

Dear Mrs. Hunter:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in Caruthersville, Missouri, on April 2, 2001. In your statement you expressed concern regarding future maintenance dredging funds for the New Madrid County Harbor and concern regarding siltation in the harbor.

The Commission recognizes the importance of annual Federal maintenance of the harbor. As you are aware, the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2002 does not include funding for maintenance of the New Madrid County Harbor as well as for many other shallow-draft harbors across the nation. If Congress enacts appropriations for the harbor dredging, the Corps of Engineers will perform the required annual maintenance.

In regard to the siltation, the Memphis District used an existing micro model, survey data, and division of flow data to evaluate several alternatives that may alleviate the problem. The micro model showed a trend that lowering the New Madrid closure dike 5 feet would reduce the siltation problem. Lowering the closure dike would help keep the siltation from forming but would not allow the siltation that exists to exit on its own. The Memphis District plans to degrade the closure dike with its Fiscal Year 2002 stone repairs contract during this construction season. This action should help to improve conditions in the harbor. In addition, the staffs of the

Memphis District and Commission are in the process of determining the appropriate response to the problem area in the harbor. The Memphis District will advise you of those findings.

Thank you again for your presentation before the Commission. We appreciate receiving your comments and will be pleased to hear from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

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