

Dear Mr. Daigle:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on April 11, 2003. In your statement you discussed the issue of hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers acknowledges your concerns of the hypoxic conditions in the northern Gulf of Mexico. The Action Plan report for reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia was presented to Congress by the Environmental Protection Agency in January 2001. This plan calls for the Corps to carry out a reconnaissance-level study of potential nutrient reduction actions that could be achieved by modifying Corps projects or project operations. Congressional authorization and funding are necessary to enable the Corps to accomplish the study. Nevertheless, the Corps is taking the hypoxia problem into account as we make plans for future work throughout the Mississippi and Atchafalaya River basins and in the central Gulf Coast region.

As you know, the Corps is participating in most, if not all, Mississippi River Basin Alliance regional sessions. We have agreed to co-lead the Hypoxia Task Force Watershed Restoration Workgroup. Mr. Owen Dutt, from St. Louis District, is our representative. He shares the leadership position with Ms. Teresa Woods from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3 Office in Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Mr. George Dunlop, from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), is our Task Force Member. Please advise him of any future

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meetings of the Lower Sub-Basin Committee. His mailing address is 108 Army Pentagon, Room 2E569, Washington, DC 20310-0108. His phone number is 703-695-1370. In addition, we look forward to receiving information about your meeting in Vicksburg this summer.

Thank you again for your comments to the Commission. We appreciate receiving your views 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