

**Protest on the Red River: Report on an Oral History of the MnDak Upstream Coalition.**

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## **Overview of Oral History Project**

In the summer of 2014, the author embarked on a project to create an oral history of the MnDak Upstream Coalition by interviewing people involved with its formation and subsequent activities. The interviews, which were recorded and transcribed, consisted of nine central questions with follow-up questions for clarity. The project was done under the auspices of the Upper Midwest Regional Center on Public Policy, a research center at North Dakota State University.<sup>i</sup> It was funded through a Dean's fellowship from the University's College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

The Coalition was selected for study because it plays a crucial oppositional role to the proposed Red River Diversion. If completed, the Diversion represents the most significant addition to the state's infrastructure in decades. For better and for worse, it would also resolve regional policy in regards to Red River flooding. In addition, the Coalition is a grass-roots organization that arose in response to regional planning by local governments. A study of such an organization adds to a general understanding of group formation and how such groups can achieve some degree of success.

In addition, North Dakota history is littered with grass-roots organizations that arose in opposition to policies supported by the political establishment. On the losing side, these organizations were often completely lost to history. For example, the Fargo Urban Renewal Agency applied for federal funds in 1961 to redevelop a neighborhood just south of the central business district.<sup>ii</sup> In response, some 700 people formed the Fargo Taxpayers Committee to protest what they saw as an unfair tax burden on

homeowners. Despite the size and anger of this group, it received minimal coverage in the *Fargo Forum*, which backed urban renewal. Once the project was approved, the Fargo Taxpayers Committee apparently faded away. Today, scholars can find little information about the group except contemporary *Forum* articles and a few oblique references in the meeting transcripts of the Fargo Urban Renewal Commission. This study avoids a repeat of this situation by applying the oral history approach to the MnDak Upstream Coalition.

Interview questions are in the Appendix.

## **Background on Planning for Red River Flooding**

The Red River Valley watershed is an intricate set of streams and tributaries spread across eastern North Dakota, northwestern Minnesota, and southern Manitoba. The topography of this region is generally flat, which often results in flooding after a rapid spring thaw or sudden thunderstorms. This flatness makes it challenging to implement standard flood control techniques on a large scale, such as dams, reservoirs, and temporary water storage. The center of the watershed is the Red River itself, which runs along the North Dakota-Minnesota border and into Canada. The Red River is unusual in that its waters flow from south to north.

Located on the Red River, the City of Fargo is the largest municipality in North Dakota with a population of 113,658 in 2013, or 15.7 percent of the state's population.<sup>iii</sup> Fargo is growing rapidly, with its population expanding by 25.5 percent between 2000

and 2013. The city is situated in Cass County, which had a total population of 162,839 in 2013. In contrast, Richland County, just south of Cass, had a population of 16,339.

Maps of North Dakota and the Red River Basin are in the Appendix.

On March 28 2009, the Red River crested at nearly forty-one feet, some twenty feet above flood level, almost overwhelming Fargo.<sup>iv</sup> Damages ran into the hundreds of millions of dollars with three deaths attributed to the flood.<sup>v</sup> As waters subsided, the affected governments sought a regional solution to perennial flooding. Since any solution was contingent upon federal aid, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was enlisted to oversee the process as well as price the various flood-fighting proposals. The Corps already had a history of working with local governments throughout North Dakota and Minnesota on matters related to flood control.<sup>vi</sup>

The City of Fargo, City of Moorhead, Cass County, and Clay County organized the Metropolitan Flood Management Committee in 2009.<sup>vii</sup> Made up of officials from the four governments, this Committee assured that any regional solution would ultimately pursue the long-term interests of Fargo. The Committee then formed a subgroup to work directly with the Corps of Engineers, called the Metro Flood Management Work Group. The Work Group had eleven officials: two Fargo city commissioners, three Moorhead commissioners, two Clay County commissioners, three Cass County commissioners, an official from the Buffalo Red River Watershed District, and a manager from the Southeast Cass Water Resource District.<sup>viii</sup>

Given the initial desire to start construction in 2012, the planning process followed a very tight schedule. Indeed, the Corps needed a letter from local officials by April 15, 2010 describing their preferred flood-fighting plan and a second letter by July

15 tabulating the finances behind such a plan.<sup>ix</sup> Subsequently, the planning process was designed for speed: as soon as the Corps released its analysis, the Work Group would hold hearings on the various plans and make a recommendation to the Committee. The four member governments of the Committee would then vote on that recommendation.

As the Committee worked on plans for flood-fighting, the City of Fargo pressed ahead with securing its expected share of expenses. On June 30, 2009, nearly 91 percent of Fargo voters approved a half-cent sales tax to pay for a still-to-be-determined plan.<sup>x</sup> This tax was expected to raise \$200 million over twenty year.<sup>xi</sup>

On October 20, 2009, the Corps of Engineers presented cost-benefit analyzes for eleven flood-fighting options to the Work Group.<sup>xii</sup> Noting the federal government would pay up to 65 percent of project costs so long as the benefit-to-cost ratio was greater than 1.0, Corps officials reported that six options met this criteria. Initially, the Corps recommended the Minnesota option. Under this approach, \$871 million would be spent on a 25 mile diversion channel around Moorhead, Minnesota.<sup>xiii</sup> This diversion would protect against a once-every-100-years flood.

However, the Work Group expressed greater interest in a North Dakota diversion. This option would require at least \$1.3 billion for a 36 mile channel around Fargo.<sup>xiv</sup> The North Dakota diversion would protect Fargo from a once-every-500-years flood, though the Corps' original benefits-to-cost estimates for it were less than 1.0 per year. Subsequently, the Corps did a second feasibility study of the diversion options. This new study had the North Dakota diversion pegged at 1.29, therefore eligible for federal funds.<sup>xv</sup>

Whereas initial estimates indicated a diversion would add a couple of inches to flood crests downstream from Fargo, a more complete study showed the effect could be as much as ten inches.<sup>xvi</sup> Diversion runoff greatly increased the likelihood of flooding in the northern cities of Hendrum, Georgetown, and Perley.<sup>xvii</sup> There was some worry that even the city of Winnipeg would be affected.

On March 18, 2010, the Metro Flood Study Group voted to recommend the North Dakota diversion to the Metropolitan Flood Management Committee.<sup>xviii</sup> This recommendation was summarily approved by the Fargo City Commission, the Moorhead City Council, and the Cass and Clay county commissions.

To secure its share of the costs, Cass County placed a sales tax increase on the ballot. This measure was approved on November 2, 2010 with 64 percent of the vote, much of that support coming from voters in Fargo and West Fargo.<sup>xix</sup>

On November 18, 2010, just sixteen days after the Cass County election, the Corps of Engineers released further information regarding the North Dakota diversion.<sup>xx</sup> The Corps chose to alleviate downstream concerns with storage cells south of Fargo that would keep excess water in temporary pools over an indeterminate number of acres. These storage cells would likely impact the upstream cities of Oxbow and Hickson.<sup>xxi</sup>

On March 30, 2011, the Corps revealed that storage cells would add at least three feet to upstream water levels during a flood.<sup>xxii</sup> Tens of thousands of acres would be submerged. In reaction, residents, farmers, and property owners south of Fargo formed the MnDak Upstream Coalition to oppose the Diversion. The Richland County Commission offered its support to this group by passing an anti-diversion resolution.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Richland Commissioners insisted that flood planning should take the interests of the entire basin into consideration and not just those of Fargo.

### **The MnDak Upstream Coalition**

The MnDak Upstream Coalition is a North Dakota non-profit corporation that describes itself as “a coalition of concerned citizens, both directly and indirectly affected by the proposed Fargo Dam.”<sup>xxiv</sup> It formed on April 3, 2011 at a public meeting held in Colfax, North Dakota to discuss the evolving Diversion plan. The Coalition filed incorporation papers with the North Dakota Secretary of State’s office on May 9, 2011. Its principal office is in the city of Christine, twenty miles south of Fargo.<sup>xxv</sup> The organization is overseen by a thirteen-member board of directors and currently employs a lobbyist and a Minnesota law firm to pursue its interests.<sup>xxvi</sup> The Coalition holds public meetings once a month and fundraising events several times per year.

In testimony before the 2014 North Dakota Legislature, Coalition member Craig Hertsgaard described the group’s specific concerns about the proposed Red River Diversion:

Critical impacts to those of us upstream are farmland flooding, damage to roads and infrastructure, flooding of cemeteries, and relocation of residences and farmsteads. In addition, residents of Hickson and Bakke are extremely concerned about the ongoing construction on the massive ring dike around their communities.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Hertsgaard testified that, after all this time, it remained unclear just how many acres of flooded land would be compensated for damages under the Diversion plan. While Corps of Engineer maps indicate the staging area will cover 50,000 acres, the Corps says only 32,000 acres will be mitigated. “The 18,000 acre discrepancy is where the

water will be less than one foot deep,” said Herstgaard, adding that farmers will be unable to plant or grow crops under such circumstances.<sup>xxviii</sup> Farmers would be forced to sue the Corps of Engineers and the Diversion Authority for compensation, thereby extending conflict for years to come.

The Coalition asserts that it does not want to prevent the City of Fargo from implementing a program for flood control. Indeed, members do not reject the idea of a Red River Diversion outright.<sup>xxix</sup> However, they believe that not only does the current Corps of Engineers plan place an undue burden on the communities south of Fargo, but the Diversion would not fully protect Fargo from a repeat of the 2009 flood. Thus, they question the competency of the Corps. The Coalition has proposed shifting the Diversion’s southern inlet three miles north to save the southern communities. In addition, they urge a greater use of water retention rather than an excessive reliance on what they term the ‘Fargo dam.’

The MnDak Upstream Coalition works with two other anti-Diversion organizations: the Richland-Wilkin Joint Powers Authority (JPA) and the Upstream Cemetery Authority. The JPA is a governmental entity representing more than thirty cities, counties, schools districts, and townships in Richland County, North Dakota and Wilkin County, Minnesota.<sup>xxx</sup> The Upstream Cemetery Authority consists of sixteen cemetery associations in Minnesota and North Dakota with 3,000 graves that will likely be inundated by Diversion staging.<sup>xxxi</sup>

The author of this study first contacted the Coalition’s Board of Directors about an oral history in the fall of 2013. Subsequently, he appeared at Coalition meetings to



describe the project to the membership. The Board then sent a request for participants out on its email lists. Ultimately, nineteen people were interviewed. Interviews were conducted wherever was most convenient for participants, usually in their homes or place of business. Each interviewee signed consent and release forms allowing the Regional Center on Public Policy to use their interview as part of the larger oral history project.

Nearly all of the participants grew up in the Fargo area. In terms of employment, there were six farmers, four retirees, two business owners, and one lawyer. The rest were employed by various local companies. While four participants described having their property significantly impacted by recent Red River or Wild Rice River flooding, the majority experienced little direct impact. The likely effect the Diversion would have on their property ranged from minimal to total inundation. However, participants believed the Diversion would devastate their communities and destroy the local culture.

### **Selections from Oral History Interviews**

This report gives a sense of: 1) the initial reactions by the interviewees to the Diversion plan; 2) the formation of the MnDak Upstream Coalition, 3) the knowledge and experiences of the interviewees; 4) general attitudes towards the City of Fargo and the Army Corps of Engineers; and 5) the future of the Coalition. For greater clarity, the interviews have been edited and placed in relation to one another.

#### **Initial Reactions to the Plan for a Diversion**

The initial back-and-forth discussion over whether the Diversion should be on the Minnesota side of the Red River or the North Dakota side during 2009 left most of the

participants only mildly interested in flood planning. This interest remained nominal when it appeared the Diversion plan would only impact those communities north of Fargo. However, these attitudes changed drastically once the Corps of Engineers announced that northern flooding would be alleviated through the use of temporary pools south of Fargo. Later announcements that water pooling would actually produce significant downstream flooding only heightened their concerns and led to a fair amount of cynicism regarding the motivations of the City of Fargo and the Corps of Engineers.

**Leah Rogne** (Retired professor whose brother helped found the Coalition): I had vaguely heard of the Diversion, you know, on the east side of Moorhead and then vaguely heard, I heard, that, you know, they were considering this one on the west side in North Dakota crossing five rivers. And I thought what a ridiculous idea...but then when the STEIS came out in this spring, it would've been spring of 2010, my brother told me that our land would have water stayed on it. Which was absolutely stunning to me. Here we are, in a place that has never flooded and has, you know, basically zero potential of flooding, and that our land would be affected by this?

**Friedrich Schumacher** (Retired farmer. Married to Leah Rogne): ...I thought they were totally out of their flipping mind. It was the most ridiculous water plan I'd ever seen.

**Cherie Mathison** (Medical transcriptionist. Owns a house south of Fargo): And we just couldn't believe it. We were just in kind of a state of denial for weeks until we finally had a big meeting in Kindred. We couldn't believe they were honestly considering doing something like that.

**Rodney Mathison** (Works in West Fargo. Married to Cherie Mathison): Why would they want to destroy 50,000 acres of some of the best ag land, tillable land in the United States? You know? And especially with how important food and everything is. It was a shocker...[people] were angry, especially some of the local neighbors around here.

### Group Formation

**Scott Hendrickson** (Fourth generation farmer): So, you know, eventually it came out into the paper that they [the Army Corps of Engineers] were planning on having this staging area south of Fargo and it all happened relatively fast. I mean, without anyone knowing anything, they're [the Corp] going to have a meeting in Kindred and tell us what's going to happen without even telling us what might happen...So before that meeting, June Kopp from Christine, North Dakota...She lives right along the Red River north of Christine a couple miles...she called me and we talked. And she thought, you know, this is going to happen and we better get on top of it sooner rather than later. So we organized a meeting. And we organized a meeting in the Colfax High School gymnasium...

So, anyway, we put it together and I and June sat in front of the group and explain what we felt was happening and that we need to be, you know, aware of what's going to be happening...And there was a group of probably close to 200 people there at the original meeting...I asked if there's anybody interested in the group, that really wants to dig in their heels and put some time into this, would you be willing to be part of the board of this group?...and I said, if so, we're going to have a meeting...immediately following this meeting...So everybody that came into the [Colfax] library afterwards, we had like 11 or 12 people all committed to spending time at this and looking into different alternatives and trying to figure out a path of least destruction because at the time...

**Patricia Otto** (Works in Moorhead, Minnesota): And then there was an organizational meeting in Christine in February of 2011. We went to that. And even at that point it sounded like something more, what needed to be done next was more what the cities, townships, and counties need to do but not so much what personal individuals needed to do. And then there was another organizational meeting that was held in Colfax in early April, I want to say of that year, of 2011. And I went to that meeting...and then I ended up getting on the Board. And because, then it was a well-attended meeting and then it was like: 'those of you who are really interested in getting involved and help with the organization of this, we're going to have another meeting in a couple of days.'

Other groups formed in opposition to the Red River Diversion, including the Bakke Homeowners Association and 'Stop The Dam.' However, these groups either faded or chose to combine their membership and resources with those of the MnDak Upstream Coalition.

**Q:** How did you get involved with the MnDak Upstream Coalition?

**Steve Brakke** (farmer and township board member): We kind of started our own here first.

**Mike Bice** (owner of the Knickerbocker Liquor Locker in Hickson): We have a Bakke group – we have a Bakke Homeowners Association – a Bakke group, which I guess...I'm on the board for that. The purpose of our group is to basically oppose the current flood diversion plan. That was the purpose of our group. We had a group there, we basically had 45, 60 homes up there...

**Q:** How did you get involved in the Coalition?

**Steve Brakke:** Well, being on the township, you know, we got tied into all the meetings and then we started talking – Mike and the area guys. And we kind of had our own group and we started throwing money at it so we could get something on the internet... And we basically kind of look at each other and these guys [MnDak Upstream Coalition] came to us and wanted to meet with us to see what we were doing. And we kind of looked at each other and 'Well, why do we need two checkbooks and two treasurers? Why don't we get together?' So we gave them the money we had in our pocket...

After incorporating, the Coalition began to cooperate closely with Richland County and the Richland-Wilkin Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Coalition leadership believed these public entities were better suited to pursue opposition to the Diversion before the state and federal courts. In addition, the governmental powers available to Richland County and the JPA made them better situated to shape regional policy.

**Scott Hendrickson:** They were going to put the dam right down on the Kindred and Fargo School District line. And it's like, pretty obvious they're going to wipe Kindred out and build Fargo all the way to the dam...the impacts would've gone well into Richland and Wilkin County besides. And that's when, that's when the Richland JPA really – the Richland-Wilkin JPA – got involved and they formed. And we put a lot of pressure as a MnDak group for Richland and Wilkin County to take the bull by the horns here and take the lead. Because we know all we are is an opposition group. And, you know, we can say what we want to say and our opinions mean things and people listen to us. And we need to try and get our word out there. But in reality we need a government to fight for us...And now the JPA is probably been handling the lawyer side of things for over two years.

### Coalition Knowledge and Experience

The Coalition includes a number of farmers who have worked the land for decades and have an intimate knowledge of local soil and water conditions. Other members reported participating in previous water management controversies, such as the proposed Kindred Dam. The Kindred Dam was authorized by Congress in 1968 as a means of alleviating Wild Rice River flooding in the West Fargo area.<sup>xxxii</sup> After twenty-five years of protest by citizen's groups and local governments, the proposed Dam was de-authorized as untenable. Taking advantage of these sorts of experiences, the Coalition proved remarkably successful in questioning the overall feasibility of the Corps of Engineer's planning for a Red River Diversion.

**Wayne Ulven** (retired superintendent of schools): The Wild Rice River and the Red River Basin, I would say back in the '70s I got involved with...trying to get the farmers upstream to look at retaining some of their [water], because it was during that period of time, it was that everyone finally found that they had a scrapper and they could do a lot of damage as far as...and the drainage boards and the...everybody that worked...they were giving off rights to drain so freely. Anyway, so a bunch of us hired, rented the haul and...we asked, tried to get so we could try to work together because we could see that this would impact us sooner or later with the amount of land that is going to be in production and the amount of land that was no longer holding water. So we knew this area where we lived was going to be affected some.

**Friedrich Schumacher**: Well, I farmed that land. I farmed in the Red River Valley and up in the Sandhills for 25 years before I started the Rogne land...So I had an intimate knowledge of the issue of water tables up in the Sandhills, which was the issue that killed the Kindred Dam project. And down in the Valley, I know the soils. I know how they act, I know what water does. There is – our land is not flooded, we are essentially head waters. But there's just one ravine over on what we call the rotten land, a half mile from the Wild Rice, a quarter mile from the Wild Rice. There's a ravine that came up

into there. The Wild Rice will back up into it. But, otherwise, the land itself doesn't flood.

**Leah Rogne**: But, in 1975, we got involved in an effort to stop the Kindred Dam. The Kindred Dam was a planned flood control project on the Sheyenne River in Richland County – we live in Richland County – in a very special environment in the Sandhills of North Dakota...And it would've displaced hundreds of people and flooded 50,000 acres. It had been authorized by Congress in the '60s, but there had been a moratorium on progress towards it until they studied its effects on groundwater. Because farmers and others said that putting a reservoir in the Sheyenne sand dunes would cause the water table to raise, rise, in the surrounding area. And that was their native understanding of how the ground water worked. And the Corps of Engineers said 'no, that won't happen.' But there was enough evidence, enough concern that they had the US Geological Survey do a study, a re-study they called it, of the effect on ground water. And it just came out in 1975. And it said it would cause a...indeed, there would be a rise in the water table anywhere from one to four feet. But the Corps said that was not a problem. Well, the local, local people – farmers, ranchers, as well as people in Fargo – said 'this is a problem because our standing water table is often four feet.' So you raise the water table four feet you have a lake. And this would make the range land unusable. And, so we organized a group called the Sheyenne Valley Association of farmers and ranchers in the area to oppose the Kindred Dam. And we were involved in, oh, years of lobbying and advocacy and there was...And about 1986, they [Congress] do-authorized the dam.

#### *Attitudes Concerning Fargo and the Corp of Engineers*

A common belief amongst the interviewees is that the Red River Diversion is designed to facilitate private development. Hemmed in by the Red River on its east and other municipalities to its north and west, the city of Fargo has little space to expand except towards its south. Much of this land sits on a floodplain, though, which makes development difficult, if not untenable. The interviewees believe the Diversion protects this land for developers at the cost of downstream residents and business owners.

**Friedrich Schumacher**: Well, that was in 2010, and I thought they were totally out of their flipping mind. It was the most ridiculous water plan I'd ever seen. I mean, a diversion around through the eastside through Minnesota – that's a simple project.

Simple, engineering-wise...we don't have an opposition to diversions in themselves. The problem is the structure of this diversion. And the Corps, there's a number of things that seem to be operating. One, I think is the ego of the Corps of Engineers and that this will put them in the history books...For Fargo, when the Minnesota side diversion was scotched, Fargo land developers realized they had an opportunity to do something they could only have dreamed of before, which is to stop the overland flooding. Like Leah was talking about – when the Sheyenne breaks out, the water goes over land towards the Red and the Wild Rice. That goes into a natural low area which Fargo would like to develop. It's down at Davies High [School]. Davies High should never have been built where it was, that was a stupid plan. And, so then the real estate developers started pushing this thing.

**Cherie Mathison**: Another thing I wanted to say was, when we first moved here, we checked out Fargo. Rod pretty much in the capacity of how much it had changed since he lived here. And it's a pretty neat city, we thought. Nice to be living so close to it. A city that has so much to offer because we came from Sacramento, which had everything, you know. We were thinking 'we're moving to North Dakota, we're going to miss a lot of stuff.' But really, with Fargo right there, we wouldn't. And so we were really feeling this sense of community when we first moved here. And I have to say that this has killed that. We don't shop in Fargo. We don't go, we don't spend our money in Fargo.

**Shelly Lewis** (U.S. Postal worker): Their initial reaction was, again, questioning why they should be flooded out when they've never been flooded. Also, Fargo, and, like, they call it the imperial Fargo, they just push through whatever they want to push through on the little guys.

**Dallas Israelson** (Farmer. Married to Colleen Isrealson): And the Corps has made a lot of mistakes through the years. And more will happen here, too. They're not just making mistakes other places. And if they do this, they'll goof it up because the Corps will not be living in Fargo.

**Colleen Israelson** (Farmer): Yeah.

**Alan Otto** (Farmer): Also, too, I'm from a part of the country where the Corps of Engineers has done, said certain things like when they built the Garrison Dam. That was going to be for irrigation purposes and flood control for Bismarck. And downstate, well, there isn't one inch of water that's gone through irrigation. Then they decided to

build at the McCloskey Canal. Well, they built it, they spent millions of dollars and it went nowhere. It's a canal to no place. And then they never finished it and it never will be finished because it was supposed to help drain Devils Lake and stuff like that and it's not happened. It's never been finished. I have very little faith in the Corps of Engineers. I hate to say that but I don't.

*On the Future of the MnDak Upstream Coalition.*

Finally, interviewees were asked about the future of the Coalition, whether it wins the struggle over the Red River Diversion or not. Most see the Coalition as having an oversight role if the Diversion is built.

**Shelly Lewis:** I think it will stay in as a group because of the fact that, okay, say that we're successful in stopping what's going on right now. They'll hopefully try to be more of a part of that other Plan B that they don't have. To have it so the factors are less on us. And they still get the protection that they need in Fargo...I believe they'll stay together as a group because they'll want to make sure that all of the ramifications of the future, paying for different things, you know. Down the road there's so many things that haven't been considered...upkeep and if, let's say they put a ring around Comstock and they run out of lots for some reason, are they going to make it longer? Or what are they going to do: are they going to buy the land?

**Friedrich Schumacher:** We need something like the Lake Agassiz Regional Council to get people talking to each other. People in Fargo have got to be involved. People further downstream have got to be involved. People upstream have got to be involved. Further upstream, the Coalition has proposed upstream retention, smaller retention projects. ...And, the Coalition is going to fight on to the bitter end. I don't think there's going to be funding for this project. I think bits and pieces of it will get built, just like the Freeway to Nowhere in Los Angeles. It will be left stranded as orphans. But until you get everybody talking to each other and you unplug the ears of the Corps by bringing in an individual second opinion just like you would do in a medical situation. It's going to keep hobbling around and hanging around and leaving everybody uncertain for years and years and years.

**Marcus Larson:** I think it's going to continue on, at least in a capacity to keep protecting our interests because this thing is, even if they said tomorrow, 'Yup, we got all the funding. This is a done deal'...it's going to take ten years to keep an eye on them 'til



this thing's complete. There's a serious issue for farms here that has gone unchecked and until that is resolved, it's never going to go away.

**Patricia Otto:** We will keep fighting for as long as we have to fight. Period. It's not – I mean, we have legal supporters that are kids through people in their eighties. So In mean it's the full gamut. I should even say eighties, I should say nineties. Charles' mother is almost one hundred and she supports this group. It's – I think the future, this group is not going to give up easily. We just aren't.

**Q:** Once the Division is done, do you think the Coalition will continue?

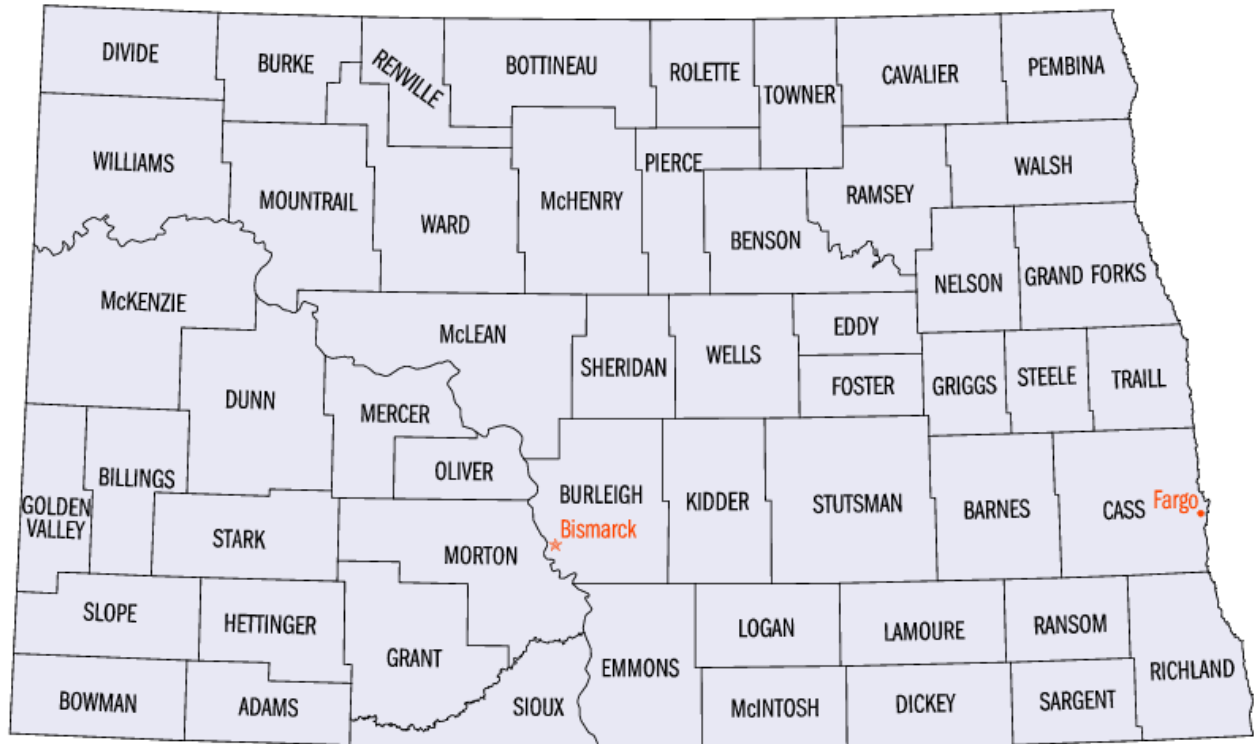
**Patricia Otto:** ...the focus is fighting to make sure the project is fair to those who live upstream. If it's possible to get to that point, it may be feasible the Coalition ends up, I don't know if I'd say dissolving, but maybe goes into hiatus. But I think as long as there's a group of people who're very passionate about this and we have gotten to know – I've gotten to know our neighbors better. My definition of neighbor has expanded. I can't say that before that I really that Hickson and Bakke, which are six miles north of us, that I would necessarily call my neighbors, but I do now. So, I think that there are some relationships we've developed that we wouldn't have otherwise. And those will continue.

**Appendix**

**Red River Basin**<sup>xxxiii</sup>



**North Dakota**<sup>xxxiv</sup>



North Dakota Red River Counties include: Pembina, Walsh Grand Forks, Traill, Cass, and Richmond.

## Open-ended Questions for MnDak Upstream Coalition Oral History

- 1) Background questions on name, whether or not have family in area, what town they live in, how long lived in area, career/employment.
- 2) How has Red River flooding impacted you and your community?
- 3) When did you first hear of plans to build a Red River diversion? What was your initial reaction? Did your attitude towards a possible diversion change? If so, why did your attitude change?
- 4) How did other people in your community react when they first heard about plans to build a Red River diversion? Did those attitudes change? If so, why?
- 5) Have you ever been involved in community groups before, either here or elsewhere?
- 6) Have you ever been politically involved before? If so, how?
- 7) How did you get involved with the group that became the MnDak Upstream Coalition? What attracted you to this group?
- 8) What sort of efforts have you made on behalf of the Coalition? Are you actively involved or occasional involved?
- 9) What do you think is the future of the Coalition?

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> See <https://www.ndsu.edu/centers/publicpolicy/> for further information.
- <sup>ii</sup> Bauroth, Nicholas. 2011. 'The Reluctant Rise of an Urban Regime: The Exercise of Power in Fargo, North Dakota.' *Journal of Urban History* 37: 519-540.
- <sup>iii</sup> United States Bureau of the Census. 2015. 'Fast Facts: North Dakota.' Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office. Downloaded from: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>.
- <sup>iv</sup> Nowatzki, Michael. 2009. 'Fargo Defends Decision not to Evacuate Residents Despite 'an Awful Lot of Pressure' From DHS and FEMA.' *Fargo Forum*, March 30, C3.
- <sup>v</sup> Kolpack, Jeff and Jim Suhr. 2010. 'F-M Not Alone in U.S. Flooding.' *Fargo Forum*, February 1, C1.
- <sup>vi</sup> United States Army Corp of Engineers. 2008. *Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Reconnaissance Study*. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District.
- <sup>vii</sup> Schmidt, Helmut. 2010. 'Flood Work Group Digs into Financing, Ownership Issues.' *Fargo Forum*, January 15. Downloaded from: <http://dev3.inforum.com/event/article/id/265990/>.
- <sup>viii</sup> Olson, Dave. 2009. 'Flood Management Work Group Aims to Find Consensus.' *Fargo Forum*, October 24, A1.
- <sup>ix</sup> Schmidt, Helmut. 2010. 'Flood Work Group Digs into Financing, Ownership Issues.'
- <sup>x</sup> *Fargo Forum* Staff. 2009. 'Fargo Voters Approved Flood Sales Tax by Whopping Margin.' *Fargo Forum*, June 30, A1.
- <sup>xi</sup> Fargo Board of City Commissioners. 2009. 'Permanent Minutes, April, 2009.' City of Fargo.
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