

Interim Transportation Committee Meeting
Kelly Sorge, Indian Hills Resort, Garrison ND.
In Support of HCR3032

First impressions are lasting and irreplaceable. I spend thousands of dollars and countless hours on advertising our beautiful oasis on the lake. We boast fantastic camping, lodging, newly constructed world class mountain bike trails and customer service beyond compare.

Then when I finally have them coming, their first experience after traveling several hours or hundreds of miles is, a primitive country road full of washboards and loose rock. Imagine what is going on the camper or boat. That is the first impression I have to compete with as they battle with dusty new fishing rods, damaged trailers and cupboard goods sent flying.

It seems a bit like false advertising. It can actually be quite embarrassing sometimes.

The goal of any business is to grow and prosper. Another major hurdle for us is the delivery trucks. Some refuse to travel in to the resort and others have threatened to stop delivering. If I can't get restaurant supplies I have no restaurant!

My most important mission today is to share the letters that our customers wrote when they learned about the possibility of paving the road. I realize reading them all may take some time on your part but I know they will appreciate your reading what they have to share.

In closing, I know the improvements may sound self serving. More importantly they are for the people who want to experience and utilize the great resource of Lake Sakakawea.

Attached: Testimony from Indian Hills Customers.

Comments from Indian Hills Customers collected by Kelly Sorge, Indian Hills
In Support of efforts to improve recreation roads
Interim Transportation Committee

Kelly:

That graveled road is ugly. We have not been to Sakakawea the last couple of years because of that road. With paved roads and the water level coming up, we would again return to this Great North Dakota site. Paving the road would be a great asset to people who drive those "dusty, wash board" roads.

Gordie Baumgartner
Fargo, ND

Kelly,

I have had personal experience with busted bolts that caused my trailer axle to swing back and almost wrecked my boat 1 year old trailer so it was not from normal wear and tear. Paved roads would also attract more people due to the resorts due to less dust, mud when it rains and just the fact that paved roads look better than gravel.

AL

Hi Kelly,

The news of the possible pavement of the road leading into Indian Hills is more than welcome. The dust that is generated when traveling the road gets into all areas of our camper trailer, and boat no matter how we try to seal it out. I believe that more people would use your facility if the road was more conducive to travel. Whenever I talk of access to the lake, it seems that the "road" is part of the discussion.

Daniel and Jamie Kinsella
Bismarck

We really hope they pave the road to Indian Hills.. The road into Indian Hills is busier than the roads that are paved to the ranchers east of Indian Hills. It is like a wash board going over it, all summer. It really damages the boat and RV with chips and gets everything so dusty also. We live at Indian Hills all summer. Everyone that comes to visit us at Indian Hills, complain about the road and can not believe how BAD it is to drive on. Most people from out of state, complain about the road also.

Dave and Connie Kovash

A few things that come to mind regarding the paving of the roads to various Sakakawea destinations.

- 1) Rock Chips and Dust - - My camper and boat are full of rock chips, which decreases the value of my personal property. I know numerous people that will not pull their camper or boat down a gravel because of the rock chips.
- 2) Broken windshield, both on the vehicle and boat. Here again, when passing a pickup/5th wheel camper and boat you have 5 or 6 sets of tires that are constantly through rocks and the chances of getting a rock chip are that much greater.
- 3) I grew up in SD and my family went to Akaska (Swan Creek) recreation area just about every weekend for 10+ years. Akaska is the size of Pick City and thrives in the summer time with fisherman and such. The one draw back that this area had was gravel. From Akaska to Swan Creek, was 9 miles of gravel one way. The area did not have a park or electrical sites and was strictly a primitive area. I made a trip back to this area in July of 08 (the first time in 12 years) and it has changed for the better. Akaska has added a couple of 20-25 camper parking lots, the 9 miles of once gravel is now paved and the area at Swan Creek now has 20 or so electrical sites. Improvements like paving a road will result in additional people using these facilities and bringing additional dollars into the region.

Kent Fischer
Bismarck, ND

As a frequent visitor to Lake Sakakawea, I commend you on your sponsorship of HB 1515, which would allocate funds to pave access roads into the "Big Lake". The lake is a wonderful resource for the state, yet underutilized due to the dusty, washboard road conditions. It's understandable why recreationists, particularly out of state visitors accustomed to paved roads, would choose to avoid the dust-filled boats, shaken RV contents, and gravel-pitted windshields resulting from travel to the lake!

Jim Ringelman, Bismarck

We have many dollars invested in our pickup and boat and will not travel to Indian Hills due to the gravel road. Should this Bill pass and Indian Hills gets a paved road, you can count on us to finally be able to come and spend many weekends at the resort and to enjoy all the amenities it has to offer!

Chris Fitterer

I have just about beat the fender wells off my trailer in years past over wash boarded roads. The Road maintainers are stretched too thin to handle the roads and keep up w/ the traffic load on these access roads. Our area has great facilities. We need to keep the public coming if we are going to continue to have these available. Lack of good roads sends people to other more accessible locations.

Rod Greene

Grand Forks, ND 58208

To whom it may concern;

I believe that when a person considers what affect a paved road has on people and equipment, the first thing that usually comes to mind is the money lost every year in wear and tear on vehicles, campers, boats and rv's. You have chipped paint, dust and dirt and not to forget the intense mud when it's rained. These are only a few items that come to mind and are miserable to contend with every time you go to the lake. Now for the real reason I have written this note. Safety should be the first concern on everyone's mind. You can't put a price tag on people's lives. Gravel roads are dangerous! These roads need to be paved just for the simple reason that it will be safer for everyone who travels to the lake.

Larry LaBere

Bismarck, ND

I would just like to give my opinion on the need for paved roads around the Lake Sakakawea area. These days, it is expensive enough to try and maintain your boat and trailer with the upkeep and to try and keep it looking halfway decent. I have traveled in and around lake Sakakawea for many years and have enjoyed the area and have many great memories of fishing and camping around the area but a couple years ago we had a chance to go up to lake of the woods and one of the advantages of going up there is that the roads in and out of the area that we went was paved right to the lake (north of Baudette, mn.) When you have to travel the washboard gravel, screws loosen up on both the truck, trailer, boat etc. and I can't tell you how many times I have either broken roller mounts on my trailer, chewed up wiring, or wounded, cracked or broken other various parts. The last two years, traveling to lake of the woods we just have not had the problems like that. Hopefully Lake Sakakawea can modernize just a little bit as I know quite a few people that feel the same way.

Doug Brennan

West Fargo, N.Dak.