



**Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr**  
*President*  
*Corps of Engineers*  
*Mississippi Valley Division*  
*Vicksburg, Miss.*



**Honorable Sam E. Angel**  
*Senior Civilian Member*  
*Lake Village, Ark.*



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



**Honorable Norma Jean Mattei, Ph.D.**  
*Civilian/Civil Engineer*  
*Houma, La.*



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



**Brig. Gen. Richard G. Kaiser**  
*Corps of Engineers*  
*Great Lakes & Ohio River Division*  
*Cincinnati, Ohio*



**Brig. Gen. David C. Hill**  
*Corps of Engineers*  
*Southwestern Division*  
*Dallas, Texas*



# MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION

*LISTENING, INSPECTING, PARTNERING,  
AND ENGINEERING SINCE 1879*



## MISSION

The mission of the Mississippi River Commission is to provide water resources engineering direction and policy advice to the Administration, Congress and the Army in a drainage basin that comprises 41% of the United States and parts of two Canadian provinces in an effort to lead sustainable management and development of water and related resources for the nation's benefit and the people's well-being.



## STRUCTURE

The Mississippi River Commission consists of three U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officers, one member of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (formerly the Coast and Geodetic Survey) and three civilians, two of whom must be civil engineers.

Each member is nominated by the United States President and vetted by the Senate. The membership on the commission captures and combines the expertise from two pools of the world's most renowned and innovative engineering talent—the United States federal government and the United States private sector.

The commission president also serves as commanding officer of the Mississippi Valley Division. The other military members typically serve as the commanding generals of the Corps of Engineers' division offices responsible for managing the key contributors of water to the Mississippi River, such as the Ohio, Missouri, Arkansas, White and Red rivers.



## HISTORY

Congress established the Mississippi River Commission on June 28, 1879, with the mission to develop plans to improve the condition of the river, foster navigation, promote commerce, and prevent destructive floods—perhaps the most difficult and complex engineering problem ever undertaken by the federal government up to that time. In addition to its responsibilities for overseeing the improvement of the Mississippi River, the commission gave Mississippi Valley interests a greater voice in shaping federal policy—a tradition that continues to this day.

A long-standing practice of the Mississippi River Commission is to listen to the concerns confronting the private, local, state and federal agencies charged

with improving and managing the indispensable resources of the Mississippi River; to inspect the challenges posed by such a vast, powerful and living watershed; and to forge sustainable partnerships to overcome those challenges for the betterment of the nation.

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 commission brings critical engineering representation to the drainage basin, which impacts 41% of the United States and includes 1.25 million square miles, more than 250 tributaries, 31 states and two Canadian provinces.

## CONTINUED SUCCESSFUL EXECUTION

In its current capacity, the Mississippi River Commission is charged with prosecuting the comprehensive river management program known as the Mississippi River and Tributaries project.

This project, which incorporates a variety of engineering techniques to improve navigation, reduce flood damages and enhance the environment, is arguably the most successful civil works project ever undertaken.

Since the initiation of the project in 1928, the nation has invested a total of \$14.8 billion, with damages prevented reaching \$666 billion by the end of 2015. This amounts to a 44.9 to 1 return for every dollar invested.

The remaining work to be completed will have an estimated 45 to 1 return on investment.

## A NEW DAY

The Mississippi River is a dynamic force that requires constant vigilance. Since its inception, the Mississippi River Commission has initiated tremendous advances in hydraulic engineering and in the design and construction of regulating works, levees and bank revetment; but its work is far from over.

The MRC is focused on watershed priorities. The management of the major sub-basins comprising the watershed directly impacts the operations and decisions of the MRC in prosecuting the MR&T project.

In 1997, the commission extended the outreach of its time-tested process of listening, inspecting, partnering and engineering by meeting face-to-face with stakeholders, federal agencies, non-governmental organizations and local Corps offices in the upper Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, Arkansas and Red river basins to better understand the concerns, issues and impacts on the watershed as a whole.



*Public meetings, then . . .  
and now*



Since 1997 the Commission has reviewed and inspected the watersheds along the upper Mississippi, the Ohio (2005 & 2011), the Missouri (2007 & 2012), the Illinois (2009) and the Arkansas-White rivers (2010 & 2014) and the Tennessee-Cumberland rivers (2015). These reviews aid the commission in its attempt to garner broad support for a working 200-year vision—an intergenerational commitment—for the world's 3rd largest watershed - America's watershed.

