

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting held in Hannibal, Missouri, on August 14, 2003. In your statement you discussed concerns about the level of protection being evaluated in the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan) and consideration of a multi-purpose authority for the Upper Mississippi River Valley.

The Comprehensive Plan will be evaluating a 500-year level of protection for the entire system as one of the alternatives. Included in several of the alternatives being evaluated will be a Regional Economic Development Analysis that will display the economic impact associated with implementation. The study team will continue to coordinate its analysis efforts with many groups, including the Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers Association.

The Comprehensive Plan and the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study (Navigation Study) are not at a point in the analysis process to be formulating recommendations. These two efforts, along with the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program, are being closely coordinated. The Commission will be making a recommendation regarding the Navigation Study and the Comprehensive Plan prior to the reports being forwarded to Congress.

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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