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Our mission is to strengthen State Associations.

The National Rural Water Association (NRWA), America’s Largest Utility Membership, was formed in 1976 to build water systems with funding from the Farmer’s Home Administration and to help rural communities address new contaminants and overcome regulatory challenges as a result of the passage of the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1974.

Today, NRWA represents rural and small utilities with populations of 10,000 or less in legislative and regulatory issues, while also providing free technical assistance and training across the United States and Puerto Rico. With the support of our State Associations, NRWA strives to protect the quality of life in America while supporting the grassroots efforts required to help rural communities thrive. Our strong grassroots advocacy helps to increase funds and their availability through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and other federal agencies and private entities.

NRWA and the partnership with each State Association allows for the delivery of training and technical assistance to rural America, while also serving as a cohesive voice and advocating for reasonable, practical, and affordable regulations for the majority of water and wastewater suppliers across the nation. This advocacy has established Rural Water as the trainer of the industry. Classroom instruction and on-site technical assistance are available through each State Association, and with their wealth of knowledge and expertise, we’re making an impact in rural communities.
Rural Water had a year filled with growth, new challenges, and new opportunities in 2023. It was a year of growth for NRWA, from adding new programs, including the Manufactured Housing Training and Technical Assistance Program, the Decentralized Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training Program, and the Disaster Circuit Rider Technical Assistance Program, to expanding our team to help better serve our members and administering our many programs.

During 2023, the water sector was in the national spotlight, and NRWA played a recognized leadership role with mainstream news coverage. We accepted three invitations to the White House and our senior staff participated in multiple high-level agency meetings. In addition to this Rural Water testified four times on Capitol Hill! The 2023 Farm Bill was a major priority for us and was years in the making as we worked throughout all of 2023 advocating for Rural Water’s priorities to be included.

In the realm of relationships with our partner associations, we continued to work with longtime partners such as the Association of State Drinking Water Agencies (ASDWA), American Water Works Association (AWWA), National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), and the American Metropolitan Water Association (AMWA). We also built new relationships with the Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities (CIFA), the National Association of Counties (NACO), and Water Equipment Manufacturers Association (WWEMA).

PFAS was a keyword for our sector in 2023. We were delighted to be one of the first to break the news of PFAS settlements from Dupont, Chemours, and Corteva for nearly $1.2 billion and the settlement from 3M for $12.5 billion. On the regulatory front, NRWA’s Regulatory Committee spent countless hours working up comments to submit on EPA’s proposed PFAS Rule. We will be eagerly waiting to see the outcome of this in the coming year.

Another keyword for the year was cybersecurity. NRWA challenged EPA’s Cybersecurity Rule, in partnership with AWWA as well as the states of Arkansas, Missouri, and Iowa. The benefits of this key decision were highlighted when EPA made the announcement they would be rescinding the rule. It is imperative to note that NRWA is in full support of ensuring small and rural water systems have the training, knowledge and skills to protect their systems from cyber-attacks, and we, along with our State Associations, have been providing this boots-on-the-ground assistance for years.

This is all just a small look into the past year for NRWA. I am confident we will be heading into 2024 ready to meet any challenges and take advantage of key opportunities.

Matthew Holmes
NRWA Chief Executive Officer
In 2023, our programs had the following impact:

- **73,785** Number of On-site and Remote Technical Assistance
- **108,316** System Personnel Trained
- **304,279** Hours Spent Helping Systems

**ESTIMATED 65 MILLION PEOPLE IMPACTED**

- **1,514** Total Trainings
- **195** Graduated Apprentices
- **613** Active Apprentices
## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2023

### Condensed Balance Sheet

as of February 28, 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Investments</td>
<td>57,508,151</td>
<td>57,121,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants, Contracts, &amp; Other Receivables</td>
<td>11,129,351</td>
<td>10,161,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans Receivable</td>
<td>3,397,992</td>
<td>3,970,563</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assets</td>
<td>1,360,547</td>
<td>1,364,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>73,396,041</td>
<td>72,618,722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable &amp; Accrued Expenses</td>
<td>11,292,515</td>
<td>9,175,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Liabilities</td>
<td>9,495,743</td>
<td>9,850,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>52,607,783</td>
<td>53,593,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>73,396,041</td>
<td>72,618,722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Condensed Statement of Activity

as of February 28, 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contacts</td>
<td>61,092,969</td>
<td>52,674,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>(2,966,578)</td>
<td>591,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3,258,486</td>
<td>2,674,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>61,384,877</td>
<td>55,941,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contacts</td>
<td>57,711,205</td>
<td>48,408,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Programs</td>
<td>1,034,295</td>
<td>682,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
<td>3,625,121</td>
<td>3,043,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>62,370,621</td>
<td>52,135,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>(985,744)</td>
<td>3,806,091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Circuit Rider

In 1980, the USDA Farmers Home Administration, in collaboration with NRWA, established the Rural Water Circuit Rider Program. This USDA-funded program provides a nationwide team of drinking water professionals to provide training and technical assistance to water utility managers, boards, and operations specialists. This training is designed as on-site, hands-on, activity-based training, where participants take ownership in learning how to resolve their current and future problems. The program is designed to protect USDA Rural Development’s current water utility infrastructure investments and help them plan for a more sustainable future.

Wastewater Program

The purpose of the USDA-funded Wastewater Program is to protect the nation’s multi-billion-dollar investment in rural and small municipal water/wastewater systems by providing on-site technical assistance and training, which also ensures cost-effective operations and adequate income within each state. NRWA has dedicated and talented Wastewater Technicians, working through the State Associations throughout the country. The primary goal of these technicians is to assist small, rural, and economically challenged communities to enhance and maintain sustainability and compliance of their wastewater systems while ensuring protection of public health and the environment.

NRWA Apprenticeship Program

The NRWA Apprenticeship Program has provided guidelines to states that lay a firm foundation for apprentices to thrive upon completion. With little to no cost, apprentices will attend an approximate two-year training program through a State Association. Classroom instruction and on-the-job training provide apprentices with the tools necessary to be a successful operations specialist in their communities. During the apprenticeship program, apprentices will earn-while-they-learn with knowledgeable, passionate people who strive to deliver clean drinking water to their community and treat wastewater before returning it to the environment. This USDA-funded program starts as a job and emerges as a solid and secure career as either a water or wastewater operations specialist.

Sourcewater Program

The NRWA Source Water Protection Program is built around small water utilities, local businesses, agriculture, government, and other groups working together to develop and implement strategies to protect their drinking water sources. It is a voluntary, grassroots planning effort that builds local responsibility and creates more sustainable communities. This cooperative USDA FSA-funded program has made significant progress in reducing point source pollution from industrial, agricultural, municipal, and even household sources. The program has also made progress in the challenging area of nonpoint source pollution.

Energy Efficiency Program

NRWA’s Energy Efficiency Technical Assistance Program is designed to promote energy-efficient practices in small water and wastewater systems. Funded through a grant from the USDA Rural Utilities Service, the program performs energy assessments, recommends energy efficient practices and technologies, and provides support in following recommendations. Technical support includes assisting with presentations to governing boards, accessing financing, training, and developing documentation.
NRWA Programs Continued

Decentralized Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training Program
The NRWA Decentralized Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training Program (DcWW) provides expertise and service that would otherwise be unaffordable to small, rural, and disadvantaged communities, particularly those in traditionally underserved and economically challenged areas. The DcWW Water Quality Action Specialists provide a holistic technical assistance approach to disadvantaged rural communities with failing or inadequate wastewater treatment, including helping communities formulate Wastewater Community Assessment Reports and Strategic Wastewater Action Plans by facilitating community involvement and steering committee consensus for project implementation.

EPA Water Training and Technical Assistance Program
The EPA Water Training and Technical Assistance Program is a U.S. EPA-funded program which provides accredited operator certification training and on-site technical assistance that supports the specific needs of small water system personnel, tribal systems, and overburdened systems. Training Specialists have experience working with small systems and possess expert knowledge regarding their compliance challenges.

EPA Wastewater Training and Technical Assistance Program
Funding from U.S. EPA's Training and Technical Assistance grant program helps provide training and technical assistance for small public water systems, small publicly owned wastewater systems, communities served by onsite/decentralized wastewater systems, and private drinking water well owners. Training and technical assistance assists small public water systems in operating and maintaining their systems to achieve and maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act; building their financial and managerial capacity to provide safe drinking water over the long term; ensuring sustainable operations; and improving water quality. This program covers four different areas: tribal, lagoon, decentralized, and compliance.

EFC Region 8
NRWA's Region 8 Environmental Finance Center serves EPA's Region 8, which includes the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. It is comprised of two programs, Categories 1 and 2. The goal of Category 1 is to assist rural water and wastewater systems in EPA Region 8 to become more resilient and sustainable in the face of a changing climate through training and working collaboratively with rural water and wastewater systems to conduct climate change risk assessments. The objective of Category 2 is to provide on-site, hands-on technical assistance to ensure rural water and wastewater systems incorporate the best and most effective managerial and State Revolving Loan/Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-related guidance for the system's future sustainability.

Manufactured Housing Program
NRWA's Manufactured Housing Technical Assistance & Training Program is designed to assist and address the specific challenges faced by rural manufactured home communities by providing hands-on, on-site technical assistance and training to identify and evaluate solutions for water and wastewater problems.

USDA Rural Development Loan and Grant Program
The USDA loan and grant program helps very small, financially distressed rural communities extend and improve water and wastewater treatment facilities that serve local households and businesses. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements, business development, housing, community services such as schools, public safety and health care, and high-speed internet access in rural areas. It can be used to finance drinking water, stormwater drainage and waste disposal systems for rural communities with 10,000 or fewer residents.
NRWA Programs have made so many impacts and strides during the 2023 year. From responding to emergencies, fixing leaks, and saving energy to training the current generation and the future generation of water and wastewater operators. Here are just a few of those successess:

**Energy Efficiency Assessment Saves Money**

The Trion Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) in Georgia had significant energy savings after adding timers to their aerators as recommended by Georgia Rural Water Association’s (GRWA) Energy Efficiency Technician Dennis Brown. Since the assessment, the facility has saved $185,671 and 2,856,288 kWh of energy.

**Louisiana Rural Water System Receives Prestigious Award**

Sabine Parish Water District #1 was recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for AQUARIUS Excellence in Innovative Financing during the Council of Infrastructure Financing Authorities (CIFA) Water Infrastructure Summit on April 12 in Washington, DC.

**Water Treatment Plant on Wheels**

New York Rural Water Association Circuit Rider Morris Coolidge built a portable filtration trailer on his own time with his own tools for a rural town in need. Equipped with four banks of filters, ultraviolet light units, a SCADA system, turbidity meters, and particle counters, the trailer will be used for emergency response in New York once the town completes the construction of a new filtration plant.

**Pre-Apprenticeship Program Launched In Tennessee**

Tennessee Association of Utility Districts launched its registered pre-apprenticeship program in August 2023, making it the first of its kind in the state. The purpose of the program is to expose high school juniors and seniors to careers in the water industry, specifically water and wastewater operators. The program is designed to let them see and hear about all necessary roles in facility operations.
Thanks to the strong, trusted relationships built over many years, Rural Water was called to testify before Congress four times in 2023. This directly reflects the expertise, credibility and success of our annual grassroots advocacy campaign. During the 2023 calendar year, the following individuals testified on behalf of Rural Water:

**Mark Pepper**  

**Matthew Holmes**  
NRWA CEO Matthew Holmes testified on June 13 before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture Subcommittee on Commodity Markets, Digital Assets, and Rural Development during the Stakeholder Perspectives on USDA’s Rural Development Program hearing.

**Rob White**  
Executive Director of Alabama Rural Water Association Rob White testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee hearing on July 19 entitled “Rural Water: Modernizing our Community Water Systems.” The hearing was part of the Senate Subcommittee on Rural Development and Energy and allowed for White to provide recommendations for the Farm Bill on behalf of Rural Water.

**Eric Volk**  
Executive Director of North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association Eric Volk testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works hearing on September 7 entitled “Implementing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act: Perspectives on The Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act, Part II.” The hearing allowed Volk to share challenges and perspectives rural and small water systems are facing with members of the committee.
NRWA’s leadership had the foresight to see and understand that PFAS, including the monitoring of levels, treatment, and remediation costs, would be a major issue for rural water and wastewater utilities. Early in 2018, NRWA partnered with Napoli Shkolnik PLLC to file a lawsuit on behalf of its members. On June 2, 2023, NRWA announced a $1.185 billion settlement had been reached in litigation against the manufacturers of perfluorooctanoic acid and perfluorooctane sulfonate (“PFAS”), including DuPont, Chemours, and Corteva. A few weeks later on June 22, a historical settlement was reached with 3M to pay $12.5 billion in damages for their role in PFAS manufacturing.

National Rural Water Association CEO Matthew Holmes attended an exclusive White House event on January 27, 2023, hosted by U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris and the Biden Administration recognizing the acceleration of lead pipe replacement. NRWA was recognized as one of more than 120 partners representing the Biden-Harris “Get the Lead Out” Partnership, which was created to reduce the amount of lead service lines and protect American communities. In November 2023, the EPA released their Lead and Copper Improvement Rule (LCRI). NRWA applauds EPA’s effort to protect public health by removing lead from our nation’s drinking water. With the help of our State Associations, Rural Water will help systems meet the LCRI’s ambitious goals, while also continuing to provide technical assistance and training each day. As details of the LCRI are reviewed, NRWA will continue working with EPA to ensure our members are prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

On March 3, 2023, EPA released a legal opinion that cyber security resiliency falls under their existing authority under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The memorandum conveyed EPA’s interpretation that states must include cybersecurity when conducting sanitary surveys. NRWA and the American Water Works Association (AWWA), joined the States of Missouri, Arkansas, and Iowa in a legal challenge to the Cybersecurity Rule because of concerns about the legal process and legality of the rule, concerns that the rule may create additional cybersecurity vulnerabilities for members, as well as concerns that states do not have appropriate resources, laws, rules or procedures in place to adhere to the rule requirements.

In July, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit granted a request from NRWA and AWWA to stop the Cybersecurity Rule from going into effect until the current case challenging the rule has been decided.

On October 12, the EPA withdrew the Cybersecurity Rule. NRWA has been actively involved in the legislative arena where cybersecurity is concerned, and its grassroots advocacy has resulted in the introduction of the “Cybersecurity for Rural Water Systems Act of 2023.” A key portion of the bill includes additional funding through the NRWA Circuit Rider Program to provide technical assistance to help utilities address cybersecurity.
During the 2023 Rural Water Rally, Rural Water advocates flooded Capitol Hill to share the Rural Water story. They met with numerous senators, representatives, and congressional staffers to inform them about important issues in our industry and funding requests for the coming year. NRWA also held the 24th annual Great American Water Taste Test during the Rally and the Pueblo of Zia from New Mexico was awarded first place. In the history of the competition, this was the first tribal utility to receive top honors.
IN-SERVICE

Each year, NRWA hosts an in-Service training for State Association employees. In June, more than 500 State Rural Water Association employees gathered in Fort Lauderdale, Florida for the annual In-Service training. During the three-day training with 98 educational sessions, attendees learned about new technologies and regulations while networking with their peers to share ideas and solutions for current rural water issues. Steve Polacek, acting administrator for USDA WEP shared updates with attendees during the opening session and Christine Sorenson with the USDA Rural Partners Network spoke about ideas the agency has for the future.

PUBLICATIONS

MAGAZINE

NRWA publishes a quarterly magazine, Rural Water, which highlights important topics in the water and wastewater industry, including emergency preparedness, cybersecurity, energy efficiency, source water protection, workforce development, and board leadership.

NRWA E-NEWSLETTER

NRWA’s Rural Water Wire is a weekly e-newsletter that delivers the latest news and information in the water and wastewater industry directly to inboxes each Thursday to more than 27,000 subscribers.

NRWA SPONSORED WEBINARS

NRWA hosted 26 free webinars in 2023, with more than 2,400 attendees.
THE INDUSTRY EVENT OF THE YEAR

WATERPRO CONFERENCE
Aurora, Colorado | Sept. 25-27, 2023

The Water Industry is always in flux — innovative technology, new regulations or changing funding formulas. The WaterPro Conference offers a full range of educational opportunities that cover all aspects of the water/wastewater industry.

The WaterPro Conference is known as the “Industry Event of the Year.” NRWA upholds this standard by introducing new and informative sessions to the agenda, along with other exciting events.

This year, events included WaterPro Feud, Rural Water on Display Photo Contest, and the Ultimate Meter Challenge. For the Women in Rural Water Luncheon, NRWA hosted Toni Glymph-Martin as the keynote speaker.

2023 WATERPRO BY THE NUMBERS

2,000+
More than 2,000 attendees from all 50 states

85
85 educational sessions

126
126 exhibitors

Join us next year!
WaterPro Conference 2024 is set for September 9-11, 2024, in beautiful Savannah, Georgia. Visit waterproconference.org to learn more.
NRWA was honored to host important guests during general sessions, including Bruno Pigott, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for EPA’s Office of Water, Farah Ahmad, Deputy Under Secretary for USDA Rural Development, Hank Naughton, Napoli Shkolnik PLLC Partner, Jennifer McLain, Director for the EPA’s Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, and Andrew Sawyers, Director for the EPA’s Office of Wastewater Management, also joined NRWA for a roundtable discussion. Each of these guest speakers discussed issues in the rural water and wastewater industry and addressed concerns from attendees through interactive Q&A sessions. We appreciate these industry leaders taking time out of their schedules to speak.

**STATE ASSOCIATION AWARDS**

Outstanding Achievement in Training –
Alabama Rural Water Association

Outstanding Achievement in Technical Assistance –
Wyoming Association of Rural Water Systems

Outstanding Achievement in Communications, Publications and Public Relations –
South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems

Outstanding Achievement in Legislative Initiatives –
Michigan Rural Water Association

Outstanding Achievement in Member Services –
Missouri Rural Water Association

2023 State Association of the Year –
Colorado Rural Water Association

**CONFERENCE TESTIMONIALS**

“This was my first WaterPro Conference and I was in AWE!! The conference far exceeded my expectations.”

“Exceptional conference! The water industry feels like family, and the conference was like a reunion -- great networking and new friends”

“I enjoyed and appreciated my time at the WaterPro conference this year in Aurora, CO. The networking opportunities were on point and the event was managed beautifully.”

Colorado Rural Water Association (pictured below) was named the 2023 State Association of the Year.

**Guest Speakers**

NRWA was honored to host important guests during general sessions, including Bruno Pigott, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for EPA’s Office of Water, Farah Ahmad, Deputy Under Secretary for USDA Rural Development, and Hank Naughton, Napoli Shkolnik PLLC Partner, Jennifer McLain, Director for the EPA’s Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, and Andrew Sawyers, Director for the EPA’s Office of Wastewater Management, also joined NRWA for a roundtable discussion. Each of these guest speakers discussed issues in the rural water and wastewater industry and addressed concerns from attendees through interactive Q&A sessions. We appreciate these industry leaders taking time out of their schedules to speak.

More than 120 exhibitors from across the United States attended WaterPro Conference.
WE ARE RURAL WATER

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Duncan, OK 73533
Phone: 580-252-0629

Follow us on our socials!