

Dear Ms. Stoller:

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.

A Comprehensive Plan was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 to address systemic flood damage reduction and related water resource problems in the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. The plan was not funded in the budget submission. However, funding is in the House and Senate mark-up of the Fiscal Year 2002 budget, and we anticipate that it will be in the final bill. Our hope is that the Comprehensive Plan will help tie the many well-intended efforts together under one umbrella and thus eliminate the appearance of what you referred to as a "hodge podge" of projects.

You indicated you and your organization would like to meet with the Commission. The Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association annual meeting in New Orleans on December 6-8 would be a great opportunity for the Commission to meet with you and your members. Please contact Mrs. Gwen Edris of my staff at telephone 601-634-5768 if you want to try to arrange a meeting during this period or at another convenient time.

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