

Dear Mr. Akin:

Thank you for the statement made on your behalf by Mr. Jim Mitas before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting held in St. Louis, Missouri, on August 15, 2003. A copy of this letter is being sent to Mr. Mitas at your St. Charles, Missouri, office. In your statement you addressed three areas: (1) an acknowledgement of the Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concerning the Flood of 1993; (2) the importance of ongoing projects within the Second District in Missouri; and (3) economic issues concerning the Missouri River.

Thank you for your comments concerning work that was accomplished during the flood that devastated the Midwest in 1993 and the goals that have been met since that flood. We continue to work with communities like Chesterfield, Missouri, to provide flood protection. We appreciate the support that you continue to provide relative to this project.

Of the ongoing projects in the Second District of Missouri, the Missouri L-15 Levee Unit in St. Charles County continues to be a priority construction project within the St. Louis District. The Phase II of the contract to reconstruct the section along the Missouri River was recently awarded, and it is anticipated that this final reach of levee will be completed during Fiscal Year 2004.

The local sponsor, the Consolidated North County Levee District, requested that the reach of private levee along the Mississippi River also be considered as a Federal levee under

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PL 84-99 upon completion of construction. The Corps does not believe that Federal law allows us to grant that request; however, our Headquarters is presently considering whether there are other means to address the sponsor's concern.

The Meramec River Basin, Valley Park Levee is 60 percent complete. The community of Valley Park remains open to direct flooding from the Meramec River until the final levee segment is constructed. The District Office has awarded the contract for the final levee contract.

Regarding the Missouri River Master Water Control Plan, the Corps has not identified a preferred alternative water control plan. The Commission has received testimony and correspondence expressing concern about proposed modifications and the potential for resulting low flows on the Mississippi River. The Corps' objective in its Missouri River operations is to implement a water control plan that meets the contemporary needs of the Missouri River Basin, serves the Congressionally authorized project purposes, complies with environmental laws including the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills responsibilities to Federally recognized Tribes. There are a myriad of complex operational and resource management issues. Upriver interests want high, stable lake levels to address recreation, irrigation, and hydropower needs. Environmental interests seek a hydrograph that more closely approximates the natural hydrograph of the Missouri River. Downriver interests (below the dams) support different flow regimes for commercial navigation, flood protection, municipal water supply, and thermal generation.

The Corps is currently engaged in examining adjustments to the Modified Conservation Plan (MCP) and is conducting numerous model runs that eliminate the "fixed trigger" and "negative storage check" features of the MCP. Modeling of these adjustments to the MCP was requested by the Missouri River Basin Association and includes the concerns expressed by the State of Missouri. The Missouri River Basin Association has indicated they have no objection to modification of the MCP alternative to eliminate these features, provided the drought storage target of 42.7 million acre-feet for a drought similar

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to the one experienced in the 1980's as defined in its original 1999 recommendation.

The Commission appreciates receiving your comments and looks forward to hearing from you or members of your staff at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Don T. Riley
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President Designee, Mississippi
River Commission

Send copy to:

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