

# **ROCKY BOY'S/NORTH CENTRAL MONTANA REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM**

## **Project Goal**

- To ensure a safe and sustainable rural, municipal, and industrial water supply for residents of the Rocky Boy's Reservation and citizens residing in Chouteau, Hill, Liberty, Pondera, Teton, Glacier, and Toole counties of Montana.

## **System Summary**

- The Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation and the State of Montana, through the Reserved Water Rights Commission, negotiated a settlement of the Tribe's Water Rights Claims. The Compact, ratified by the 1997 Montana Legislature and signed by President Clinton in December of 1999, provided a water allocation of 10,000-acre feet to the Tribe from Lake Elwell (Tiber Reservoir) south of Chester, Montana. In addition to providing a water supply for the Tribe, the project was also expanded to provide water service to residents of Chouteau, Hill, Liberty, Pondera, Teton, Glacier, and Toole counties. It was authorized but not funded on December 12, 2002, when then President Bush signed S. 2017, The Rocky Boy's/North Central Montana Regional Water System (NCRMWS) Act of 2002 (PL107-331, 116 Stat. 2859) as the final step the federal approval process and the beginning of a project to improve the quality of life for the Tribe and residents of north central Montana.
- The system is comprised of Core and Non-Core Systems. The Core System consists of an intake structure, treatment plant, storage, pumping, transmission pipeline, and on-reservation infrastructure to provide water from Lake Elwell to the residents of the Rocky Boy's Reservation.
- The Non-Core System consists of the pipelines, storage, and pumping facilities to deliver water from the Core System to the Participating Systems, including communities, rural water districts, Hutterite colonies and other rural water users in north central Montana. The Non-Core System is represented by the North Central Montana Regional Water Authority (NCRMWA). NCRMWA was created to administer the implementation of the Non-Core system through an Interlocal Agreement with the taxing entities participating in the Rocky Boy's/NCRMWA project. There are currently 22 water systems participating in the Non-Core System.

## **Complete Segments**

- To address the immediate challenges experienced by participating water systems NCRMWA implanted an interim plan to address water service scenarios, whereby member entities work together to leverage existing resources. Five interim service scenarios have been completed to date: North Havre County Water District (CWD) receiving water service from the City of Havre, South Chester CWD and Riverview Colony receiving water service from the Tiber CWD, Brady County Water & Sewer District (CWSD) receiving water service from the City of Conrad, City of Cut Bank receiving a portion of their water from the City of Shelby, Nine Mile CWD and Oilmont CWD receiving water from the City of Shelby
- The Core system has installed 28 miles of core pipeline with 26 miles remaining. Sletten Construction began work on Tiber TWP in January 2020 with final completion scheduled for June 1, 2023. Construction has begun on the Non-Core Tiber area pumpstation along with the Town of Big Sandy and Loma CWD segments and is slated for completion by 2024. Final design is proceeding on the Hill CWD and City of Havre segments. Assuming Federal funding is sustained at recent levels, the Tiber WTP could be operational by 2026 and providing clean water to approximately 30,000 residents of North Central Montana.