

Dear Mr. Sabins:

Thank you for your comments before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in Morgan City, Louisiana, on August 23, 2001, on behalf of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

The Commission recognizes the efforts of the Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee and others in securing the authorization of the Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment in Section 402 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. The Commission supports the Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment and recognizes the need for funding for this effort. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, funding for this assessment was not included in the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2002. Funding was not included in either the House or Senate versions of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2002. To date, letters of support have been received from five of the seven states. The Commission will continue to coordinate closely with all the states regarding the status of funding.

The Mississippi Valley Division is working with the Corps Headquarters to finalize implementation guidance for Section 402 for use once funding is made available. You will be provided a copy of this guidance as soon as it is completed.

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Thank you again for your attendance and participation at our hearing. The Commission appreciates 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 Designee, Mississippi
River Commission