

MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

AUGUST 19, 2016

Testimony by Windell A. Curole

South Lafourche Levee District

I thank you, General Wehr, and the commission for taking the time to accept my testimony. I ask that you address two issues which greatly affect our ability to live on a subsiding delta, which continues to provide important services to this country.

I ask that the 404 permitting process be reviewed to shorten the time in acquiring a permit when there is basic agreement among parties. A recent example was a permit to construct segments K & L of the Morganza to the Gulf project, when consensus on the mitigation and most relevant issues were within the first six months of discussion. The permit took practically five years.

We also believe that a permit request from a public body, for a public purpose with public funds, should get a quicker review than other permits.

The second point of discussion is the need to adjust the flood protection standards designed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. I believe that levee (earthen structures) standards did not need tremendous changes. Some standards obviously needed changes for floodwalls and the intersection of levee (earthen structures) and hard structures (walls, gates, etc.).

I also request that the concept of improving a flood protection system that does not reach a certain standard, but can provide increased protection, be recognized by the Corps and incorporated in any attempt to reduce flooding. Presently when projects improve flood protection, but do not reach Corps standards, they are not accepted or allowed to be constructed. Risk reduction using sound engineering should be acknowledged even when a certain standard is not accomplished. My request is that a process be devised to accept flood protection level work which is engineered to a certain standard based on budget constraints. In

other words, allow us to build affordable levees which are well engineered but do not meet Corps' standard.

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