

GEORGE VOINOVICH
OHIO



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

April 20, 2005

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

I am writing to urge you to request that the International Joint Commission (IJC) review a proposal to construct a Devil's Lake outlet in North Dakota.


As you know, the IJC is an independent binational organization established by the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. It serves an important role to help prevent and resolve disputes between the United States and Canada relating to the use and quality of boundary waters.

Recently, it has come to my attention that there is some serious concern about the proposed Devil's Lake outlet in North Dakota. They believe this project could harm the environmental integrity of the Great Lakes and surrounding areas. Additionally, there is some concern that the outlet could introduce more invasive species into this ecosystem. Consistent with its role, the IJC would provide an independent assessment of these potential risks.

For nearly 40 years, I have worked to protect and restore the Great Lakes. In May 2004, President Bush signed Executive Order 13340, instituting a program to coordinate federal environmental activities and develop a restoration strategy. I respectfully urge you to refer the Devil's Lake outlet proposal to the IJC for further review to ensure that all affected parties are heard and that it does not cause harm to our national treasure, the Great Lakes.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,


George V. Voinovich
United States Senator