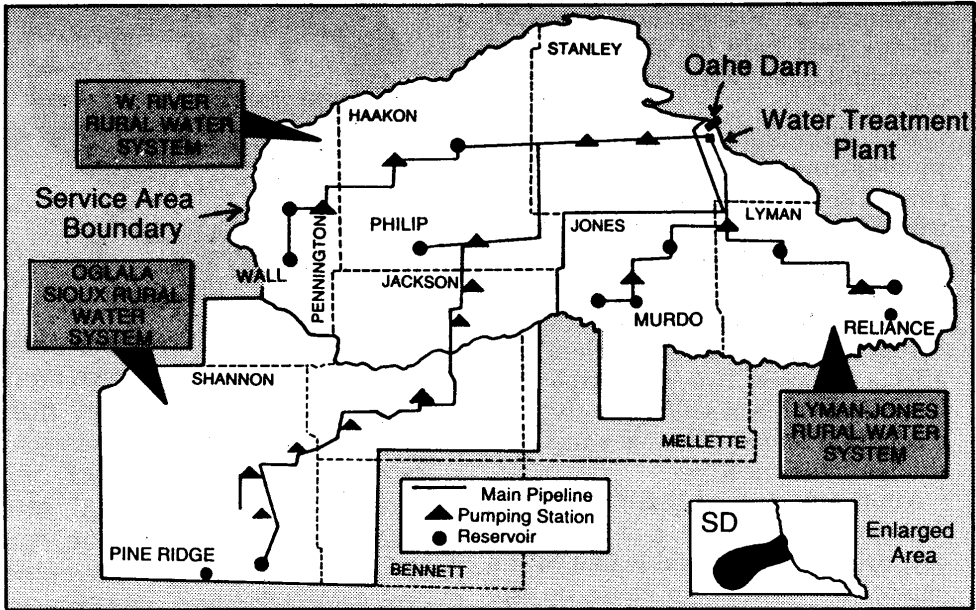


POLICY/LEGISLATION

U.S. WATER NEWS



Some Pick-Sloan compensation

South Dakota wins pipe project

PIERRE, S.D. — South Dakota made some headway in its efforts to redress the failings of the 1944 Pick-Sloan Act when the U.S. House of Representatives recently passed a bill authorizing construction of the Mni Wiconi Pipeline.

The pipeline will deliver drinking water from a Missouri River reservoir to more than 11,000 square miles in eight counties of western South Dakota. The cost is projected at \$100 million, but no funding was appropriated this year.

The House bill was pushed by South Dakota's Congressman Tim Johnson. Joel Benson of Johnson's office noted that various politicians have been trying to get the project authorized for 23 years. This year's success occurred because the congressman brought together farmers, ranchers, Indians, and environmentalists, Benson said. Political support was bi-partisan. Benson predicted hearings and action in the

U.S. Senate this summer.

This year, Congress also fully funded a majority of the authorized water projects sought by South Dakota, including: WEB rural water pipeline, \$12 million; Belle Fourche irrigation project, \$4.2 million; James River Restoration, \$200,000; Missouri River banks stabilization, \$75,000; Sioux Falls flood control study, \$200,000; Big South-Lake Kampesca Flood Control, \$125,000; and Gregory County Hydro Pump Storage and Irrigation, \$500,000.

Many of these projects are part of a plan approved by the state legislature this year which was submitted to Congress to compensate for perceived inequities in the 1944 Pick-Sloan Act. The act built the six Missouri River mainstem reservoirs, flooding large amounts of South Dakota farmland, and promised compensatory irrigation development. The irrigation projects never were built.