

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 5, 2025

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

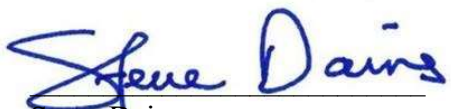
Dear Secretary Burgum,

We are writing regarding ongoing challenges at Flathead Lake in northwestern Montana. Over the last several years, we have seen unseasonably warm conditions that have resulted in accelerated runoff in the northern reaches of the Flathead basin. Decreased inflows into the lake have precipitated lower lake levels, adversely affecting environmental and economic conditions for residents and visitors alike. I appreciate your responsiveness and decisiveness toward granting a temporary modification from minimum instream flow requirements from the Séliš Ksanka Qlispé (SKQ) Project. This, combined with significant increases in precipitation levels for July, helped avoid catastrophically low lake levels. Given the drought conditions over the last few years, I urge you to identify a path forward that does not depend on granting annual emergency authorities to maintain sufficient lake levels for the local communities that call Flathead Lake home.

Flathead Lake is one of the crown jewels of Montana. The lake supports abundant recreational opportunities and is essential to the area's economy. Consistent and predictable lake levels catalyze significant revenue for the region, benefit downstream irrigation users, and generate reliable, affordable hydroelectric power.

We recognize the diverse set of stakeholders and statutory requirements that help determine outflows. I request that you collaborate with various relevant parties to identify a solution that maintains hydropower production and economic development, abides by statutory requirements and other legal obligations, including President Trump's recent Executive Order 14154- Unleashing American Energy, respects property rights, promotes outdoor recreation, has the support of the local communities, and minimizes future conflict. .

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Tim Sheehy
United States Senator