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March 23, 2007

Copy

Mr. Dennis Breitzman, Area Manager
 Bureau of Reclamation
 Dakota Area Office
 P.O. Box 1017
 Bismarck, ND 58502

Dear Dennis:

After much discussion, we of the Upper James River and the Upper Sheyenne River feel that attention must be given to several areas of both divisions. See items #1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of attached letter.

We of Wells, Eddy, and Sheridan Counties supported the Lone Tree Dam. The Wells and Eddy Counties boards worked hard to help design the New Rockford Canal and now feel let down, as neither of these projects is being used. The landowners who gave up land for both of these bureau projects are giving up on all bureau ideas.

Please do all that you can to see to it that our area will receive some benefit from the RRVWSP in the future?

Also the Oakes test area for irrigation has been an item of concern for years. Let's put water in the James River for future use. The upper James River and Sheyenne River both have served a large area of North Dakota for recreation, water supply for farmers, livestock, home use and fire prevention. We have held many meetings in regards to these projects.

Please review the attached document and call if you have questions. We look forward to some action in our area and the Red River Project.

Sincerely:

Norman C Rudel
 P.O. Box 465
 Fessenden, ND 58438

March 23, 2007

Mr. Dennis E Breitzman, Area Manager
Bureau of Reclamation
Dakota Area Office
P.O. Box 1017
Bismarck, ND 58502

Subject: Red River Valley Water Supply Project (RRVWSP)
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Dear Mr. Breitzman:

H 1 Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the SDEIS for the RRVWSP. As you are well aware, the citizens of Wells County are very disappointed that supplying water to the James River via the New Rockford Canal is not within the scope of study for the RRVWSP. Many of our citizens have been impacted and have sacrificed so much for the development of the Garrison Diversion Project intended for the long awaited benefits to the environment and for the citizens of North Dakota including Eddy, Wells, Sheridan, Benson, Nelson, Griggs Counties and the Spirit Lake Reservation.

H 2 In reviewing the SDEIS for the RRVWSP, we notice that Wells County and our neighboring Counties within the Upper Sheyenne River Basin are currently not included within the Service Area that you have considered in the RRVWSP Alternatives.

H 3 First, on behalf of the Citizens of Wells County, we hereby request that you consider including Wells County, and our neighboring Counties of Sheridan, Wells, Eddy, Nelson and Griggs, and the southern portions of the Spirit Lake Reservation, all located in the Upper Sheyenne River Basin, within the RRVWSP Service Area.

H 4 The Upper Sheyenne River Basin is located within the Red River Basin and Hudson Bay Drainage. As such, in order for us to receive water from the Missouri River, it would require treatment to prevent the transfer of Biota into the Hudson Bay Basin. We are well aware that the State of North

Dakota and Bureau of Reclamation's preferred Alternative is the GDU Import to Sheyenne River (Executive Summary SDEIS, p. 26 & 27). In this Alternative the Biota Treatment Plant would be located at the end of the McClusky Canal in the Lonetree WMA in Sheridan County.

#5
Secondly, we hereby request that you consider adding a second outlet from the biota treatment plant to deliver about 5,000 to 10,000 acre-feet annually of treated Missouri River MR&I water, via the currently unused lower reach of the McClusky Canal, to the upper Sheyenne River as needed. Delivery of water during the winter and spring snowmelt periods should probably be avoided, to prevent damages from ice in the winter and increased flooding during high spring flows.

We further suggest you consider utilizing the existing lower end of the McClusky Canal to transport the treated MR&I water to the Upper Sheyenne River. Of course, a short pipeline, about one mile long, would likely be needed to bypass the existing plugs and Hofer Lake (McClusky Lake) Recreation Area about the McClusky Canal plugs.

#6
We believe treated MR&I water delivered to the Upper Sheyenne River would augment the flow of water, improve the water quality, and provide a second route to deliver a portion of the treated MR&I water into Lake Ashtabula for the RRVWSP. This second outlet may allow the pipe diameter and costs of the main pipeline to be reduced to somewhat less than your current estimated costs of \$700.5 million, and annual OM&R cost of \$7.57 million, since the water delivered to the Upper Sheyenne River would not have the high pumping costs as would the main pipeline. We do not envision a need to expand the capacity of the Biota Treatment Plant, at least not initially.

In case you are not aware, there are 7 existing small impoundments on the Upper Sheyenne River. Most of them date back to the WPA and CCC time period during and shortly after the severe 1930's drought. Four small shallow reservoirs/lakes exist within the Lonetree WMA. There is one 4 miles long small, but larger dam and deeper reservoir at Harvey, ND. These small reservoirs have provided numerous multiple use benefits in the Upper Sheyenne River for several users over the years. The Harvey Reservoir in Wells County provides some good local fishing most years. There is a small

reservoir northwest of Sheyenne, ND that is used for various purposes, including washing gravel in adjacent gravel pits. The last small reservoir, before the Sheyenne River flows into Lake Ashtabula, is located about 2 miles downstream (east) of the Hwy #20 & 15 crossing in Eddy County, and 2 miles west of the Eddy County - Nelson County line. This may be a road that has been washed out or overtopped during high river flow. All seven impoundment/lakes/reservoirs are subject to low water levels, become stagnant, and have gone dry during extended drought conditions, especially those in the LWMA.

Most of the land adjacent to the Sheyenne River in Upper Sheyenne River Basin is owned by the adjacent farmers, and is used primarily as pasture or hay land. The largest tract of public land is in the LWMA that is now owned by the Bureau of Reclamation and managed by the ND State Game & Fish Department.

The Harvey Dam and Reservoir is public land owned by the City of Harvey and now managed as a WMA by the ND State Game & Fish Department. Prior to 1984, Harvey was originally scheduled to receive MR&I water from Lonetree Dam and Reservoir, a main water supply feature of the Garrison Diversion Unit. After construction was terminated on the Lonetree Dam, Harvey installed a well field and a 7 mile pipeline from the New Rockford Aquifer near Selz, ND for a better quality and dependable Municipal Water Supply. The McLean-Sheridan Rural Water Supply System supplies groundwater to rural water users in those two counties.

The Harvey Dam and Reservoir provides a nice local fishery and recreation area, plus a source of additional water for fire protection if we should experience large grass or building fires that are often more common during dry drought periods.

Wells County is fortunate to have excellent railroad service available with both the BNSF and CPR lines crossing the county in a NW-SE direction. We are also fortunate to have an excellent highway and road network for transporting goods and materials into, out of, and across the county in all directions. Fessenden, ND is the Wells County Seat.

Treated Missouri River MR&I water delivered into the Upper Sheyenne River would be received by our citizens, friends and neighbors. It would provide the opportunity for us to attract new value added agricultural businesses, recreations, and industries into our rural communities and towns. We are fortunate to have two railroads available to us in Wells County. We also have an excellent highway and road network. We have a combined rural and town population of about 5200 citizens, and are primarily involved in agriculture and agriculture related businesses. We have a North Dakota raised meat processing plant located in Harvey and they require an ample supply of good quality water, as do our farm families, towns people, and livestock.

We are essentially dependent on groundwater at the present time. Many of the newer groundwater wells have not undergone the stress associated with the lower water tables that we will experience during the next long duration, severe drought. We already know the capacities of the production wells are limited.

MR&I water would enhance the livelihood and quality of life for some of our farmers, especially those living near the Sheyenne River, and provide an assured quality water supply for livestock and wildlife in the grasslands and pastures located adjacent to and near the Sheyenne River. Hunting and fishing would also be improved and more stable. Additional surface water would supplement and provide a backup source of water for our existing groundwater supply, especially to fight any large rural grass and brush fires that are so common during severe drought periods.

The LWMA is fast becoming better known, and is attracting more hunters, bird watchers, and tourists every year. These visitors are most welcome to our region and we appreciate them coming on both a personal basis and for the economy. Many of them combine their trip to LWMA with a trip to fish in Devils Lake. During a major drought, grass fires on the 33,000 acre LWMA could cause major damage to the LWMA and neighboring farms, especially if the lakes and impoundments are dry and without sufficient water to contain and control the fires. Periodic controlled burns are beneficial for improved grassland habitat. But they can be difficult to manage and control during drought conditions. Controlled burns may have to be postponed, especially if the shallow lakes and impoundments are dry, or if

the water levels are too low to pump, or if the water is too far from shore to access the water.

As you know, Devils Lake has risen naturally since 1993, and is currently around an all time recorded high level, and is providing excellent fishing conditions. As you also know Devils Lake was at an all time low for many years during the period from the 1930's until 1993, and was a "dead" lake. When that condition occurs again, in the not too distant future, water in the Upper Sheyenne River will be of that much more importance to our region, and especially for the southern portion of the Spirit Lake Reservation. The peoples on the Spirit Lake Reservation would also appreciate additional treated MR&I water flowing in the Upper Sheyenne River for many of the same purposes as would their neighboring Counties in the Upper Sheyenne River Basin.

Our rural communities currently are experiencing an aging and declining population like so many rural areas are in the Great Plains Region. With additional treated MR&I water in the Upper Sheyenne River, our area will become more attractive for our residents to stay. Hopefully, new residents will also be attracted to come and make their homes in our area. At least, additional water in the Upper Sheyenne River would provide us that opportunity. We do know for a fact from past history, especially during the drought of the 1930's, many of our residents had to move elsewhere to make a living. Many of them never did return, except to come "home" and visit relatives, friends, and neighbors who stayed behind and were barely able to survive the hardships of the drought conditions. Availability of good quality rural water is critical to help prevent another large out migration during the next major drought. The protection of existing and expansion of businesses and industry is most certainly dependant upon a good quality MR&I water supply.

We hope you will take our request for treated MR&I water into consideration as you prepare your Final EIS. We are available to answer any questions you may have of us concerning this request. We stand ready to contact individual farmers and residents in Wells County, if you should need information regarding our request. As you know, Wells County receives about 4-6 inches less average annual precipitation than does the Red River

Valley, and our water needs are as great or greater, especially during severe drought periods.

Please know that we completely understand how critical the need for an assured MR&I water supply in the Red River Valley is during a 1930's type drought, especially the major cities of Fargo and Grand Forks. We whole heartedly fully support your efforts to study and plan various alternatives. We appreciate being kept informed and to have had the opportunity to provide you with our comments and our request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely:

*Norman Rudel - Director on Garrison Bd.
Mellco*