



*Remarks by Major General Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.,  
Commander, Mississippi Valley Division,  
at the Inland Waterways Users Board Meeting,  
Davenport, Iowa, 18 July 2001*

## **WELCOME**

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_. Good morning. Welcome to the Quad Cities and the Mississippi Valley Division.

I had the opportunity to meet with most of you last night at the ice breaker, and I look forward to broadening and strengthening these relationships as we gather here in the Quad Cities area.

My thanks to the Alter Trading Corporation, Quad Cities Propeller Club, and other navigation interests of the Quad Cities area, for sponsoring last night's reception.

I am pleased to be a part of this meeting and I appreciate the opportunity to share with you some information and thoughts about the Mississippi Valley Division.

## **MVD**

The Mississippi Valley Division consists of six Districts, with headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota; Rock Island, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; Vicksburg, Mississippi; and New Orleans, Louisiana. Our Division Headquarters are also located in Vicksburg.

The division includes portions of 12 states and encompasses 370,000 square miles that span the river's corridor from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

## *Missions*

### **NAVIGATION**

One of the Mississippi Valley Division's primary missions is keeping the navigation channel open on the river. This work is vital to the nation's economy and security.

Each year, millions of tons of grain, coal, petroleum products, and other commodities pass through the system of locks on the upper river and nearly one-half billion tons of commodities are transported each year on the river between Minneapolis-St. Paul and the Gulf of Mexico.

Many of the locks and dams on the Mississippi were built in the 1930's, and over the past 60-plus years -- time, weather, and increased usage have taken their toll on these structures.

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

Many of you took the opportunity yesterday to tour locks and dams 11, 12, and 14.

## **NAV STUDY UPDATE**



While on the topic of the lock and dam system, let me briefly mention the Nav Study.

Earlier this year, the Chief of Engineers halted completion of the feasibility report on the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study to allow time to review the findings of the National Research Council's (NRC) report on the study.

In March of this year, the Corps of Engineers formed a National Federal Principals Task Force to provide advice on how to address key issues identified in the National Research Council's report.

The Task Force includes representatives of the U. S. Department of Agriculture; Department of Interior; Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Transportation; and Corps of Engineers and is supported by a regional work group made up of representatives from these same agencies.

The recommendations of the Task Force, which are currently being finalized, will be use to revise the project management plan for completing this complex system feasibility study. Denny Lundberg will provide you with a more detailed update on the Upper Miss study during the presentations later today.

*Missions*

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Back to our missions . . . the Mississippi Valley Division fully supports the national interests in environmental protection and we seek to strike a balance between navigation and ecosystem needs.

The division has stewardship responsibilities for over 1.1 million acres of project lands and over 1.0 million acres of water, including reservoirs and navigation pools.

We enjoy our role as stewards of a wide range of environmental programs and projects that help identify, protect, restore, and minimize harm to nature's endowments.

Our Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management

Program is a showcase of projects to enhance, improve and restore fish and wildlife habitat in the backwaters and side channels of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers.

Whenever possible, we are using dredge material to restore and enhance various waterfowl habitats, and we are exploring other beneficial uses of dredged material.

On the Lower Mississippi River we have been conducting environmental studies of our channel improvement works since 1982 and are notching dikes and modifying revetments to improve and conserve riverine habitat.

## *Missions*

### **FLOOD PROTECTION**

Another of the division's primary missions is flood protection.

During the past 60 years, the Corps invested billions of dollars nationwide in flood protection projects -- building thousands of miles of levees, floodwalls, and channel improvements. All for the purpose of reducing damage to property and relieving human suffering and financial loss.

### **SUMMARY**

The Mississippi Valley Division's vision reinforces more than 170 years of commitment to the citizens of this nation. During the past two centuries, the Corps and its partners and customers have developed engineering strategies and techniques to protect the people of this nation from floods and to improve the national economy by providing for river navigation.

And as the interests of the American public broadened, we

adopted a wide array of environmental and recreational initiatives that have enhanced and reshaped our missions, programs, and outlook into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

And, as always, the Corps stands ready to provide assistance before, during, and after natural disasters affecting this great river valley and the nation.

The Mississippi Valley Division will search for "Solutions without Boundaries" as we address the challenges of the new millennium with a balanced and responsive vision of the future.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this meeting of the Inland Waterways Users Board.

Your hard work and leadership will continue to enable us to modernize our nation's infrastructure to meet the needs of the new millennium through a vital navigation system. Thank you.