

Dear Mr. Caldwell:

During the public meeting of the Mississippi River Commission held in Houma, Louisiana, on August 23, 2002, Mr. Randy Hanchey presented comments on areas of concern to your office. In his statement Mr. Hanchey discussed the coastal erosion problems of south Louisiana. He mentioned the ongoing efforts on the Coast 2050 or Louisiana Coastal Area plan and requested that the Commission take a more active role in the project.

The Commission acknowledges the urgent nature of coastal land loss and the effects on the people, ecology, and economy of Louisiana. We strongly support the studies that are underway by the New Orleans District and the Department of Natural Resources, as the study sponsor, to find solutions to these complex problems. The Commission endorses development of the Louisiana Coastal Area Comprehensive Plan and related feasibility studies to find reasonable solutions to your coastal erosion problems. The continued close cooperation of your staff and the interagency project delivery team at the New Orleans District is essential for the efficient and timely development of the Comprehensive Plan and related feasibility studies on a schedule that would allow approval of the plan in a potential Water Resources Development Act of 2004.

The Commission applauds the efforts of the Department of Natural Resources to develop enduring partnerships with and between the various state and Federal agencies for the

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development of a strategic program for the restoration of coastal Louisiana. Strong support and collaboration among all parties will be needed to ensure a positive outcome in the important battle against coastal erosion.

The Commission appreciates receiving comments from the Department of Natural Resource and looks forward to further discussions with you or your staff.

Sincerely,

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