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Letter from Representative Burdick to Bigelow Neal Regarding Garrison Dam Pool Level, June 20, 1949

Usher Burdick

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June 20, 1949

Begelow Neal,
Garrison, N. Dak.
Dear WNeal:

Go ahead-use anything I have said or written-shoot the works.

Mc Lean county is going to be cut in two parts by this extra 20 feet of water- which is not necessary, for flood control, navigation, irrigation, or power development. At the present moment I do not think the engineers will get away with it. We are plastering 'em in good sh from any angle we can find.

I have just run on to an other reason for a low water level Williston. It is all contained in one word, "Aggradation" and if you know how this aggradation develops, a high water level at Williston is dangerous.

The Missouri River flowing past Williston normally carries 40 thousand acre feet of silt per year, but the force of the current carries this silt on down the river and it does not pile up where the Yellowstone empties into the Missouri at Ft Bufprd. This silt drops to the bottom just as soon as the current hits dead water- therefore the silt would begin to pile up at the west end of the lake or close to Ft Buford. The fill would be terrific as practically no part of the 40 thousand acre feet of silt would move much further than where the river encounters still water.

Suppose the army engineers dyked the City of Williston, the and the three irrigation projects, you can see that this aggradation would soon fill in and the river would overflow any dyke that could be built and do it soon too, because all the discharge of the turbulent Yellowstone would fall at the upper end of the lake. A pont containing 17 million acre would bring the west end of the Lake about 10 miles East of Williston and there being no dykes there the damage would be less serious.

The dyking system at Willison, therefore, is scientifically unpracticle

When you get around to it I hope you will picture to the pec of Mc Lean County just what this extra feet of water will do to that sectic

Sincerely,

Usher L. Burdick.