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Central files

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Date: 2/16/2006 4:17:44 PM
Subject: RRVWSP DEIS Public Hearing comment

<<Comments.wpd>>

The following message is being sent on behalf of Joel Wessman:

As promised, attached please find comment as recommended by FAC/NAR and presented by Consul Rob Pengelly regarding the RRVWSP DEIS Public Hearing - Fargo, February 15, 2006.

CC: <Joel.Wessman@international.gc.ca>

**Red River Valley Water Supply DRAFT Environmental Impact Statement
Public Hearing
Fargo, North Dakota
February 15, 2006**

Comments provided by Consulate General of Canada, Minneapolis:

Good evening. I am Robert Pengelly, Consul responsible for political and economic relations with the Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis. I would like to thank the Bureau of Reclamation and the State of North Dakota for the opportunity to provide brief comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project:

- * As noted by the Bureau of Reclamation the Red River Valley Water Supply Project is a complex project that has potential trans-boundary environmental impacts.
- * The Government of Canada is concerned about alternatives that could pose a significant risk of harm to Canada's environment and natural resources.
- * In September 2005, Canada provided written comments to the Bureau of Reclamation on the draft Red River Valley Needs and Options Report.
- * Our view continues to be that water conservation and in-basin alternatives need to be fully studied and considered to determine whether they can meet the area's water needs. Conservation and in-basin alternatives are cost-effective and would reduce downstream inputs.
- * We are concerned that the final Needs and Options Report does not appear to give consideration to the issues raised in our September comments.
- * Our September comments pertained to, among other things, assumptions underpinning water demand, various hydrological calculations, approaches to engineering design and costing, and the risk of biota transfer associated with the contemplated inter-basin transfer options.

- * Canada remains concerned about the risk of biota transfer and compliance with Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty and the recommendations set out by the International Joint Commissions 1977 report to the Governments of the United States and Canada on the Garrison Diversion Unit.
- * Consistent with our obligations under the Canada-United States Boundary Waters Treaty, the Government of Canada is committed to working together to collectively manage the waters of the Red River basin for the benefit of the basin as a whole.
- * We remain willing to work to find mutually acceptable solutions founded on the principles of solid science and effective basin stewardship.
- * Given the strong binational interests in the Red River Valley Water Supply Project and the potential impact on transboundary waters as defined by the Boundary Waters Treaty, Canada is pleased that the Bureau of Reclamation has agreed to a 30 day extension to the comment period on the draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- * The Government of Canada will be providing the Bureau of Reclamation with written comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement prior to the expiration of the public comment period.

Thank you