April 19, 2016

Dear Nebraska DNR:

I am writing as a representative of the American Canoe Association (ACA). My purpose is to express the ACA’s support of Instream Flow Applications A-19406, A-19407, A-19408 and A-19409 which have been requested for the lower section of the Niobrara River.

Since our founding in 1880, the ACA has grown into the nation’s largest and most active nonprofit paddlesports organization with 30,000 members and over 300 Clubs and Affiliates across the United States and abroad. We serve the canoe, kayak, raft and paddleboard communities by providing education related to all aspects of paddling, stewardship of paddling environments, sanctioning of programs and events and by promoting on-water safety.

Few regions have the diversity of protected species such as whooping cranes, least terns, piping plovers and pallid sturgeon as does the Niobrara river basin. The economic benefits of maintaining and preserving the river and the associated State Park have been estimated at almost $11 million per year. Further, one has only to visit personally or go online to see the beauty of the area and to see your citizens and tourists enjoying themselves in one of Nebraska’s leading recreational attractions.

We believe that the Niobrara River is one of Nebraska’s heritage resources and that proper stewardship of the river will provide lasting economic, recreational, and environmental benefits. By approving the above named Instream Flow Applications, you will be providing the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resource Districts tools that insure the Niobrara river basin will retain its health, beauty and life-giving flow for the future.

Sincerely,

Louis F. Metzger
Public Policy Chief