

Lake Agassiz
Water Authority

Bulletin

Volume VI, Issue IV

July/August 2008

In this issue:

- The Preferred Alternative—the Best Solution
- LAWA Meetings Update
- Regional Drought Conditions
- Awaiting the Record of Decision
- Upcoming Meetings

The Preferred Alternative—the Best Solution

The Preferred Alternative, the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River, is the best solution for the drinking water needs of the Red River Valley for many reasons. Among these, which are detailed below, it is the most flexible, the most reliable, and it provides the most environmental benefits.

It is the most flexible.

- This is a supplemental water supply, not a replacement water supply. It's used only when needed.
- The alternative is adaptable to different growth patterns in the Valley.
- Many of the northern rural water systems are not in need of water right now, but they do have a real need for a reliable and quality water supply in the future. Because of the realization of this future need, there is enough capacity in the main pipeline to serve these water systems directly from the pipeline.

Lake Ashtabula holds 22.4 billion gallons of water.

It would take 22,400 million-gallon water towers to hold as much water as Lake Ashtabula.

It is the most reliable.

- This alternative has tremendous built-in storage capacity. Utilizing Lake Ashtabula as a regulating storage reservoir provides the capacity to store 22.4 billion gallons of water. A pipeline alternative would not have that extra storage capacity. It would take 22,400 million-gallon water towers to match that capacity.
- The stored water is delivered by gravity (no pumps).
- State-of-the-art water treatment currently exists in the Valley and will continue to be used.

It provides the most environmental benefits.

- This alternative provides water to meet the ND Game and Fish Department's recommended flows on the Sheyenne River to maintain the aquatic environment. The recommended flows released out of Baldhill Dam, on the Sheyenne River, are: 23 cfs (cubic feet per second) minimum flows year-round, a spring flush of 215 cfs for 48-72 hours, and a minimum flow of 69 cfs in April.
- This alternative also leaves water in the Red River to enhance the aquatic environment.

In addition to the above reasons, the Preferred Alternative is the least costly of all Missouri River Alternatives to construct, and it's the least costly of all alternatives to maintain and operate. Details of its cost effectiveness will be included in the next issue of the *LAWA Bulletin*.

(A description and map of the Preferred Alternative is on page 2.)

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Meetings Update

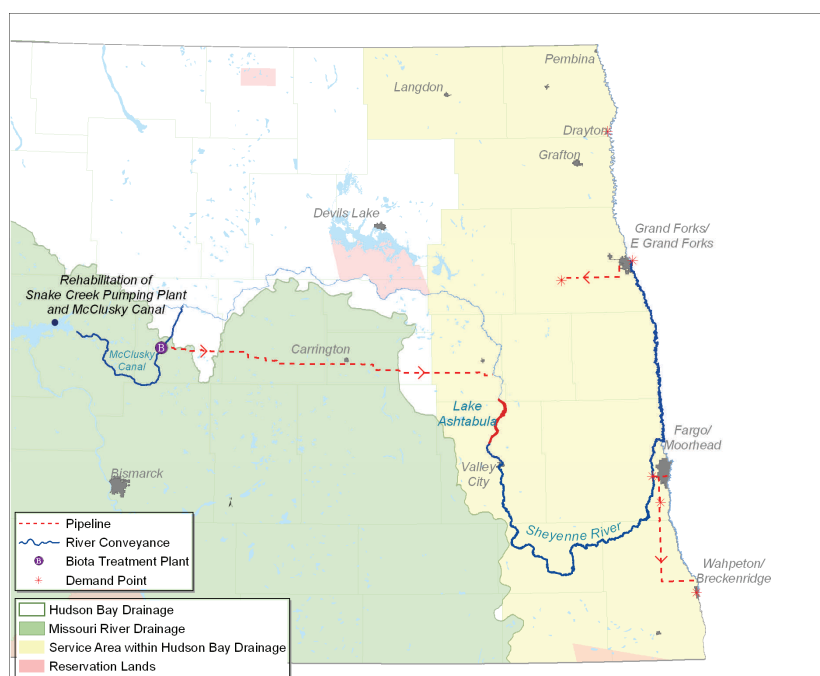
- A draft Agreement of Intent, where water systems indicate how much capacity they want to nominate from the Red River Valley Water Supply Project, was circulated and discussed among the LAWA Board of Directors at the August Board meeting.
 - The Board passed a motion making the “commitment fee” non-refundable. As it stands in the draft Agreement of Intent, a water system’s commitment fee to participate in the Project will range from \$3,500 per cfs nominated not to exceed \$5,000.
 - Once the Agreement of Intent is finalized, it will be distributed to water systems after the Record of Decision is announced by the Secretary of the Interior.
- The group reviewed and discussed a draft “Proposed Water Project Allocations:2009-2011 Biennium” developed by the ND Water Coalition. The plan includes the proposed overall Red River Valley Water Supply Project funding plan and funding needs, along with the proposed allocations for water projects across the state over the next biennium. The proposed plan still needs to be adopted by the full ND Water Coalition at their next meeting.
- The group reviewed a letter from the ND Water Users Association to the ND Public Service Commission, regarding the need for adequate design standards and monitoring plans for the NuStar pipeline. The pipeline is a concern to water systems since it crosses water sources in the Red River Basin, which are critical drinking water supplies.

Preferred Alternative—GDU Import to Sheyenne River

The local, state and federal Preferred Alternative is the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River.

This alternative would use the GDU Principal Supply Works, consisting of the Snake Creek Pumping Plant, Lake Audubon and the McClusky Canal, to transport Missouri River water to a biota treatment plant near McClusky.

From there, a buried pipeline would carry the treated water to the Sheyenne River. Using Lake Ashtabula as a regulating reservoir, water would be released from the Baldhill Dam, when needed, to water systems in the Red River Valley.



Regional Drought Conditions

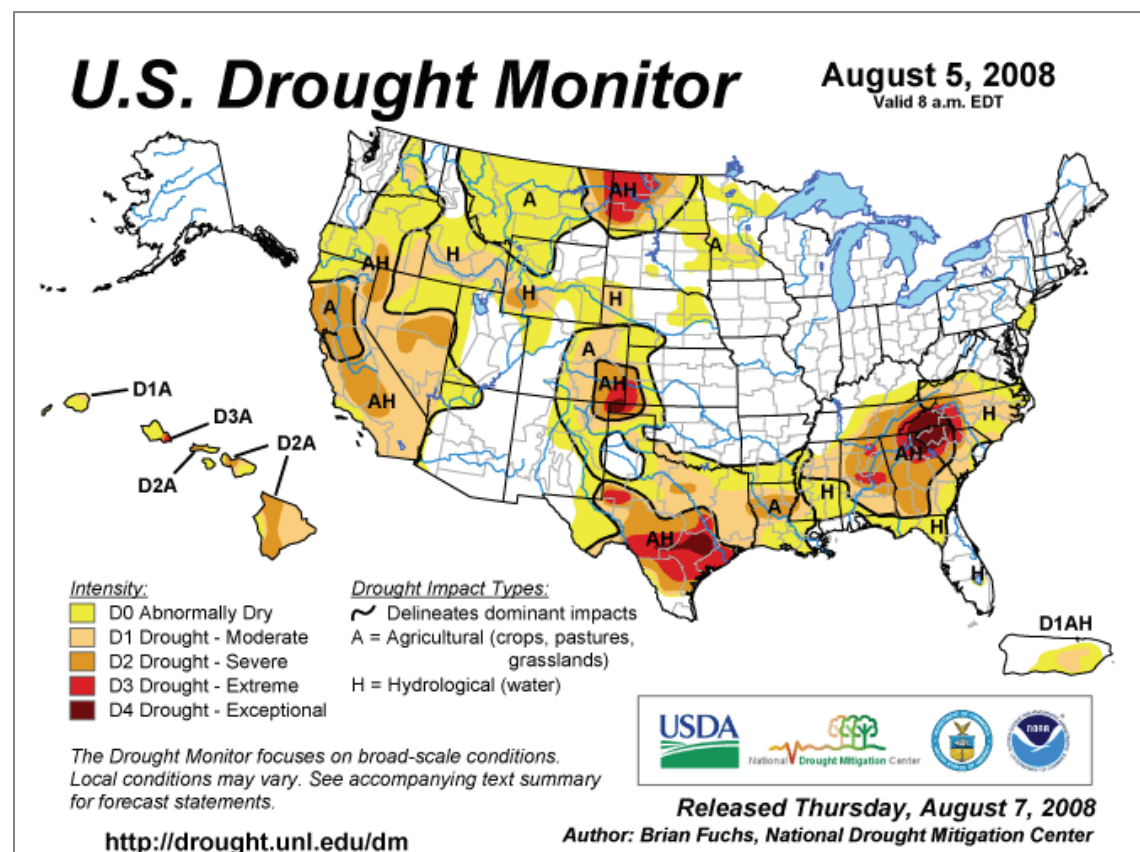
Even with above normal rainfall received in North Dakota late this summer, dryness still plagues the entire state.

Extreme drought conditions continue to plague north-central and western North Dakota, equating to 38% of the state. Due to the agricultural damage that has been done, the recent rains will not reverse these impacts so late in the summer. In central North Dakota, the region is seeing moderate to severe drought. Abnormally dry conditions are found throughout the eastern part of the state.

The North Dakota State Climate Office recently released information regarding the “average” July weather in ND. Though the state average was actually figured to be warmer than usual, the temperatures in the east were much cooler than normal, while the western part of the state ran much higher temps than the average.

The higher temps, coupled with high winds, increased the severity of drought in western North Dakota.

The Climate Prediction Center is not calling for any improvements in the existing drought conditions in western North Dakota (North Dakota State Climate Office Press Release, July 2008).



Awaiting the Record of Decision

The next step for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project is the issuance of the Record of Decision from the Secretary of the Interior. The Record of Decision, which is expected this fall, is the final determination as to which alternative will be implemented for the Project.

Once this is issued, work will start on obtaining right-of-way easement options, applying for environmental permits and clearances, developing an operational plan and beginning pre-final design of the Project.

If the Record of Decision includes utilizing Missouri River water, congressional authorization will need to be sought.



**Lake Agassiz
Water Authority**

P.O. Box 140
Carrington, ND 58421

Phone: 701-652-3194

Fax: 701-652-3195

www.lakeagassiz.org

LAWA Board of Directors

Chairman Bruce Furness—City of Fargo

Vice Chairman Keith Burley—Cass Rural Water Users

Secretary/Treasurer Dave Koland—Garrison Diversion

Curt Kreun—City of Grand Forks

LaVonne Althoff—Southeast Water Users

Clark Cronquist—Agassiz Water Users

Kenneth Evenson—City of Valley City

Rick Bigwood—North Valley Water District

John Drees—Grand Forks-Trail Water District

Kelli Poehls—City of Moorhead

Kevin Burg—City of Hillsboro

Upcoming Meeting

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Board of Directors

September 9, 2008, 10:00 AM—Doublewood Inn, Fargo

October 14, 2008, 10:00 AM—Doublewood Inn, Fargo
