

Bear River Water Conservancy District

Annual Report of Activities – Calendar Year 2025

Presented to the Board of Trustees – March 25, 2026

Prepared by: Chance Baxter, General Manager

The 2025 year was busy and productive for the District, and I want to give the Board a clear, straightforward summary of what we accomplished and where we stand moving into 2026. Much like my Quarterly reports, this update focuses on project progress, financial condition, operational performance, and the major issues we worked through together over the last twelve months.

From an administrative standpoint, we had a few changes in Board membership and officer roles during the year. We welcomed Trustees Kelly Lemmon and Mike Braegger, and Trustee Jay Capener was reappointed. Mid-year, Chairman Bott stepped down and Trustee Capener was elected as Chairman, with Trustee Kendrick as Vice Chair. The District stayed in full compliance with required reporting and audit obligations. The 2024 audit came back clean. We did have one training-related compliance item that we addressed right away.

Financially, the District is in a strong position. The audit showed \$17 million in capital assets and a good net position. Revenues were up by about \$1.3 million compared to 2023. We adopted the 2026 budget with the scheduled 3% COLA. Throughout the year, we maintained tight oversight on expenses while still moving forward with important capital work. We also provided targeted support to several communities where the District's participation helped stabilize or improve local systems. These included funding assistance to Deweyville for their pipeline replacement, Willard City for a PRV upgrade, Thatcher Penrose for their IFFP study, and early coordination with Mantua on a generator project.

One of the biggest administrative tasks of the year was updating the Water Service Policy. The committee and legal counsel helped work through several needed changes. We clarified service processes, updated the section on wholesale and retail delivery, and added flexibility for how we handle water service on District-owned property. We also extended the water sales moratorium for 90 days to make sure the timing aligned with the new impact fee schedule.

Operationally, we made substantial progress across nearly every system. In Harper Ward, the transmission pipeline is complete and came in under budget. The 500,000-gallon tank and pond were finished, and the pump house contract was awarded at \$1,037,000. As the Board knows, the

well needed a pump redesign due to plumbness issues. Even with that adjustment, the project is on track, and we expect the pump house to be commissioned soon.

South Willard Well #2 was drilled and tested with excellent results at roughly 1,000 gallons per minute. We advanced the pump house engineering this year after receiving Board approval on funding. We also worked out the wholesale agreement with Willard City for the 24-home subdivision and officially applied the District's tiered rate structure to South Willard's retail connections.

In Bothwell, we completed the year-long optimization study. That work helped us clearly identify where the system needs upsizing and how we can operate more efficiently. The study gave us a realistic picture of the long-term improvements needed. Based on that information, the Board approved will-serve letters for the Anderson and Moulding developments with conditions tied to system upgrades. Bothwell's wholesale agreement was also renewed for 40 acre-feet annually under a perpetual term.

Additional system improvements included completing the Deweyville pipeline late in the year, finalizing Howell's chlorinator engineering, reviewing Sleepy Hollow's engineering plans, and bringing the Flat Canyon Well fully online with SCADA, power, and monitoring upgrades.

The District spent considerable time assisting with regional planning in 2025. The County Water Master Plan reached the final draft stage, and the secondary water feasibility study continued to move forward. Both efforts will be helpful as we begin long-term planning on the District side. We also met several times with private systems, including Thatcher Hills, Cedar Ridge, and Ukon/Riverside North Garland, to help them evaluate long-term options and operational needs.

Public engagement increased significantly this year, especially in Harper Ward. The discussion around possibly transferring the Harper Ward pipeline to Brigham City brought large public turnout and strong feedback. After working through the pros and cons and hearing from the community, Brigham City withdrew its interest, which resolved the issue for the time being. Throughout the year, District staff participated in Rural Water, AWWA, Water Users, and other state-level coordination efforts.

One of the more complicated issues we dealt with was the discussion around withdrawal requests from Brigham City and Perry City. The original petitions were insufficient, but the conversation itself continued through much of the year. After reviewing financial and operational implications, and after substantial discussion with the Board, the District voted in October not to initiate a withdrawal process. Even so, communication lines remain open so we can continue to work toward solutions that benefit the entire county.

Operationally, this was the first year in more than a year that we had a fully staffed operations team. Our new operator, Wyatt Stevens, has been doing well. System demands were high due to weather conditions, but staff kept everything running smoothly. We also replaced an aging F-150 in the fleet to reduce maintenance costs and improve reliability.

As we move into 2026, our focus will be on progressing the Bothwell pipeline and tank projects, getting South Willard's pump house ready for construction, reviewing Collinston's long-term supply needs, and finishing the secondary water feasibility recommendations. We also expect to wrap up the Harper Ward pump house, assist Thatcher Hills with operational needs. Adoption of the County Water Master Plan will help guide many of these decisions.

Overall, 2025 was a productive year. We kept major projects advancing, updated important policies, maintained financial stability, and continued strengthening relationships with the communities we serve. I appreciate the Board's support and look forward to the work ahead in 2026. The Board, staff, and partner entities should be commended for their leadership and commitment to protecting and developing Box Elder County's long-term water resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Chance Baxter

General Manager

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