

City of Minot

Office of the Mayor

May 3, 2006

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| 5/8/06 | JW | Alicia |
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| CLASSIFICATION | | |
| PROJECT | | |
| CONTROL NO. | | |
| FOLDER I.D. | | |

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: Alicia Waters
PO Box 1017
Bismarck, North Dakota 58502

RE: NAWS-EIS Comments

Dear Ms. Waters,

As you are aware the City of Minot has been involved with the Garrison Diversion Reformulation Act of 1986 and subsequent Dakota Water Resources Act to develop Garrison Diversion water use. The City of Minot responded to a questionnaire sent out by the Bureau and State Water Commission in 1986. From that questionnaire the development started for the NAWS Project.

The City of Minot has played a vital role in the development of the NAWS Project. We passed a \$.01 sales tax to provide the 35 percent local share for the entire NAWS Project. We have, since the project started, up fronted money to keep the project going. We are still of the mind and desire to have the NAWS Project completed as soon as possible for Minot and the entire NAWS Project area.

We have been working with the Bureau of Reclamation, the State Water Commission, the NAWS Advisory Board and the cities in the project area to continue the development of the project. We have paid the local share of the NAWS Phase I Project in Rugby. We have encouraged the development of the water line from Minot to Berthold in advance of the Missouri River water being delivered to Minot. We support other projects in the Minot area to advance the NAWS Project not only for Minot but also for the entire project area.

★The Magic City★

We understand the need for the Environmental Impact Statement to go beyond the Environmental Assessment that was done previously. The biota transfer was heavily studied in the EA. Hopefully that study will be included in the EIS so there is not duplication of the studies already done. We understand the EIS is going to be further evaluating the construction and operation of water treatment methods and the construction methods and operation measures to be used to minimize the risk of biota transfer.

There is no question of a need for the NAWS Project for the northwest corner of the State of North Dakota. The knowledge we gained from the drought in the late 80's and early 90's shows the need for this project. Mohall had to drill new wells to keep its water supply during that time. Westhope had problems with their water supply during the late 80's and early 90's. Bottineau has a continual problem with contaminants in its water supply and has recently drilled new wells to try to address that issue. Kenmare has recently signed on as needing the water from the NAWS Project. The city of Columbus, in the northwest corner of North Dakota, is part of the system. They have needed the water for years. The longer this project gets delayed, the more critical the needs become. The longer this project is delayed, the more chance there is of these small communities having to go on their own and develop a treatment system to comply with the rules of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Following are comments on the "Issues and Potential Effects" listed in the NAWS Project scoping brochure attached with your letter. The potential impacts to the Missouri River system from the withdrawal of water for NAWS shows, from some quick calculations: 1) The system is being designed for 26 MG/day for the project. That is 40,204.4 CFS. If there is 10,000 CFS being released down the Missouri River from Garrison Dam, that is 0.004% of the 10,000 CFS. We know that 10,000 CFS is rarely seen as a release from the Garrison Dam. The release is normally 12,000 to 20,000 CFS. If you look at the water being released down the Missouri River, we are taking a very minimal amount of that water. 2) The area of the lake and the amount of water NAWS will take from that in a one-year time will be 29,107 acre feet. That amount of water, taken off the top of the lake in one year, will supply water to Minot and the NAWS Project area. That is a miniscule amount of water, in comparison, to meet the needs of the citizens of the north central portion of North Dakota. The NAWS Project will enable these communities to meet the EPA rules with a good quality, ample supply of water.

A further issue that is raised in the brochure is the treatment alternatives that would allow Minot the ability to maintain its water treatment plant and current water supply. If the water treatment alternative is south of the Continental Divide or at the lake, Minot loses a number of options with its water treatment plant. To maintain those options we would have to continue operation and maintenance of our existing water treatment plant so we do not lose our existing water sources. That is important because, if there is a break in the NAWS supply line to Minot, it is going to impact the delivery of water to Minot and to the NAWS Project Area.

Minot's ability to maintain the delivery of water to the Minot Air Force Base and the entire NAWS Project is a major concern. So the option of having the water treatment at Minot with pretreatment before the Continental Divide is the best option for the project to maintain continuity of service.

If there would be a shut down of the NAWS delivery line with the water treatment plant at Minot, we would switch to our existing water supplies and continue operation until the NAWS line is up and running. Then we would not lose service to the Minot area, Minot Air Force Base and the entire NAWS area.

We thank you for the opportunity to become part of this scoping activity for the EIS for the NAWS Project. It is of utmost importance to Minot, to the Minot Air Force Base and to the entire NAWS Project. We look forward to a speedy turnaround on this EIS. The judge has authorized several projects that can be completed in the Minot area. Those will certainly be done. But the importance of receiving water from the Missouri River for our project and our area is not to be minimized.

Sincerely,



Curt Zimbelman
Mayor
City of Minot

CZ/tr