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International Joint Commission
U.S. Section
1250 23rd Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20440

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INT'L JOINT COMMISSION
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International Joint Commission

ACTION: JC
INFORMATION: UB, MC, FB, Clamen, CMRF
FILE: 9-3

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you, for your extensive travel and attendance at the consultation sessions recently held in Montana, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

As a cattle rancher depending on St. Mary/Milk River water for irrigated lands providing winter-feed base for our livestock, I have a keen interest in the distribution of water from these two rivers. Thus, I am requesting the IJC to review the 1921 Order to determine its conformity with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909.

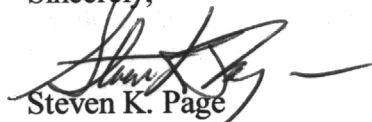
The first sentence of Article VI of the Treaty clearly states that "*the two rivers are to be treated as one and the water shall be apportioned equally*". This principle is contradicted by the 1921 IJC Order and present-day division of water, particularly in view of the differing characteristics of the two rivers.

The St Mary is a very significant perennial stream, providing sizeable flows during the entire irrigation season with an annual flow volume exceeding three times that of the Milk. By comparison, the Milk River is an intermittent stream, drying up during early summer months of most years, essentially remaining dry until spring runoff the following year. The St. Mary flows from Glacier Park in the U.S. through Canada, while the Milk essentially flows from Canadian prairie through the U.S. Consequently, Canadian irrigators receive the major benefit from the better of the two rivers.

Apparently, this was an inequitable situation intended to be mitigated by the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, later compromised by the 1921 IJC Order.

Irrigators on the Milk River in Montana are only interested in receiving a fair-share of the St. Mary/Milk River waters based on the terms of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, no more, no less. Conversely, available data indicates that we may not be receiving our full entitlement under the terms of the treaty, and the 1921 IJC Order merits a detailed review.

Sincerely,


Steven K. Page