



White Earth Reservation Tribal Council

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February 17, 2006

Red River Valley Water Supply Project
Bureau Of Reclamation
P.O. Box 1017
Bismarck, ND 58502-1017

RE: Proposed resurrect the ill-fated Garrison Diversion Project.

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to urge your immediate attention to an issue that has the potential for devastating environmental consequences where the state of North Dakota intends to divert waters from Missouri River into the Sheyenne River, which flows into the Red River of the North, and ultimately into Canadian waters. We believe that the potential adverse effects on the environment have not been thoroughly explored, and that these issues merit the immediate attention of the governments of Canada and the United States.

We believe that no adequate consideration has been given to the potential risks associated with diverting waters from one basin of water to another, particularly considering that the Red River of the North experiences severe flooding every year. Other considerations involved in the diversion of waters from the Missouri River basin include the irreversible effects that may result from the introduction of non-native species; impacts to the solids content of the receiving water; as well as the potentially harmful timing and flow of water in the Sheyenne River all the way to Lake Winnipeg in Canada.

The Boundary Water Treaty of 1909, implemented through the International Joint Commission, provides the principles and mechanisms to help resolve disputes and to prevent future ones, primarily those concerning water quantity and water quality along the boundary between Canada and the United States. We feel that the present issue is precisely what was contemplated in the Boundary

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Water Treaty. When considering all of the circumstances of this issue, we feel that it would be prudent for you to refer this issue to the International Joint Commission so that all interests are adequately considered.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) did studied the Garrison Diversion and in 1977 advised that it should not proceed unless and until the Governments of Canada and U.S. agreed on proven mitigation to eliminate the risk of biota transfer and disease transfer or that those issues were no longer a concern.

The White Earth Indian Reservation, Fishery Program, with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Rainy River First Nation, Manitoba, Canada have been working on a long term project of restoring virus free Lake Sturgeon to the Red River of the North Basin.

Historical accounts suggest that Lake Sturgeon were abundant in the Red River basin until the 1800's. Lake Sturgeon populations, throughout Minnesota, were decimated by over exploitation, construction of dams, and declines in water quality. By the mid 1900's Lake Sturgeon had effectively been extirpated from the Red River basin. Although there are occasional, unconfirmed reports of Lake Sturgeon being caught in the Red River, there are little chance that this population could recover on its own.

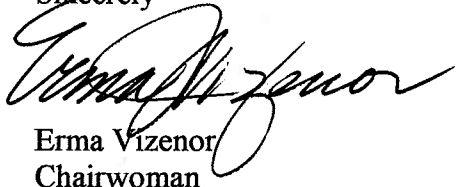
The White Earth Indian Reservation, State of Minnesota, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources all have indicated that restoration of Lake Sturgeon population is a high priority.

Aside from the issue of biotic transfer, due to our position in the upper part of the basin, there is little likelihood that the White Earth Indian Reservation would directly suffer from the ill effects of flooding or of water quality pollution in the Red River. However, we are aware of the fact that many of the First Nation Reserves of Manitoba will be adversely affected.

As the duly recognized representative government of the White Earth Chippewa Tribe, we passed a Resolution (Number 057-06-012) on February 17, 2006, opposing the discharge and biotic transfer into the Red River of the North.

We call upon your assistance in avoiding the irreversible consequences that could likely follow from actions disregarding international law.

Sincerely



Erma Vizenor
Chairwoman

White Earth Reservation Tribal Council