

November 4, 2011

Headquarters, US Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: CECW-P (IP)
7701 Telegraph Road
Alexandria, VA 22315-3860

To Whom this may concern,

This letter is to express our disapproval of and concerns with the existing design of the Diversion and Dam around the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan area.

The alignment of the Diversion has been chosen by the local sponsors to accommodate the city of Fargo's current future plans for development. It is not based on sound engineering principles or with the intent of minimizing the costs of the project as much as possible but rather to remove land that is in the existing flood plain for development. In order to do this, land that currently does not flood or floods to manageable levels will be inundated with flood waters. This is in violation of Executive Order 11988.

The more northern inlet that is referenced in Appendix "O" would more effectively keep the impacts of the diversion in Cass and Clay Counties along with all the benefits of the project. The current plan has impacts going many miles into Richland and Wilkin Counties with no benefits to those counties. Richland County and Wilkin County infrastructure will be greatly impacted as well as the Richland 44 and Kindred School Districts with absolutely no benefits from this project. Rather there will be many homes that will have to be sold resulting in a reduced tax base and a reduced population in northern Richland County which is the only real area of growth within Richland County. Will Richland County, Wilkin County, Richland 44 and Kindred School Districts be made whole in this process by the local sponsors? Have those impacts been included in the costs of the project?

From the maps in the FEIS, there will be many miles along the Red River and the Wild Rice River that will have increased water elevations that will require properties to be protected by dikes or other methods of protection. Many of these properties are outside of the "red line" for the official staging area but will none the less be impacted. Are the costs associated with protecting those properties included in the proposed plan? With the various ravines in the area it is logical to conclude that many other properties outside of the "red line" will also have to be protected from impacts caused by the Diversion. Have the costs been included in this proposal? With all the costs to protect the many miles upstream of the project that will be impacted has the benefit cost ratio been properly calculated?

The initial plan took quite some time to develop but the final plan was pushed through very rapidly without input from the communities that will be adversely impacted. The sponsors have insured that their communities will be protected but at horrendous costs to the upstream communities. Many of the people in the area upstream of Fargo-

Moorhead that will be impacted are from families that have lived on those properties for many generations. Their ancestors chose their properties because of the elevations and the way they had survived the devastating flood of 1897. Now their properties will be subjected to man made flooding.

The farmland that will be within the staging area as well as the farmland that will be impacted but that is outside of the "red line" will not be eligible for Multi Peril Crop Insurance. Without the coverage provided by Multi Peril Crop Insurance there will be many farmers that will not be able to continue farming. This will affect the value of that farmland as well as the rental rates that will be paid to land owners. The expense of property taxes will still be there but the income will not. The income that is produced by the agricultural sector has a huge impact on the Fargo Moorhead area as this is new income each year, not just existing money that is recycled through the economy. With so many acres potentially taken out of production or with greatly reduced yields there will be a major impact on the local economy.

As landowners and homeowners in the area just outside of the "red line" we are greatly concerned about the adverse impacts to our property, the value of it and the ability to sell it when the time comes that we have to move off of our property. Craig Evans of the Corps of Engineers spoke at a meeting of the South East Water Initiative in Hankinson in late August. At that time he said that no one will be harmed financially in this process. We need an explanation of how that will not happen by this hastily contrived plan that impacts so very many acres and homes upstream of Fargo-Moorhead.

Sincerely,

Alan and Patricia Otto
Christine, ND