



THE ASSOCIATE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, DC 20240

AUG 25 2006

The Honorable John Thune
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Dear Senator Thune:

Thank you for your letter of July 25, 2006, transmitting a copy of a memorandum from Wayne Ducheneaux, Executive Director of the Cheyenne River Sioux Housing Authority, concerning the emergency relocation of the water intake system for Dewey and Ziebach Counties. We will send a copy of this response to Mr. Ducheneaux for his reference.

The Department recognizes the emergency brought on by the unprecedented and unavoidable drought, which is reflected in poor water quality and quantity, coupled with over 90 fires in the past several weeks that have destroyed prairie, ranch buildings and one home. Without intervention to relocate the water intake from the Cheyenne River, the situation would be demonstrably worsened. A project to redirect the water intake to the Missouri River in the Oahe Reservoir is being overseen by the Army Corps of Engineers at an estimated cost of \$16.5 million.

The Department has acted upon your request to provide funding to support this project. The additional \$1.0 million to be transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), through the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Cheyenne River Sioux Housing Authority to the Army Corps of Engineers should facilitate completion of the project. To date we have confirmation that the BIA funds have been provided to IHS. These funds involve BIA Fiscal Year 2005/2006 carryover funding from an Operation of Indian Programs construction account.

We appreciate your interest in this matter. If we can be of any further assistance to you regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Sincerely,

James E. Cason

cc: Mr. Wayne Ducheneaux