

Dear Mr. Mueller:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in West Memphis, Arkansas, on August 20, 2002. In your statement you identified specific headcutting and channel instability problems on the Arkansas and White Rivers and requested that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers take a systems approach to solving these problems.

The Commission recognizes the significant fish and wildlife habitat in the Lower White and Arkansas Rivers and the need to protect this significant ecosystem. A meeting was held on October 3, 2002, among the Little Rock, Memphis, and Vicksburg Districts of the Corps of Engineers to review the problems that you identified. The Districts will establish a joint team to examine potential solutions and implementation authorities for both the immediate headcutting concerns and the needs for longer-term study of the system. The Corps will continue to work with you on these efforts.

In addition, the Memphis and Little Rock Districts are jointly performing a White River Basin Comprehensive Study that is expected to address the issues related to long-term watershed management, whereby all environmental, commercial, and private uses of the basin will be balanced, as suggested in your statement. We welcome and encourage active participation in this study by the Fish and Wildlife Service and other stakeholders in the basin. The President's budget for Fiscal Year 2003 included \$400,000 to continue this study. Based on

-2-

anticipated future funding, completion of the study is scheduled for June 2008.

Thank you again for your comments during the hearing. The Commission appreciates 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