



1-31-1946

## Letter from Representative Burdick Regarding Garrison Dam Pool Level, January 31, 1946

Usher L. Burdick  
*United States House of Representatives*

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/burdick-papers>

---

### Recommended Citation

Burdick, Usher L., "Letter from Representative Burdick Regarding Garrison Dam Pool Level, January 31, 1946" (1946). *Usher Burdick Papers*. 366.  
<https://commons.und.edu/burdick-papers/366>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Usher Burdick Papers by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [und.common@library.und.edu](mailto:und.common@library.und.edu).

USHER L. BURDICK  
Chiltenham,  
Maryland.

January 31, 1946

On February 4th The Appropriation Bill will be debated in the Committee of the Whole House and you will do me a great personal favor to be present.

In this bill is an appropriation for the Garrison Dam in North Dakota. Last December the Congress voted authority for this Dam but in Senate Document 247, and a similar document in the House, the height of that Dam was to be enough to impound 17,000,000 acre feet of water. That would have raised a water level of approximately 1830 feet above sea level. We had no objections to that, providing the Indians lower down the river would be satisfied and compensated.

To our great surprise at Williston, North Dakota, where I reside, the Army Engineers are now determined to accommodate a water level of 1850 feet, or 20 feet higher than Congress authorized in the original authorization. If this is done it will flood (90,000 acres of the best land in my county it will flood a portion of the City of Williston and the railroad tracks. Under this state of facts here, in short, is what the people of Williston ask:

That the dam itself be built at any height the engineers want, but that the water level be kept down to 1830 feet UNTIL experience shows that it is necessary to raise that level. It will take about 16 years to build the dam and store the water, and surely that is time enough to determine whether all this flooding is necessary. When it is time to flood our lands we want Congress to say so and not leave that question with the Army Engineers or any other autocratic body or bureau.

All of the purposes of the dam can be fulfilled at a water level of 1830-foot control, navigation, irrigation and power later on if we must sacrifice our property for the public good we will submit willingly, but we want Congress to be the judge and not some Bureau.

The Bureau of reclamation agree with this theory and the amendment which I enclose will not be seriously objected to by the engineers. I don't know who will offer the amendment but I hope you can support it.

Sincerely yours,

Usher L. Burdick,

P.S. I am not in anyones pay in soliciting for this amendment, but I am deeply concerned as a citizen of Williston. I am personally interested too, for the land on which we have raised cattle for generations will be completely flooded out.