

## Upcoming Meetings

Lake Agassiz Water Authority  
Technical Advisory Committee  
meeting, January 10, 2006,  
9:00 a.m., Howard Johnson Inn,  
Fargo.

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Board  
meeting, January 10, 2006, 1:30 p.m.,  
Fargo City Commission Chambers,  
Fargo.

## Red River Valley Water Supply Project EIS Timeline

**December 30, 2005** – Draft EIS  
distributed

**February 2006** – Public hearings  
scheduled

**February 28, 2006** – Draft EIS  
comments due

**December 2006** – Final EIS due



WATER AUTHORITY  
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## Bulletin

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## North Dakota State Preferred Alternative Included in Draft EIS

Garrison Diversion represents the State of North Dakota's interests as a Co-Lead with the Bureau of Reclamation in the preparation of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In fulfilling their legal obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Co-Leads extensively studied numerous alternatives to meet the comprehensive water quality and water quantity needs of the Red River Valley. The final EIS will identify the alternative preferred by the Co-Leads. A draft EIS, due to be distributed December 30, 2005, contains the alternative selected by the State as its preferred alternative. The Bureau of Reclamation's preferred alternative will be included in the Final EIS.

An EIS identifies a preferred alternative in order to enable the public to carefully consider and scrutinize the alternative that is most likely to be selected in the EIS process. The law does not

require or discourage the identification of a preferred alternative at the draft EIS stage. In formulating the State of North Dakota's preferred alternative, the alternatives were studied in depth by the water users, Lake Agassiz Water Authority, Garrison Diversion, the State Water Commission and many state agencies.

After consideration of such things as feasibility, environmental consequences, political realities and cost, the various state agencies, as well as Lake Agassiz Water Authority, the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District Board and the State Water Commission all voted to choose the Garrison Diversion Import to the Sheyenne River Alternative as its preferred alternative. The State of North Dakota felt it important to identify its preferred alternative in the Draft EIS.

The State of North Dakota believes that the GDU Import to Sheyenne River Alternative is superior to any other alternative in terms of environmental factors, feasibility, political reality, and cost. The State chose to identify its preferred alternative in the Draft EIS in order to allow ample time and attention to be dedicated to this alternative.

The Co-Leads are required to take a "hard look" at the environmental consequences of proposed actions. The State believes that earlier identification of a preferred alternative will allow more time for project supporters and objectors to adequately scrutinize the preferred alternative.

As issues are raised on the preferred alternative, the  
**State Preferred Alternative Continued on  
next page.**

### Special points of interest:

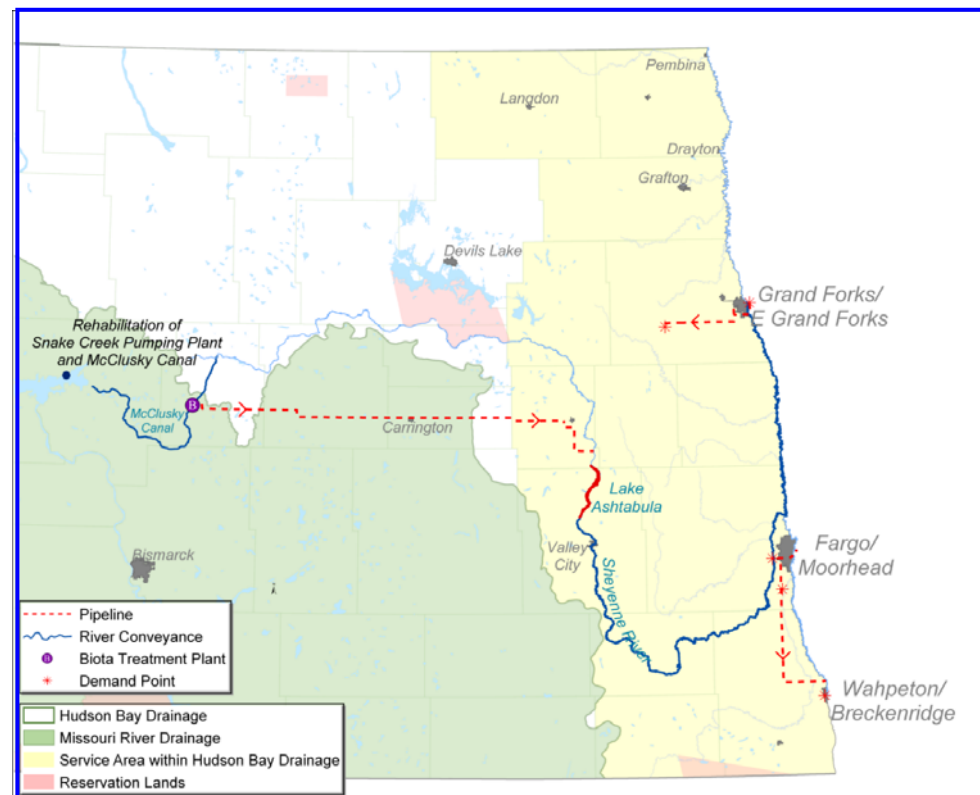
- Draft EIS Includes State Preferred Alternative
- RRVWSP Update
- Upcoming Meetings
- RRVWSP EIS Timeline

### State Preferred Alternative Continued

Co-Leads can revisit the alternative selection, modify the alternative if necessary, and otherwise address commenter concerns. Finally, the State wanted to identify a preferred alternative in the Draft EIS because, after review of the EIS information accumulated, the interested parties from North Dakota felt that the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River Alternative was the best and most feasible alternative. State leaders believe that full and early disclosure will facilitate optimal discussion, input and comment on their preferred alternative. The

State hopes to create a stronger, more defensible EIS by allowing interested parties ample time to raise any potential concerns with the preferred alternative. The Co-Leads can respond to comments, revise the alternative if necessary, or select a different preferred alternative in the Final EIS.

The State's goal is to create the best Red River Valley Water Supply Project that will meet the water needs of the Red River Valley. Early disclosure of a preferred alternative helps facilitate that goal.



Above is a map depicting the GDU Import to Sheyenne River Alternative. This alternative was selected as the State of North Dakota's Preferred Alternative.

## Red River Valley Water Supply Project Updates

◇ The Final Needs & Options Report for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project has been completed and is currently being distributed. To view or request a copy of the report go to <http://www.usbr.gov/gp/dkao>.

Governor Hoeven named the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River as the State of North Dakota's Preferred Alternative.

◇ On November 1, 2005, the North Dakota State Water Commission unanimously recommended the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River Alternative for the State's preferred alternative.

◇ Water quality under extreme low flow conditions remains a question that needs further investigation. On November 17, 2005, a meeting with U.S.G.S., ND State Health Dept., Garrison Diversion and Reclamation was conducted to strategize a method to predict the water quality under different conditions. The consensus was that an unsteady state model would be needed and a workshop was suggested to get input on the assumptions to be used in the model.

◇ The North Dakota Game and Fish Dept. submitted comments to the US Fish and Wildlife Service on the Coordination Report. The comments primarily indicated that the report failed to recognize the need for minimum stream flows to meet the aquatic needs.

◇ Public hearings on the Draft EIS have been scheduled for February; see dates below. Comments on the EIS will be due 60 days after the Draft EIS is available. Comments need to be postmarked by February 28, 2006.

### RRWSP Draft EIS Public Hearing Dates

**Thursday, February 2, 2006**

7:00 p.m., Bismarck, North Dakota, Best Western Doublewood Inn, 1400 East Interchange Avenue

**Tuesday, February 7, 2006**

7:00 p.m., Grand Forks, North Dakota, Holiday Inn, 1210 North 43<sup>rd</sup> Street

**Wednesday, February 8, 2006**

7:00 p.m., Warroad, Minnesota, Warroad Public School Theatre, 510 Cedar Avenue

**Thursday, February 9, 2006**

7:00 p.m., Valley City, North Dakota, AmericInn, 280 Winter Show Road Southeast

**Wednesday, February 15, 2006**

7:00 p.m., Fargo, North Dakota, Ramada Plaza Suites and Conference Center, 1635 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Southwest

**Thursday, February 16, 2006**

7:00 p.m., Perham, Minnesota, Lakeside Golf Club, 2727 450<sup>th</sup> Street

**Friday, February 17, 2006**

1:00 p.m., Red Lake, Minnesota, Red Lake Community Center