

## DEVILS LAKE FLOODING DISASTER

August 17, 2010

### Testimony of Morrie Saxerud

My personal opinion is that the State and Federal response should be one of two things. Either we should start immediately to discharge enough water from the Devils Lake basin to insure that there will not be an uncontrolled spill or start now to protect downstream cities with adequate levees to sustain the predicted uncontrolled flow for the period of time it will be spilling.

Attached is an e-mail and charts showing flow information and flow charts from Mark Koenig PE MVP Emergency Manager with the Army Corp of Engineers. He sent me this information in response to my question asking what would be needed for a levee that would handle 12000 cfs. The black line on the chart shows the proposed dike for the 2010 flood event. It is at 27.5 ft. and provides 2 ft. of freeboard at a 9000cfs flow. There were some levees put in at this height in 2010 but levee height was stepped down as forecasts changed.

The 12000 cfs event, a figure I picked out of the newspaper, would require a dike height of 30.5 ft. where the levee system starts as the river enters the City at Oak Ridge Drive. Oak Ridge Drive is used as a reference line only to align with the levee that is below the hill in the park, it does not mean we need levees at the top of the hill on Oak Ridge Drive. The step down reflects the drop in elevation as the river flows through the City and also reflects a lower dike requirement as the river clears the bridges and moves faster as it exits the City.

My understanding is that there is talk of removing the levees again. We know there is a concern by FEMA that too much confidence is put into non permanent dikes that are not built to spec and could fail. This is a legitimate concern but until permanent levees are built a non permanent levee system built under controlled conditions and not on frost, snow and water lapping at the top would be better than a hastily built dike in response to a spill out of Devils Lake.

There are people that are thinking of selling their homes and leaving the city to protect their investment. The city needs to quell those fears by putting an emergency plan in place that addresses the spill. The cities along the Sheyenne River need an affirmative action from the State of North Dakota and the Federal Government to remove the emergency from an emergency spill. I believe a control structure out of Stump Lake is the most logical and the sooner it is put in place the lower the discharge requirement. If the level of Devils Lake cannot be lowered by one method or another, then permanent levees need to be put in place.

Thank you,

Morrie Saxerud