



News Release

**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®

Mississippi Valley Division

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MS River Commission Schedules "High Water" Inspection Trip

VICKSBURG, Miss., March 31, 2000-- Members of the Mississippi River Commission will conduct their annual "high-water" inspection trip on the Mississippi River, April 10-14, 2000.

Four public meetings have been scheduled aboard the Motor Vessel MISSISSIPPI in selected towns along the river so members of the Commission can hold listening sessions with local citizens and receive first-hand feedback from residents. The meeting places, dates and times are as follows:

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| April 10 | 8:30 a.m. | Cape Girardeau, Mo., at the City Front |
| April 11 | 8:30 a.m. | Memphis, Tenn., at the City Front |
| April 12 | 8:30 a.m. | Greenville, Miss., at the City Front |
| April 14 | 8:30 a.m. | New Orleans, La., at the Corps' District |

Office at the Foot of Prytania Street

All meetings will be open to the public. Local interests are invited to present their views and suggestions on matters pertaining to the Flood Control, Mississippi River and Tributaries project affecting the water resources infrastructure needs in the valley. Additionally, the commission encourages

views and opinions on other water-related issues such as marine transportation, flooding impacts, environmental benefits, water and sewage infrastructure and emergency response to natural disasters.

The agenda for each public meeting will be as follows:

1. President of the Commission will present a summary of national and regional issues affecting the Corps of Engineers and Commission programs and projects on the Mississippi River and its tributaries.
2. District Commander will present an overview of current Mississippi River and Tributary project issues in the respective district area.
3. Local organizations and any members of the public will have an opportunity to make presentations or offer views or comments on any issue affecting programs or projects of the Commission and the Corps as noted above.

The MRC, organized in 1879, is composed of seven members, each nominated by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate. Three of the organization's members are officers of the Corps of Engineers; one member is from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and three members are civilians, two of whom are civil engineers.

General duties of the Commission include recommendation of policy and work programs, the study of and reporting upon the necessity for modifications or additions to the flood control and navigation project, recommendation upon any matters authorized by law, and making semi-annual inspection trips. The duties of the Commission, as established in 1879, included the entire length of the Mississippi River from its headwaters at Lake Itasca, Minn., to Head of Passes, La., where the Mississippi River empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Since authorization of the extensive MR&T Project on the lower river, the primary focus of the Commission has been the alluvial valley of the Mississippi River from Cape Girardeau, Mo., to the Gulf of Mexico. The Commission usually inspects the lower river and holds public hearings twice each year, once in the spring during high water, and in late summer or early fall during low water.

The purpose of the public meetings is to maintain a dialogue, an exchange of viewpoints and ideas flowing between the public and the Corps. Presentations by the public are made orally, but a copy of the remarks should be presented to the Commission for the official record.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Any media wishing to conduct interviews with MRC members are asked to be on board 30 minutes prior to beginning of public meeting.)