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Support Lewis and Clark Lake with Your Signature

(YANKTON, SD) -- MSAC wants the public's support in saying the time is long overdue to address sedimentation at Lewis and Clark Lake.

Visit MSAC's keepitblue.org website to sign a petition vocalizing support for government agencies, organizations and the public to work together in tackling sediment at Lewis and Clark Lake. The petition also calls for exploring the idea of sediment collectors on the Niobrara River. An Ohio company, Kurtz Bros., Inc., reports that this technology could intercept up to 60% of the bed load sediment load from the Niobrara River. Reports estimate that the Niobrara River contributes about 60 percent of the annual load of sediment entering Lewis and Clark Lake.

Not only does Lewis and Clark Lake generate thousands of visitor trips annually, it provides a water source for municipal drinking water systems and irrigation systems, fuels hydropower generation at Gavins Point Dam, and is an important link in the six-reservoir system on the Missouri River that provides flood control for millions of Americans. The ability to store water is crucial for efficient production of the systems benefits, including flood control. Accumulating sediment reduces water storage capacities in all the reservoirs. Lewis and Clark Lake has the shortest projected lifespan as it is the smallest reservoir in the system and will fill the fastest with sediment. By 2045, the reservoir is expected to be half full with sediment, according to the 2009 National Resources Conservation Service - Phase II Sedimentation Assessment for the Upper Missouri River Basin.

"Lewis and Clark Lake is an important water resource for people in South Dakota and Nebraska and thousands of people downstream. Doing nothing about the accumulating sediment not only allows the problem to grow, but it also allows the costs of dealing with symptoms to grow and the costs of addressing the root problem to grow," said Sandy Stockholm, MSAC executive director.

In September, MSAC submitted a grant application to the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) requesting funds totaling \$113,289 to conduct a feasibility study of sediment collectors on the Niobrara River. MSAC has committed \$10,000 toward the \$130,789 effort. The USGS Nebraska Water Science Center would assist with report preparation, an estimated in-kind contribution of \$5,000. Depending on fund availability, the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center may be able to participate in the study process. Kurtz Bros., Inc. will assist with public education, contributing in-kind \$2,500.

Collectors could reduce the amount of sediment entering Lewis and Clark Lake by up to 35 percent, according to Kurtz Bros., Inc. This two-week feasibility study would give technology developers and

agencies a better look at how the collectors would actually perform. Two, four-foot collectors would be placed in the Niobrara River for two weeks.

The collectors could be part of a larger sediment management plan that could lead to sustainability of the reservoir.

"Today, we don't know all the ingredients of a plan to sustain the reservoir. Sediment collectors could be a part of that plan. A feasibility study would allow the public to learn more about the technology and what could be expected from their operation," she said.

Pumping the collected sand to shore allows for the reuse of the material and potential revenue source to support the operations.

NET received 112 applications requesting more than \$42 million. Award recommendations will be announced Feb. 6, 2018. The trust is scheduled to conduct a public hearing on the recommendations on April 5, 2018, and affirm awards following the hearing.

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Visit MSAC's FaceBook page for current information.