

U.S. Department of State's Note to Canadian Embassy,  
Washington, February 18, 1977

Garrison Diversion Unit

The Department of State refers to the Canadian Embassy's Note No. 495 covering the construction of the Garrison Diversion Unit of the Pick Sloan Missouri Basin program and requesting that further construction and decisions on construction of the Lonetree Reservoir be deferred, in view of potential transfer of biota from the Missouri River Basin into Canadian waters, until such time as the report of the International Joint Commission on the Transboundary aspects of the Garrison Diversion Unit has been received and been the subject of bilateral consultations.

The Department of State has been informed by the Department of the Interior that the construction of the Lonetree Reservoir would not be completed under the present construction schedule until August 1979. Filling of the reservoir with waters from the Missouri River system is not scheduled to begin until after the construction has been completed, i.e., until May 1981 at the earliest. Thus a considerable period of time would elapse between the scheduled publication in June 1977 of the International Joint Commission report on the Transboundary impacts of the Garrison Diversion Unit and the 1981 date for the commencement of filling of the Lonetree Reservoir with Missouri River Basin waters.

Nonetheless, in order to meet the concerns expressed in the Embassy's Note regarding the potential transfer of foreign biota from the Missouri River into waters flowing into Canada, the United States Government wishes to advise the Government of Canada that a contract for the construction of the Lonetree Dam will not be let until after the report to Governments of the International Joint Commission has been received and subsequent consultations between the two governments have taken place.

The Embassy will recall that the joint reference from Governments to the International Joint Commission specifically calls upon the Commission to examine the issue of the potential transmission of foreign biota from the area of the Garrison Diversion Unit into Canada.

The United States Government reiterates its commitment of February 5, 1974, to undertake no construction of works in the Garrison Diversion Unit potentially affecting waters flowing into Canada until it is clear that its obligations under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 will be met.