

Dear Ms. Cohen:

Thank you for your statement filed for record during the Mississippi River Commission public meeting held in St. Louis, Missouri, on August 15, 2003. In your statement you specifically addressed issues relative to the Confluence Greenway project.

Under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Planning Assistance to States (PAS) program many things can be studied. The types of studies conducted in recent years include water supply and demand, water quality issues, environmental conservation and restoration, wetland evaluations, and flood damage reduction. The Commission is pleased that your organization was able to utilize the PAS program to complete the Chouteau Island master plan. The Commission appreciates your continued support of this program and recognition of its continued funding needs.

The Confluence Greenway project, which is being carried out under Section 206 of the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP), will assist in the implementation of the master plan that resulted from the PAS study. This is a showcase for the CAP program as its purpose is to restore the ecosystem of the area in partnership with several state and local government entities, as well as several not-for-profit organizations. The project will provide habitat restoration in the greater St. Louis, Missouri, area and surrounding communities. This year, the St. Louis District will continue the Planning and Design Analysis (PDA) phase that includes evaluating alternatives, selecting the recommended plan, preparing the report, and initiating plans and specifications. Pending availability of

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funds, the District will complete the PDA phase and initiate construction in Fiscal Year 2004.

The Corps will continue to strive for improving the environmental quality of river systems. We recognize your desire for a program similar to the Missouri River Navigation Mitigation Program on the middle Mississippi. Through our Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program, we have the authority to provide habitat rehabilitation and enhancement projects on the upper Mississippi River among the Twin Cities in Minnesota and the mouth of the Ohio River, the

Illinois Waterway, and small portions of tributaries that have commercial navigation channels.

The Commission understands that the state natural resource agencies in Missouri and Illinois and numerous non-government organizations support legislation that clarifies existing navigation authority under our Regulating Works program to protect fish and wildlife habitat as an integral part of the navigation project.

The Commission appreciates receiving your comments 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