

Lewis & Clark
REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

Explorer

Fall 2024

Golden Spike & Madison Milestones Celebrated!

Large crowds of supporters helped Lewis & Clark celebrate two major milestones. On July 26 near Sibley the final section of pipe was installed – the “golden spike” or “golden pipe” as it were! On August 2 water finally started flowing to Madison after 34 1/2 years of waiting, and to mark the momentous occasion a ribbon cutting ceremony was held on August 21!

“Golden Spike”

While supporters cheered and took pictures, Metro Construction installed the final section of 12-inch PVC pipe for the 17-mile Sibley service line, but more importantly it was the final section of pipe for the entire 310-mile distribution system. “The first section of pipe was installed on June 14, 2004 near Vermillion, so this milestone was 20 years in the making! The importance of Lewis & Clark is for our future economic development. You can’t do anything without water. You can’t grow without water,” said Chairman Murray Hulstein. Director Larry Pedley of Sibley remarked, “The Corps of Discovery took two years and four months and the transcontinental railroad took just over six years to build. Construction for this project has been over 20 years in the making. It is often said that nothing worth having comes easy and that certainly has been the case for Lewis & Clark. If this was easy, everybody would be doing it. This is an important achievement.”



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In addition to Hulstein and Pedley, remarks were made by Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) Regional Director Brent Esplin, Banner's Tim Conner, Sen. Grassley's Jacob Bossman, Sen. Ernst's Kolby DeWitt and Executive Director Troy Larson. Everyone signed the pipe and then watched it go in the trench. Former Director Denny Davids of Sibley brought a bottle of commemorative wine from the August 2004 groundbreaking and it was buried with the pipe.

34 different pipeline contracts were awarded that totaled \$309.5M so it averaged \$1M per mile, not including engineering or easement expenses. Pipe diameters ranged from as small as six inches for the Centerville and South Lincoln RWS service lines to as large as 54 inches for the trunk line between the treatment plant and the Tea pump station and reservoirs.

Golden Spike



Banner's
Tim Conner



Above: Director Larry Pedley of Sibley, Director Jen Wippert of Rock Rapids, Operations Manager Jim Auen, Chairman Murray Hulstein of Sioux Center, Construction Administrator Clint Koehn, Executive Director Troy Larson, Director Nolan Meyer of Harrisburg, Director Jerry Lonneman of Lincoln Pipestone RWS, Director Todd Uhl of Sheldon, Director Scott Hain of Worthington, Business Manager Lori Seten and Director Nate Vander Plaats of Lennox



Former Director
Denny Davids
of Sibley



Left: Reclamation Regional Director Brent Esplin, Rural Water Division Manager Dani Fettig and Area Manager Joe Hall

“It’s a fantastic day for Madison!”

The ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the new one-million gallon ground storage reservoir near Madison. Mayor Roy Lindsay summed it up best when he said “It’s a fantastic day for Madison!” Other speakers included Senator John Thune, Senator Mike Rounds, Rep. Dusty Johnson, BoR Deputy Commissioner Roque Sanchez, BoR Regional Director Brent Esplin, Hulstein and Larson. Other BoR officials also attended from D.C., Billings, Bismarck and Pierre.

Thune: “It’s a big day. (L&C) is an example of the kind of hard work and partnership that yields big benefits for the people in this area, and I’m just grateful to all of you who have contributed to it and helped work with us to get to where we are today.”

Rounds: “Members of Congress in South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa have worked together across party lines to make sure this project has been successful, and it doesn’t happen without folks making a commitment at the local level. For all of you who first dreamed about the opportunities that rural water would bring to your communities, farms and ranches, good job, because you’ve stuck with this all the way through.”

Johnson: “In the kind of toxic political environment we’re in right now, it’s a little hard to say, ‘gosh, we’re going to plant seeds that we know we’re going to have to count on Democrats to water and Republicans to water...but we’re going to do this together.’ And there are people that helped plant those seeds who aren’t with us anymore, and they didn’t do it because of the glory...they did it because the families and communities deserve water. If you don’t have water, I’m not sure how much else matters.”

Madison



Senator Thune



Senator Rounds



Congressman Johnson



Deputy Commissioner Sanchez



Mayor Lindsay



Left: “Chrome Dome Club” – BoR Deputy Regional Director Marlon Duke, Director Ryan Hegg of Madison, BoR Area Manager Joe Hall and Executive Director Troy Larson

Rounds & Klobuchar Introduce Feasibility Study Bill



Senators Mike Rounds and Amy Klobuchar on June 4 introduced a bill (S. 4458) that would restore the authority of the Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) to participate in feasibility studies for new and expanding rural water projects without first needing congressional authorization. This authority, which existed from 2006 – 2016, would be extended to 2032.

During the Q&A at a Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce lunch on October 9, Executive Director Troy Larson thanked Rounds for partnering with Klobuchar to introduce this bill. The legislation would streamline the process for BoR assuming financial responsibility for up to half of the estimated \$3M cost of the feasibility study required for a possible second expansion for L&C. Rounds remarked that “Economic development and water development are the same thing. We shouldn’t need a literal Act of Congress for Reclamation to participate in feasibility studies.”

L&C fully supports the Rounds-Klobuchar bill but its passage is not certain, so L&C officials are also working with Senator Thune and Rep. Johnson with the goal of introducing a bill in January 2025 that would authorize BoR to participate in a feasibility study on a possible second expansion for L&C. “We are burning the candle at both ends,” said Larson.

Chairman’s Report



Chairman Murray Hulstein

As of mid-October, the proposed Dakota Mainstem Regional Water System (DMS) has 56 member cities and rural water systems in SD, IA, MN and NE. This includes L&C, as well as 17 of our 20 members.

Another member will be applying soon. Two others will follow DMS’ progress through L&C, and if appropriate apply later. Executive Director Troy Larson and Operations Manager Jim Auen have been nominated by L&C to serve on DMS’ Board of Directors. DMS is a possible alternative to a second expansion of L&C.

L&C’s Base System is 44.19 million gallons a day (MGD) and we are currently expanding the System to 60 MGD. This first expansion should be completed in late 2030. When considering projects for authorization, the BoR looks at water needs in 40-year increments. That puts us at 2070. This number likely will change, but L&C members currently estimate they collectively need an additional 82 MGD by 2070. For some members they need more water closer to 2040.

Banner expects to complete their Appraisal Level Study in December on a possible second expansion. A feasibility study is the next step (see article at left). Banner estimates roughly 75% of the feasibility study would apply to DMS if the decision is made later to go that route.

The test well results from this summer are still being analyzed, but our existing wellfield could potentially address roughly half of the capacity needed for a second expansion. If that happens, then presumably to address the other half we will need to consider whether to expand L&C further or participate in DMS. Nothing has been ruled in or out. There are way too many unknowns at this point, so to keep our options open we will continue to do whatever we can to advance both efforts. Hopefully we will have a clearer picture in a year or two on the best path forward.

Reservoir & Pump Station Expansion Projects

After installing the concrete wall and dome panels for the Hull reservoir, DN Tanks applied multiple layers of tightly wrapped wire and shotcrete. The 1.5 million gallon ground reservoir southwest of Hull has been successfully pressure tested and disinfected. Remaining work includes painting the reservoir, finishing the controls and electrical work, and installing the mixing system, fencing and paving. DN Tanks fully expects to meet their November 29, 2024 substantial completion deadline.

Rice Lake is making good progress on the Larchwood pump station located west of Larchwood on the Iowa side of the Iowa-South Dakota border. They are currently working on the roof and will soon begin installing the interior process piping, equipment and controls. Rice Lake feels confident about meeting their April 18, 2025 substantial completion deadline.

Both projects are part of L&C's expansion from 44.19 million gallons a day (MGD) to 60 MGD, and are being funded by Iowa ARPA funding.



Left to right: Executive Director Troy Larson, Construction Administrator Clint Koehn, Business Manager Lori Seten and Operations Manager Jim Aven check out progress on the Larchwood pump station on September 25

Water Flowing to Sibley Very Soon!

October 28 Ribbon Cutting for Sibley

After flushing, pigging and disinfecting the 17 miles of 12-inch diameter PVC pipe, Metro reached substantial completion on October 5, well in advance of their July 2025 substantial completion deadline. “This was our last segment of pipeline and it was by far the earliest a pipeline contract reached substantial completion in relation to the deadline. Hats off to Metro for getting after it,” said Executive Director Troy Larson.

West Branch needed water from the Sibley service line in order to test the equipment inside the Sibley meter building. They expect to reach substantial completion by mid-October, at which time water will be flowing to Sibley! The last of the 20 members to be connected, but certainly not the least.

A ribbon cutting celebration is scheduled for October 28. Senator Chuck Grassley is confirmed to attend. He is the only Member of Congress who has served throughout L&C’s long journey that started when the project was incorporated in January 1990.



“This was our last segment of pipeline and it was by far the earliest a pipeline contract reached substantial completion in relation to the deadline. Hats off to Metro for getting after it.”

FROM THE PIPELINE



DN Tanks reached substantial completion on the one-million gallon ground storage reservoir a few miles east of Madison on August 2 and water began flowing to Madison that day! Senate Majority Leader Casey Crabtree (left) and Greater Madison Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Eric Hortness taped a funny "Cool Dads" video on August 29 with Executive Director Troy Larson. It can be seen on the videos link of the Chamber's Facebook page.



During the annual L&C Twins outing on August 23, some of the attendees had a chance to visit with Official Scorer Stew Thornley, who works for the MN Department of Health and has closely followed L&C's progress since its inception. Left to right: Director/Mayor Pat Baustian of Luverne, Thornley, Executive Director Troy Larson and Director Brad Preheim of Centerville.



The long-awaited backup generator finally arrived for the Crooks pump station, allowing D.W. Proehl to reach substantial completion on July 26, which was the substantial completion deadline so just in the nick of time!



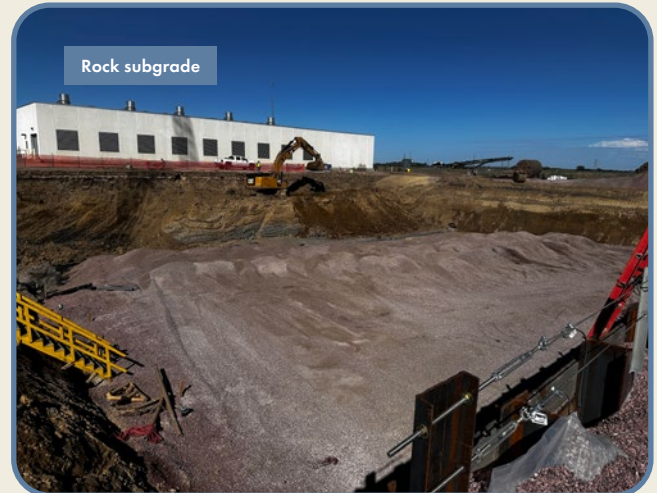
Senator Chuck Grassley held a townhall meeting in Sioux Center on August 20. City officials thanked Grassley for his long-time support of L&C, including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. They invited him to the ribbon cutting ceremony for Sibley, an invitation he has accepted for October 28. Left to right: Retired Utilities Manager Harold Schiebout, Grassley, Utilities Manager/L&C Chairman Murray Hulstein, City Manager Scott Wynja and Councilman Eric Moerman.

Water Treatment Plant Phase 3

PKG has gotten a good start on construction of the third and final phase of the water treatment plant, which is not expected to be completed until 2028. This project is part of the Base System, but a bid alternate in the contract includes a second three-million gallon underground clearwell that is part of the expansion. There was significant savings to construct the second clearwell as part of this project, instead of a stand-alone project at a later time.

South Dakota ARPA funding will pay for the vast majority of the second clearwell. Those funds need to be spent by the end of 2026. PKG has excavated 75% of the clearwell and poured the mud mat. They are currently pouring the floor slab. PKG plans to excavate the remaining part of the clearwell yet this year after existing piping is moved to make way.

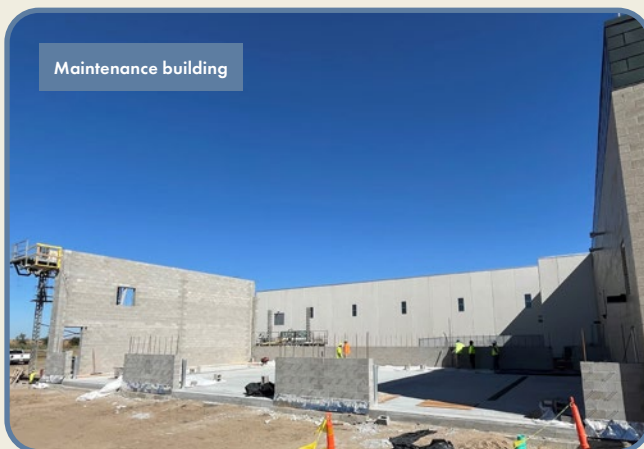
Good progress is also being made on the maintenance building. Knutson from Centerville is constructing the exterior block walls. PKG has completed the demolition and concrete work in the chemical feed room for the conversion to gas chlorine. “There are many other components of this project that have not been started yet. They have a long way to go, but great to see PKG getting a good start,” said Operations Manager Jim Auen.



Rock subgrade



Mud mat



Maintenance building



Floor slab pour

Water Treatment Plant Tours

Operations Manager Jim Auen and Plant Supervisor Mike Duchscher always enjoy giving tours of the plant and wellfield to L&C's members and various groups from the public. USD classes often make the rounds. The photos below show some of the recent tours.



Shown by the clearwell excavation on September 13 are (left to right) Auen, Reid Rasmussen from Rep. Johnson's Sioux Falls office, Lennox Mayor Danny Fergen, Lennox City Administrator/Director Nate Vander Plaats, Josh Chase from the Sioux Metro Growth Alliance and Duchscher



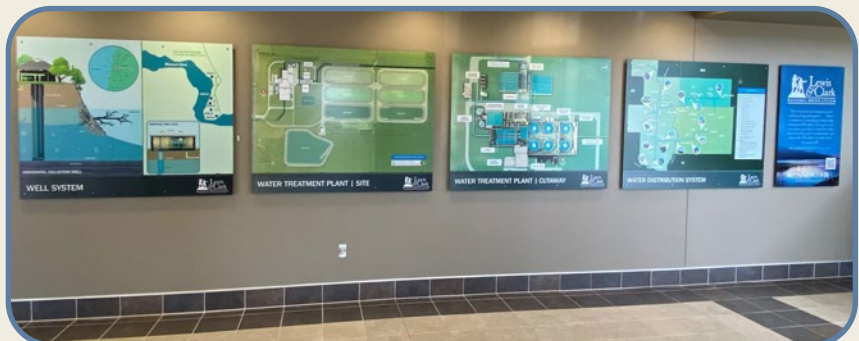
Shown in the high service pump station, Duchscher (far right) on July 24 gave a tour to the SD Agriculture & Rural Leadership class, as well as provided background on the history and future of L&C



Sioux Falls maintenance staff toured the plant and wellfield on August 16. Shown in front of some of the 1,250 h.p. motors/pumps are (left to right) Dan Lewis, Riley Schneekloth, Maintenance Supervisor Gregg Tiehen and Jim Larson.



Display panels designed by and generously donated by Banner and HDR were installed in the plant lobby on September 3. The metal panels show the wells, treatment and distribution processes, and will aid greatly when giving tours. They were manufactured by and installed by Distribution Operator Justin "JD" Walsh. The Well System panel on the far left was also installed in the wellhouse for the Site B collector well. L&C's Lead Engineer Kristin Bisgard of Banner is shown by two of the panels. Thank you, Banner and HDR!

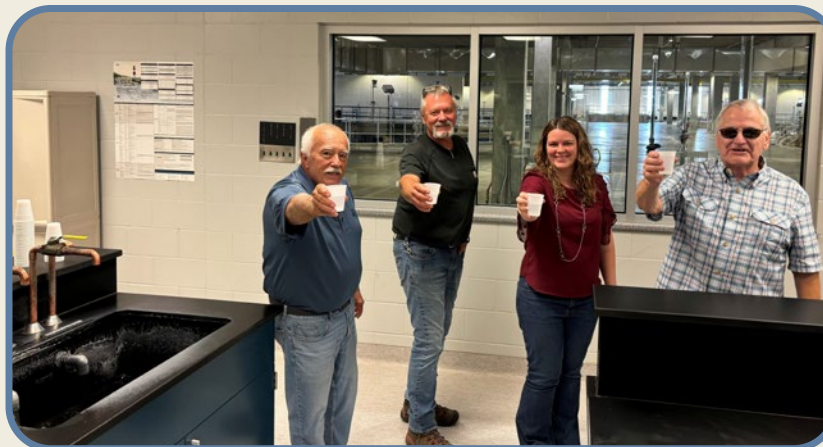


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Water Treatment Plant Tours



The Board of Directors held their monthly meeting at the plant on September 26. They then toured the maintenance building and clearwell construction.



Tasting the water in the lab on September 26 are (left to right) Director Larry Pedley of Sibley, Director Jeff Heidebrecht of Beresford, Director Jen Wippert of Rock Rapids and Sibley Councilman Larry Stone



Shown in front of one of the solids contact basins, officials from Harrisburg, Luverne and Sioux Center toured the plant and wellfield on September 30. Left to right: Duchscher, Sioux Center's Harlan Kruid, Director Nolan Meyer of Harrisburg, Harrisburg's Jessica Meyer, Sioux Center's Zach Boneschans, Harrisburg's Monty Jenkins, Luverne's Jill Wolf, Luverne's Aaron Altman, Mayor/Director Pat Baustian of Luverne, Luverne's Aric Uithoven, Sioux Center's Jordan Leinen, Luverne's Joe Ahrens and Auen

Lime Drying Beds Nearing Completion

Lidel Construction expects to meet the October 25 substantial completion deadline for the three lime drying beds and stockpile area. They have benefitted from dry weather, especially with constructing and compacting the clay liners. When completed L&C will have six drying beds and two stockpile areas. Two of the new drying beds are for the Base System and the third is part of the expansion. South Dakota ARPA funding is being used to pay for the expansion drying bed. It was a significant cost savings to construct the expansion bed in conjunction with this project, as opposed to a stand-alone project later. “Lime sludge is a byproduct of the treatment process. The beds and stockpile areas are part of the process to dry the sludge so it can be removed and hauled away for agricultural applications. We are currently generating roughly 29,000 tons of lime sludge per year, which will increase as we produce more water,” said Operations Manager Jim Auen.





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Operations Update

FY24 was another record setting year! L&C delivered a record 8.71 billion gallons for a record daily average of 23.8 million gallons – 4.6% higher than FY23. Record peak day was 35.87 million gallons on July 29 and the record daily average for a month was set in September with 32.7 million gallons. “Sheldon was connected last December, Madison was connected in August and Sibley will be connected in mid-October, so FY25 will no doubt be another record setting year,” said Operations Manager Jim Auen.

L&C experienced its first leak on September 25 when a boring contractor working on a project for Lincoln County RWS punctured the 30-inch transmission line southeast of Sioux Falls (see photo at right). This disrupted service to the four Minnesota members, Minnehaha Community Water Corp and Rock Rapids for one day until a welder made repairs. “This was an absolutely preventable situation. Fortunately, it occurred at a high spot in the line so we were able to maintain pressure. No disinfection was required, which would have lengthened the disruption,” said Auen.

