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ANGOSTURA UNIT
CONTRACT NEGOTIATION AND WATER MANAGEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING
ON THE
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

February 21, 2001
2:00 - 4:00 PM
Super 8 Motel
West Highway 212
Eagle Butte, South Dakota

Conducted By:

MR. KENNETH PARR
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
515 Ninth Street, Room 101
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

and

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Dakotas Area Office
Bismarck, North Dakota

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Wednesday, February 21, 2001.

MR. PARR: I wanted to welcome you all to the public hearing on the Angostura Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I would like to thank the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe for allowing us to hold this public meeting here on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

The reason why we are here with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement is because the original contract with the Angostura Irrigation District expired in 1995, and because it is a federal action, we are required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act. So we're in a NEPA process right now conducting this Environmental Impact Statement, basically at the request of the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

Also, parallel to the NEPA process is what's called the contract negotiation or contract renewal process. And so along with that process, the NEPA process and the contract renewal process, two products of that is a record of decision that will be issued based on the Final EIS, and then a new contract will be signed, some type of contract will be signed with the Angostura Irrigation District.

Just for your information, the Angostura reservoir and the Angostura unit is in the southwest part of South Dakota, just south and east of Hot Springs. The primary drainage area is a prairie drainage from Wyoming into forming

1 the Cheyenne River and into the reservoir, where we have it
2 dammed on the Cheyenne River. Then the irrigation district is
3 this little red area, and the study area goes all the way
4 through to the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

5 At the request of the Cheyenne River Sioux
6 Tribe, as I said earlier, we are in the NEPA process, and
7 this particular NEPA process is an Environmental Impact
8 Statement. Four years ago we came to you to scope out the
9 issues and alternatives, and so since 1997 up until January
10 of 2001 we were writing the Draft EIS. Well, in the middle
11 of January we distributed that for public review, and now
12 it's out for a 90-day public review period. We'll be
13 accepting comments on this Draft EIS through April 27th.

14 After April 27th we'll review and analyze all
15 those comments and address those comments in a Final
16 Environmental Impact Statement. It will probably take us
17 approximately six to seven months from April 27th to complete
18 the Final EIS and the Record of Decision. When we put out
19 the Final EIS and the Record of Decision, there will be an
20 additional or another 30-day comment period.

21 This is what the EIS looks like when you do open
22 it up. There's a summary, a purpose and need for the
23 project, what we call a federal action. That federal action
24 is contract renewal. We're required by law to renew some
25 sort of contract with the Angostura Irrigation District.

1 There's a chapter on alternatives, affected environment,
2 environmental impact, consultation and coordination, and then
3 the appendices. I have additional Draft EIS's and appendices
4 available if you should need some.

5 MR. NELSON: Does the appendices contain
6 information regarding water quality and scientific study?

7 MR. FARR: That's correct. All the base line
8 data and base line reports are in that appendices. Also under
9 the National Environmental Policy Act and its Council of
10 Environmental Quality regulations we are required to solicit
11 cooperating agency assistance.

12 And so we went out and wrote lots of letters
13 and talked to several agencies and these are the groups of
14 agencies and tribes that wanted to participate as a
15 cooperating agency, and they are listed in alphabetical
16 order.

17 In addition to that we are required by law and
18 presidential memorandum to consult with Indian tribes on a
19 government to government basis, and to determine if there's
20 impacts in Indian assets. We wrote to numerous tribes and
21 three tribes: Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux
22 Tribe and Oglala Lakota Nation agreed to participate in this
23 NEPA process; and it was the Oglala Lakota Nation that
24 requested this to be elevated from an environmental
25 assessment to an environmental impact statement.

1 On submitting comments on the Draft EIS, at this
 2 public hearing we are soliciting or asking for your oral
 3 comments. If you wish not to give oral comments at this time,
 4 you can also -- we have comment cards spread around the room
 5 here. You're welcome to take a comment card and put your
 6 comments on a card or more than one card if you wish.

7 We also will accept comments by mail. If you
 8 want you can take this card home and mail it to me after you
 9 filled it out. We also can accept comment via telephone or
 10 E-mail, all of that stuff is available in the Draft EIS, my
 11 E-mail address and phone number. You can give me your
 12 comments via those avenues.

13 After we've accepted all of the public comments
 14 here today, I would like to then close down this public
 15 hearing and open this up to some type of open house, so you
 16 have the opportunity to talk with various technical experts on
 17 the data, the data analysis we collected and completed in the
 18 Draft EIS.

19 That concludes my opening remarks. I'm now
 20 opening up this forum here to public comment, if anyone
 21 should have one, on the Angostura Draft Environmental Impact
 22 Statement.

23 MR. NELSON: Well, on behalf of the Cheyenne
 24 River Sioux Tribe, and in the absence of the appropriate
 25 elected officials, I guess we'll have to wait and retain our

1 comments to a later date within your time frame for comments.
 2 I don't have the personnel or the representatives here at this
 3 time.

4 MR. PARR: Well, thank you. I do appreciate
 5 that.

6 MR. NELSON: But I myself have a couple
 7 questions.

8 MR. PARR: We'll get to that here in a minute.
 9 I think for all practical purposes here, this will conclude
 10 our public hearing on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation
 11 for the Angostura Draft EIS.

12 (End of public hearing for February 21, 2001.)
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