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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

February 25, 2010

CHARLES J. HOUY, STAFF DIRECTOR  
BRUCE EVANS, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

BG Michael Walsh  
Commander, Mississippi Valley Division  
P.O. Box 80  
Vicksburg, MS 39181-00803

Dear General Walsh:

In light of the most recent National Weather Service spring flood forecasts, I am requesting that you establish a task force within the Corps to evaluate and provide an assessment for our committee of the flooding threats to our North Dakota communities, and report to us the planning underway to address that flood threat. I am also requesting the Corps make all necessary preparations such as pre-positioning the equipment and materials that your flood assessment deems necessary.

I ask that you provide a written report of your findings regarding these requests by March 12, 2010. As a part of your report, I would like a timeline on how and when emergency procedures within the Corps of Engineers are activated to address flood predictions of this nature. This timeline should include the actions that have been taken to date; what will be done between now and when flooding occurs; and the actions that will be necessary in the aftermath of the flood.

The latest Weather Service predictions show a near certainty of major flooding in Abercrombie, Drayton, Fargo, Harwood and Lisbon, and a strong likelihood in much of the rest of Eastern North Dakota. Fargo shows a 20 percent chance of reaching last year's record crest level, while Lisbon's risk of a new record level is a sobering 50 percent.

Many of the smaller communities in North Dakota are still recovering from last year's flooding and are ill-prepared for another flood season so soon. The task force that I am requesting will help them focus their efforts on the potential flood threats they may be facing, and to assist them in planning for their resources to be used on the most effective steps to protect themselves.

I know you are aware of the chaos that flood fights inflict on local communities. Last year, our communities, with assistance from the State and Federal Government, and especially the Corps, waged an exhausting, but largely successful flood fight. We could not have protected the people, property and infrastructure of these communities without the leadership and assistance of the Corps of Engineers.

One lesson I think we have all learned is that it is never too early to start planning for the next flood threat. During the flood fight for Fargo last year, there were a number of instances where affected communities and the Corps were scrambling to acquire flood fighting materials and equipment. As flooding is predicted to be much more widespread this year than last, I am also requesting that the Corps start the search now for the material that may be needed for flood fighting and to pre-position as much of the materials and equipment as possible.

During a flood there is no more capable group of people that we would rather have assisting us than the Corps of Engineers. Without the herculean efforts of our citizens along with your assistance and expertise, we would be discussing rebuilding these communities rather than protecting them from another predicted flood.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Byron L. Dorgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Byron L. Dorgan, Chairman  
Senate Energy and Water  
Appropriations Subcommittee