

Water Management District

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**Public Meeting - Memphis, Tennessee
Mississippi River Commission Low-Water Inspection Trip
August 17, 2015
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General Wehr and other members of the Mississippi River Commission, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you. My name is Gene Sullivan and I am the Executive Director of the Bayou Meto Water Management District. I want to take a few minutes this morning to give you an update on progress we have made on the Bayou Meto Basin Project since my report to you last March.

As you know the three major components of our project are: 1) Flood risk reduction 2) Groundwater protection/irrigation water supply and 3) Waterfowl habitat management.

We have made significant progress on each of the components. The Little Bayou Meto Pump Station which serves both the flood risk reduction and the waterfowl habitat management components was completed and turned over to the sponsors in June. It will be operational when the contract with Entergy is completed early next year.

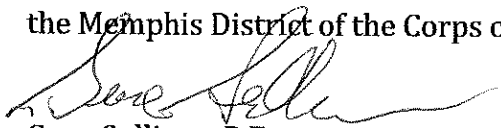
We are on schedule with our three year plan to start delivering water into the basin in time for the 2018 irrigation season. The Corps will be awarding two contracts totaling 25 to 30 million dollars later this month for work on the main canal which will deliver water from the pump station into the basin.

The availability of Federal funds continues to be the limiting factor in timely construction of the project. The farmers within our district have been paying an assessment for nine years for benefits which they have not yet received. At the current rate of Federal funding it will take nearly twenty years to complete the construction of our project. If the Federal cost share funds were made available in a timely manner we could complete it five years.

Water supply is the most critical resource problem our Nation will face this century. There is a simple solution in most parts of this country and the Bayou Meto Project is an excellent example of addressing the problem through a Federal-State-Local partnership.

We earnestly solicit your assistance in finding a way to raise the American people's awareness of the need for conserving our groundwater while maintaining an adequate supply of water for municipalities, agriculture, industry and the environment.

We want to thank the Mississippi River Commission, General Wehr, Colonel Anderson and the Memphis District of the Corps of Engineers for their continuing support.



Gene Sullivan, P.E.