

Lake Agassiz
Water Authority

Bulletin

Volume VI, Issue III

May/June 2008

In this issue:

- Why not use Devils Lake for the RRVWSP?
- Next Steps for the RRVWSP
- Regional Drought Conditions
- LAWA Update
- Upcoming Meetings

Why not use Devils Lake for the RRVWSP?

This is a frequent question asked about the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (Project). It is a good question. Considering the proximity of the lake to the Red River Valley and the flooding caused over the past decade, it would appear that Devils Lake would be a great source of water for the Valley.

The option of using Devils Lake as a water source for the Project was studied as part of the Environmental Impact Statement. However, the findings indicate that when the Red River Valley was experiencing a drought, so was Devils Lake, and there was insufficient water to meet the Red River Valley's shortage.

After the devastating drought of the 1930s, the elevation of Devils Lake was over 47 feet below the peak stage recorded in 2001. If similar low-water levels occurred during a future drought, there would not be enough water to meet the projected shortages in the Valley.

Devils Lake also becomes highly saline at low-water levels, like those of the early 1940s.

Releasing that water into the Sheyenne River could violate water quality standards. Because of this, Devils Lake was eliminated from further consideration as one of the alternatives or features of the Project.

Another question asked is "why not import water from the Missouri River to Devils Lake and use it as an additional regulating reservoir?" This water could then be discharged into the Sheyenne River. In concept, this would stabilize Devils Lake and potentially use less water from the Missouri River. This is another valid suggestion. The authorizing federal legislation for the Project, the Dakota Water Resources Act of 2000, specifically prohibits funding for any facility that would transfer Missouri River water to Devils Lake. Therefore, this option was not considered.

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Update

- At the LAWA Board Meeting in May, the group discussed the cost allocation model that was developed using different debt repayment shapes for the water systems based on population growth.
- At the LAWA Board Meeting in June, the group discussed components needed in a memorandum of understanding between Garrison Diversion and local water systems participating in the Red River Valley Water Supply Project. Also discussed was the draft state funding plan for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project developed for the ND Water Coalition.

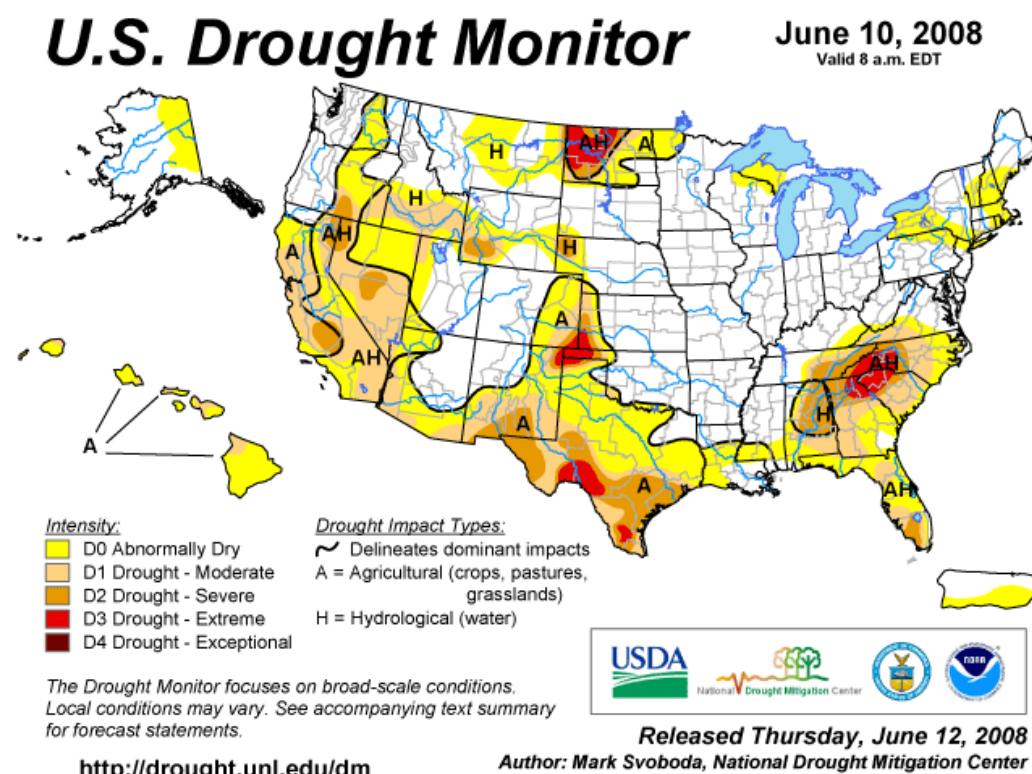
Preferred Alternative



The local, state and federal Preferred Alternative is the GDU Import to the Sheyenne River Alternative. This alternative would use the GDU Principal Supply Works, consisting of the Snake Creek Pumping Plant, Lake Audubon and the McClusky Canal, to transport Missouri River water to a biota treatment plant near McClusky. From there, a buried pipeline would carry the water to the Sheyenne River. Using Lake Ashtabula as a regulating reservoir, water would be released from the Baldhill Dam, when needed, to water systems in the Red River Valley.

Regional Drought Conditions

Even with the recent rains received across North Dakota, only the southeastern part of the state is not currently under drought conditions. Over two-thirds of the state remains under a drought classification. Western North Dakota is in an extreme drought, while the central and northeastern parts of the state range from abnormally dry to severe drought conditions.



Information recently released by the North

Dakota State Climate Office states that North Dakota had a dry and cold winter followed by a dry and cold spring. Severe to moderate drought covered the western two-thirds of the state. In fact, western North Dakota was so dry during the past six-month period that the statewide ranking was the 11th driest six-month period in recorded history, despite the fact that eastern North Dakota was wetter than normal.

April and May temperatures were cooler than normal across the state. So what can residents expect this summer? The Climate Prediction Center "expects the remainder of June to remain cooler and wetter than average, with a reversal of sorts as we get into the last half of the summer season. July and August, on balance, are anticipated to be warmer and drier." (*North Dakota Climate Bulletin*, spring 08)

Next Steps for the RRVWSP

The next step for the Project is the issuance of the Record of Decision from the Secretary of the Interior. This is the final determination as to which alternative will be implemented for the Project. Once this is issued, work will start on obtaining right-of-way easement options, applying for environmental permits and clearances, developing an operational plan and beginning pre-final design of the Project.

The Lake Agassiz Water Authority Board of Directors will not meet in July. The next scheduled meeting will be August 12.



**Lake Agassiz
Water Authority**

P.O. Box 140
Carrington, ND 58421

Phone: 701-652-3194

Fax: 701-652-3195

www.lakeagassiz.org

LAWA Board of Directors

Chairman Bruce Furness—City of Fargo

Vice Chairman Keith Burley—Cass Rural Water Users

Secretary/Treasurer Dave Koland—Garrison Diversion

Curt Kreun—City of Grand Forks

LaVonne Althoff—Southeast Water Users

Clark Cronquist—Agassiz Water Users

Kenneth Evenson—City of Valley City

Rick Bigwood—North Valley Water District

John Drees—Grand Forks-Trail Water District

Kelli Poehls—City of Moorhead

Kevin Burg—City of Hillsboro

Upcoming Meeting

Lake Agassiz Water Authority Board of Directors

August 12, 2008 10:00 AM

Doublewood Inn, Birch Room, Fargo
