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**Testimony of  
Jean Walton, Executive Director  
North Dakota Water Coalition  
Red River Valley Water Supply Public Hearing  
February 2, 2006**

My name is Jean Walton, and I serve as the Executive Director of the North Dakota Water Coalition. The Water Coalition is comprised of more than 30 statewide and regional organizations in North Dakota who have a stake in water. We have joined together as a united effort to complete North Dakota's water infrastructure for economic growth and quality of life. The Coalition is here tonight in support of the state's preferred alternative, and the critical need for water in the Red River Valley.

This project is an integral part of North Dakota's future. Along with water conservation for our state's eastern communities, the Red River Valley Water Supply Project will ensure that residents in the Valley will have quality drinking water in the years to come. Without this water, the businesses, industries and citizens cannot exist. The future of our state's economic success depends on this project.

I am also submitting written testimony on behalf of Mike Dwyer, Executive Vice President of the North Dakota Water Users Association.

Thank you.