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Statement to Major General Phillip R. Anderson  
Mississippi River Partnering Conference, June 16, 2000  
By Laura Cohen, Project Manager, Confluence Greenway

On behalf of the Confluence Greenway project, I would like to thank Major General Anderson and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the opportunity to participate in this Partnering Conference to address the needs and opportunities concerning the future of the Mississippi River.

The Confluence Greenway is a collaborative effort by not-for profit organizations and government agencies to create a sustainable, 40-mile riverside recreation and conservation area on both banks of the Mississippi, extending from the Gateway Arch in downtown St. Louis to the River's meeting-points with the Missouri and Illinois Rivers.

We appreciate the assistance we have received from the staff of the St. Louis District in the early stages of planning and implementing the Confluence project. But we hope that the Corps will play a greater role in this public-private partnership in the future.

The Corps is in a unique position to help. We encourage you to use your full authority to be a leader in environmental restoration and floodplain management up and down the River. Here in the St. Louis metropolitan area for example, the Corps could play a major role in the Confluence by restoring Chouteau Island, enhancing the Riverfront Trail and controlling flooding in East St. Louis.

These are real opportunities that exist today for the Corps to partner with other public and private entities to achieve real gains for the River and its neighboring communities in riverside conservation, recreation, increased wildlife habitat and improved water quality for the region.

Partnerships are not a panacea however. They are hard work and require a level of cooperation and accountability that sometimes goes beyond what partners are used to. But partnerships also mean more expertise and resources focused on a goal. By working together, we could bring additional funding to River projects through Congress, the states, local entities as well as the private sector.

If the Mississippi is going to be a "River of Dreams" we need to work together to make it happen now.

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Trails 2004  
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