

Dear Mr. Hobby:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 8, 2003.

The Commission is aware that there has recently been an increase of sediment from the Nonconnah Creek basin into McKellar Lake Harbor. This increase is due to several major hydrologic events that occurred during the last few years. As a result, emergency work is being implemented to shore bank areas exposed around bridges and major utility lines along Nonconnah Creek. This should reduce the amount of sediment transfer from these areas; however, with each significant rainfall event, additional sediment transfer into McKellar Lake Harbor is a possibility from unprotected areas.

We are working with the City of Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee (the Nonconnah Creek Project sponsors), to conduct a preliminary review of the authorized Nonconnah Creek flood control project. The review will address the entire Nonconnah Creek watershed and recommend measures that can be considered to reduce the amount of sediment transfer, achieve flood protection, and restore the environmental resources within the watershed. The review is scheduled to begin by mid-June and be completed within seven months. This preliminary review will determine if a reevaluation of the project is warranted.

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In the meantime, the City of Memphis has requested that any design and construction activities for the authorized Nonconnah channel improvements (other than the bank stabilization work to be constructed this year at Riverport Road) be delayed until the results of the preliminary project review are determined. The City of Memphis has indicated to the Memphis District that it is not interested in reconstruction of the weir at the mouth of Nonconnah Creek unless it can obtain Congressional legislation to reconstruct it at 100 percent Federal expense. Stabilization features, such as the weir and other stabilization measures placed upstream, will help to reduce the amount of sediment into

the harbor; however, the review of the authorized project will give us additional input on others measures to consider.

Regarding your statement about dredging in the harbor, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has the responsibility to maintain navigation in McKellar Lake within the authorized project limits, subject to the availability of funding. This is normally accomplished with a cutterhead dredge under contract to the Memphis District. As you are aware, this dredge can be released for short periods of time to perform dredging for private industry outside the authorized project dimensions.

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