

Filling the gaps

KLJ Engineering selected for Buffalo Gap Road project

By Gaylon Wm. Parker
bcpnews@gspublishing.net

After a unanimous vote from both the Golden Valley County and Billings County commissions, Brosz/KLJ Engineering was selected by a pair of 3-0 votes to work on the upcoming Buffalo Gap Extension Road project that will see improvements and rerouting of Buffalo Gap Road. The two government bodies already have agreed unanimously to share responsibility for the project – with about an even split pertaining to mileage between Billings and Golden Valley – which will later include requests for proposals and eventual approval to expedite the process and provide an easier route to completion.

The other firm that submitted a bid was Civil Science Engineering, and both companies have offices in Dickinson.

Brosz Engineering oversees many projects in Southwest North Dakota and leaders said both were, “Obviously qualified and have very good references.”

Buffalo Gap Road’s current path takes it north from Interstate 94, Exit 18 and then northwesterly towards State Road 103 W in Golden Valley County, and it would be diverted towards almost due north and link up with 103 just west of the Knutson Creek Substation along the western edge of Billings County.

While most of the proposed area the eventual road would travel along is under inside US Forest Service areas, the service has expressed approval for the project, and that could alleviate some otherwise mitigating circumstances such as permitting. Also, environmental surveys will be required – including



wetlands, archeological and cultural surveys – which can always impede projects of this kind, and these surveys would be a part of the process in completing the road. It was said during the meeting that the US Forest Service would perform the botany and wildlife surveys pertaining to the road’s corridor, which also could help expedite the process and save money. But it’s expected Brosz will be able to get the ball rolling quickly on the engineering front with KLJ working that side of

the project as the subcontractor.

No discussions, thus far, have been held pertaining to funding – whether it be done partially through flex-funding from the state or other government subsidies – but the initial costs were originally agreed to be split 50-50 between Golden Valley and Billings, regardless of whether those avenues are pursued.

Upon engineering approval – and with it preliminary designs and the overall final plans for

the thoroughfare – the project would be bid at that point and run as a county project that could begin as early as February or March 2027 and is targeted for an end-of-year completion under the best possible circumstances with all subsequent management under Brosz’s supervision, including subcontractors, to streamline the project and make it more efficient.

One other benefit of the road’s proposed path is that Buffalo Gap Road would be diverted away from private property, on which much of the current roadway exists and has created difficulties in the past through disagreements with landholders and other difficulties.

For more information about the US Forest Service and US Department of Agriculture, please see www.fs.usda.gov.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT



Belfield High School

Name: Michael Warren

Family: Nancy Kramer

Do you have any nicknames? NA

What is your favorite class? Welding

Favorite social media app? Snapchat

What is your favorite TV show? Shameless

Who is your favorite musician? Aramas

Favorite food? Steak

Least favorite school lunch? NA

How do you stay informed on current events? I don't

Least favorite chore to help with at home? Mowing

What is your favorite midnight snack? Cheese

What is your favorite holiday? Why? Thanksgiving, food

What are your plans after high school? Work

What do you do in your spare time? Work

Do you have any pet peeves? Getting told something will get done and then having to do it myself

Who is your role model and why? My mom, she's caring

If you could choose a super power, what would it be and why? NA

What would you do if you won the lottery? Run away

What is your dream job? Mechanic shop

SPONSORED BY

Stoppeworth & Sons, Inc.

Belfield, ND

701-575-4320

Financial relief for ag

North Dakota expands ag relief programs to \$500 million, adding \$100 million

By Jacob Orledge

North Dakota Monitor

North Dakota officials are authorizing the Bank of North Dakota to further expand the largest agriculture disaster relief program in the bank’s history.

The North Dakota Industrial Commission agreed Tuesday to au-

thorize the state-owned bank to allocate an additional \$100 million to the 2026 Farm Financial Stability Program, created last fall to help ag producers to restructure their debts.

The three person commission, which includes the governor, attorney general and agriculture commis-

sioner, also closed a second ag relief program, the Grain Inventory Loan Program, and transferred the remaining \$12 million to the low-interest loan program.

“This is why we exist,” said Gov. Kelly Armstrong. “If we can’t do this, we’re not doing it right.”

The state’s agriculture producers have been hit by a fourfold storm of low commodity prices, high costs, storms and high interest rates in recent years, said bank CEO Don Morgan.

“Their margins are squeezed,” Morgan said. The total value of the two relief programs will rise to \$500 million as a result of Tuesday’s actions.

“This would, I believe, at this point in time, be the only additional allocation we would be asking for through ag renewal season,” Morgan said, referring to the time of year when farmers and ranchers work with their local lenders to renew annual operating loans. “This will see us through.”

Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said the pro-

gram has been a good idea and “helps lessen the burden that a lot of these guys are dealing with.”

Nearly 600 agriculture producers have applied for nearly \$480 million in relief through the Farm Financial Stability Program since December, according to Bank of North Dakota documents. Just shy of \$93 million has been approved and distributed as of March 16.

“It may not cover every single application. In fact, it probably won’t, but that’s OK,” Morgan said. “In working with our bank partners, we feel comfortable that this is the right amount moving forward.”

The low-interest loans are designed to allow farmers and ranchers to restructure existing debt at a lower interest rate, convert operating losses into loans with extended repayment schedules and ensure they have cash going into this year’s planting season.

Agriculture producers in Foster and Bottineau counties have thus far received the most funding through the program, at \$7.9 million and \$7.1 million

respectively. Mountrail, Stutsman and Eddy counties are the others to have received more than \$5 million so far.

Walsh County has the most funding pending approval and distribution, with \$55 million. Other counties with more than \$20 million pending through the program include Grand Forks, Cass, Pembina and Stutsman counties. The deadline for farmers and ranchers to apply for low-interest loans through the program is June 30. Applications are accepted through local banks and credit unions in the state.

The Grain Inventory Program, a short-term financing initiative to help farmers hold leftover inventory from 2025 until prices improved, has been utilized less than expected. Farmers have submitted 10 applications for a total of \$7.7 million through the program. Seven applications totaling \$5.8 million have been approved and distributed, including \$2.5 million for producers in Hettinger County.

North Dakota Monitor reporter Jacob Orledge can be reached at jorledge@northdakotamonitor.com.

ADULT PROM NIGHT
\$25/single, \$50 couple

DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY

JOIN US!

Once a year
May 2nd
8:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.
Legion Hall in Belfield

Register on Facebook
Messenger OR email
belfieldparkboard@outlook.com

Celebrate with friends in style and fun!

Beverages available for purchase
REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED