

Testimony on Red River Valley Water Supply Water Project
March 20, 2006
New Town, ND meeting
Glenda Baker-Embry

I am an elder of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation. I'm also a veteran and Sun Dancer. I was born in Elbowoods and spent my formative years there. I am adamantly opposed to sending any of our water to the Red River Valley.

If there is a drought in the Red River Valley, very likely there will be a drought all over the Plains and that includes the Fort Berthold Reservation. We need to look out for our own here. I live in Parshall and about two years ago we were forced to purchase drinking water because the water was too turbid for us to drink. Our intake valve had to be lowered.

We have water here, if the people there in the east need water let them move here to where the water is. I believe because the tax base is larger in the Fargo, Grand Forks area politicians are catering to the people there and forgetting us again. If it were not for our Chairman standing up and demanding a Public Hearing here, we would not have been consulted again. It would have been the Garrison Dam all over again. I say get their water from one of the other plans.

Our needs here should be taken care of first. This is a costly project. I read in the letter of your Executive Summary that tribes were consulted and that is not true.

I am a diabetic and have high blood pressure and was unable to drink the well water from Parshall because of the high sodium content. Too many of our people still haul water, we need to take care of them before we start sending our water across the state.

The Bureau of Reclamation is a federal agency that has a Trust responsibility to Indian tribes. It's time for them to stand up to their responsibilities.

Don't let this be another Garrison Dam, and start construction on the canals while you are talking to us about Trust and decisions. We are the First Americans, for once let the federal government really listen to what we have to say and then act on our concerns.

Glenda Embry