

# Western Grant Ambulance District to bring vote to secure services

The Western Grant Ambulance District announces a special election to ensure the continued availability of emergency medical services for the area. To address a significant funding gap and ensure the long-term sustainability of the local ambulance service, the district is seeking voter support for a 15 mill levy and the annexation of the entire ambulance service area into the taxation district.

Community meetings will be held at

7 p.m. Wednesday, May 27, at the New Leipzig Community Center, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 3, at the Carson Community Center, and at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 10, at the Elgin Community Center, where information will be shared.

The special election will be held from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. MT Tuesday, June 16, for any qualified elector residing in the existing and proposed territory. The polling location will be at the New Leipzig EMS Building, located

at 18 First St. SE, New Leipzig.

"It's a vital part of our communities. It's something that we have to have for our communities," Western Grant Ambulance District Chairman Keith Payne said.

The 2023 Legislature passed HB 1365 mandating the formation of ambulance taxation districts for rural ambulance services. The Western Grant Ambulance District formed last year and is overseen by a seven-member board, which oversees the tax dollars and state grants, and makes decisions about spending for the New Leipzig-Elgin Ambulance Service. The New Leipzig-Elgin Ambulance Service is the only ambulance service operating within the taxation district. The Carson quick response unit, which cannot transport patients, operates under the New Leipzig-Elgin Ambulance Service's license.

"They are a valuable part of the whole operation, they definitely are, and it's nothing we're trying to do away with at all. We're trying to include them in every step that we can," Payne said about the QRU.

## Financial realities

The cost of maintaining a 24/7 ambulance service is substantial. For 2026, the total projected cost to operate the ambulance service is \$1,207,013. This total includes \$1,089,346 in operating costs and \$117,667 reserved for the purchase of a new ambulance.

Effective July 1, 2022, Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center (JMHCC) became one of only 10 critical access hospitals in the nation selected to participate in a federal demonstration project, the Frontier Community Health Integration Project (FCHIP), allowing it to receive cost-based reimbursement to operate an ambulance.

The project allowed JMHCC to sign a management agreement with the ambulance service to lease the ambulances and provide the physical service, including all the labor.

That funding does not cover the entire cost of operating an ambulance, however, and the FCHIP program expires in 2027.

"We have to look at the future and how we are going to maintain our services," JMHCC EMS Director Cary Kehr said.

The ambulance

service retains the license to operate, contracts with the hospital to utilize the FCHIP funding and the Western Grant Ambulance District collects the tax and grant funding to support the operations of the ambulance service. A QRU then operates under the ambulance service license and budget, Payne described.

A mill levy does not support any services of JMHCC, but will be used for the Western Grant Ambulance District to fund the ambulance service.

While the service receives revenue from various payers and programs, such as FCHIP, a massive deficit remains. Even with current supplemental payments, the service faces a revenue shortfall of \$566,909. Without future supplemental programs, that deficit could grow to over \$893,000. Currently, the existing 2 mill levy in the Western Grant Ambulance District generates an estimated \$24,562 for FY27, which is insufficient to cover rising costs.

"Right now, the hospital is footing the bill. They are picking up the tab for the shortfall," Payne said.

## Fairness through annexation

A key component of the proposal is the annexation of the full service area. Currently, there is a discrepancy between the area the ambulance serves and the area that provides tax support. By annexing the entire service area, the district ensures taxes are fairly spread across all property owners who receive ambulance protection. This alignment will better position the Western Grant Ambulance District to provide reliable funding for the ambulance service into the future, a news release from the district stated.

The annexation question includes a sliver in eastern Grant County and small portions of townships in Hettinger County and Adams County, which are currently in the ambulance's service area, but aren't in the taxation district.

"The service area will be the same as the taxation district and that's the reason

why we're doing it, so that everybody who is getting the service will be paying the same across the board," Payne said.

## Impact on taxpayers

The proposed 15 mill levy, which is the maximum the district can request, and annexation is estimated to generate \$248,876 in annual revenue to help bridge the funding gap. For the average property owner, the daily cost of securing this life-saving service is:

- Residential (\$150,000 value): Approximately 31 cents per day (\$112.50 annually).
- Commercial (\$225,000 value): Approximately 46 cents per day (\$168.75 annually).
- Agricultural (\$50,000 value): Approximately 10 cents per day (\$37.50 annually).

## Legislative limitations

Due to the 3% mill levy cap enacted during the 2025 legislative session, the Western Grant Ambulance District will be restricted in its ability to increase property tax levies. Starting next year, the district may raise its total levy by no more than 3% over the prior year's dollar amount, regardless of rising operational costs or new service demands. If the district maintains its current levy of \$24,562, it would be permitted to increase the next year's levy by only \$737. This limited growth makes it challenging to keep pace with inflation, increasing expenses and the growing need for essential emergency services, the district's news release stated.

To ensure the long-term financial stability of the district and continue providing reliable ambulance service to the community, the board has decided to levy the maximum allowable amount for the ambulance service and annex the entire service area into the taxation area. This proactive step is necessary to help offset rising costs for personnel, equipment, training and operations, without which critical services could be jeopardized. The district remains dedicated to transparency and fiscal responsibility.

# RE-ELECT

## Representative

# Karen Rohr

June 9, 2026 - District 31

paid for by Friends of Karen Rohr

4/23, 4/30, 5/7, 5/14

## NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES PUBLIC NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY FINDING AND OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE COMMENT ON THE NAVIGABILITY OF THE FOLLOWING NORTH DAKOTA WATERS:

### BOIS DE SIOUX RIVER, MISSOURI RIVER, MOUSE RIVER, RED RIVER, UPPER DES LACS LAKE, AND YELLOWSTONE RIVER

The North Dakota Department of Water Resources (Department) hereby provides notice that pursuant to North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) § 61-33-05.1(2) it is soliciting public comment on the preliminary navigability findings (made under N.D.C.C. § 61-33-05.1(1)) of the following North Dakota waters (Waters):

- Bois De Sioux River
- Missouri River
- Mouse River
- Red River of the North
- Upper Des Lacs Lake
- Yellowstone River

**1. Mailing and E-Mail addresses where public comments may be sent**  
North Dakota Department of Water Resources  
C/O Regulatory Division  
1200 Memorial Highway  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
sovereignlands@nd.gov

### 2. Body of Water(s) for Finding of Navigability

The Department solicited a study of the Waters for their potential for being used for commerce, or susceptible for being used for commerce, in their condition at the time North Dakota became a state (1889). Below is a summary of the preliminary navigability findings.

#### Bois De Sioux River

All portions of the Bois De Sioux River within the state of North Dakota.

#### Missouri River

All portions of the Missouri River within the state of North Dakota.

#### Mouse River

All portions of the Mouse River within the state of North Dakota.

#### Red River of the North

All portions of the Red River of the North within the state of North Dakota.

#### Upper Des Lacs Lake

All portions of Upper Des Lacs Lake within the state of North Dakota.

#### Yellowstone River

All portions of the Yellowstone River within the state of North Dakota.

### 3. Public Hearing

The Department will conduct a public hearing at 9 AM on July 14, 2026, at the Lewis & Clark Room No. 238 at the Bank of North Dakota (1200 Memorial Highway, Bismarck, ND 58504). A virtual option will also be available at [www.dwr.nd.gov](http://www.dwr.nd.gov).

Each of the Waters will get at least 15 minutes and up to an hour of public comment, with a break from 12 PM to 1 PM central for lunch. Each waterbody will have a hearing open and closed in the order presented in this notice. If no members of the public in-person or virtual provide comment within a 15-minute period, the hearing for that particular waterbody will be closed and the next waterbody comment hearing will be opened.

### 4. Public Hearing Purpose

The purpose of the public hearing is to provide the public with an opportunity to provide comment to the Department on the draft determinations of navigability prior to making a final determination of navigability. The Department welcomes all comments that will aid in the Department's final determination of navigability on all segments of the Waters under consideration.

If a waterbody is determined to be navigable, the area within the ordinary high water mark of the navigable water body is held in trust by the State of North Dakota for the people of North Dakota.

### 5. Availability of Preliminary Finding Documentation

The Department's preliminary finding of navigability for the Waters are available on the Department's website at [www.dwr.nd.gov](http://www.dwr.nd.gov).

Dated the 11th day of May, 2026

North Dakota Department of Water Resources  
Reice Haase, Director



## NOTICE of School Board Election

Notice is hereby given, that on Tuesday, the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June 2026, the annual election will be held for the purpose of electing two board members for the **Roosevelt Public School District No. 18**, Carson, North Dakota 58529.

The school board election will be held with the Grant County Election.

Eligible voters will be voting for **two directors** to fill the expired three-year term of Carmel Miller and Jennifer Hauge. The positions are At-Large.

By order of the Board of Directors  
Roosevelt Public School District No. 18  
P.O. Box 197  
Carson, North Dakota 58529  
/s/Carey Reis,  
Carey Reis, Business Manager

5/21, 5/28