

Lake Agassiz
Water Authority

Bulletin

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Comprehensive Report Sent to Congress

On December 5, 2008, the Bureau of Reclamation submitted a Comprehensive Report to Congress, as required by the Dakota Water Resources Act of 2000 (DWRA), for the proposed Red River Valley Water Supply Project (Project). Dave Koland, Garrison Diversion General Manager, says, "The submission of the Comprehensive Report to Congress brings us one step closer to making the Project a reality."

The Comprehensive Report identifies the selected alternative for the Project, environmental issues, effects on Minnesota and Missouri River states, and compliance with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909.

Proposed Project

The proposed Project is the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River Alternative. This is the preferred alternative of the Bureau of Reclamation, State of North Dakota, and the Lake Agassiz Water Authority. The primary feature of the project is a buried pipeline from the McClusky Canal to Lake Ashtabula.

Environment

The Project has minimal adverse environmental impacts, while the environmental benefits are maximized by the Project. Fish, mussels, and riparian habitat are improved in the Sheyenne River, and fish habitat is improved in the Red River. A biological assessment completed by the Bureau of Reclamation found that the Project is not likely to adversely affect any Federally listed species, including two endangered species, the least tern and piping plover.

Minnesota & Missouri River States

Impacts generally would be temporary and associated with construction of the Project in North Dakota or be minimal. The Project will not increase erosion on riverbanks, cause flooding, or adversely affect aquatic resources in the Red River Basin. The project would augment stream flows in the Sheyenne and Red Rivers and would meet most of the aquatic needs targets recommended by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, which is a beneficial effect for Minnesota.

The Project would withdraw about 0.3% of the water stored in the upper Missouri River system mainstem reservoirs. Existing water supplies in the Missouri River system will not be affected by the Project.

Treaty Compliance

The DWRA required that the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of State, and the Environmental Protection Agency determine that adequate water treatment can be provided in the Project to meet the requirements of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. The Treaty addresses issues of water quality and quantity along the border between the United States and Canada. Through a process defined by a Memorandum of Understanding between the three agencies, it was determined that adequate treatment procedures can be provided to meet the requirements of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909.

Next Steps for the RRVWSP

Efforts are underway on the LAWA and Garrison Diversion operational plan for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (Project). The objective is to develop an overall plan for delivering water from the Project pipeline to and through the Sheyenne River and Red River systems to the contracted end users.

- The operational plan features will help determine the operation of the pipeline delivery system, account for gains and losses of water in the river systems, and develop a system to determine the amount of contracted water end users intake to their treatment or delivery facilities.
- A water accountability method will be developed in order to ensure that environmental requirements are met and existing rights within the Sheyenne and Red Rivers are protected and coordinated with the delivery of project water to end users.
- A few of the tasks included in the operational plan are to collect existing data, reports and documents on the Sheyenne and Red River systems. The collected data will be evaluated and analyzed in order to build an overall picture of how the river systems operate.



The Baldhill Dam, shown here, is the primary feature used to control supplemental water supplies in the Project.

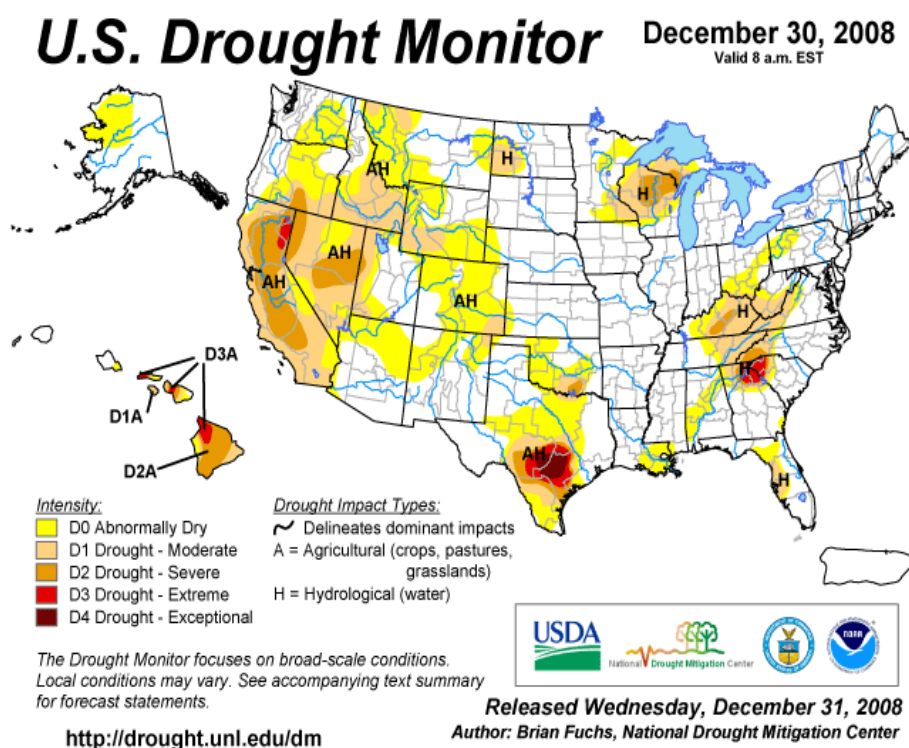
Through the stages of the operational plan, questions will be answered about the timeliness of releases from the Baldhill Dam, the amount of water released, and how the releases will be accounted for throughout the Project system.

The operational plan will establish a protocol, to be included in the Water Supply Contracts. The protocol will coordinate releases from the Baldhill Dam in order to supply end users with adequate supplies of Project water.

Regional Drought Conditions

The month of December was bitterly cold, seeing average monthly temperatures six to ten degrees below normal. The average monthly air temperatures ranged from -1° to 11° F.

Record snowfalls were recorded in December across parts of North Dakota. According to the North Dakota State Climate office, most of the state received precipitation at 50% to 300% above normal in December; however, the southwest corner of the state did not receive enough moisture to relieve the drought. The Climate Prediction Center anticipates that the drought conditions will improve, as above normal precipitation is expected.



Lake Agassiz Water Authority Update

- The deadline has been extended for potential water systems to return their Agreement of Intent to participate in the Project. The new deadline will be February 1, 2009. The information is crucial in developing the operating plan for the project.
 - To date, 12 signed Agreements of Intent have been received, with verbal commitments from a majority of systems. The signed Agreements are from: Agassiz Water District, City of Cooperstown, City of East Grand Forks, City of Grafton, City of Grand Forks, City of Hillsboro, City of Mayville, Langdon Rural Water District, North Valley Water District, Richland County, Traill Rural Water District, and City of Valley City.
 - At the annual meeting of the ND Rural Water Systems Association held in December, the rural water representation to the LAWA Board were re-elected. The members are Keith Burley, LaVonne Althoff, Clark Cronquist, Rick Bigwood, and John Drees.
 - The LAWA Board voted to support adding bonding authority to the Garrison Diversion authorities this legislative session.
 - The LAWA Board voted to have Garrison Diversion continue the administration of the Project in the future.
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**Lake Agassiz
Water Authority**

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John Drees—Grand Forks-Trail Water District

Kelli Poehls—City of Moorhead

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Upcoming Meeting

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Board of Directors

January 13, 2009, 10:00 AM
