



## MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

December 21, 2012

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

### PRESIDENT and MEMBER

Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody  
Commander, Mississippi  
Valley Division  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

### MEMBERS

Honorable Sam E. Angel  
Sr. Civilian  
Lake Village, Arkansas

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

Honorable Norma Jean Mattei  
Civilian/Civil Engineer  
Metairie, Louisiana

\*Brig. Gen. Margaret W. Burcham  
Commander, Great Lakes &  
Ohio River Division  
Cincinnati, Ohio

\*RDML Gerd F. Glang  
National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
Silver Spring, Maryland

\*Brig. Gen. Anthony C. Funkhouser  
Commander, Northwestern  
Division  
Portland, Oregon

### SECRETARY

Col. John C. Dvoracek  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

### DIRECTOR

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

Email: [cemvd-ex@usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvd-ex@usace.army.mil)  
Web site: [www.mvd.usace.army.mil/mrc](http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/mrc)

\* designee

The Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) project is perhaps the world's most comprehensive and successful flood risk management and navigation systems. More than a dozen significant floods have tested the MR&T since its inception over 80 years ago, but none as extensively as the 2011 record flood. In 2011, the MR&T system performed as designed by accommodating the river while using roughly 85 percent of its overall design capacity. Even though this was the largest Mississippi River flood in recorded history, astonishingly not a single life was lost. An incredible \$230 billion in flood damages were prevented in that single event. Since its inception, the MR&T system is calculated to have prevented \$612 billion in cumulative flood damages. At an investment level of \$14 billion, those savings result in a \$44 return on every \$1 invested. These figures do not include all of the positive economic activity, from farming to towns and factories, plus annual transportation savings of \$3 billion enabled by this unique system.

We owe a debt of gratitude for the wisdom, tenacity, and efforts of our fore-bearers who envisioned, devised, funded, constructed, and maintained this innovative system that has proven so beneficial to so many for so long. We extend our sincere appreciation to the thousands of local landowners, levee boards, cities, states, and other partners who determinedly fought the flood alongside us and who continue to stand with us during the path to recovery. The region and the nation are grateful beneficiaries of those endeavors.

After more than a year of evaluation and documentation, the expansive MR&T 2011 Post Flood Report and the condensed "Room for the River" booklet will serve as educational tools and reference points for our citizens, decision makers, and future flood fighters. Facts, figures, and lessons derived from the 2011 flood serve to hasten and guide our efforts to rebuild and improve the MR&T project, ensuring the continued safety and security of our citizen's lives and livelihoods.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Mississippi River Commission, working hand-in-hand with our strong partners, continues to study the lessons from past history, apply those lessons to maintain and improve the system in the present, and collaborate with all partners and stakeholders to envision and craft an improved and more resilient future. We continue to be generational beneficiaries of the world's most commercially vibrant watershed and its largest inland navigation system, with an incredibly diverse natural ecological treasure, all enabling the nation's economic and natural vitality.

Essays and Building Strong!

John W. Peabody  
Major General, U.S. Army  
Commander, Mississippi Valley Division  
President, Mississippi River Commission

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*