



November 1, 2021

To all past and present supporters of the Oakes Irrigation Research Site:

As we approach the listening sessions for the 2021/2023 biennium, it seemed relevant to provide you the history of the operations of the Oakes Irrigation Research Site (OIRS) and the outcome of past funding requests.

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The Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Garrison Diversion) has been funding a large portion of the OIRS operations since 1970, and until recently, 75 percent of funding has been through Garrison Diversion and the remaining 25 percent through other grants. That changed in 2019, when legislative action allocated \$100,000 per fiscal year to the OIRS. The funding represents about 25 percent of total annual funding, yet still leaves a funding shortfall.

Garrison Diversion has been working to phase out of the OIRS funding due to the reallocation of funding to other projects.

Through discussions with NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center (CREC) and Garrison Diversion Board members and staff, an agreement was made for Garrison Diversion to assist with equipment upgrades, increase acreage, and secure land and a larger building. Garrison Diversion would help get the facility in decent condition, and in return, the NDSU Ag Administration and CREC would work together through the SBARE process to secure necessary funds that would allow NDSU to take over the financial obligation of operating the site.

Garrison Diversion and the CREC have been working together to update the facilities for the OIRS. Local fundraising efforts raised money for necessary improvements to the OIRS. The site began as a 20-acre research plot and through joint effort was expanded to 40 acres.

Over the past several years,

- The ND Corn Council and the ND Soybean Council provided generous donations that were used toward the purchase of a new irrigation system.
- In order to secure land ownership for the future, Garrison Diversion purchased five acres of land from Bob Titus for a building site.
- The new linear system was installed in September 2015 and doubled the acreage for research.
- A used plot combine was purchased specifically for the OIRS in order to more efficiently harvest the research plots.
- Kelly Cooper joined the OIRS as a full-time research agronomist in August 2015.

- Bob and Elsie Titus deeded the land leased for the OIRS to the NDSU Development Foundation in their life estate. Garrison Diversion will continue paying the lease until the Titus' passing.
- The OIRS - Robert Titus Research Farm was dedicated on August 20, 2015, in recognition of Bob Titus.
- Two tractors, two research planters and a research sprayer were purchased.
- A horizontal collector well system was installed for the new linear irrigation system.

A \$600,000 request was made for the 2017-2019 biennium. OIRS was ranked number one before the Budget Restoration became a priority, and no funding was dedicated to the OIRS.

In 2019, a continuing appropriation of \$200,000 was allocated for the 2019-2021 biennium for operating support at the OIRS, with \$100,000 applied each year for two years. There is an understanding that additional money will be allocated when the state is in a better financial position.

Garrison Diversion has developed a long-term funding plan, which would allow Garrison Diversion to phase out of funding the site and for NDSU to take over full funding. A proposal included Garrison Diversion's assistance with construction of a new building, a six-year funding exit plan and passage of the land lease on to NDSU once construction is complete.

In 2021, Garrison Diversion agreed to the following six-year funding plan:

2021	\$178,000
2022-2025	\$167,875
2026	\$83,938

Garrison Diversion also committed \$250,000 towards a building for office space, storage and research trials. Garrison Diversion will provide the insulated shell, and NDSU will finish the inside.

We will be asking SBARE to fully fund the OIRS and ask that you keep this information in mind to support our request as the SBARE listening sessions approach. Your past and continued support of the OIRS is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Kelly Klosterman
 Richland County Director
 Garrison Diversion

On behalf of:
 NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center
 Garrison Diversion Conservancy District