

EXHIBIT 14
DATE 3.23.05
HB 782

Robert T. Goffena
Chairman of the Board,
Deadman's Basin Water Users Association

Member of Adjudication Advisory Committee for Judge Loble

I am sorry for not being able to be there but my daughter and her family are going to have a new baby today.

Being a verified river basin, the Musselshell River does not have a lot of issue remarks. A study of 40C by the DNRC shows that over 50% of our water rights have a major flaw in one or more of their elements as compared to the examination rules used in later basins. For this reason, water right users on the Musselshell were afraid to protest their neighbors water rights for fear of protest to their own. Why rock the boat if the verification method gave you more rights than you historically had. The only way to gain a step toward a more accurate adjudication is for the issue remarks we do have to be brought forward by this bill. Our hope for survival on the lower Musselshell, a severly dewatered river, is to take this step and sometime in the future have a reexamination of our entire basin to get the rest of our issue remarks so that we can correct the erosion of our private property rights--our water rights. We support this bill and recommend that it is passed as is.

Thank you for your time,

Robert Goffena