



Dr. Charles A. Lawson
Secretary, U.S. Section
International Joint Commission
1717 H Street NW, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20006

July 5, 2017

Dear Dr. Lawson:

The governments of Canada and the United States thank the International Joint Commission (IJC) for its development of the “Plan of Study: For the Review of the Operating Plan Contained in Annex A of the 1989 International Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America” for the Souris River Basin. The governments are now in a position to issue a reference for the IJC to undertake the proposed Plan of Study.

In accordance with Article IX of the *Boundary Waters Treaty* of 1909, the governments of Canada and the United States request that the Commission examine and report on flooding and water supply in the Souris River basin, and coordinate the completion of the full scope of the 2013 “Plan of Study: For the Review of the Operating Plan Contained in Annex A of the 1989 International Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America”. In so doing, the governments request the Commission to work with the entities designated in Article X of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada for Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin, signed at Washington October 26, 1989, as amended (1989 Agreement) as well as the State of North Dakota.

The governments request the Commission to evaluate and make recommendations regarding the Operating Plan contained in Annex A to the 1989 Agreement. The Commission’s work is also to include evaluating and making recommendations regarding how the provision of flood control and water supply benefits might be maximized. The study should include:

1. The collection and harmonization of data necessary to support hydraulic and hydrologic modelling and associated studies;
2. The development of hydrological watershed runoff and inflow sequences to allow for the simulation of various water supply conditions including historical conditions, extreme conditions, and conditions influenced by the effects of climate change;
3. The development of hydraulic, hydrologic and optimization modelling tools that will allow for the accurate simulation of flows within the Souris River so that operational scenarios may be evaluated;
4. Studies evaluating the physical processes occurring in the Souris Basin which are thought to have contributed to recent flooding events;

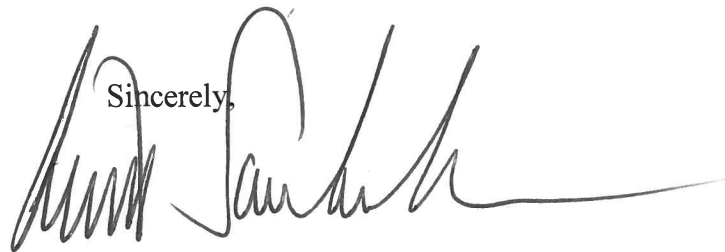
5. A detailed review of the Operating Plan contained in Annex A of the 1989 Agreement;
6. Identifying and, as appropriate, making recommendations regarding improvements to the Operating Plan contained in Annex A of the 1989 Agreement to reduce the flooding and water supply risks in the Souris River basin with consideration to low flow, apportionment, water quality and aquatic ecosystem health;
7. The evaluation, on a qualitative and quantitative basis, of the costs and benefits of a range of possible infrastructure and operational plans regarding flooding and water supply in the Souris River basin;
8. The evaluation of additional flood protection measures, beyond what is currently provided under the 1989 Agreement, which may include feasibility evaluations of increasing storage at existing dams, more efficient channel alignment and capacity, and the provision of flood control measures in and around communities within the basin;
9. Assessing possible adaptation strategies to address the potential future variability in water supplies associated with climate change;
10. Facilitating collaboration among various Federal, State, Provincial, local agencies, the public, as well as Native American Tribes, First Nations, and Métis located within the basin to share their views and provide input during the study process; and
11. Considering any other matters that the Commission, in consultation with governments, deems relevant to the purpose of this study.

The focus of the Commission's studies and recommendations should relate to the scientific and engineering studies and projects outlined as the Optimal Scope in the 2013 plan of study. This includes assisting the designated entities with the review of the Operating Plan contained in Annex A of the 1989 Agreement and evaluating a greater latitude of alternatives outside the current Agreement. The governments understand that the State of North Dakota intends to provide funding for the study as part of the United States contribution.

The Commission, subject to the availability of adequate funding, should proceed with the full scope of the Plan of Study as expeditiously as possible and should issue its report to governments in accordance with this reference within three years of the date of this letter. Such a report will complete the Commission's work under this reference.

An identical letter is being sent from Global Affairs Canada to the Canadian Section of the International Joint Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Sandrolini", written over a horizontal line.

Chris Sandrolini
Director, Office of Canadian Affairs
United States Department of State