

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 21, 2022

Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon
Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Lieutenant General Spellmon:

Drought conditions in the upper Missouri River basin have created challenges for recreation areas near Lake Sakakawea. Persistent low water levels create problems for lake access, and several low water level ramps must be repaired so they can be used in the coming year. As the Corps of Engineers develops its Fiscal Year 2022 work plan, I urge you to include funding for Category 1 boat ramps at Lake Sakakawea.

Colonel Himes, commander of the Omaha District, outlined for me a plan to work with local stakeholders to upgrade and maintain infrastructure near the lake. This plan includes the appointment of drought coordinator, streamlining permits for boat ramps and water intakes, and coordinating with state and local officials to maintain and upgrade infrastructure around the lake. In particular, Colonel Himes has surveyed the area and estimated that the Corps could perform basic maintenance on Category 1 boat ramps – those owned and operated by the Corps of Engineers – at Lake Sakakawea, Lake Oahe, and Fort Peck for a total of less than \$2 million.

I commend the Omaha District for taking steps to work with local stakeholders to identify the best way to coordinate efforts to improve lake access. As part of this effort, I hope that you will support funding to repair and maintain Category 1 boat ramps at Lake Sakakawea. There is every reason to believe that we are in the midst of an extended dry period, and a combined federal, state and local effort provides the best way to ensure lake access for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued service to the nation.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven
U.S. Senator