



Get to know

MONTANA'S REGIONAL WATER SYSTEMS

Most of us have access to high-quality drinking water. Unfortunately, there are areas of Montana where the tap water looks bad, tastes worse, and does not meet federal drinking water standards. Some sources are highly mineralized or limited in quantity. Many rural water users and residents must haul their drinking water instead of using their taps.

Four rural water systems are currently in development to bring a reliable source of clean drinking water to rural water users and residents.

These four systems combined already deliver water to over 30 communities or water districts, several public entities, and thousands of rural customers. When the systems are complete, tens of thousands of Montana households will receive clean and plentiful drinking water from regional water systems.

Every system is successful because of partnerships.

It takes far more than a village to successfully plan, design, and build a regional water system. These systems have relied on cooperation and funding from local communities, the US Bureau of Reclamation, and the State of Montana for two decades, and counting.



- » **Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority** began through efforts of local conservation districts and has teamed with the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation. The system has been under construction for over 19 years and is slated for completion by 2026.
- » **North Central Montana Regional Water Authority** has partnered with the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation. The system has been under construction for over 17 years.
- » **Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority** was formed in 2005. This system has received State Revolving Fund construction loans and worked with county and local governments. The system is in the process of gaining federal authorization.
- » **Central Montana Regional Authority** was federally authorized in 2020 and is in the process of developing stronger relationships with state and federal agencies. The system is currently under construction.

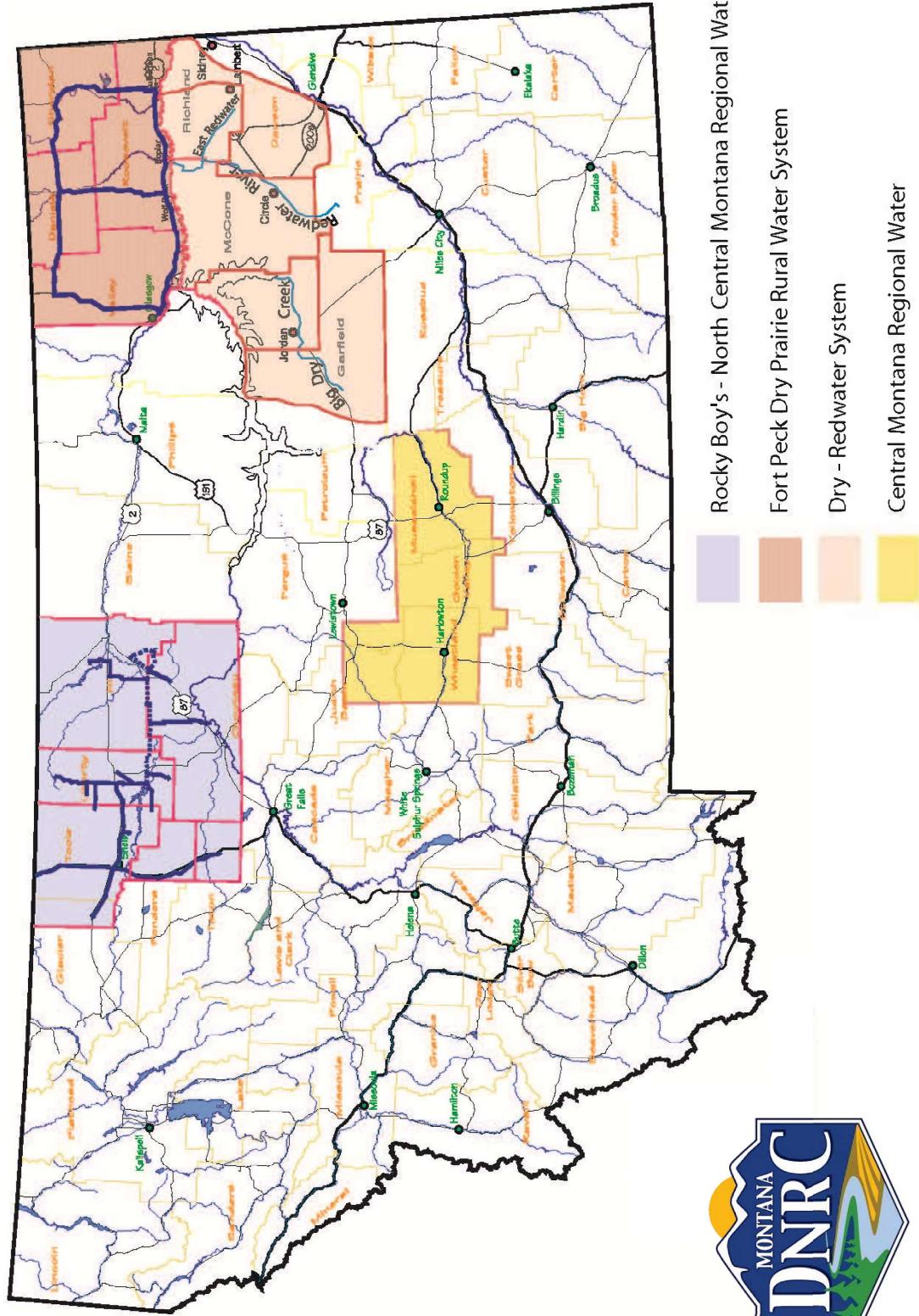
Montana DNRC plays an important role.



The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) supports these systems by providing funding for all system-related activities including planning, community outreach, project coordination, design, construction and operational assistance.

MONTANA'S REGIONAL WATER SYSTEMS

Areas to be served



FORT PECK – DRY PRAIRIE REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

“The Fort Peck/Dry Prairie system has improved the quality of life and created economic development opportunities both on and off the Reservation. Customers of both systems continually express gratitude for their high quality, dependable drinking water.”

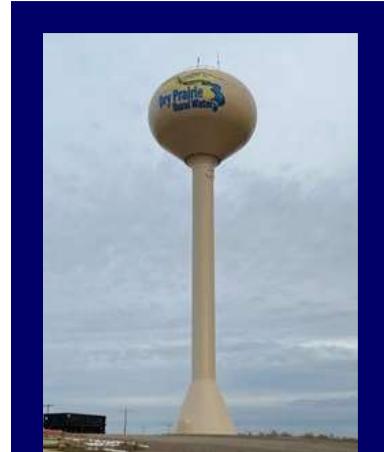
—Joni Sherman, General Manager, Dry Prairie Regional Water Authority

Need for Clean, Plentiful Drinking Water in Northeast Montana

Northeast Montana had an historical need for clean, plentiful drinking water. Traditionally, groundwater was the primary source of potable water in the area, with concentrations of dissolved solids and sulfates generally higher than Federal secondary standards for drinking water. Consequently, tap water in the region has often been unusable for drinking and cooking. More recently, the region has experienced population growth as development of oil reserves in the region intensified, increasing the demand for drinking water.

Building Partnerships to Form a Regional Water System

This system is the result of a successful joint venture between the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation and nontribal individuals and communities adjacent to the Reservation. The Assiniboine and Sioux Rural Water Supply System (ASRWSS) partnered with the Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority (DPRWA) to build a regional water system that is actively improving the quality of life for residents of northeast Montana. In October 2000, Congress authorized the Fort Peck—Dry Prairie Regional Water System. Construction began in 2003.



Elevated Tank Near Scobey



Elevated Tank Near Lustre

Construction Status—System Completion Projected in 2026

The DPRWA is currently delivering water to about 3,800 service connections in twelve communities as well as to 1,800 rural services in Sheridan, Roosevelt, Daniels and Valley Counties. The ASRWSS constructed and now operate the raw-water intake on the Missouri River, as well as the water treatment plant near Wolf Point. The plant was completed in 2012 and began delivering water to residents on and off the reservation.

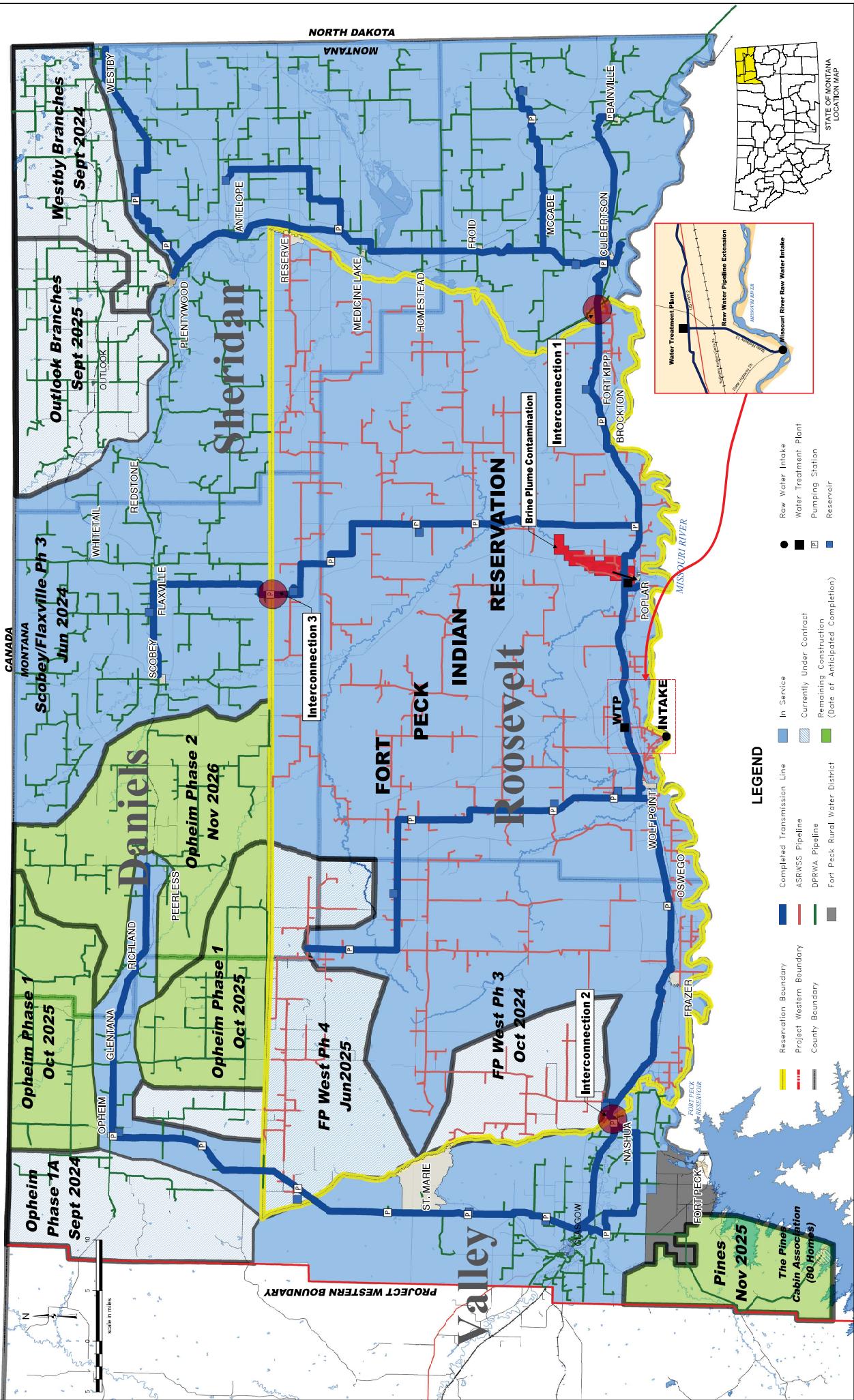
The completed system will consist of over 3,200 miles of pipeline and will deliver drinking water to more than 20 communities and nearly 4,000 farms, ranches and rural homes.

The ASRWSS are completing their final pipeline construction in the far northwest corner of the Reservation. DPRWA currently has three pipeline contracts underway in the northern part of the system with plans to bid out the final three projects in 2025. The final completion date for construction is December 31, 2026.

Current State of Funding and Projected Needs

Total estimated total project cost indexed to 2024 is \$434 million. The DPRWA indexed cost is \$227 million. The federal share (76%) is \$173 million. All Federal funds have been received. The current total of combined state and local share (24%) needed, is \$54 million. The state and local share spent to date is \$36.8 million, with a remainder of \$10.4 million needed to fully complete construction based upon the indexed cost. It is anticipated that DPRWA’s share will be \$29.8 million under the authorized ceiling when complete.

ASSINIBOINE AND SIOUX AND DRY PRAIRIE RURAL WATER SYSTEMS



ROCKY BOY'S—NORTH CENTRAL MONTANA REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

Need for Clean, Plentiful Drinking Water in North Central Montana

Poor quality and/or insufficient quantity of drinking water, aging infrastructure, and increasing costs for communities to comply with state and federal public water supply requirements drive the need for the Rocky Boy's-North Central Montana shared drinking water system. Numerous member communities have either been out of compliance with drinking water requirements or anticipate difficulty meeting future standards.



Building Partnerships to Form a Regional Water System

A water rights compact between the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation and the State of Montana allocates water to the Tribe from Tiber Reservoir located south of Chester. The North Central Montana Regional Water Authority (NCMRWA) was formed to partner with the Tribe in managing off-reservation water delivery systems.

Construction Status

When fully constructed, the entire system will consist of:

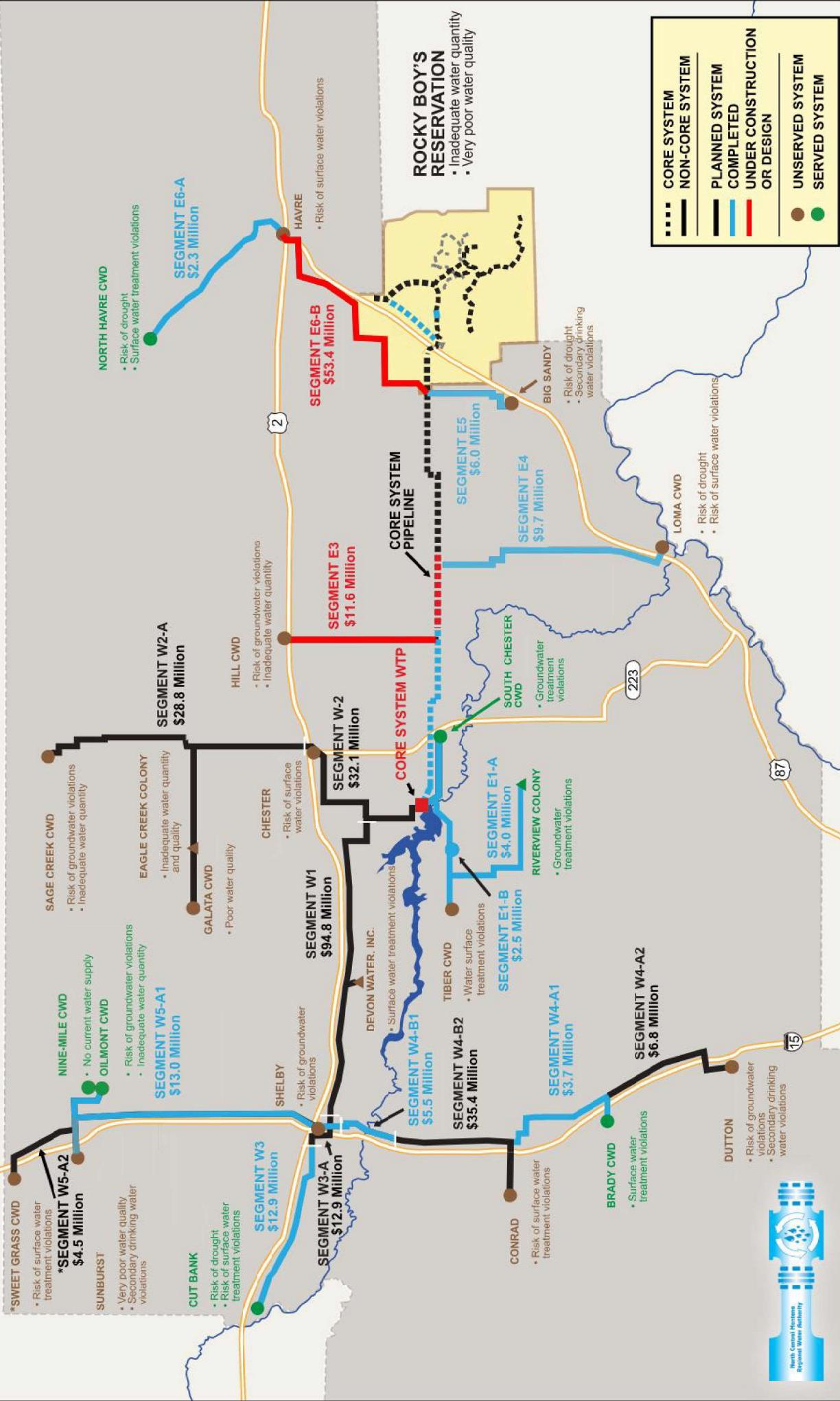
1. Shared infrastructure, including the raw water intake in Tiber Reservoir, the water treatment plant, and core pipeline
2. Two separately managed systems that will distribute to on- and off-reservation communities and county water districts. The on-reservation system is managed by the Chippewa Cree Tribe, which will also wholesale water to NCMRWA for distribution to off-reservation users.

The completed system will serve over 10,000 households and a total estimated population of 28,000.

Current State of Funding and Projected Needs

Total estimated total project cost indexed and recalculated to 2026 is \$1 billion. Combined state-local share is over \$173 million, with the Federal Government responsible for more than \$825 million of the shared infrastructure and Tribal water system. Recent increased pricing for materials and labor has significantly inflated projected costs. Less expensive options for supplying regional water to remaining member communities and water districts are under consideration.

ROCKY BOY'S - NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM



DRY-REDWATER REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

Need for Clean, Plentiful Drinking Water in Eastern Montana

The Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority (Authority) formed in 2005 to own/operate a regional water system to provide household and livestock water. It was established due to interest from residents of Garfield, McCone, Richland, Dawson and a portion of Prairie counties in Montana.

The System as planned would serve about 10,000 residents, primarily utilizing water from Fort Peck Reservoir on the Missouri River.

Federal Authorization—A Major Milestone

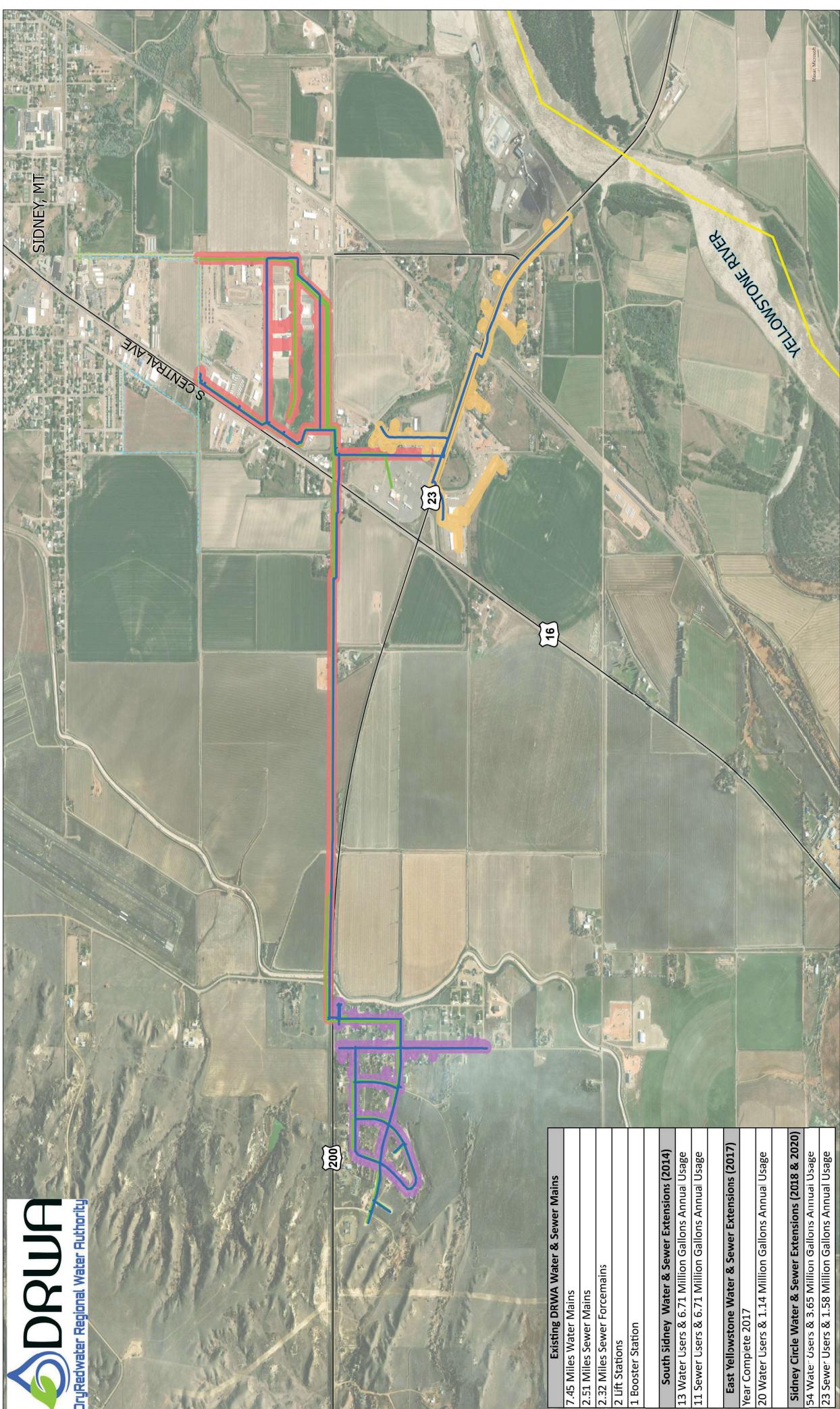
A bill to authorize the regional system, co-sponsored by Senators Daines and Tester, was introduced in 2015, again in 2017 and 2019. Following considerable efforts by the Congressional delegation and a DC-based lobbyist for the water authority, legislation which included directives to the US Bureau of Reclamation to resume feasibility studies and related work with the Dry-Redwater Authority was passed in the 116th Congress and signed into law by President Trump on December 27, 2020.

Construction Status and Current State of Funding

Dry-Redwater negotiated with the US Corps of Engineers for a water intake location on the Dry Arm of Fort Peck Reservoir and obtained a purchase option for 40 acres in McCone County for a water treatment plant (WTP) site. Cost estimates for the system have ranged from \$270 million upward for infrastructure including a surface water treatment plant, and pipeline installation from Sand Springs to Fairview. The Bureau of Reclamation is proceeding with completion of a feasibility study to establish project extent, through determination of benefit-to-cost ratio and related analyses. A Bureau of Reclamation contractor is performing the updates.

The Authority, at Richland County's request, assumed responsibility for construction, operation and maintenance of small pipeline projects south and southwest of the City of Sidney. Water supply and/or sewage treatment are provided by Sidney. Pipelines completed in the area include water supply to businesses and homes south of Sidney (2014), north of the Yellowstone (2016), and rural subdivisions (2018); and sanitary sewer mains for limited areas (2014 and 2020-2021).




 Interstate Engineering, Inc.
 P.O. Box 648
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 Sidney, MT 59270
 (406) 433-5617

 DRY-REDWATER REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY
 EXISTING WATER & SEWER FACILITIES MAP
 EXHIBIT B

CENTRAL MONTANA REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

Need for Clean, Plentiful Drinking Water in Central Montana

The Central Montana Regional Water Authority (Authority) was established in September 2005, with a board of directors representing each community to be served. The Authority organized to help Central Montana residents plagued for decades by poor water quality and quantity. Montanans living within the Judith and Musselshell River drainages have considerable difficulty in obtaining drinking water from reliable sources.

A Groundwater Supply System

Motivated by prolonged drought, the City of Roundup and Musselshell County began work over 20 years ago on a project to explore the Madison Aquifer on the northeast end of the Little Belt Mountains as a potential water source. Using groundwater to supply a regional water system would save the cost of building and maintaining a surface water treatment plant and provide more source diversity throughout the system than a conventional surface water supply. A Judith Basin ground water study, run from 2016 through 2018, verified that the Madison Aquifer could adequately supply this project.

Construction Status

A Madison exploratory test well was completed near Utica in 2003. The Authority drilled a second well at Ubet west of Judith Gap in 2012; a third was installed in 2019, and Wells 4 and 5 in 2024. After finishing a feasibility study, the Authority pursued congressional authorization. The Clean Water for Rural Communities Act, passed in 2020, and was signed into law by President Trump. Construction projects brought Madison aquifer water to the community of Harlowton in September 2023, and to Roundup by the end of 2024. Upcoming project segments will have regional water to Melstone in 2025 and Lavina-Broadview in 2026.

Current State of Funding and Projected Needs

The Musselshell-Judith Central Montana Regional Water System project's estimated cost is \$87 million (2014 dollars) for well development and the distribution system. Combined state and local share was \$30 million, or 35% of the total. **Total project cost indexed to federal fiscal year 2026 is \$133 million.**

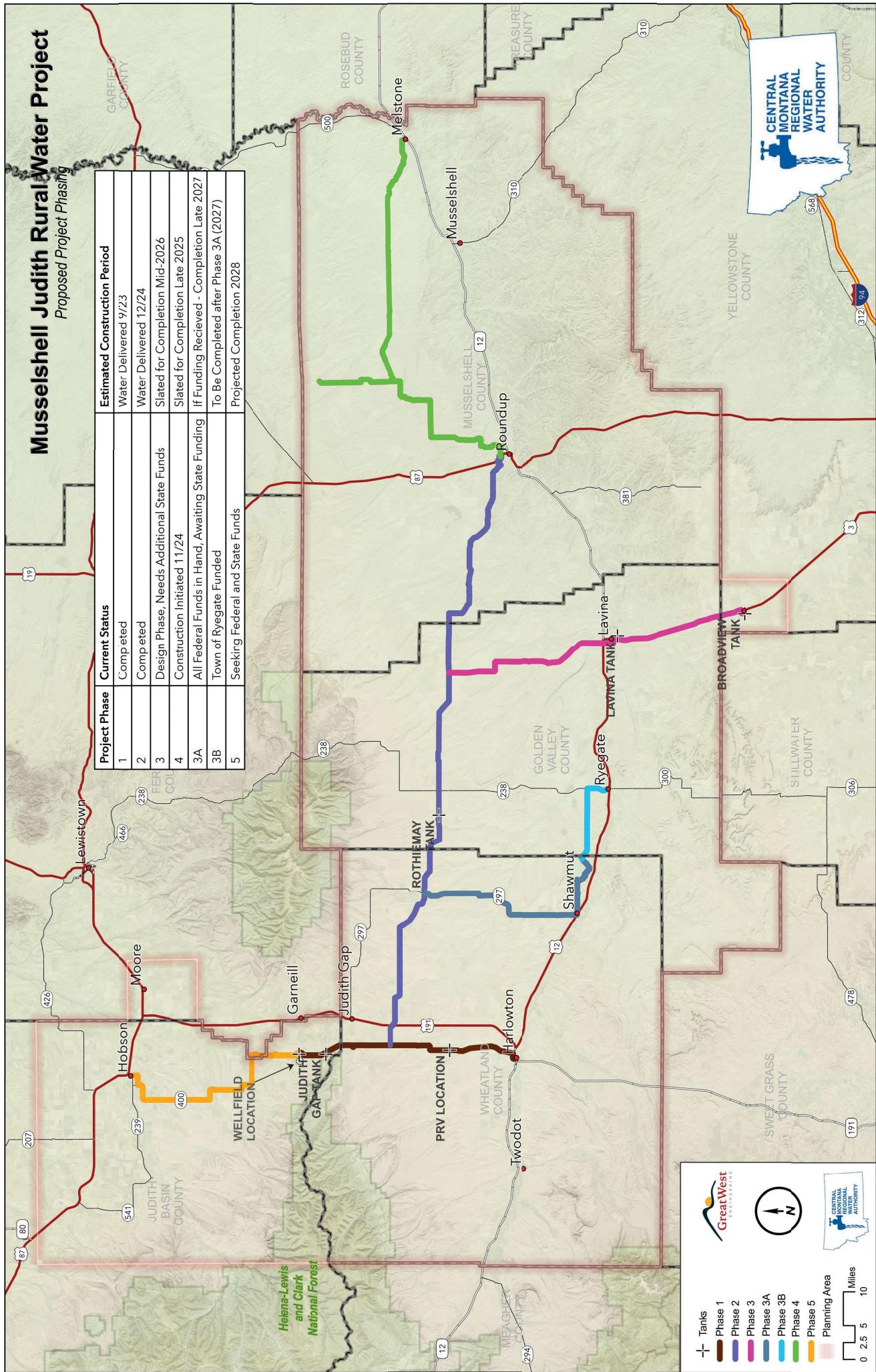


Pipeline Installation Near Harlowtown
Great West Engineering, 2022

Musselshell Judith Rural Water Project

Proposed Project Phasing

Project Phase	Current Status	Estimated Construction Period
1	Completed	Water Delivered 9/23
2	Completed	Water Delivered 12/24
3	Design Phase, Needs Additional State Funds	Slated for Completion Mid-2026
4	Construction Initiated 11/24	Slated for Completion Late 2025
3A	All Federal Funds in Hand, Awaiting State Funding	If Funding Received - Completion Late 2027
3B	Town of RyeGate Funded	To Be Completed after Phase 3A (2027)
5	Seeking Federal and State Funds	Projected Completion 2028



Planning Area
Miles
0 2.5 5 10