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March 27, 2006

Signe Snortland
 Bureau of Reclamation
 PO Box 1014
 Bismarck ND 58502-1017

Dear Ms. Snortland:

We have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (the Project) and would like to add our comments to your record.

First, I'd like to provide you with a brief overview of our organization. Formed in 1990, River Keepers is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to advocate the sustainable use of the Red River of the North. Additionally, we strive to promote a positive community attitude towards the Red River. River Keepers work primarily focuses in Minnesota's Buffalo Red Watershed District and North Dakota's South East Cass Water Resource District.

While attitudes towards the Red River have been negative in the past, recent years have shown a newfound interest in the river. Citizens of the Red River Valley are increasingly enjoying the many benefits this river has to offer.

River Keepers does not have the resources to do a complete review of the volumes of information that have been published but we would like to express what we think are important issues that an option should address:

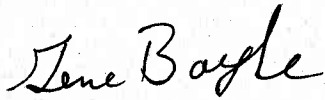
1. We believe in conserving our natural resources, especially our water. Any option should include measures for conservation and a drought contingency plan.
2. Adequate flows for aquatic life and riparian maintenance should be considered. We believe it is short sighted not to at least consider the possibility of providing minimum instream flows in a solution.
3. Any solution should not be a detriment to the water quality of our rivers.
4. We understand that the risk of biota transfer is a controversial issue with any of the Missouri River import options. River Keepers supports options wherein experts in the field can assure us that there are safe and reliable methods to prevent this transfer from occurring due to a project.
5. River Keepers has been actively involved in the retrofitting of dams in the Fargo/Moorhead area for increased safety and an improved fishery. River Keepers would like to see options that would continue with this effort in the Red River drainage. Dam removal should also be considered as part of any infrastructure improvements.
6. If it is viable, recreation improvements should be part of the solution.

"Promoting a renewed vision for the Red River of the North."

With the real possibility that another drought could occur, we are concerned that the Red River will suffer damage without addressing the water supply issue. The recreation enjoyed on the Red River could be negatively impacted. Recreation and environmental impacts produced by not acting could devastate this magnificent waterway that we and others have worked to promote and enhance.

Please consider our comments regarding the RRVWSP DEIS. We appreciate the work of the Bureau and the Conservancy District in bringing the Project to this stage. The Red River is a vital part of the valley, and we plan to enjoy it for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Gene Boyle
President



Robert Backman
Executive Director