

Committee on Resources

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**Statement of Mark Limbaugh
Deputy Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
U. S. Department of the Interior**

On S. 943
before the
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Resources
July 8, 2004

My name is Mark Limbaugh, and I am Deputy Commissioner of Reclamation. It's my pleasure to provide the Administration's views on S. 943, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into one or more contracts with the City of Cheyenne, Wyoming to store water in the Kendrick Project in Wyoming.

Mr. Chairman the Department supports S. 943 as it passed the Senate and is currently pending before the Committee.

The Bureau of Reclamation has several dams and reservoirs located on the North Platte River in Wyoming. The North Platte River System is operated to optimize irrigation and power benefits. In the course of accomplishing these activities, vacant space becomes available in Seminoe Reservoir as water is released to other downstream Reclamation reservoirs.

By enacting S. 943, the Secretary of the Interior would be authorized to enter into long-term contracts with the City of Cheyenne to store water in Seminoe Reservoir for municipal and industrial use.

When Commissioner Keys testified before the Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources on October 15, 2003, he stated that the Administration could support S. 943 if the version then pending were modified to clarify 1) whose water is to be stored in Seminoe Reservoir and 2) the disposition of revenues received. Those modifications were made to the bill, as we recommended, prior to Senate passage. Accordingly, the Administration supports prompt enactment of S. 943.

I am pleased to answer any questions the Committee may have.