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THE WORKS PROGRAM

-- Works Progress Administration --

For Release in Morning Newspapers
Friday, July 24, 1936.

WPA Makes Swift Advance in History of Water Conservation in Drought Areas.

Swift advance in the development of water conservation was indicated today in reports from the Dakotas, heart of the Central West drought area, to Deputy Works Progress Administrator Aubrey Williams and Assistant Administrator Howard O. Hunter in charge of drought operations.

In three days North Dakota has added 40 water conservation projects to its list of those ready to start operations, Thomas H. Moodie, State Administrator reported, making the total now 127.

During the same period South Dakota has increased its water conservation and supply program from 162 projects to 209, including more than 40 small operations to provide water for both human and livestock needs in villages and rural areas which were without funds when community wells ran dry. Two hundred of these small projects will be started by the Works Progress Administration in South Dakota by the end of the week, according to M. A. Kennedy, State Administrator.

The majority of conservation dams in South Dakota, Mr. Kennedy said, are designed to provide a reservoir or artificial lake covering an average of 10 to 20 acres, although the largest of this type, in Lawrence County, will store water in a

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300-acre area. He estimated the total cost of the water conservation program in this drought-stricken state at \$1,500,000. Approximately 12,500 farmers have been employed by the Works Progress Administration to date in the devastated areas of South Dakota.

North Dakota expects to provide at least one dam in every township of the drought counties before it completes its program, Administrator Moodie said. This State is now providing jobs for 12,000 drought victims.

Although, as in South Dakota, most of the water conservation projects of North Dakota are small, the Epping Dam in Williams County, is one of the largest clay core dams in the world. This dam, begun before the present emergency, is now nearing completion. It will create a lake more than 12 miles long and reaching a width of two miles. Water already is being stored by the structure and a limited amount is available for irrigation.

"This project alone will prove of the utmost service to a great live-stock area," Mr. Moodie said.

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