

## WATER PROJECTS ARE DESCRIBED

Rotarians Hear Talk  
by Chairman of  
State Board.

Rockwood Brown of Billings, chairman of the state water conservation board, addressed the weekly meeting of the Billings Rotary club Monday on the importance of water conservation to the businessmen of Montana and the need for further water projects.

Of primary importance at the present time, Brown said, is construction of a dam in the Big Horn canyon, assuring a water supply for agricultural districts in that area. The support of Wyoming for this project has been promised, Brown said. Among other projects for the future is construction of a dam on the Yellowstone river in the vicinity of Livingston, Brown said.

These projects will double the irrigated land in eastern Montana, and assure continued prosperity for businessmen throughout the area, he said.

Reviewing the history of water conservation in the state, Brown pointed out that within the last 10 years, 16,000,000 acres of land have been taken from the tax rolls, throwing an additional burden upon the businessmen of the state.

Land thus removed from the tax rolls paid an average of 10 cents per acre per year in taxes, he said. Irrigated land pays an average of 81 per cent per year in taxes, and efforts are being made to place an additional million acres of land under irrigation to restore the lost tax income, Brown stated.

Early irrigation projects in the state were financed by private corporations and associations, and were necessarily the cheapest and most feasible of projects, Brown said. Later attempts at irrigation financed by irrigation districts proved impractical, Brown said, and the present method of obtaining projects is through the work of the water conservation board. Under this system, federal loans and grants pay the initial cost of projects, and the loan is repaid through the sale of water to farmers.

In the future, after federal aid for irrigation projects is discontinued, the state hopes to acquire a private market for water board bonds in order to continue this work, Brown said. Since the board was formed in 1934, 16 projects have been undertaken in the state, providing new water or a supplementary supply for about 800,000 acres of land, Brown said.

Brown pointed out that businessmen are dependent upon the prosperity of agriculture, and agriculture in Montana depends upon a steady water supply.

# Brown Reviews Water Conservation Projects

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