



March 15, 2007

Red River Valley Water Supply Project
 Bureau of Reclamation
 P.O. Box 1017
 Bismarck, ND 58502-1017

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Red River Valley Water Supply Project. The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is pleased to provide the following comments.

The draft EIS identifies six different alternatives that were considered as options for meeting the municipal, rural and industrial (MRI) water supply needs of the Red River Valley. Of those six, five meet the MRI needs of the Red River Valley. The no action alternative fails to provide for the long term water supply needs of the Red River Valley through 2050 and therefore is not a viable option.

The Garrison Diversion Unit Import to Sheyenne River Alternative has been selected by the Bureau of Reclamation and Garrison Diversion as the preferred alternative. This alternative seeks a diversion of 122 cubic feet per second from the Missouri River to meet demands in the Red River valley.

Current water demand within the proposed service area is 65,664 acre feet with the demand estimated in 2050 to be 113,702 acre feet. This is an increase of 48,038 acre feet over the 50 year time period. At a diversion rate of 122 cubic feet per second, the proposed water system could theoretically divert 88,328 acre feet per year with continuous pumping. The annual yield from a diversion of 122 cubic feet per second could easily meet the anticipated increase of 48,038 acre feet or even the maximum shortfall of 55,000 acre feet estimated under the "No Action Alternative." The 122 cubic feet per second diversion would need to operate 62% of the time to provide 55,000 acre feet.

The average water yield from the Missouri River above Sioux City is 25.2 million acre feet. An annual use of 55,000 acre feet by the Red River Water Supply Project amounts to 0.2% of 25.2 million acre feet of runoff. The impact to base flows is negligible especially considering the amount of water stored in the mainstem reservoirs. North Dakota, like South Dakota, never

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 and NATURAL RESOURCES

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realized many of the proposed benefits included in the Pick Sloan Act. This water supply proposal represents a small return on the promised benefits of the mainstem reservoirs on the Missouri River. Therefore, the preferred alternative identified in the draft EIS is supported by DENR and we agree it should be fully supported by the federal government.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Pirner', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Steven M. Pirner, P.E.
Secretary

cc: Jeff Vonk, Secretary, Dept. of Game, Fish and Parks
Jason Glodt, Senior Policy Advisor, Governor's Office
Diane Best, Assistant Attorney General