



MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

August 20, 2009

MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 80
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39181-0080

STATEMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

For more than 130 years, the Mississippi River Commission has been closely involved with important issues facing the Mississippi River basin. Our focus continues to be on listening, inspecting, partnering, and engineering to help find solutions to water resource challenges facing the basin.

PRESIDENT and MEMBER

*Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh
Commander, Mississippi Valley Division
Vicksburg, Mississippi

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*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
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Cincinnati, Ohio

*Brig. Gen. William E. Rapp
Commander, Northwestern Division
Portland, Oregon

SECRETARY

Col. George T. Shepard Jr.
Vicksburg, Mississippi

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. T. Stephen Gambrell
Vicksburg, Mississippi
(601) 634-5766

Email: cemvd-ex@usace.army.mil
Web site: www.mvd.usace.army.mil

* designee
** nominated

The Mississippi River basin is an integrated system of rivers that drains portions of 38 states and more than 1.2 million square miles. Significant actions that affect water quality or water quantity in any portion of the upper basin eventually have an impact downstream on flood damage reduction, navigation, environmental sustainability, water supply, and river-related infrastructure. As such, this Commission is compelled to express our concern with potential changes in major tributaries to the Mississippi that could adversely affect the lower basin. The Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study, authorized and appropriated in Section 108 of the FY 09 Omnibus Appropriations Act, has the potential of leading Congress to make such changes. After hearing numerous challenges to the study from stakeholders during our 2009 Low-Water Inspection Trip, the Commission wants to express our interest in the process and outcomes of that study.

At certain times of the year, the Missouri River contributes up to 60 percent of the Mississippi River flow between St. Charles and Cairo and historically the majority of the sediment load of the system. The Pick-Sloan plan, authorized by the 1944 Flood Control Act, and the Missouri River Master Manual operations have direct and indirect impacts on the Mississippi River. After 65 years, some changes in the authorized purposes may well be appropriate, but must be made only after careful study and deliberation. In order to ensure that any impacts on the Mississippi River generated by changes contemplated in the authorized purposes of the Missouri River are fully understood and assessed, the Commission requests the following:

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.

Listening, Inspecting, Partnering and Engineering since 1879

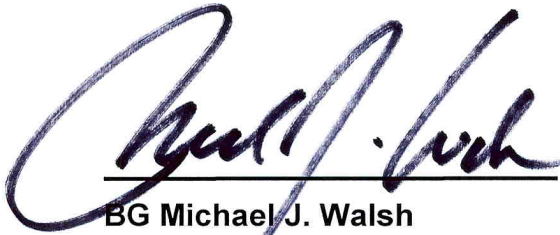
- That the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study fully assesses the impacts of potential changes in flow regimes in the Missouri River on the Mississippi River with particular attention to flood damage reduction, navigation, and sediment loads.

- That the Northwestern Division of the Corps of Engineers consults closely with the St. Louis District of the Mississippi Valley Division on the assessment of these impacts to the Mississippi River.

- That the Northwestern Division briefs the Mississippi River Commission on the results of the interim external peer reviews and independent science reviews before the study is finalized.

The Mississippi River Commission is dedicated to helping achieve the long-term vision of the incredible resource that is the entire Mississippi River Basin. We will continue to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, other Federal agencies, the basin's states, and other non-governmental groups to realize that vision.

Mississippi River Commission
Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study
August 21, 2009



BG Michael J. Walsh
President-Designee
Mississippi Valley Division
Vicksburg, MS




Hon. Sam E. Angel
Senior Civilian Member
Lake Village, AR



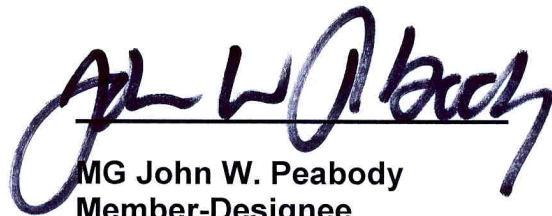
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Civilian Member, Engineer
New Madrid, MO



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Civilian Member, Engineer
Houma, LA



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Member-Designee
National Oceanic &
Atmospheric Admin.
Silver Spring, MD



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