

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

Thank you for your statement before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in West Memphis, Arkansas, on August 20, 2002. In your statement you discussed the progress being made on the Bayou Meto Basin, Arkansas, Reevaluation, the continuing groundwater depletion and flooding problems within the basin, and funding for Fiscal Year 2003.

The Commission shares your concerns regarding the continuing flooding and groundwater depletion problems in the Bayou Meto basin. The Memphis District is working to complete the general reevaluation as expeditiously as possible.

The President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2003 does not include funding for the reevaluation. The budget request for the Mississippi River and Tributaries project focuses on its main-stem components and studies and projects whose outputs are related to flood control, navigation, and environmental restoration. House and Senate actions on the Fiscal Year 2003 appropriations have not been completed; however, as you stated, funding for the Bayou Meto Reevaluation is included in the House and Senate bills.

The Commission appreciates receiving your comments 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