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January 22, 2007

Ms. Signe Snortland
Dakotas Area Office
US Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 1017
Bismarck ND 58502-1017

RE: The hydrologic model in the EIS

Ms. Snortland:

In response to questions raised about the effects of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project during drought periods, the Bureau of Reclamation's comment in the draft EIS is:

Reclamation will evaluate the effects of climatic cycles on streamflow within the Red River and Upper Missouri River basins. This will, in part, be used to establish the appropriate drought scenario to use for hydrologic modeling and will provide an understandable context regarding the likelihood of more or less severe droughts than previously experienced.

A critical component of this modeling is the data base from which it is derived. Proxy paleo-climatic records for the northern Great Plains have documented drought periods having durations from hundreds to thousands of years. In light of this record, limiting modeling to the last ca. 100-year record could be gravely misleading. The paleo-climatic records must be addressed in the modeling. Moreover, there is a scientific consensus that global warming is occurring. Such warming could have devastating impacts on the snowpack that feeds the Missouri River and hence on water levels in the river and mainstem reservoirs. Because of global warming the next 100 years could be significantly different from the last 100 years.

Given the paleo-climatic record and the uncertainties created by global warming is there any reason to believe that the Bureau can actually create a hydrologic model that will provide realistic projections of future drought severity?

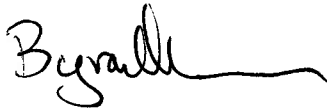
At a minimum, any model proposed by the Bureau must be accompanied by statements outlining the assumptions underlying the model and an explicit evaluation of the scale of uncertainties inherent in the model.

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Sincerely,

STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Byron Olson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Byron Olson
Tribal archaeologist