

Dear Mr. Wise:

Thank you for your statement before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 8, 2003. You provided testimony supporting the Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment project.

The Commission agrees with you that this assessment is much needed and recognizes that would be the first step in realizing recreation and wildlife habitat potential, in concert with flood protection and navigation, for the Lower Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers. The Commission fully supports funding for this effort. However, with many competing interests for Federal funding, including the war on terrorism, homeland security, and the requirement to balance the Federal budget, the funding level in the General Investigations Fiscal Year 2004 President's budget request was not sufficient to include new start funding for this effort.

Thank you again for your presentation. 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