

United States Senate

February 1, 2016

Colonel John W. Henderson
Commander and District Engineer, Omaha District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1616 Capitol Ave., Suite 9000
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

Dear Colonel Henderson:

I write to request that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) grant the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project's request to extend Permit NOW-2008-02556-MTB for a period of two years. The rocking maintenance allowed under this permit is essential for the irrigation project and would significantly reduce the long-term costs associated with operating the Lower Yellowstone Intake Diversion Dam.

As you know, this project is critical to close to four hundred farms and irrigates over 50,000 acres of cropland in eastern Montana. The Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project first applied for and received this permit in 2014 with the understanding that extensions could be granted, if necessary. Each winter, inclement weather and ice flows regularly damage existing infrastructure, the impact of which would be exacerbated further without an extension of the authorization to maintain and repair the dam. Additionally, due to ongoing delays surrounding the construction of the fish bypass and concrete improvement efforts, an extension of this permit is warranted.

I urge you to act as expeditiously as possible in considering the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project's application to extend Permit NOW-2008-02556-MTB and that you accommodate their request to the greatest extent possible. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your prompt response and staying in close contact on this critically important issue.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator

cc: Noreen Walsh, Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Office
Michael Ryan, Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Great Plains Region