

From: "Jerry & Wanda" <gawemer@srt.com>
To: <awaters@gp.usbr.gov>
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Subject: Comments on NAWS

Good Morning Alicia,

I hope I'm not too late for you to include my comments.

My name is Wanda Emerson, and I'm from the rural community of Mohall, North Dakota,

population, just under 1,000. For eight years I was a member of the Mohall city council,

and following that spent eight years as the Mayor of Mohall. During this entire 16 years our community had concerns in regards to our declining water supply. Mohall's water supply is surface water run-off, fed by an area stream. Shallow wells, 20 to 26 foot deep. When there is no run off, our wells go dry. Beginning in 1990, Mohall officials realized they were facing a critical water shortage. Since that time, the city has spent approximately \$400,00.00 to correct this problem and give Mohall a temporary stable water supply that all communities need to survive. Working with the North Dakota State Water Commission to map our area looking for a new source of water, we found the only aquifer in our area that would supply Mohall with it's daily needs, were the wells we were already utilizing. At that time, working with the state engineers, we placed four new wells in our existing aquifer. By doing this, we were able to minimize the draw -down in any one well by spreading the usage out over a larger area, which helped during the drought years. During these four years, the citizens of Mohall were limited to household use of water. No lawn watering, car washing, or even watering of gardens was permitted.

The quantity of water is a small part of the problem our cities are confronting on a daily basis. With the escalating costs of chemicals needed to provide quality drinking water to meet EPA standards, the water utility cost to our citizens is also an ongoing concern for our city councils.

Several other cities in the NAWS area are facing urgent water needs. Berthold, North Dakota, a community of just under 500 population, has at times been under a boil only water usage due to contaminants in their water supply. Westhope, North Dakota, a community of just under 600 population, has an obsolete water treatment plant that is in need of major repairs or replacement. The cost of this to the citizens of Westhope is more than they felt they could afford to pass on to their tax paying citizens.

As with all communities large and small, we're always looking for ways to expand our economic base. At this time, if a manufacturing business was interested in starting up in Mohall, and that business needed an ample water supply for production, we would have to turn them away. No community can survive without a good source of quality water, and, don't we have the right to demand it, when only two hours from Mohall, we have the Missouri River and the Garrison Dam.

The survival of rural North Dakota is also important to the larger cities in the state. Without a new source of quality water in northwestern North Dakota, many of these rural communities will die. We need the larger cities, and they need us. North Dakota was built on rural communities and our farming heritage; we need to fight to retain their existence.

Wanda Emerson

NAWS Advisory Committee

701-756-6359

gawemer@ndak.net

PO Box 579

Mohall, ND 58761