

Joseph A. Mangiamelli, Columbus, NE.

I write today concerning the review for the Loup River Power District relicensing effort. I am concerned, as city administrator, about the impact of Article 406 which proposes to reduce the capacity of water flowing into the canal from current 3500 cfs to 2000 cfs. The goal of the reduction is to "enhance habitat for threatened and endangered birds" in the river - a worthy goal. The Article further provides temporary modification of this flow during emergency situations for short periods.

This community has a long history of dealing with flooding along the Loup River and we are in process of upgrading the Loup River levee to protect the community from future flooding. Most recently, ice jams forming along the river upstream from the city broke sending huge (semmi trailer sized) ice floes down stream and, fortunately, passed the city. Any future similar situation could be coupled with a jam of the floes in our area creating a devastating flood situation.

I would hope that any reporting process allowed within Article 406 not be burdensome to implement and not carry penalties to the Power District for such utilization in any effort to protect "the habitat of threatened and endangered" humans residing adjacent to the river. The Article as written appears to require an agreement NDEQ and NG&PC for any modification. That will be impossible when flooding is about to occur or is already occurring. Provisions must be made in advance establishing the criteria for modification so this community is not placed at risk while bureaucratic red tape is being reviewed. Of course, the Commission should be notified of any modification in flow levels and reasoning therefor - notification to the above state regulatory agencies should be as efficient.

On behalf of the 22,222 residents of Columbus, Nebraska, I urge the Commission's approval of the application from Loup River Power District for recertification and ask for indulgence in protecting these same residents from flooding by allowing a simplified reporting process for modification of the reduced water flow into the canal. Thank you!

Joe Mangiamelli, City Administrator

Document Content(s)

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