



August 2022

Report by Representative Burdick Regarding an Investigation of Garrison Dam Project, August 25

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Recommended Citation

Burdick, Usher L., "Report by Representative Burdick Regarding an Investigation of Garrison Dam Project, August 25" (2022). *Usher Burdick Papers*. 493.
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RELEASE 8-25-9-1

CONGRESS ASKED
TO INVESTIGATE
ARMY AT GARRISON

Washington, D.C.--One of the leaders in the fight to limit the pool level at Garrison Dam has introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives calling for an investigation of land requisitioning for the giant project. Congressman Usher L. Burdick (R-N.D.) said his resolution has been referred to the House Committee on Rules.

Burdick asserted that authorization for the Garrison Dam limits it to a gross storage capacity of 17 million acre-feet. He said Army Engineers are currently engaged in acquiring land by purchase and other proceedings "far in excess of that required for the storage of 17 million acre-feet and in excess of the 1,830 foot pool level operation agreed to."

The North Dakota Republican said that by so doing, Army Engineers are violating the provisions of Public Law 534 and Senate Document 247, and are threatening to raise the pool level to 1,850 feet. The seventeen million acre-foot storage capacity was agreed to in Document 247, he said, which was signed on behalf of the Bureau of Reclamation by Commissioner Harry W. Bashore, Assistant Director W.G. Sloan; Acting Director John R. Riter; by Major General Reybold for the Chief of Engineers and by Gail Hathaway, head engineer representing the Chief of Engineers. He said it was approved by R.C. Crawford, Brigadier General representing the U.S. Army.

In asking for the investigation, Burdick asserted that a higher pool level would needlessly destroy another 100 thousand acres of agricultural land, flood three now-existing irrigation projects, destroy part of the Great Northern Railroad bed, and flood part of the city of Williston.

The resolution asked that the speaker of the House appoint a special committee of five members of the House of Representatives; three to be members of the Public Lands Committee and two, of the Appropriations Committee, to investigate the activities of the Army Engineers at Garrison and determine by what authority they are using public funds to acquire lands that are in excess and unauthorized under any provision of any existing law.