

Red River Land Owner
Rachel Roen Morgan
3407 133rd Lane NW
Andover MN 55304
November 5, 2011

US Army Corp of Engineers
ATTN: CECW-P (IP)
7701 Telegraph Road
Alexandria VA 22315-3860

RE: Opposition to April 2011 Locally Preferred Plan (North Dakota Diversion with storage and staging) for flood control in the Red River Valley.

Dear caring folks of the US Army Corp of Engineers,

I am a land owner of rich, fertile agricultural soil along the Red River Valley one to two miles west of Comstock, Minnesota and am strongly opposed to the Red River diversion proposed to save the homes of those who knowingly built on a flood plain in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Location: Our farm is in a prime location as it surrounds Highway 2 connecting Highway 75 on the Minnesota side to Interstate 29 on the North Dakota side. On the farm sits a beautiful four-story residence, a historical frame house and log-home site and 20 outbuildings that have never been flooded by the Red River. Up until recently, this ideal property was highly sought after as a building site for new homes due to its location near Oxbow Golf Course and the easy access to Fargo and Moorhead.

History: My great grandfather homesteaded it 140 years ago and the property is still in the family as my sisters and I continue to share in the ownership. Great Grandpa Narve Roen chose this location and built first, his log cabin, then a frame home high on the bluffs of the Red River. He raised 10 children here. My father heard him tell stories of how he befriended the Indians living in the territory and passed those stories along to us around the kitchen table of another beautiful gingerbread-style four-story house that was also built along the river on this property in 1906 by my grandfather Stennom Roen – the house we shared with my grandparents and that I grew up in.

Preservation of Historical Value: We had considered registering with the historical society the homes built by my great grandfather and by my grandfather and several of the twenty outbuildings (including the barn built by my great grandfather). I wish we had followed through on that. But whether or not they are on the historical registry, they have historical value to all who are descendants of Narve and Gor Roen – many of whom attended a family reunion on our farm in 2006.

Land value: When my mother passed away in 2008, we had the farmland appraised at \$3,000/acre. MANY interested parties contacted us about the prime land along the Red River adjacent to the bridge crossing into North Dakota as they wished to purchase and build new homes on this property; one party was verbally committed to do so. Can you imagine what talk of the diversion has done to the value of this prime property now? If you were to intentionally flood this property, where will the money come from to compensate us for the value of the land PRIOR to the diversion proposal or equal to that of other prime building sites and fertile areas in Minnesota?

Gravesites: We have a small family cemetery high on the riverbank of our property from my great-grandfather's days. With the diversion, this would be flooded. My grandparents on both sides of our family, my mother and father, as well as many other relatives from my father's and mother's side are buried in Eagle Cemetery near Christine ND – a property which has never flooded in the past but I understand will be affected by the proposed diversion as well.

Church: And if the Eagle Valley cemetery is affected, the adjacent newly built Eagle Valley Evangelical Free Church along the Red River two miles east of Christine, ND would also be affected by the diversion. This is the church my parents and grandparents faithfully attended and financially supported when it was located in Wolverton, MN – the new church on its new location that our family helped fund. I invite you to visit this wonderful new facility; then justify flooding it.

Possible alternatives to diversion I ask you to consider: Residents and farmers south of Fargo-Moorhead should not have to be punished for the mistakes of those who chose to build in a flood plain in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Consider options of widening, straightening, dredging the river, erecting permanent flood walls, or erecting a ring dike around the city. Consider retention areas on land unsuitable for farming or moving the homes in Fargo-Moorhead along the river out onto the plains that you are planning to flood with the diversion.

Thank you for your genuine consideration.

Sincerely,



Rachel Roen Morgan

P.S. If you choose to ignore my appeal and that of many others, and build this diversion, I invite you to come and clean the houses and 20 outbuildings on our farm after murky muddy river water has unnecessarily filled them and the main floor of the inhabited grand home my grandfather built.