



News Release

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Mississippi River Commission
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MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION SCHEDULES "HIGH-WATER" INSPECTION TRIP

VICKSBURG, Miss., March 24, 2003 -- The Mississippi River Commission will conduct its annual "high-water" inspection trip on the Mississippi River, April 7-11, 2003.

Four public meetings have been scheduled aboard the Motor Vessel MISSISSIPPI in selected towns along the river so Commission members have the opportunity to meet with local residents and hear their concerns, ideas and issues. The meeting places, dates and times are as follows:

- April 7 9:00 a.m. Cape Girardeau, Mo., at the City Front
- April 8 9:00 a.m. Memphis, Tenn., at the Mud Island River Park Landing
- April 9 9:00 a.m. Greenville, Miss., at the City Front
- April 11 9:00 a.m. New Orleans, La., at the Corps of Engineers' Dock, Foot of Prytania Street

All meetings are open to the public. Local interests are invited to present their views and suggestions on matters affecting the water resources infrastructure needs in the valley, including flood control and the Mississippi River and Tributaries project, environmental issues, recreation and navigation.

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 U.S. Army 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.

2-2-2-2 HIGH-WATER TRIP

3. Local organizations and 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 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 and encourage 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.

The public hearing process is unique to the Mississippi River Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The benefits of hearing first hand the issues and concerns through the public hearing process are invaluable to the Commission and the Corps. Also, the interaction with congressional, federal and state interests, local boards and non-government organizations and the public is crucial to the decision making process of the Commission.