



THE CANADIAN
FEDERATION
OF AGRICULTURE

LA FÉDÉRATION
CANADIENNE
DE L'AGRICULTURE

August 25, 2004

Secretary, Canadian Section
International Joint Commission
22 Floor, 234 Laurier Ave W

<p>IJC / CMI OTTAWA ACTION: McAuley INFO: Chair Gray/MC/NH/ MV/Bourget AUG 26 2004</p> <p>FILE / DOSSIER 3-14-9 (9)</p>
--

Dear Sir/Madam,

It has come to our attention that a request has been made by Governor Judy Martz of Montana to review the 1921 Order of the International Joint Commission with the intent to change the historic sharing of water from the Milk and St. Mary Rivers, ultimately taking water allocated to Canada and directing it to the US. As you are aware, the State of Montana has allocated more water rights in their state to individuals and groups than they have water. As a result of several years of drought and the lack of up-keep to their irrigation system, Montana is facing a situation of catastrophic proportions and is looking at Canada's allotted water supply off of the St. Mary and Milk Rivers as the answer. The Governor has pledged to decommission one dam in her state and has pressure to do so with others, all with the aim of taking Canadian water. For agricultural producers of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the ramifications of such a plan would be huge.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture represents over 200,000 farmers from across the country who are responsible for the production of safe, affordable and high-quality food products for the domestic market and abroad. Canadian producers are committed to being good stewards of the land and protecting the natural resources they are so heavily dependent upon. Irrigated land in Alberta accounts for about 4% of arable land but represents 20% of the province's cropped land value of production. Many producers are dependent on the water from the Milk and St. Mary River system have willingly shared the cost with the Alberta government for the maintenance and rehabilitation of the irrigation system. Canadian farmers and the Canadian Government have invested over a billion dollars in this irrigation infrastructure. This state of the art system delivers water to over 650,000 acres of land, producing high valued crops including; vegetables, potatoes, sugar beets, alfalfa and timothy. This large investment has been based on the knowledge that this water supply would remain certain.

While there is no question that the severe disrepair of the American irrigation system has left the State of Montana under difficult circumstances, there is no room for Canadian agriculture and industrial users to scale back simply because the state of Montana has over-allocated their supply.

On behalf of the Canadian farmers dependent on the St. Mary and Milk Rivers for their livelihood and who have invested millions of dollars to protect its irrigation system, I urge you to not reopen the 1921 Order. The Boundary Water Treaty has been effective at fairly allocating water for over 80 years and we are confident it can continue to protect the water rights of both Canadian and American citizens in the future.

Sincerely,



Bob Friesen
CFA President

c c : Ministers of Environment Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Foreign
Affairs Canada

THE CANADIAN
FEDERATION
OF AGRICULTURE



LA FÉDÉRATION
CANADIENNE
DE L'AGRICULTURE

FAX TRANSMISSION
TRANSMISSION DE TÉLÉCOPIEUR

August 25, 2004

TO/À: Secretary, Canadian Section
(613) 993-5583

FROM/DE: Karla House

Subject/Sujet: 1921 IJC Order on St. Mary and Milk River

No. of pages to follow / No. de pages à suivre: 2

Original to follow by Mail

Our fax number is / Notre no. de télécopieur: (613) 236-5749

Please call (613) 236-3633
if you have had any difficulty in receiving
this transmission

Veillez téléphoner à (613) 236-3633
en cas de difficulté lors de la réception de
cette transmission