

Clarke County Water Supply Project Final Plan-EIS Phone and E-mail Comments

Date	Method	Summary of Conversation	Reply
4/14/2026	Email message	Introduction: I have recently learned about the Clarke County Water Supply Project (Iowa-northwest of Osceola) and wanted to express my thoughts/concerns over the Environment Impact statement (EIS). The project's purpose is to make a reliable agriculture supply to meet current and upcoming demands (1.62 million gallons and 2.7 million gallons of water respectively). The alternative measure is building a water supply reservoir that will cost around \$117 million dollars and the creation of 239 annual jobs (net profits of \$173 million). As a stakeholder who values wildlife, I wanted to express my concern over the EIS. My concern is about what the project does to the local wildlife (through habitat Fragmentation). Concern: Wildlife Impact through Fragmentation The construction of the watershed area includes two ecoregions (Loess Flats and Till plains and Rolling Loess Prairies) and 217 acres of the forest area (out of 470 acres) would be permanently impacted by the overall project. In section 5.6.2 (pg.90) (Water Supply Reservoir at Dam Site 4B), it mentions that some of the species in their proximity would be affected including three bat species in the area (Northern Long-Eared bat, Tricolored bat, and Indiana Bat). Although they provided detailed information about what they do in the area (hunt, roost, or forage) and mitigations for the short term, the EIS does not state any possible mitigation strategies for the long term. Long term habitat fragmentation will devastate each of these species since all of them are currently endangered. A case similar to this can be seen in the Pick-Sloan plan (Missouri) where five dams and reservoirs were built to provide water supply for irrigation land (3 million acres), flood control, and hydroelectricity. The problem was that it came with the trade-off of habitat fragmentation for certain species (Least Tern, and Piping Plover). The construction of the dams have caused their livable habitats to dissipate and made them become endangered. The bats are already endangered now and I worry with the project they might change to becoming critically endangered or extinct. I would recommend a more extensive investigation on long term mitigations to prevent the adverse effects on each of the bats populations. Conclusion: Wildlife is something that should be monitored and cared for. It appears that the EIS is lacking in some of the major foundations for long term mitigation for habitat fragmentation and its impact on the local species. To me, this EIS should have a complete analysis of the long term effects and without addressing these issues would be considered incomplete. Thank you for hearing my concerns and hopefully can be addressed with further study. References: The Linda Hall Library. (2024, April 4). The Pick-Sloan Plan: Digital Exhibitions. The Pick-Sloan Plan. https://www.lindahall.org/experience/digital-exhibitions/natures-fury/07-controlling-the-big-muddy/the-pick-sloan-plan/#:~:text=Environmental%20Impact,shallow%20water%20habitat%2C%20a%20and%20wetlands.	The Final Plan-EIS includes the Preferred Alternatives environmental effects on a range of resource topics, including threatened and endangered species, aquatic resources, and cropland. The Final-Plan EIS also evaluated trade-offs to various environmental services due to implementation of the Preferred Alternative. The NRCS did consider these effects in the decision-making process.

4/26/2026	Email message	I am submitting this comment on the Clarke County Water Supply Project Final Plan-EIS. While I understand the need for reliable water supply, I am concerned that the project undervalues the existing land. The affected area is not empty space; it includes grassland, cropland, forest, wetlands, streams, floodplains, wildlife habitat, and farmland that already provide ecological, biodiversity, and economic value. These lands support wildlife, native plants, pollinators, water filtration, soil stability, flood storage, agricultural productivity, and rural community character. Once converted into a reservoir and related infrastructure, many of these values cannot be fully replaced through mitigation. I urge NRCS and the project sponsors to more fully consider the inherent value of the existing landscape and give stronger consideration to the no-action alternative or less damaging alternatives before final approval.	The Final Plan-EIS includes the Preferred Alternatives environmental effects on a range of resource topics, including threatened and endangered species, aquatic resources, and cropland. The Final-Plan EIS also evaluated trade-offs to various environmental services due to implementation of the Preferred Alternative. The NRCS did consider these effects in the decision-making process.
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