



# EAST RANGE WATER SYSTEM

## Project Funding Needs

### Project Description

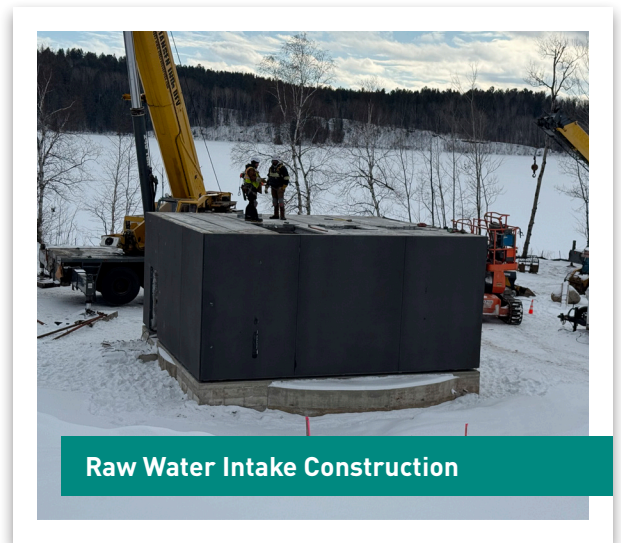
**Phase 1** of the project involves construction of a raw water intake, watermain, and water treatment facility to serve the City of Aurora and Town of White. This phase of the project is in construction and will be completed by November 1st, 2026. This new water treatment plant will have the capacity to serve over 3,000 constituents across multiple communities, the Mesabi East School District, and Essentia Hospital. This system will also have the capacity to continue providing emergency water to Biwabik and Giants Ridge as Aurora’s existing water treatment plant has done twice in the last five years. The project components have been designed with the intent of expansion to provide water and fire protection to communities throughout the East Range.

**Phase 2** will involve an expansion to the water treatment plant, a watermain connecting Hoyt Lakes to the system, and rehabilitation and expansion of the existing booster station. The watermain will also allow further connections to residents of Town of White. The expansion will also have the capacity for Biwabik to join in the future. When fully completed, the East Range Water System will provide water to over 5,000 constituents across many East Range communities.

### Phase 1 Funding Needs

ERWB Phase 1 Project Funding	
Item	Cost
Project Bid Cost	\$33,000,000
Value Engineered Project Cost	\$31,000,000
Grants Committed	(\$21,000,000)
State PFA Affordable Loan	(\$5,000,000)
<b>Project Funding Gap</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>

The East Range Water project served as the model for increasing the WIF cap during the 2025 legislative session. Despite this recognition and several years of pursuing state and federal support, the project remains unable to close the \$5,000,000 funding gap for Phase 1. Aurora and the Town of White are requesting that legislators consider amendment language that would allow the project to access the necessary WIF grant dollars. This adjustment is essential to making Phase 1 financially viable for the communities and ensuring the project can move forward without placing an unsustainable burden on local rate payers.



Raw Water Intake Construction



Water Treatment Plant Construction

# East Range Water Board Project Overview - Phases 1 and 2

East Range Water Board

March 2026

