



STATE OF TENNESSEE

DON SUNDQUIST
GOVERNOR

June 26, 2001

Brigadier General Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.
Division Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division
Post Office Box 80
Vicksburg, Mississippi 39181-0800

Dear General Arnold:

In response to your April 9, 2001, letter I am pleased you are seeking the cooperation and support of the State of Tennessee, as well as other participating states, for implementing Section 402 - Lower Mississippi River Natural Resources Assessment - of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (WRDA 2000). We certainly support the need for this assessment of information needed for river-related management, natural resource habitat, river-related recreation and access as Section 402 authorizes for the Lower Mississippi River. We look forward to cooperating with you and others on this Assessment. We greatly appreciate Mr. Don Basham of your staff discussing this issue with all the States on May 23, 2001, at the annual meeting of the multi-state Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee. We do not believe however, the wording nor the intent of Section 402 was for the normal cost sharing requirements of a traditional feasibility study to apply to this Assessment.

We understand you are recommending the first phase of the Assessment to be Reconnaissance study, which will be conducted in cooperation with the participating states and others, and is conducted at 100 percent Federal cost. We would urge you to immediately initiate this phase of the study. We do not view Section 402 as worded, nor as intended, to be a traditional feasibility study. However, we understand that Section 225 of the WRDA 2000 permits the States, as non-federal sponsors, to provide their entire share of cost through in-kind services such as materials, supplies, or other in-kind services necessary to prepare a feasibility report. The State of Tennessee has the resources and ability to collect and provide important information and data, and provides expertise, which will be critical and essential to the conduct of the Assessment and subsequent report to Congress. We are willing to collect and provide needed information and provide expertise, by agreement, with your agency. The report to Congress should provide the recommendations and guidelines which will allow the State of Tennessee to determine its future role and involvement in any resulting activities. We look forward to immediately working with you as a non-federal sponsor on the Assessment and the resulting report to Congress.

Brigadier General Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.

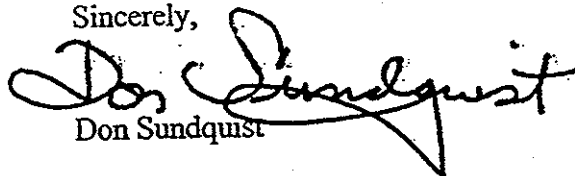
June 26, 2001

Page two

With the wise use of the Lower Mississippi River's natural resources, sustainable increases to the economy of our state and the other Lower Mississippi River States can occur without impacting existing economic and other uses of the river. Last year, over 10.8 million people in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley participated in fishing and wildlife-related (excluding hunting) outdoor recreation. They spent \$5.9 billion on such items as food, fuel, lodging and equipment. These kinds of activities and revenues are important to the economy of the region and to our state and the well-being of our citizens. The Assessment and report to Congress could contain valuable recommendations which would sustain the River's natural resources and increase the supporting activities and revenues.

The contacts for the State of Tennessee will be Mr. Robert Todd, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (615/781-6575), and Mr. John Leonard, Assistant Commissioner for Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (615/532-0220). Again, I appreciate your seeking the cooperation and support of the State of Tennessee and the other six participating States in this important regional Assessment. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information or support.

Sincerely,


Don Sundquist