



## North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association Welcomes New Board Members

North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association welcomes two newly elected board members to the executive board. The election of officers took place in Medora prior to the Leadership Retreat, July 14-15, 2021.



**Bruce Henschel -  
Director At Large**

Bruce Henschel grew up in the city of Bathgate, N.D., and graduated from Neche High School in 1975, the same year rural water was brought into the city. After high school, Bruce worked for a local contractor building and remodeling homes. A few years later,

he went to work for an area farmer and continued his passion for farming for more than 20 years. In 2002, Bruce became involved in the insurance industry and in 2009, became the agency manager for Drayton Insurance Agency, now Koda Insurance Agency, where he still works today. In 2007, Bruce was elected to the North Valley Water District board of directors and was appointed secretary/treasurer. In 2014, Langdon Rural Water District and North Valley Water District merged to form Northeast Rural Water District (NRWD) and Bruce continues to serve as a board member and secretary/treasurer. Bruce is married to his wife, Cindy, and they have two children and five grandchildren. Liking to remain active, he often volunteers for local community events and in his free time enjoys golfing, fishing, traveling and spending time with his family and friends. Being newly elected to the executive board, Bruce is excited to start getting involved with the duties to help insure that we continue to supply a reliable water source to all the great residents of the of North Dakota. Welcome Bruce!



**Jeremy Schuler -  
Managers'  
Representative**

Jeremy Schuler grew up in rural Munich, N.D., and graduated from Munich High School in 1992. He attended college at North Dakota State College of Science and graduated with an Associate of

Applied Science degree in 1994. After college, Jeremy was employed by John Deere of Langdon, N.D., for eight years. Jeremy was offered a career in the rural water industry on June 3, 2002, as a water operator for Langdon Rural Water District. On Jan. 1, 2014, Langdon Rural Water District and North Valley Water District merged to form Northeast Regional Water District (NRWD) and Jeremy was promoted to branch manager of the Langdon Division of NRWD. On July 1, 2019, he was hired as general manager of NRWD where he plans to further his knowledge, dedication and passion for rural water in North Dakota. Jeremy is married to his wife, Lisa, and they have three children. He enjoys volunteering his time and talents within his community. Jeremy enjoys riding motorcycle, camping and spending time with his family. He is honored to serve as the newly elected manager's rep on the executive board and looks forward to continuing the growth, education and delivery of safe water in the great state of North Dakota. Welcome Jeremy!

### **Executive Board members:**

President – Jim Schmaltz of Grand Forks  
Vice President – Matt Odermann of Perth  
Secretary – LaVonne Althoff of Hankinson

Treasurer – Joe LaFave of Bismarck  
National Rural Water Representative – Michele Schommer of Munich  
Past President – Jack Hancock of Gilby

# How Regionalization Can Decrease Costs and Increase Sustainability

By Geoffrey Slick, Rural Water Practice Leader

The word regionalization is often thrown around loosely in the water world and is often thought of as switching a town or rural water district from their own existing source to a new “shared” source. However, that is not always the case

Many rural water districts in North Dakota are partnering with cities and other water districts to minimize up-front capital costs to save taxpayers’ money and day-to-day operation costs.

East Central Regional Water District (ECRWD), formerly Grand Forks Traill Water District and Traill Rural Water District, has been leading the way in North Dakota as a “regional” supplier. Issues like aging infrastructure, inability to find workers and limited resources have spurred ECRWD, its neighbors and communities within its system to work together to solve water needs.

ECRWD recently connected to Larimore and Agassiz Water User District to provide bulk water to these systems and decommission their existing water treatment plants. Currently, ECRWD is teaming with the communities of Hatton and Grandin to provide them with greater flows and pressures to allow them to decommission their existing outdated water towers. The regional projects primarily consist of providing large pipelines from existing storage reservoirs to communities that need emergency flows without the maintenance-heavy infrastructure. New pipelines provide greater pressures for rural users, as well as providing communities with greater flows than they are used to. In some instances, it allows the decommissioning of their existing storage like underground storage, standpipes or water towers.

ECRWD System Manager Neil Breidenbach notes that working together with neighbors and communities has saved everyone money. “Whether it be saving money, increased service capacity or just working together in a time of need, we are all in this together,” Breidenbach says. “Regionalization projects ECRWD has been involved with have helped rural North Dakota remain sustainable and affordable.”

Many communities do not realize there are regional options that can help with their water supply, storage and even distribution systems that can ultimately save them money, reduce headaches and save tax payer dollars. If your community is looking at decommissioning a water treatment plant, water tower or other storage, or even considering the future of your distribution system, I encourage you to reach out to your local water district or bulk water providers. They may be able to save you money.

