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TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE

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3/7/07	RN	Signe Snortland (701) 854-2120
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CLASSIFICATION		
PROJECT		
CONTROL NO.		
FOLDER I.D.		

March 7, 2007

Ms. Signe Snortland
Bureau of Reclamation, Dakota Areas Office
P.O. Box 1017
Bismarck, ND 58502

Comments on the Red River Valley Water Supply Project SDEIS
and Cultural Resources:

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's THPO office is opposed to the use of all action alternatives that used the Sheyenne River drainage to transport project water. This opposition is based upon three considerations:

1. The limited amount of data provided by the Class I inventory indicates that there are more known sites along the Sheyenne River than along other alternatives.
2. Oral tradition, the historic record, and the ethnographic record all indicate that proximity to rivers was an important consideration influencing the selection of campsites by Indian people.
3. The Sheyenne River is within the ancestral territory of the Great Sioux Nation and was an area utilized by bands now represented on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

Whatever alternative is finally selected, a Class III cultural resources inventory must be conducted on the entire project corridor, including the Sheyenne River if that is chosen. Locations containing large concentrations of stones or large, isolated boulders should be noted, even if they are not recognized as sites *per se*. Results of the inventory must be sent to the affected Tribes.

Tribes have the right to have TCP studies conducted on those sites of Tribal concern. Selection of these sites is entirely at the Tribe's discretion. Funding must be provided for Tribal participation in TCP studies.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has had poor experiences with private companies in TCP studies. Words of elders have been dismissed, taken out of context, and otherwise misused. If a private consultant is hired to summarize the TCP findings, this consultant must be pre-approved by the Tribes.

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When Tribes are expected to divulge sacred knowledge, a strict confidentiality protocol must be developed. Because there are concerns raised by North Dakota's open records law, comments by Tribal members involving sacred knowledge must remain solely in federal jurisdiction, protected from FOIA requests, and not shared with the general public or state agencies such as the SHSND. Such records can only be shared if written consent is provided by the Tribes.

There must be a commitment to first avoid or minimize impacts to National Register sites. Mitigation by excavation should be used only as a last resort.

If the Sheyenne River is utilized, a program must be established to monitor the long-term bank erosion due to increased flow from the RRWSP. Such erosion can adversely affect National Register eligible sites. Provisions for bank stabilization, if needed, must be provided.

Sincerely,

STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Mentz, Sr.", is written over the typed name.

Tim Mentz, Sr.
Preservation Officer