



1150 Connecticut Avenue NW  
Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20036

118 Broadway Suite 512  
Fargo ND 58102  
[gthompson@audubon.org](mailto:gthompson@audubon.org)

10 March 2007

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

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RE: **Request for Extension of Comment Period for the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (SDEIS-RRVWSP)**

Dear Ms. Snortland: *Signe*

This letter is written to respectfully request at least a minimum 90-day extension to the comment period for the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project. The current comment deadline is 26 March 2007, which I believe is insufficient to permit an adequate review of the 541-page SDEIS or the 606 pages of Appendices.

I believe there are sufficient differences between the DEIS and the SDEIS to merit the provision of additional time for review and assessment. In addition, the SDEIS has identified potential adverse impacts to the habitat for two endangered species, the interior least tern and the piping plover. The DSEIS states that: *"Reclamation is continuing informal section 7 consultation with the Service and will prepare and submit a biological assessment prior to the release of the FEIS. The assessment will address effects to interior least terns and piping plovers and other listed species and critical habitat for the preferred alternative. Reclamation will prepare the biological assessment on the preferred alternative identified in the FEIS in accordance with ESA regulations on interagency cooperation (50 CFR 402). The biological assessment for section 7 consultation will be attached to the FEIS (p. 396, DSEIS).* How can input and comments be provided on the potentially very significant impacts to two endangered species associated with the preferred alternative, when the consultation and assessment have not yet been completed and included?



USFWS

I will look forward to your positive response, and to the opportunity afforded by an extension to provide substantive input and comments to this DSEIS. Thank you for your attention in this matter; it is appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information and/or clarification.

Yours truly,

*Genevieve Thompson*

Genevieve Thompson  
VP & Exec. Director, Audubon Dakota

*Betsy Loyless*

Betsy Loyless  
Exec. V.P. for Public Policy, Audubon

cc: Carol Browner, Chairperson, Audubon  
Dale Hall, Director, US Fish & Wildlife Service