

Dear Ms. Hawkins:

Thank you for your remarks before the Mississippi River Commission during our public meeting held on August 17, 2001, in St. Louis, Missouri, during which you discussed several permit actions within the Corps of Engineers St. Louis District.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act gives the Corps of Engineers the authority to regulate discharges or fill material in waters of the United States, including wetlands. The Corps' regulatory program considers the public interest in both the protection and use of water resources and also considers the full range of environmental and socio-economic factors during permit evaluation. The Corps solicits public comments and considers them in their decisions. Other laws, regulations, Executive Orders, guidance letters, and memorandums of agreements with other agencies are considered during the processing of applications for permits. The Corps' policy is to provide applicants with a timely and balanced decision that reflects the public interest and application of pertinent laws and regulations.

Permit applications for proposed projects within the Dobrey Slough and Granite City areas undergo the same permit evaluation as those evaluated in other locations. The permits to which you referred in your comments, namely the Donna Lynne Legacy Subdivision and the Eagle Lake Subdivision, were processed under applicable regulations and a public interest review. Upon receipt of comments regarding regional flooding, the St. Louis

District reconsidered its decisions for both projects. The Corps issued a permit for the Donna Lynne Legacy Subdivision. The developer for the Eagle Lake Subdivision exercised his right to have the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, perform a wetlands delineation on the proposed site. The site was determined to be a "prior converted" land and is no longer a jurisdictional area under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The Corps will continue its efforts to meet the flood control, navigation, and environmental needs in the Mississippi Valley. Our success is largely attributable to a strong partnership with local interests and groups representing members of the public.

Thank you again for your participation in our St. Louis meeting. The Commission appreciates receiving your comments and looks forward to hearing from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

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