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## Letter from S. W. Thompson to Representative Burdick Regarding Lost Bridge Road, March 14, 1952

S. W. Thompson

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NORTH DAKOTA  
STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT



Bismarck, North Dakota  
March 14, 1952

Honorable Usher L. Burdick  
House Office Building  
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Congressman:

As a result of the topographic change that will take place by reason of the filling of the Garrison Reservoir, there will apparently be an entirely new road system built within the boundaries of the new reservation at Ft. Berthold. One of the new Indian roads is proposed near the western boundary of the reservation from Highway No. 23 on the north to the Lost Bridge on the south. The State Highway Department is being asked to consider an extension of Highway No. 22 from Killdeer north to meet this Indian road at the Lost Bridge.

It has not been the policy of the State Highway Department to add mileage to its system because it is very evident that the present mileage is too great to construct and maintain with the funds that can reasonably be expected to be provided by our small population. On the other hand, the Superintendent of the Indian Agency contends that the Indians are unwilling to relocate in the southwestern part of the new reservation unless they can be assured that they can have a road out. It may, therefore, become necessary to give some thought to extending Highway No. 22 for that purpose.


The second difficulty which confronts the Highway Department is the abnormal cost involved in constructing a road through this particular area. It is not only very hilly, but much of it is very rugged, which will require enormous fills and cuts. It is roughly estimated that the cost of this highway would be not less than one million dollars.

A few days ago, Mr. John Hart, Executive Director of the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, was in the office with reference to this matter. He indicated that the Government had made available to the reservation the sum of three million dollars for new highways, but that they were about to ask for a deficiency appropriation of another million. If this additional appropriation is to be seriously considered, it would seem that a substantial sum should go to this outlet since its only purpose will be to provide a road for the Indians. It would also seem that a portion of this should be paid by the Army as a part of its program of relocation. The State simply does not have sufficient money for this purpose.

Usher L. Burdick  
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Will you kindly keep this matter in mind, perhaps make some preliminary investigation of what might be contemplated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Army, and keep us advised as to developments.

Yours very truly,

  
S. W. Thompson,  
State Highway Commissioner.

P.S. We enclose for your information a Road System Map of the reservation indicating the highway relocations.

SWT

SWT:cf  
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