



GREAT LAKES RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

MAY 18 2005

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May 13, 2005

Dr. Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

I am writing as someone who has studied political issues affecting the management and protection of the waters of the Great Lakes for nearly two decades. As a researcher at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and Executive Director of the Great Lakes Research Consortium, a New York based organization of seventeen colleges and universities in New York and eight affiliated schools in the province of Ontario, I have come to appreciate the importance of the International Joint Commission and U.S. - Canada Boundary Waters Treaty. It is from this perspective that I write to you with my concerns about plans under way in the state of North Dakota to divert water from Devils Lake to the Sheyenne River that drains to the Red River and then into Manitoba, Canada. I, and many others, strongly believe that this is a matter that should be referred to the International Joint Commission. Clearly, the federal government of Canada and the provincial government of Manitoba believe that this action falls under the purview of the Boundary Waters Treaty that gives the IJC authority to rule "on applications for approval of projects affecting boundary or transboundary waters; it assists the two countries in the protection of the transboundary environment, and it alerts the governments to emerging issues along the boundary that may give rise to bilateral disputes." The matter of water diversion from Devils Lake should clearly be a matter for assessment by the IJC.

I do not claim to prejudge the outcome of a reference to the IJC but I do know that the possible impacts of this water diversion can be devastating - not only water pollution, but the spread of invasive species to other bodies of water throughout Canada and other States in the United States. I am well aware of the catastrophic harm done to the Great Lakes ecosystem, as well as the immense economic cost, of the recent invasions of Zebra Mussels and Sea Lampreys. We, in New York State and Ontario Province also bear the brunt of water and air pollution that makes its way from the upper Great Lakes to Lakes Erie and Ontario.

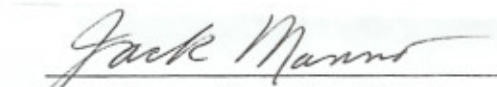
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The United States has been a responsible partner in the Boundary Waters Treaty for nearly one hundred years. It is this treaty and the Canada - U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement that has created the institutional mechanisms that have made binational Great Lakes protection possible. The tools are in place. We have an international treaty and an organization whose function is to make recommendations about water matters affecting the U.S. and Canada. Let's use it appropriately. Failing to do so undermines one of the most significant international environmental agreements ever signed. I urge you to refer the matter of the Devils Lake Outlet to the IJC.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Jack Manno, Executive Director
Great Lakes Research Consortium