the point of inhibiting flow. Most irrigation seasons the canal is treated with aquatic herbicides.

State: ND County: Dickey Watershed: Irrigation District

Project Name: Dickey-Sargent Irrigation District Modernization

**Potential benefits of a Watershed Flood Prevention Operations program project.**

Dickey-Sargent has a limited water supply, which cannot be guaranteed from year to year. Reconstructing the canal to an appropriate size and installing a new liner or converting the canal to pressurized pipes would provide multiple benefits:

1. Reduce the volume of water to initially fill the system.
2. Reduce the volume of water drained out after the irrigation season.
3. Reduce surface evaporation from the over-sized canal.
4. Reduce or eliminate canal seepage.
5. In a year with a full supply, less water would be needed, conserving water for a future year.
6. In a year with a limited supply fewer irrigated acres would be dropped, providing an economic benefit.
7. Reduce or eliminate the need for application of aquatic herbicides, providing an environmental benefit.

**SPONSOR WILL:**

- Assist in the locally led planning effort: YES  X  NO
- Obtain needed land rights including the use of power of eminent domain, if necessary: YES  X  NO
- Provide local cost-share funds and/or in-kind services to provide the required portion of total project costs: YES  X  NO
- Provide Funds for continuing Operation and Maintenance actions: YES  X  NO
- Obtain required permits and approvals at Sponsor cost: YES  X  NO
- Provide leadership to help ensure adequate conservation land treatment measures are maintained on at least 50% of the watershed area above retention reservoirs: N/A  X  YES   NO
- Before being credited with the value of any in-kind contribution for any in-kind services and/or acquisition of land rights, Sponsor will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NRCS: YES  X  NO

**Preliminary Investigation – Feasibility Report  
Sponsor Authority and Role Declaration Checklist**

**Version 2021.0716**

**State:** ND    **County:**    Dickey    **Watershed:** Irrigation District

**Project Name:**    Dickey-Sargent Irrigation District Modernization

**Authorized Representative of Sponsor**

**Name (printed):** Dale Esser

**Title:** Secretary for Board

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Date:** May 23, 2022