



Kindred concerned about diversion impacts

By [HEIDI REISENAUER](#) on Jan 12, 2011 at 12:00 a.m.

If you go

- **What:** Metro Flood Study Work Group meeting
- **When:** 3:30 p.m. Thursday
- **Where:** Fargo City Commission Chambers, second floor at 209 3rd St. N.
- **Info:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Col. Michael J. Price, the St. Paul District commander, and his staff will attend the meeting.

The Kindred (N.D.) School District is bracing for what a proposed Fargo-Moorhead diversion might mean for a new school project and its future tax base.

As the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers continues a feasibility study that will determine the extent of the diversion's upstream impacts, Kindred Superintendent Steve Hall is hoping local leaders understand what the project could mean for his district.

About 19 percent of the district's students live in Oxbow, Bakke Subdivision and Hickson, all areas thought to be affected by upstream impacts of the diversion, Hall said.

The taxable value of those communities makes up 23 percent of the district's \$15.4 million tax base, Hall said.

In addition to lost tax valuation, the district stands to lose almost \$475,000 in state student aid if those communities are wiped out, Hall said. Each of the 125 students in those areas is worth \$3,779 in state aid this year, he said.

Hall said he realizes there is still much to be decided before the final diversion plan is determined.

"I understand (the impact) may be something anywhere in between nothing to the worst-case scenario," he said.

In November, the corps announced a new plan that would mean higher floodwaters in Oxbow, Hickson and Bakke Subdivision, all located a few miles south of where the diversion would begin carrying water out of the Red River.

Last year, Kindred School District voters passed a \$14.7 million project for a new school, and Hall worries what lost tax revenues as a result of the diversion could mean for paying off those bonds over the next 16 years.

"Prior to any of this discussion with the diversion voters in our district approved the new school," Hall said. "Now if this would happen, we're already a year into the planning of it."

The burden of the project would fall on other residents in the district, and Hall wants to know if that loss could be mitigated by the Metro Flood Study Work Group that is overseeing diversion planning.

Kindred is about 25 miles southwest of Fargo.

Kindred's concerns are echoed by Oxbow Mayor Jim Nyhof.

"We're not just talking about homes on the golf course anymore," Nyhof said.

"We're talking about our kids' education, and we're going to fight for it."

In December, Hall sent a letter outlining the district's concerns to the Metro Flood Study Work Group, which will discuss the issue during Thursday's monthly meeting.

Fargo City Commissioner and work group Co-chairman Tim Mahoney said he welcomes the input because working on the diversion is a process, one that requires putting out an idea, addressing what problems arise and finding solutions to those concerns.

"You can't build a diversion without causing some disruption somewhere, so we're looking at every way to mitigate that," he said.

Readers can reach Forum reporter Heidi Shaffer at (701) 241-5511
