

Dear Mr. Neff:

Thank you for your attendance at the public meeting of the Mississippi River Commission on August 15, 2001, in Keokuk, Iowa.

We welcome hearing various viewpoints on the many attributes of the Mississippi River. The varied missions of the Corps of Engineers reflect the public interest as determined and authorized by Congress. The Civil Works mission of the Corps includes navigation, environmental restoration, flood protection, and recreation. Generally, our greatest challenge is the equitable balancing of these missions among the diverse interests of the citizens of the upper Mississippi Valley.

You are correct in that the Corps of Engineers has not been funded for the Challenge 21 Program. A Comprehensive Plan for the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway System was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 to address systemic flood damage reduction and related water resource problems, including ecosystem restoration and improvements, in the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. At this time the plan has not been funded by Congress.

Your interest in Mississippi River Commission activities is appreciated. We look forward to hearing from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

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