

**Bismarck Tribune, 12/8/08, by the Associated Press**

## **N.D. officials pleased with NAWS recommendation**

State and Minot-area officials say they are satisfied with the recommended water treatment option for the Northwest Area Water Supply project.

The federal Bureau of Reclamation said last week that it is recommending an option that is much closer to what North Dakota officials wanted than to what Canada had been seeking.

The province of Manitoba fears the project to bring Missouri River water to northwestern North Dakota will pollute its waters, a contention North Dakota officials dispute.

Bob Schempp of Minot, chairman of the NAWS Advisory Committee, said the treatment method proposed in the bureau study - a mix of chemical and ultraviolet disinfection - "makes a great deal of sense."

Minot Mayor Curt Zimbelman called the recommendation "reasonable" and said it will move the project forward.

Gov. John Hoeven said the water treatment option "provides additional environmental protection but on a cost-effective basis. It means that we can get it done and move forward."

Dale Frink, the state Water Commission's chief engineer, said he also is pleased with the bureau recommendation but that it is difficult to know whether Canada will continue to fight the project.

"It's certainly a potential," he said.

The Canadian Embassy in Washington has not responded to the report. Dwight Williamson, a Manitoba water official in Winnipeg, said the Manitoba Water Stewardship agency plans to complete its review and submit its concerns to the Bureau of Reclamation within a month.

"It doesn't include filtration, and we believe that would place our environment at risk," he said of the bureau's preferred water treatment method.

Completion of NAWS likely is still a long way away. The bureau's preferred water treatment option will not be made final for at least another month. Officials then will have to take their decision to the federal judge who ordered the environmental review after Manitoba sued in October 2002.