

Julie Paulson (jkpnd1@hotmail.com)
10805 County Road 17 South
Horace, ND
November 6, 2011

Headquarters, US Army Corps of Engineers
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7701 Telegraph Road
Alexandria, VA 22315-3860

RE: Comments on lack of notification issues of buyouts and opposition to the Final Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Locally Preferred Plan (LPP).

I am a long-time resident of Cass County, North Dakota and I am writing to express my concerns about the Final Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Locally Preferred Plan (LPP). I certainly understand the importance of mitigating/controlling the floods that we continue to fight, however, putting in place a diversion and storage area creates so many new social, economical and ecological challenges for those who have been committed to this area of North Dakota for their entire lives.

This option displaces thousands of acres of farmland and people from their homes that are not in danger of flooding today and does not guarantee flood protection. This is a high risk project which attempts to cross five rivers with a diversion, which has never been done before, and would use levees, built on the weakest soils in the lower 48 states to act as a dam to hold back flood waters on prime farm land south of Fargo and Moorhead. The report states that a breach of the levees would be catastrophic. Who will pay for the recovery? For the cost of \$2 billion to taxpayers (local and nationally), there is still no guarantee of flood protection. There are also the ongoing maintenance costs, costs of losing communities, the effect on agricultural land and businesses, loss of family farms, potential damage to upstream communities, and the unknown impacts outside of the 33,390 acre staging area that have very high costs both fiscally and emotionally, just to prevent a potential flood. Many people have had to evacuate their homes or lost them during a flood, however, they were on or near the river. Now many people that are not on or near the river will experience the same grief and financial impact to prevent a potential 100 year or 500 year flood if this project is a go. For what cost?

I personally chose to purchase and live in a rural residence that is not currently in danger of flooding. I chose that location because of that. I have not been approached or notified for a buyout, however, I was notified by the Army Corps to sign a right of entry to my property for surveys and investigations. I emailed Terry Williams the Project Manager in April 2010.

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"My name is Julie Paulson and I received a letter in the mail regarding a right of entry for the diversion project for Fargo Moorhead area. My parcel ID is 64205000030010. I am inquiring to determine why you would need access to my property. I am directly east of the storage area 1 and about 1 mile from the proposed diversion location.

I am okay with taking samples and surveys, etc, however, i am not okay with the idea of storing anything on my property for any length of time.

Please let me know what type of activities would need to take place specifically on my property. I would like to know this information before I sign the right of entry for surveys and investigations."

I was told that since there is a 300 foot leeway, they need to test the soil in the proximity. So I guess my property would be impacted if they need another 300 feet for the project, however, my home is not part of the projected buyout costs. Also, if you don't need the land, and a storage area of 8.5+ feet of water across the road from me, you can't tell me that my basement won't become a pool as the water table is already high. Why wasn't I or people like me notified of a potential buyout and the costs factored in? I am concerned with a buyout that as I won't get the value that my property is worth, however... if I don't get a buyout that I will have property damage as a direct result of your project and insurance won't cover a manmade flood. I am worried that not all components of this huge project have been taken into consideration such as mine...

I emailed additional questions regarding the 300 foot question back to them and received no response.

I am frustrated by the decision to proceed, as many others are. We feel we are in the minority of the larger Fargo voice. I do understand the bigger picture and there are more solutions to the problem that wouldn't impact so many innocent people who tried to divert flooding by selecting the location in which we live (not by a river or chance of flood).

I wonder how many people will be impacted, like I, that aren't aware of where and how water will flow both above and below the ground... I think that diverting the water out of Fargo and making it everyone who lives south of Fargo, getting rid of communities, cemeteries, churches, homes and 33,390 acres farmland is a very harsh punishment to many local citizens are there is no thought by the local and state officials as they are not negatively impacted by their home. If the flood can be fought successfully with temporary measures today, can't permanent levees, floodwalls, along the natural course of the river is not a viable solution that follow the natural course of waterflow. Grand Forks had this in place shortly after they flooded.

I know I am one little voice, but I am speaking on behalf of those of us that want to make a difference in our community. I am a very unselfish person and think that the solutions at the table are displacing innocent people from their home and farmsteads with no place to go. Also the compensation will not be what is needed to replace the homes they have, nor the memories that were made within them.

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Are these tradeoffs that we really want to make as a country that is suppose to provide opportunities, maintain integrity and equality? Why is someone's home along the river in Fargo or in Fargo metro more important than my home or all of the others south and north of Fargo. Shifting the water problem from one location to another at such a large cost, does it really make taxpayer fiscal sense? The flood in Minot ND was stated to never happen either by the US Army Corp. That is a real life recent example of a risk of levees still having catastrophic occurrences. Why pay \$2 billion dollars when there are no guarantees. Please suggest take a step back and take a more reasonable, fiscally responsible approach that doesn't utilize tax payers dollars on a project that will impact our agricultural growth in North Dakota and in the US, kick folks out of their homes, and have unidentified economic and social risks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Julie Paulson".

Julie Paulson