

Mayor Walaker Warns Diversion Opponents

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The F–M diversion plan is now in the hands of congress, but one local leader says if the plan doesn't pass, he'll be the first to place blame on those who opposed it in the first place.

Fargo Mayor Dennis Walaker delivered what he considers a warning at this week's State of the Cities event, and some local residents are firing back.

After proclaiming a positive future for Fargo in the coming year, Mayor Walaker left people silent after saying these words in regards to the F–M diversion plan.

"If it fails, I don't think any of you want to go on the front page of the Forum as I point fingers at the people who stopped this project. That's a warning as far as I'm concerned," said Walaker.

If the diversion receives the go ahead from Washington, towns like Oxbow, North Dakota could be wiped straight off the map by the raging Red.

Oxbow Mayor Jim Nyhoff says he hopes the plan is approved, but says if his town is wiped out, he'll be placing some blame of his own.

"The complete loss of it, to me, is devastating and that's the last thing I want. I'll stand on the front page of the paper, too, and point at the person who took Oxbow away from me," said Nyhoff.

Some residents who would be affected by the proposed diversion say Walaker's words were way out of line.

"To so-call put a threat or a warning on us because we're protecting our community was totally unbelievable. To say if you continue to fight for you home and stop this project, we'll put you in the paper," said Elmer Bakke development resident, Dennis Biewer.

Biewer says he understands the need for protection, but argues that there needs to be more research before work on a diversion starts.

"They are just destroying so much that people have worked their whole lives for. So many of the dreams people have worked their whole lives for," Biewer added.

It looks like whether the diversion passes or not, there will be a few disapproving fingers pointed somewhere. Kim

Mayor Walaker did acknowledge that he and the flood mitigation committee are looking into solutions for regions that would be affected by the diversion.