

March 16, 2010

The Honorable Chet Culver

Governor of Iowa

Dear Governor Culver:

As you have been made aware, Dickinson County is deeply concerned with the threat of flooding in the Iowa Great Lakes this spring due to the abnormally high (62") snowfall received and unusually high water in the lakes at the point of freezing this past winter. Dickinson County has enlisted the help of the Army Corps of Engineers to make predictions for lake elevation rises based on the existing snow pack and receiving normal rainfall through the spring. At this time, the Corps' forecast indicates that the lakes will rise to an elevation of 1398.4 feet, which is 1.6 feet below the level achieved during the Great Flood of 1993. If the lakes should see rains matching those of 1993, levels would come to an elevation of 1399.6, a mere 5 inches below the 1993 level. According to Mr. Dick Taylor, Nebraska-Iowa Operations Project Manager for the Corp of Engineers, lake elevation on March 14, 2010 was measured at 1395.9 inches, and rising at the rate of .15 inches per day. Mr. Taylor went on to state that once the level reaches 1396.5, even the emergency measures he is recommending would do little to prevent flooding in the Iowa Great Lakes chain.

If the Iowa Great Lakes were to experience 1993 or near-1993 lake levels, the impact on the critical infrastructure around the lakes would be devastating, not to mention the private properties and the potential of millions of dollars lost in tourism revenues.

In terms of just infrastructure, it is estimated the Sanitary Sewer District, along with the cities' sewer systems, would suffer considerable damage. To quantify, it is estimated that cost to the lift stations alone could be over a half million dollars. This does not account for wave action, which caused tremendous damage in 1993, nor sewer backups or any of the other sewer system infrastructure. Along with the Sanitary Sewer District, Iowa Lakes Electric and Alliant Energy both report significant potential damages. Black Hills Energy has concerns related to the gas meters of the hundreds of homes along the shorelines of West Okoboji that were flooded in 1993. Since then, Black Hills has added natural gas lines to the south and southeast shorelines of East Okoboji increasing the numbers exposed to potential damage. Wahpeton's city hall and public works building is at an elevation of 1397.5 and is just west of the shoreline of West Okoboji. Public health and safety are also a concern. If our local roads near the shoreline become flooded, response time by emergency personnel to areas cut-off by the high water could be greatly extended, risking human life.

Aside from critical infrastructure as described above, a flood of this magnitude would have serious impacts to the tourism in Dickinson County. It is estimated that tourism in the Iowa Great Lakes area

brings in 212 million dollars per year and is responsible for 1,880 jobs. The loss of those dollars and jobs would not only be devastating to Dickinson County but to the State of Iowa.

The Flood of 1993 caused \$39 million in damage to homes, businesses and public utilities. Allowing for inflation, that figure today would stand at over \$57 million, not accounting for increased property values. Dickinson County residential values for fiscal year 2011 stand at 1.35 billion dollars, the vast majority of those dollars represented by lakeshore property vulnerable to flooding. Commercial property, including many resorts, would also be at considerable risk.

Using past history as a guide and today's forecast for rises on the Iowa Great Lakes system, the Dickinson County Supervisors are hereby requesting that you request the Corp of Engineers to invoke its Emergency Authority Power or, in the alternative, that as Governor you invoke Iowa Code Chapter 29C.6 and declare a disaster emergency allowing Advanced Measures to be undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers.

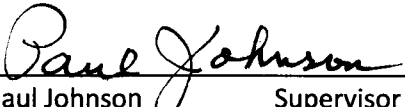
According to Mr. Taylor, because of the late date and continuing rise of water, the only viable option remaining is a controlled breach in the Lower Gar Road, otherwise designated as 230th Avenue. We would further ask the Corp for the permanent placement of two 4' x 14' box culverts, placed 6 inches above the weir elevation, to prevent the need for future requests for advanced measures. Engineering for the placement of those box culverts has already been accomplished by the Dickinson County Engineer.


The Board of Supervisors has worked closely with the Army Corps of Engineers, Dickinson County Emergency Management, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and our citizens. We feel that the disaster emergency declaration and resultant intervention from the Corp of Engineers is the best option moving forward to reduce the impact of high water on the Iowa Great Lakes area.

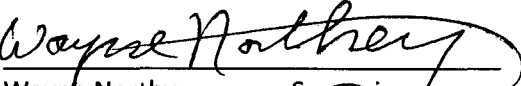
Thank you for your quick and assured consideration of our request.


Very Truly Yours,

Dickinson County Board of Supervisors


Paul Johnson Supervisor


Mardi Allen Supervisor


Wayne Northy Supervisor


Pam Jordan Supervisor