



# MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

August 20, 2009

## STATEMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER RESOURCE ASSESSMENT DRAFT RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION  
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### PRESIDENT and MEMBER

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*Commander, Mississippi  
Valley Division*  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

### MEMBERS

\*Honorable Sam E. Angel  
*Civilian*  
Lake Village, Arkansas

Honorable R. D. James  
*Civilian/Civil Engineer*  
New Madrid, Missouri

\*Honorable Wm. Clifford Smith  
*Civilian/Civil Engineer*  
Houma, Louisiana

\*Rear Adm. Jonathan W. Bailey  
*National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration*  
Silver Spring, Maryland

\*Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody  
*Commander, Great Lakes &  
Ohio River Division*  
Cincinnati, Ohio

\*Brig. Gen. William E. Rapp  
*Commander, Northwestern  
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\* designee  
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Since its establishment in 1879, the Mississippi River Commission has been charged with developing plans for the general improvement of the Mississippi River to facilitate navigation, promote commerce, and prevent destructive floods. The Mississippi River Commission recognizes the vital importance of the vast natural resources of the Mississippi River to the nation. Maintaining the great natural resources of the river is of vital significance to the comprehensive approach to fulfilling the objectives and requirements of the nation's responsibilities.

The focus of the Commission continues to be on listening, inspecting, partnering, and engineering to help find solutions to water resource challenges facing the watershed. During the 2009 Low-Water Inspection Trip, the Commission received testimony appreciative of, and in opposition to, the Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment, Draft Reconnaissance Report, dated July 2009. While generally supportive of the assessment, the Commission finds that the report addresses only a part of the larger picture that comprises the many valuable resources of the lower Mississippi River valley. The study appears to be insufficient by failing to adequately address key issues such as the impacts on private property rights, navigation, and flood damage reduction. Also, the footprint of the study does not include a valuable area of coastal Louisiana between the mouths of the Mississippi and the Atchafalaya Rivers.

The Mississippi River Commission remains dedicated to helping achieve a sustainable long-term vision that includes the balanced and appropriate use of the incredible resource that makes up the entire Mississippi watershed. We will continue to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, other Federal agencies, and other non-governmental groups to realize that vision.

Since 1879, the seven-member Presidentially appointed Mississippi River Commission has developed and matured plans for the general improvement of the Mississippi River from the Head of Passes to the Headwaters. The Mississippi River Commission brings critical engineering representation to the drainage basin, which impacts 41% of the United States and includes 1.25 million square miles, over 250 tributaries, 31 states, and 2 Canadian provinces.

Mississippi River Commission  
Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment  
Draft Reconnaissance Study  
August 20, 2009

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President-Designee  
Mississippi Valley Division  
Vicksburg, MS



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Senior Civilian Member  
Lake Village, AR



Hon. R. P. James  
Civilian Member, Engineer  
New Madrid, MO



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Listening, Inspecting, Partnering and Engineering since 1879