

MEMORANDUM

TO: Programs, Projects & Operations Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Test of Emergency Transfer of Water from Wash. County RW #1 to the City of Blair

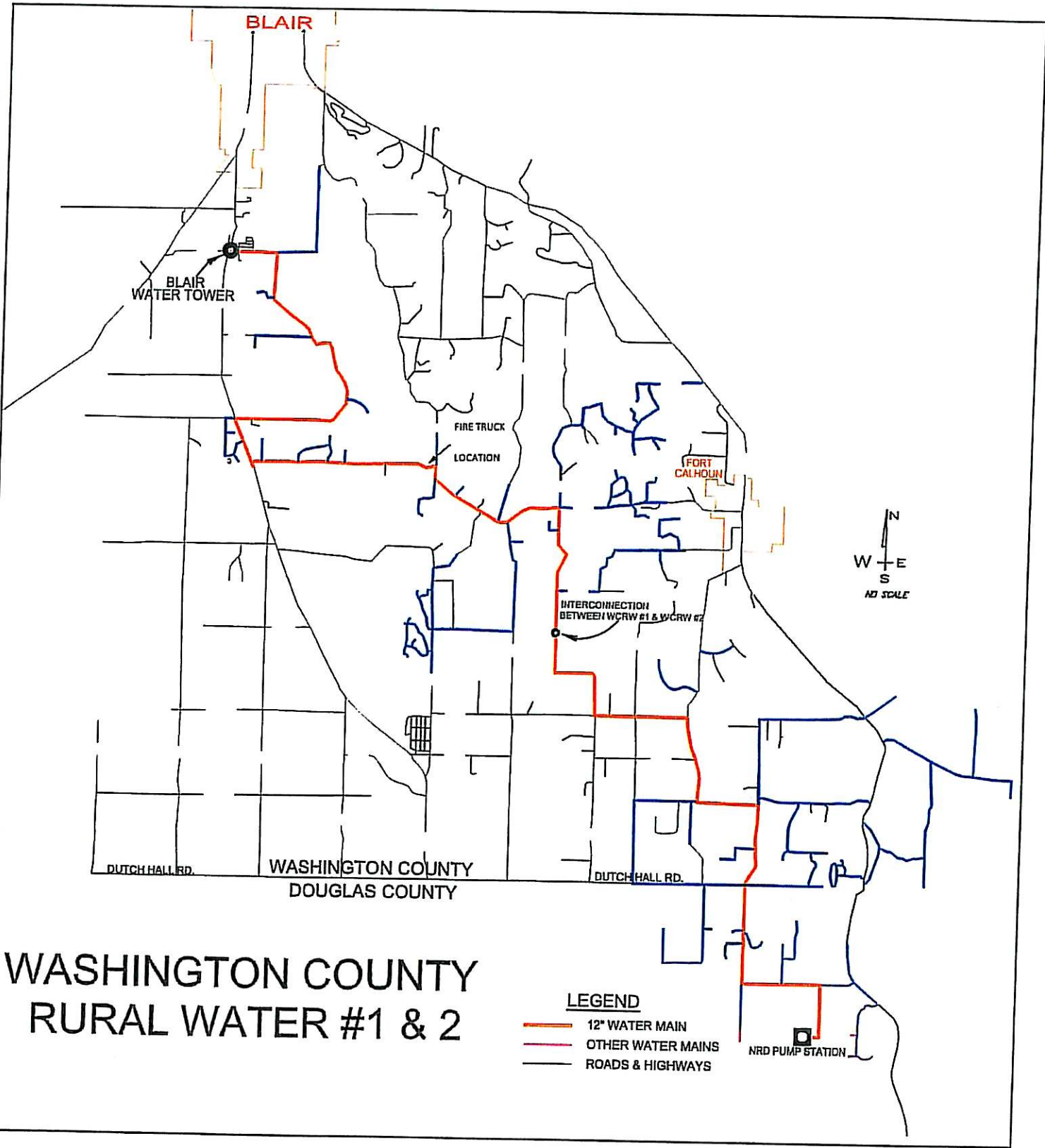
DATE: June 24, 2009

FROM: Dick Sklenar

On the above date a test of emergency transfer of water supply from Wash. County RW #1 (WCRW#1) to the City of Blair was conducted. Both Wash. County RW #1 and WCRW #2 are designed to accommodate a test flow of over 1000 gallons per minute to the City. However, the concept had never been tested until now. This was because Wash. County RW #2 had somewhat of a frail distribution system since its construction in 2005. There had been at least 1 leak every other month for a period of over 2 years. But 14 months prior to June, 2009, the system stabilized and no leaks were encountered.

Prior to initiating the test, a briefing of all personnel, both City and NRD, was conducted in the afternoon of June 23 at the water tower along Hwy. 133. Handouts were prepared, and an explanation of how the test should proceed was explained. Assignments for stationing of personnel were given. Approval for the test was given by the Nebraska Dept. of Health & Human Services, and the Metropolitan Utilities District was notified as well.

Personnel were stationed in the morning of June 24, 2009, at the water tower, at the intersection of roads 32 & P35, the interconnection between WCRW #1 & WCRW #2, and at the NRD pump station on N. 60th Street. The operation concluded at about 11:00 a.m. and was successful. The NRD pump station discharge pressure was elevated 30 ps.i. (from 140 to 170) to accommodate a flow range in excess of 1200 gallons per minute. Flow into the water tower increased about .7 ft. before the test was halted for the day. The only delays in the test procedure were the fire hoses for the pumper fire truck that sprang a leak. A new hose was brought out. Concerns that a fracture in the rural water distribution system was to occur during the test, never materialized. All parties involved, including the Blair public works director, were pleased with the outcome. It is suggested that the exercise be conducted once every 7 to 10 years.



WASHINGTON COUNTY RURAL WATER #1 & 2

LEGEND

- 12" WATER MAIN
- OTHER WATER MAINS
- ROADS & HIGHWAYS

NRD PUMP STATION

Editorial

Emergency water test; two groups working together

It didn't generate much fanfare, but Blair marked an important occasion last month when water was pumped from the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District's rural water system to the water tower just south of town.

It marked the first test of the system that was designed to provide Blair with a backup supply of water in case of an emergency. And the test went well, which is good news for Blair residents. Using a Blair Volunteer Fire Department pumper truck, a crew pumped 1,200 gallons of water per minute to the water tower.

The test confirmed that, in case of emergency, Blair could get water from the Metropolitan Utilities District in Omaha via the NRD's rural water system. That way Blair could provide at least basic water service to residents in the event that the city's main water supply was interrupted.

The recent test was the culmination of four years of planning and work by the city of Blair and the PMNRD. This a project that has proven to be of great value to everyone involved, including residents in Blair and Washington County. Many county residents now have a dependable supply of water for household and emergency use thanks to the NRD's rural water system that serves a large area between Blair and Fort Calhoun.

And Blair residents have a reliable backup supply of water in case an emergency shut down the city's normal water supply. The 1,200 gpm that was pumped into the water tower during the recent test is about half of what the city uses on a regular basis, but it would provide enough water to keep the community going in an emergency.

It's an example of two government subdivisions (three, if you count MUD in Omaha) working together to achieve a common goal and to consolidate efforts for maximum efficiency. And it's an example of the kind of emergency planning that continues to enhance the quality of life in Blair.

The city of Blair invested about \$500,000 into this endeavor and it looks like it was money well spent.