

Dear Mr. Brazel:

Thank you for your statement filed for the record before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in Cairo, Illinois, on March 4, 2002. In your statement you discussed the benefits of the recent levee enlargement, erosion on the levee side slopes and ramps, and maintenance responsibilities of the relief well collector ditches.

The Commission appreciates your comments regarding the benefits achieved by the levee grade raise and section enlargement of the Commerce to Birds Point reach of the mainline Mississippi River Levee. Current plans are to have the contractor repair erosion on the levee slopes and ramps. In addition, the contractor will be required to mow the improved sections of the levee as prescribed in his contract.

In regard to the maintenance of the relief well collector ditches, the Memphis District is currently reviewing the authorities and policies regarding maintenance of these ditches in the Mississippi River Levees project. Features of the Mississippi River Levees project include over 3,000 miles of levees and associated berms, floodwalls, drainage structures, relief wells, and relief well collector ditches in the Memphis, Vicksburg, and New Orleans Districts. The application of maintenance policies and authorities for levees and other features of levees are generally consistent throughout all three districts. The Memphis District will provide a solution that is consistent with the policies established by legislation and followed by all districts within the Division. The Memphis District is planning to meet with the local sponsors (Levee District No. 2 of Scott County and Levee District No. 3 of Mississippi County), County Commissioners, and representatives of Rep. Jo Ann Emerson's office in the near future to discuss this and other issues.

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The Commission appreciates receiving your views and will be pleased to hear from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President, Mississippi River
Commission