

Dear Mr. Butler:

Thank you for your presentation during the public meeting of the Mississippi River Commission held in New Orleans, Louisiana, on April 11, 2003. In your statement you discussed the need to build, protect, and continue to expand the inland waterway system. You also expressed concern about bank erosion occurring along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) and its impact to the navigation industry and landowners along the waterway.

The erosion repair work done last year was a one-time test to determine the effectiveness of the concrete mattress and sinking unit in the GIWW environment. The pilot project proved that articulated concrete mattress worked well in this limited application and that the sinking unit can operate in the shallow draft of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

A General Investigations Reconnaissance Study addressing bank erosion along the entire portion of the GIWW located in Louisiana is nearing completion. A feasibility study that would investigate the problem in more detail is estimated to cost \$6.5 million and take 3-5 years to complete. The study cost would be cost shared 50/50 with a non-Federal sponsor. One of the tasks that must be addressed during a reconnaissance study is the assessment of the level of interest and support from non-Federal entities in the identified potential solutions and cost sharing of the feasibility phase and construction. A letter of intent from the local sponsor stating the willingness to pursue the cost-shared feasibility study described in the Project Study Plan and to share in the costs of construction is required.

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Unfortunately, we have been unable to identify a non-Federal cost-share partner for this study. Consequently, we are unable to recommend proceeding to the feasibility phase of the study at this time.

The Commission appreciates receiving the views of the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association and will be pleased to hear from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

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