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Subject: NAWS Project - Comment Sheet

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Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NAWS Project related to the Public Scoping process/Public meetings that are part of the process to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the project. Minot and all of Northwest and Northcentral North Dakota have long needed a clean, pure, dependable, and abundant water supply. The Northwest Area Water Supply provides the best chance of meeting our needs. For decades we have had discussions of methods by which we could get that assured water supply. Finally, in the 1980's serious discussions began that eventually led to this project. As you know, this project went through a rigorous Environmental Assessment which resulted in a "Finding of no significant Impact" (FONSI). One of the major environmental concerns that our neighbors to the north have had is the possibility of biota transfer. The FONSI on this project pointed out that there are several ways that significant biota transfer is now occurring without the NAWS project. Never-the-less this project has been designed with a pretreatment process of the water south of the continental divide, full treatment at the Minot water treatment plant, and with the additional step of providing UV (ultraviolet) treatment to the water. Additionally there are shutoff valves designed into the construction of the water pipeline that will automatically shutoff the flow of water in the unlikely event of a pipeline break north of the continental divide. We believe that the precautions built into the system are sufficient to address the biota transfer concerns and that an additional "hard look" at those concerns will conclude the same thing.

As result, we urge that the current EIS use the scientific research completed in the EA and also use the relevant scientific research completed on the EIS for the Red River Valley Project. By doing so it would be expected that the EIS could be completed in reasonable time frame. The timeline for this EIS lists April of 2008 as the expected completion date of the final EIS on NAWS.

Completing this work in that timeline is important if we are to be able to keep construction moving forward. We have enough non-treatment related work to keep the project moving forward in the interim. Still, delay in this EIS would mean further delay in citizens of this part of the nation having access to this needed water supply.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment as part of the public scoping process.