



MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

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

ST. JOHN'S BAYOU-NEW MADRID FLOODWAY PROJECT

Since its initiation in 1928, the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) project program has brought an unprecedented degree of flood protection to approximately 4 million people living in the 35,000 square-mile project area. The nation has contributed nearly \$13 billion toward the planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of the project. To date the nation has received a 27 to 1 return on that investment, including flood damages prevented. These astounding figures place the MR&T project among the most successful and cost-effective public works projects in the history of the United States.

Despite this overall success, key authorized features of the comprehensive flood control components of the MR&T project remain incomplete thereby preventing the realization of the full benefits of flood protection for certain areas in the Alluvial Valley. The St. John's Bayou-New Madrid Floodway project, authorized by the 1954 Flood Control Act and the WRDA 86, is one such vital component.

During public meetings spanning several sessions of the Mississippi River Commission, the project sponsors, local members of the public, and their elected representatives, including U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson, have demonstrated through passionate testimony the staunch determination to see this project become a reality. Based on the enthusiastic and unyielding support of the local people and sponsors for the project and the systemic value of this element for the larger MR&T project, the Commission recommends that the current effort by the Memphis District to produce the revised environmental impact statement for the St. John's Bayou-New Madrid Floodway Project be completed diligently with sound science and engineering.

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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.

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