

May 24, 2006

International St. Mary & Milk Rivers Administrative Measures Task Force
Secretary, Canadian Section

Ottawa, ON

(submitted at Public Meeting, May 24, 2006 in Lethbridge, Alberta)

Dear Task Force Members:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Economic Development Lethbridge, I am submitting comments in support of Alberta's position on the draft report of the International Joint Commission regarding the St. Mary & Milk Rivers agreement of 1921.

There is no doubt the water flowing in these rivers is of significant economic and recreational importance to the residents of both Alberta and Montana. It is a credit to those who crafted the original agreement that it so fairly distributes this resource among those who use or need it. We support the provincial perspective that this foundation needs to remain in place as it is still reasonable, fair and balanced.

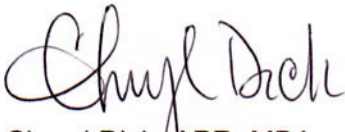
At the same time, today's technologies allow for improved monitoring, reporting and accounting, which are important for sharing information and ensuring the most effective and efficient use of this asset. Those impacted by the agreement need to be kept well-informed and engaged so they can make informed decisions...not based on political boundaries but on common sense and mutual benefit.

A proven mechanism for doing this is the use of specific letters of intent which build on the original agreement and create solutions-based directions for the stakeholders. We support this approach based on constructive public consultation practices and discussions with grassroots users, not just politicians and bureaucrats.

The parties should also be encouraged to focus on retaining and enhancing the strength of the irrigation system on both sides of the border as well as developing long-term relationships. Taking polarized positions does not serve the greater good and that should be the emphasis of any decision with the potential impact of this one.

With a positive approach, we look forward to continued enhancement of our cross-border relationships, economy and water resources.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Dick, APR, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

Cc EDL Board
Mayor Robert D. Tarleck
Mr. Dave McGee

