



*Remarks by Major General Phillip R. Anderson,  
Commander, Mississippi Valley Division,  
to the Vicksburg Rotary Club,  
Vicksburg, Mississippi, 17 February 2000*

## **WELCOME**

Good morning. I am Major General Phillip R. Anderson, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division Corps of Engineers. Let me begin by saying how nice it is to be here with you today. Thank you for the invitation to speak to your group.

I'll be talking to you today about my division's role in the Mississippi Valley, our primary mission areas, and how we plan to invest in the valley in these areas.

## **MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION**

First of all, a little bit about who we are: The Mississippi Valley Division -- or MVD -- consists of six districts that span the river's corridor from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

The boundary of our division incorporates portions of 12 states, 60 congressional districts, and encompasses 370,000 square miles. In addition, it is represented by 24 percent of the United States Senate and 13 percent of the United States House of Representatives.

Our division headquarters is here in Vicksburg, with our 6 district offices located in St. Paul, Minnesota; Rock Island, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; Vicksburg; and New Orleans, Louisiana.

The districts manage and execute a host of programs and projects that focus on flood control, navigation, and environmental integrity.

## INVESTING IN AMERICA

Next, I want to take a few minutes to tell you about a new initiative. Dr. Joseph Westphal, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, announced last fall an initiative focused on getting water resources back on the national agenda and ensuring that the Corps' infrastructure will meet the future needs of the nation.

Lt. Gen. Joe N. Ballard, our Chief of Engineers, then directed preparation of a Civil Works "**Investing in America**" strategy. The program's objectives reflect a reasonable assessment of what is achievable and also reflect adoption of a very aggressive attitude to meet those objectives. My division is in the process of developing our part of the Corps-wide plan to meet those objectives.

I will focus now on some of our mission areas and how we plan to invest in the valley in those areas.

## **NAVIGATION**

The first is navigation -- one of our primary missions. MVD has an array of river engineering tools to keep the river aligned, and to maintain the commercial navigation channel depth and width. These "tools" include revetments, dikes, foreshore protection, bendway weirs, dredging, as well as locks and dams.

More than one billion tons of commerce move each year on the 11,000-miles of inland waterways. Because of the savings involved with barging bulk goods, a reliable commercial navigation channel in the river saves the Nation over a billion dollars each year in fuel and shipping costs.

However, most of the locks and dams on the river were built during the 1930s, and over the past 60-plus years -- time, weather, and increased usage have taken their toll.

The Corps' upper districts have a major rehabilitation effort underway to address these problems and extend the life of our lock and dam system.

They are also nearing completion of the most comprehensive planning study in the Corps of Engineers – The Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study. This study will address the needs of the navigation system through the year 2050.

We place great emphasis on this study and rehabilitating and improving these aged navigation structures.

### **NAVIGATION – FUTURE INVESTMENTS**

As for the future of navigation on the Mississippi River, we will continue to **invest** our efforts in a strong environmentally sustainable maritime transportation system. However, we have a real challenge before us in this area.

Our maritime transportation system is nearing capacity, while demands on it are likely to double by 2020.

We estimate that addressing MVD's navigation system needs would require an **investment** of approximately \$3 billion dollars over the next twenty years.

### **FLOOD PROTECTION**

Another of our primary missions is flood protection. During the past 60 years, the Corps has **invested** billions of dollars nationwide in flood control projects -- building thousands of miles of levees, floodwalls, reservoirs, and channel improvements. All for the purpose of reducing damage to property and relieving human suffering and financial losses.

### **FLOOD PROTECTION - FUTURE INVESTMENTS**

As for the future of flood control, we will continue to **invest** our efforts toward reducing the negative consequences of flooding.

MVD's water resources infrastructure has done an admirable job of reducing flood damages - for example, on the lower river alone, the Mississippi River & Tributaries project has prevented \$231.5 billion dollars in flood damages for an investment of just \$10 billion dollars.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

Turning now to our environmental efforts. . . Our upper districts are players in one of the Corps' most highly acclaimed environmental programs -- the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program.

This program is specifically authorized to enhance, improve, and restore spawning and feeding habitats of fish and wildlife in the backwaters and side channels of the Mississippi and Illinois rivers.

Much the same as our upper districts, our lower districts also continue the division's creative environmental initiatives along the Mississippi and its tributaries.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - FUTURE INVESTMENTS**

What does the future hold for environmental stewardship? We will continue to **invest** our efforts toward a healthy environment providing economic, ecosystem, social, and cultural benefits.

Particularly in the environmental arena, we must look to the past, in order to put hindsight in service to the future.

Traditionally, the Corps has been in the business of protecting people, homes, agricultural land, urban areas, and infrastructure from floods, as well as fostering reliable transportation and economic growth.

But, that was then. Our division has now been involved in environmental work for more than a quarter century. And for at least the past 10 years we have been attempting to bring the environmental dimension of our missions out of obscurity.

Legislation passed in 1990 established environmental protection as one of the primary missions of water resources projects -- along with navigation and flood control.

This new direction has allowed us to expand even more our traditional environmental activities and enhance or restore natural resources at our projects.

## **RECREATION**

Recreation is yet another of our missions. The Corps of Engineers is the nation's leading provider of water-based recreation. MVD manages 33 reservoirs totaling approximately 1.8 million acres of land and water.

The Corps hosts 30 percent of the visitation to Federal lands on less than 2 percent of lands owned by the Federal government. In 1998, MVD alone recorded approximately 35 million visitor hours spending over \$5 million dollars in user fees at our projects.

Even though recreation usually takes a back seat to our other missions, when we consider the 35 million visitor hours logged at our 639 recreation facilities, this amounts to more than \$3 billion dollars of tangible economic benefits that accrue to the local and regional economies in MVD from this high-profile business function.

## RECREATION - FUTURE INVESTMENTS

As for future investments in the recreation arena, modernization of the Corps' managed recreation areas has been identified as a priority by the Chief of Engineers.

Many of the Corps' managed areas were built in the 1960's and no longer serve the needs of the visiting public. The electrical and water systems, as well as the sewage hookups, do not meet the requirements of today's modern campers. In addition, many of the areas are currently not accessible to handicapped persons.

The Corps, along with the Assistant Secretary of the Army, supports the recreation modernization initial program to start bringing the Corps' recreation program up to the visiting public's standard.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

In addition to our other missions, we also maintain a strong emergency management capability to assist the public in responding to and recovering from floods, hurricanes, and other natural disasters.

A current example of our corporate commitment to disaster response is a new initiative called Readiness 2000. Under this concept, each Corps District is assigned a specific mission which can be instantly energized through a team of professionals. We now have trained teams throughout this division ready to provide emergency ice, water, power, temporary roofing, debris removal, and temporary housing.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE- FUTURE INVESTMENTS**

As for future investments in emergency management, the frequency and severity of damages created by natural and other disasters require a rapid and effective emergency management response. This challenge will always remain an area of national need.

I'm certain our future will see an increased reliance on technology to provide both faster assessments of response needs utilizing remote sensing and GIS (Geospatial Information System); as well as more accurate and early damage estimates through modeling (e.g., estimation of debris quantities).

There is not a lot of room for error or delay in this business function. We need to ensure that we have sufficient talent in a readiness posture to deliver when called upon. The nation depends on us.

## **INVESTING IN AMERICA**

Investing in America -- I see our overriding common goal as the development and placement of the infrastructure this nation will need for the 21st Century.

The success of this strategy will involve our customers, stakeholders, partners, and all interested in water resources.

We will do our part in discussions with Corps Headquarters, as well as the Administration and Congress, to be advocates for public infrastructure, especially in the field of water resources.

We need to make the case that a strong infrastructure is necessary for the strong economy on which the entire Federal government depends. To be sure, the benefits from civil works projects far exceed the costs.

But we can't, and shouldn't, do it alone. Your voices count, too, and I know you will continue to make them heard in support of the projects that will best help us achieve the prosperity we all seek.

We must also realize that our success in meeting the nation's needs will ultimately depend on our ability to carry out the larger program we envision.

### **CLOSING**

In closing, again, I thank you for the invitation to speak today. Now, if you have any questions, I'll be happy to take them at this time.