

**GLASGOW IRRIGATION DISTRICT**  
**PO BOX 271, #15 IRRIGATION STREET**  
**GLASGOW, MONTANA 59230**  
\*\*\*\*\*

Phone: (406) 228-2346

Fax: (406) 228-9410

August 23, 2004

INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION  
U.S. SECTION  
1250 23<sup>RD</sup> STREET NW, SUITE 100  
WASHINGTON DC 20440

Dear International Joint Commission:

We represent about 100 families whom are members of the Glasgow Irrigation District. We are the lowermost Irrigation District within the Milk River System. The purpose of this correspondence is to respectfully request the International Joint Commission review the 1921 IJC order that apportions the flows of the St. Mary and Milk Rivers. Reasons for our request are discussed below.

We believe that the 1921 IJC Order is inconsistent with Article VI of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty, which states the St. Marys and Milk Rivers are to be treated as "one stream" and "apportioned equally" between the two countries. In contrast, the Order gives the U.S. much less than 50% of the combined flows. Data indicate that the U.S. actually receives an average of about 40% of the combined flows, while Canada receives about 60%. More importantly, the Canadian supply of water is characterized by a much higher degree of certainty than is the U.S. share.

In our opinion, differences in the "amount" and the "certainty" of irrigation water explain why there are more than 500,000-750,000 acres being irrigated in Southern Alberta. In contrast, approximately 110,000 acres are irrigated within the Milk River Irrigation System in Montana. We experience water shortages during 6 years out of every 10. Thus the "nature" of our water supply restricts our abilities to acquire capital investment for additional irrigation development.

In comparison to Irrigation Districts in Alberta (and to the seven other Irrigation District that are upstream on the Milk River), we (the Glasgow Irrigation District) are generally the first to experience water shortages. To compensate, we have to be more efficient, which generally incurs higher irrigation expenses (for cleaning canals, maintaining checks and turnouts, etc.). In 2004, our irrigators are taxed an average of \$20.00 per acre to maintain

International Joint Commission  
\*\*\*\*\*  
ACTION:  
INFORMATION: LB, JC, FB, MC, CMA, clamen  
FILE: 9-2-1:3  
Glasgow Irrigation District provides comments on the St. Mary and Milk River Order  
2004 SEP  
INT'L JOINT COMMISSION  
RECEIVED IJC

and operate our irrigation infrastructure (about \$6.00/acre goes to the operation and maintenance of the St. Mary system). In addition, we pay \$4.75 per acre-foot of water. To pay these expenses, most of us grow alfalfa and other forage crops for cattle. Because of water shortages, there are no potatoes, sugar beets, or other "specialty" crops grown in the Glasgow Irrigation District.

We recognize that the International Joint Commission was established to assist the governments of the United States and Canada in preventing and resolving transboundary disputes, primarily water and environmental issues. Discrepancies in apportionment of the Milk and St. Mary Rivers between Canada and the United States have accentuated since the 1921 Order. After 83 years, we believe that the Order is not consistent with the 1909 Treaty, nor is its perpetuation in the best interest of our two Countries. Change is necessary when we realize the direction we are going is not where we want to go. Therefore, we submit that the IJC appoints an investigative board or task force to rigorously review the 1921 Order and recommend the modifications needed to ensure an equitable and fair apportionment of water for future Canadians and U.S. citizens.

Thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact us in additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

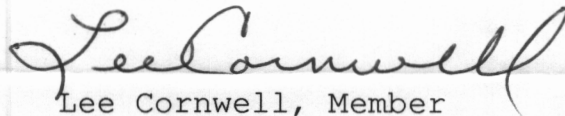
GLASGOW IRRIGATION DISTRICT



John Lacey, President



Melvin Novak, Vice-President



Lee Cornwell, Member

JL:jl