

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
REGIONAL LISTENING SESSION MEETING NOTES

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
JUNE 16, 2000

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June 2000

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by

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REGIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS MEETING NOTES – ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

The notes provided below document the main points that were offered during the Listening Session in St. Louis, Missouri on June 16, 2000. The notes highlight and summarize the key topics and issues that were discussed at the meeting. Selected attachments are provided in this document.

Water plays a major role in how we live and work. As steward of America's water resources for more than 200 years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun a dialogue with the American public, stakeholders, customers, and government agencies at all levels about the water resources challenges that lie ahead. The Corps is conducting 14 regional public listening sessions throughout the United States between June and November of 2000 to provide citizens the opportunity to voice concerns about pressing water resources problems, opportunities, and needs impacting their lives, communities, and future sustainability. This dialogue is an integral part of the Corps' strategic planning process.

The cities where listening sessions are being conducted include St. Louis, MO, Sacramento, CA, Phoenix, AZ, Woburn, MA, Atlanta, GA, Omaha, NE, Honolulu, HI, Chicago, IL, Louisville, KY, Dallas, TX, Williamsburg, VA, New Brunswick, NJ, Anchorage, AK, Vancouver, WA.

This report summarizes the St. Louis, Missouri, listening session. This session, hosted by the Mississippi Valley Division, was conducted on June 16, 2000 at the Regal Riverfront Hotel in St. Louis. Approximately 220 people attended this meeting to share their views with the Corps.

The information collected from the listening sessions will be incorporated into a report assessing future national water resources needs and the gaps that must be closed to meet these needs. This report will be shared with key decision makers within the Army and Congress to help inform their discussions about water resources issues and future investment decisions. Additionally, the report will provide a point of departure for ensuing discussions with other Federal agencies to identify common water resources issues and missions most appropriate to the roles and responsibilities of the Federal government. The information will also be incorporated into a revision of the Civil Works Program Strategic Plan.

Welcoming Remarks

To initiate the session, Major General Phillip Anderson (President of the Mississippi River Commission and Commander of Mississippi Valley Division) welcomed attendees on behalf of the MVD. He explained that the primary goal of the sessions was to learn what the people of the United States felt were important water resource challenges facing the Nation.

Additionally, he commented that the sessions would help meet requirements from Congress contained in the Government Performance Results Act and assist in long-term planning to meet the Corps responsibilities for water resources development and management. General Anderson wanted participants to realize that the Corps intends to develop a better understanding of water resource challenges by conducting meetings around the Nation to address these challenges. By visiting regions throughout the Nation, the Corps felt they could form a better understanding of micro-issues in relation to national macro-issues.

General Anderson indicated that the Corps has been serving the nation for 200 years and that today, the focus has been on answering national infrastructure needs such as ecological restoration and modifying harbors to accommodate increased demand for shipped goods. He noted that in preparation for the sessions, the Corps identified six general water resource challenges facing the Nation. The challenges included flood control, improved navigation capabilities, environmental restoration, adequate urban and rural water supply, aging water resources infrastructure, and response to disasters.

General Anderson continued by reminding everyone that these are national issues. It was understood that participants would be inclined to discuss specific challenges that relate to them, but General Anderson urged everyone to try to discuss the challenges on a regional or national scale. In conclusion, General Anderson reminded everyone a summary of the session would be provided on the IWR website (www.wrsc.usace.army.mil/iwr/waterchallenges) and a final report would be compiled upon conclusion of the sessions. In closing, General Anderson reminded participants that the intent of the sessions was to help make national decisions on water resource planning, levels of investment and stewardship requirements. Mr. Jim Creighton, representing the contractor, Planning and Management Consultants, Ltd., was then introduced as the facilitator of the session.

Session Objectives

Mr. Creighton began by introducing himself to the audience. He asked the participants not to read any prepared, written statements at the session, but rather provide them to the session recorders for inclusion in a report summarizing the session which would be posted on the IWR website.¹ Next, Mr. Creighton outlined the session agenda with the participants. Although the agenda would serve as a general guide to the day's activities, the agenda could be modified at the facilitator's discretion as appropriate for the dynamics of the particular audience. The agenda was presented as follows:

1:00 – 1:20 PM	Welcome
1:20 – 1:40	Session Objectives
1:40 – 2:40	Table Talk Discussion
2:40 – 3:30	Large Group Discussion
3:30 – 3:50	Break
3:50 – 4:05	Brief Plenary Session

¹ The statements and associated materials are included as Attachment C.

4:05 – 5:00	Small Group Discussion
5:00 – 5:30	Closing Remarks and Adjourn
5:30 – 6:30	Informal Dialogue with Attendees

Mr. Creighton asked the participants to focus on the following four sets of questions during the session:

1. What are the key water resources challenges facing our country (or this region)?
2. Why is it a problem? What impact is the problem already having or is likely to have on our prosperity, quality of life, and environmental sustainability?
3. What actions should we take to respond to the challenge? What should be done about the problem?
4. Who should take these actions? What should the Federal government do to help address the problem? What can you or your organizations do?

Mr. Creighton continued by explaining to participants that the Corps did not want a regular public hearing, but rather an interactive session where everyone could express their views. An important point of order was that specific projects would not be addressed or discussed as part of this event, since it would limit the level of discussion required to achieve the objectives of the workshop. A Corps Public Affairs Officer (PAO), Ms. Bobbie Galford with the Mississippi Valley Division, was present for discussion regarding specific projects if someone required assistance. He added that, if someone needed to contact a Corps representative to call 1-800-447-6342 and they would be able to speak with Mr. Mark Gmitro, Listening Session Coordinator, USACE.

Mr. Creighton explained the intended process of the listening session. The first portion of the session would be conducted by forming small groups and informally discussing the various challenges/issues each person wanted to address. A volunteer would need to take notes of the challenges mentioned during the discussion. Corps staff at each table was instructed by the facilitator not to serve as spokespersons for the groups, but they could record the challenges developed at each table (if so asked by the group). A spokesperson would be chosen from each small group to report the group's ideas to the entire audience. Each group would have a representative recite the list of challenges their group identified and if some were not previously mentioned, then they would be added to the master list of challenges. The master list would be projected on a large screen for everyone for discussion and subsequent review. After this review, the original goal was to consolidate the challenges into a set of broader groups of water resource challenges. Next, these condensed sets of challenges would then be posted around the room. Participants would then be asked to assemble around the challenge of choice for discussion and would be free to move from one issue to another for maximum participation. This portion of discussion would be documented and one person would be asked to present the response to that challenge by answering the following:

1. What actions need to be taken to respond to problems, needs, opportunities, ect.?
2. Who should take these actions?
3. What are you or your group willing to do to make these actions happen? What role should the Federal government play?

To allow for a mix of responses to the same challenge, participants would have the opportunity to write down their individual remarks regarding the challenges being addressed on self-adhesive note paper (i.e. stickies). These remarks would then be placed in the area designated for each specific challenge. During this portion of the session, a Corps representative would hand out a comment sheet for individual remarks on the quality of the session provided. Lastly, at the end of the session, the stickies would be collected, transcribed, and included in the summary report. The comment sheets would also be collected for review after the session. The transcribed comments regarding identified challenges are included as Attachment A.²

At the conclusion of the session, people were invited to remain for informal discussion and comments with Corps representatives and other participants of the session. Mr. Creighton asked participants to gather in groups and bring any written statements to the session recorders. Following these instructions and ground rules, Mr. Creighton directed the parties' participants to begin their first table-talk discussion.

Identification and Validation of Water Resource Challenges (1st Group Discussion)

About 23 groups of about 6-8 persons gathered for approximately one hour. At each table was an assortment of stakeholders including environmental professionals, maritime specialists, town/city officials, outdoor recreation providers, farmers, conservationists, homeowners, perspectives of various state and Federal agencies, and others. The objective was to have many different views shared among the small groups, to compile a list of the ideas, and to have the list conveyed to the broader listening audience. One USACE representative was assigned to each table to listen and offer any input in the discussion. After one hour, Mr. Creighton asked everyone to stop and have a group spokesperson present the challenges their group acknowledged. He asked that if a challenge had already been mentioned and added to the list, then it should not be repeated. He added that this would be a good time to provide individual remarks on stickies. The following is the initial list of 52 challenges proposed by the entire group of participants during the first discussion:

- A. Aging infrastructure
- B. Environmental restoration
- C. Emergency response
- D. Flood control
- E. Floodplain management and flood damage reduction
- F. Water supply/conveyance

² The authors of this report made every effort to accurately transcribe the handwritten comments from the "stickies" generated by the listening session participants; however, some comments may contain errors due to illegibility or incoherence of the original text.

- G. Marine transportation system
- H. Socioeconomic, outreach, and community input
- I. Reform of Army Corps of Engineers
- J. Adjust societies demands to fit the river
- K. Policy based on consensus
- L. Effective forums of partnerships; mandatory tracking
- M. Balance; benefit/cost analysis
- N. Recreation
- O. Solving multiple problems at the same time
- P. Funding needed
- Q. Agreement on how challenges are solved
- R. Prioritization of federal land acquisition (Interagency)
- S. Better coordination between agencies
- T. Land use planning, controls, and incentives
- U. Restoration; Protection of Base Flows
- V. More complete monitoring program
- W. Evolve away from federal land management
- X. Floodplain compatible uses
- Y. Ecologically equivalent mitigation
- Z. Engage environmental non-governmental organizations in partnerships
- AA. Groundwater depletion and utilization of available supplies
- BB. Control of importation of exotic species
- CC. Holistic system approach to entire Mississippi river basin
- DD. Communication drives funding
- EE. Think national river system

- FF. Military/civilian roles in water planning
- GG. Regional sediment management in watershed context
- HH. Environmental enhancement and stewardship
- II. Economic viability context
- JJ. Coordination among local government agencies
- KK. Storm water management
- LL. Policy on long range vision (35 years) with balance of watershed usage
- MM. Waterway transportation – think more comprehensively intermodal
- NN. Finding balance between operating and maintaining what we have and building/acquiring new things
- OO. Climate change could alter basic assumptions
- PP. Information education
- QQ. Flood plain management
- RR. Lack of vision of Army Corps of Engineers – need to go and try to influence congress
- SS. Comprehensive planning of watersheds
- TT. Revalidate assumptions prior to project implementation
- UU. Full cost accounting which includes costs and benefits – water quality; low income communities
- VV. Protection of vanishing species
- WW. Trimming costs of project planning
- XX. Corps drop back and focus on traditional roles such as flood control and navigation
- YY. Look at other models of consensus building – Breaux Act, Chesapeake Bay
- ZZ. Visibility for Mississippi River

Once challenges were presented, Mr. Creighton realized that the list of challenges were too extensive for consolidation within the allowed time. Given this, the format of the second group session required modification. Mr. Creighton proposed staying in the table talk groups that were formed during the first group discussion rather than trying to break out in to specific challenge groups. With so many challenges, the original breakout format would not be possible.

The entire audience was asked for any objections to staying in the same table talk groups and all participants generally agreed to the format modification. A 20 minute intermission then took place.

Responsibilities and Actions Needed to Meet the Challenges (2nd Group Discussion)

After the intermission, Mr. Creighton reiterated the format of the second portion of the session. The number attendees appeared to decrease, with approximately 125 remaining after the intermission period. The groups were asked to look at the challenges they initially identified and consider the following questions:

1. What actions need to be taken to respond to problems, needs, opportunities, etc.?
2. Who should take these actions?
3. What are you or your group willing to do to make these actions happen? What role should the Federal government play?

Each group was asked to have a non-Corps volunteer take notes during discussion and conduct a verbal and written summarization at the conclusion of the discussion. Mr. Creighton assured everyone that the notes would be used to assist in the official summary of the session. He added that this would also be an opportune time to fill out the stickies and post them on the walls for observation and inclusion in the session summary.

The groups were given approximately 30 minutes to discuss their challenges. Afterwards, Mr. Creighton took oral comments from each group regarding their conclusions. Each group presented a basic summary of the challenges they addressed. Nineteen group summaries were presented:

1. Table 1 Report Out: Topic I – Reform of the Corps: Persons in this group believe that the Corps needs to be reformed. First, the Corps should demilitarize all civil works departments. Then, a new Federal agency could be created from portions of the Bureau of Reclamation and the former Corps to focus specifically on waterway management. This agency would be most effectively aligned under the Executive Branch with a cabinet member appointed as head of the agency. This new agency would develop their mission, with the focus being on environmental protection and ecological restoration, where limits would be set on river system uses. This agency would also require coordination with other Federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding research projects, wildlife concerns, and wetland issues. Citizen participation would have to be implemented into the agency format. Furthermore, full-cost accounting would need to be included in the decision making process. For additional enforcement, the agency would need to criminalize the violation of environmental laws. To keep the new agency honest, true campaign finance reform would need to be enacted.
2. Table 2 Report Out: Topic CC- Holistic system approach to entire Mississippi River Basin: Persons in this group felt an independent commission was required to manage the Mississippi

River Basin. This commission would conduct comprehensive and strategic planning implementation, coordination, and reporting. The commission focus would be:

- Aimed at sustainable economics and ecosystems,
- Diverse representing all necessary skills and knowledge,
- Responsible for monitoring,
- Floodplain management, and
- Basin surface/groundwater uses.

The commission could include a single entity or multiple entities with responsibilities limited to different portions of the basin (i.e. upper/lower). Discussion was also given to the scope of such a commission, viewing it in both inclusive and exclusive terms.

Topic U - Restoration; Protection of Base Flows: Concerns regarding watershed hydrology and the identification of wetland benefits.

Topic E - Floodplain management and flood damage reduction: The following issues were addressed:

- Coordinate Federal programs,
- Agricultural techniques that consider the river as a resource,
- Keeping people on the floodplain,
- Conserving family farms, and
- Finding ways to evolve away from the exclusive public buy-out approach.

Topic V – More Complete Monitoring Program: The group discussed having a complete monitoring program combined with a network of communication. The program would need to “tell a story” depicting the current health of the river system and describe various sources of water quality problems.

3. Table 3 Report Out: Topic HH - Environmental enhancement and stewardship: Persons with this group felt the initial wording of one of the pre-recommended challenges (B. environmental restoration) should read “environmental enhancement and stewardship”. They felt the design and implementation of cost effective and innovative ecosystem and watershed approaches were required. These modified approaches would enhance the ability to balance environmental and socioeconomic benefits. From this, an effective integration of ecosystem science, economic evaluation, and environmental engineering could be applied. The agencies involved in the implementation would include non-government organizations (NGOs) and Federal, State, and local governments.

Topic GG - Regional sediment management in watershed context: The group addressed regional sediment management in a watershed context with the following actions required:

- Have sediment acknowledged as a resource,
- View the entire watershed as a single unit, including shoreline,

- Develop new integrated computational tools for watershed monitoring and management,
- Acknowledgement of watershed activities and their effects on habitats, biotic features, ecological processes, and morphology,
- Develop techniques to analyze the effects of other management alternatives across individual and multiple watersheds, and
- Improve partnerships between the Corps, private stakeholders, and other Federal agencies regarding water resources management.

Topic N - Recreation: Recreational water use was a current challenge of concern. The importance of the uses and benefits of recreational water use needs to be included in project benefit/cost ratios. When conducting project planning, engineering, and design activities, recreational applications should be considered in the project development. For example, an unfortunate consequence of poor planning is the aggressive migration of non-indigenous species in recreational areas. Acknowledging the problem during the development of project operation and maintenance would be more effective. Recreational areas should be designed so that they are compatible with their urban and rural surroundings. This effort would require implementation from NGOs and Federal, State, and local government bodies.

4. Table 4 Report Out: Topic L - Effective forums of partnerships; mandatory tracking: Persons in this group felt a partnership among Federal, State, and local agencies, along with community organizations, was required for the delivery of governmental services directed at water resource issues. This could be accomplished through a series of actions, such as:
 - Adding additional field personnel, increasing the number of field offices, and spreading the knowledge of issues throughout the agency,
 - Educating public officials in Federal, State, and local agencies about basic watershed and environmental functions,
 - Providing additional listening sessions,
 - Providing watershed education in high schools,
 - Conducting additional commercials and public announcements on television and radio,
 - Establishing community monitoring programs, and
 - Publishing a contact list of Federal, State, and local personnel to inquire about or to inform on water resource issues.
5. Table 5 Report Out: Topic E - Floodplain management and flood damage reduction: Persons in this group felt flood control and shipping locks were challenges of concern. They felt restrictions should be placed on development in areas below the 100 year floodplain (if not currently protected by formal flood control) unless flood insurance was purchased. Another option would be to fund private land owners for allowing their land to flood through a program similar to Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), or Wetland Reserve Program (FRP). Along the same lines, areas could be restored back to the natural floodplain where practical. Proper appropriations could be set aside to ease flood damage in key areas.

Topic G - Marine transportation system: Another challenge discussed was the aging lock systems along the Illinois and Upper Mississippi Rivers. Replacement of locks 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, Peoria, and Lagrange with 1,200 feet chambers was recommended. The old lock chambers could be used as auxiliary locks. Replacement of the locks would keep the midwest agricultural economy competitive with the rest of the world. One important aspect would be to educate the general public about the diverse needs and purpose of the inland water system. They would also need to understand the environmental impact and economic benefits from new locks being created.

6. Table 6 Report Out: Topic ZZ – Visibility for Mississippi River: Persons in this group felt the visibility of the Mississippi needed to be increased. The river system needed to be nationally recognized for its navigation and ecological importance; and focus was required on water quality, sediment management, and flood damage reduction challenges. Actions that could be taken to address the above challenges include:
 - Provide staffing to the Mississippi River Caucus from temporary assignments out of the EPA, FWS, NRCS, Corps, etc. agencies. These participants could develop a cross-cutting agenda and subsequent program.
 - Water resource education in public schools.
 - Create water resource visitor centers at locks, dams, and other Corps facilities.
 - Create a multi-purpose Federal web page for education and tourism.

7. Table 7 Report Out – Topic L - Effective forums of partnerships; mandatory tracking: Persons in this group did not list any specific challenges, but recommended actions that could be taken to promote effective forums and partnerships to give access and empowerment to all groups with interests in water resource development. Additionally, this sanction would need to establish a structured, compulsory mechanism that accurately acquires, collates, and analyzes inputs from all sectors of society. From this, a consensus would be needed for the implementation of a plan of action with five, 25, and 100 year milestones/visions. These time-oriented goals would be supported by a mandatory tracking and feedback system. Institutions at all levels would need to be involved including the Federal Reserve Board.

8. Table 8 Report Out: Topic Z - Engage environmental non-governmental organizations in partnerships: Persons in this group identified two challenges. The first challenge related to environmental NGOs and their involvement in government project planning and formation. To properly participate in the project planning process, environmental NGOs would need to recognize the importance of early, continuous, and constructive engagement. The best way this could benefit the planning process is by inviting NGOs to planning meetings and allowing them to be involved in the entire decision making process.

Topic F - Water supply/conveyance: The other challenge was making sure adequate water supplies, both from surface and groundwater, would be available. This could be accomplished by obtaining a national inventory of available water (Federal level) where depletion areas would be identified (State level) and long-term impacts would be projected during project planning (all levels). Significant environmental benefits would need to be recognized for the effective protection of underground aquifers.

9. Table 9 Report Out: Persons in this group identified three challenges. Topic P – Funding Needed: obtaining additional funding for water resources projects. This could be accomplished by lobbying Congress for larger appropriations and raising the national profile. Congress would be responsible for providing the funding, whereas the Corps would create the budgets for projects. Better spending could be accomplished by reducing design costs, better spending practices (prioritization), and reducing the project backlog. The second challenge Topic HH - Environmental enhancement and stewardship, dealt with wetlands permitting and mitigation. Consideration of cumulative impacts on a watershed should be applied concurrently with project construction and wetland permitting. This could be implemented through reforms enacted by Congress, with policies modified by the Corps. Lastly, within Topic NN - Finding balance between operating and maintaining what we have and building/acquiring new things, the challenge of balancing navigation and environmental issues was discussed. One way to satisfy this balance would be to increase the entire Energy and Water funding and raise habitat restoration spending to its fullest capability. Furthermore, river uses could be determined through acts of Congress.
10. Table 10 Report Out: Topic LL - Policy on long range vision (35 years) with balance of watershed usage: Persons in this group discussed challenges dealing with viewing systems as a whole, resource allocation, and infrastructure maintenance. The management of projects should be done with a long-term (35 years) holistic approach. Wealth was addressed and the difference between creating and transferring wealth was noted. Questions arose as to who decides on water resource allocations. It was mentioned that physical ownership differs from theoretical stakeholder ownership. One way to deal with this challenge would be to determine economic viability and allocate accordingly. Existing infrastructure maintenance was discussed and would need to be addressed to preserve the status quo. Maintenance should be considered for structural and nonstructural items.
11. Table 11 Report Out: Persons in this group identified many various challenges. First, under Topic A - Aging infrastructure, the issue of aging infrastructure was addressed. Problems such as aging Coast Guard equipment, recapitalization of Inland Aids to Navigation, deteriorating lock systems and port facilities, and declining quality of residential areas adjacent to ports were identified. To resolve these problems, solutions such as prioritization of projects, redevelopment of ports, planned port access and redirecting funds could be applied. The Federal government could establish funding priorities through legislative decisions; State government could implement better economic development strategies; and local groups could gain project support through communication.

Topic T - Land use planning, controls, and incentives: Another challenge discussed was land use planning. Control over development in floodplain areas could be accomplished through incentives such as additional buy-out programs and local control. Additionally, a consistent permitting policy with new laws could be introduced. Assessments on the impact to the ecosystem could be implemented, with standardized economic cost analyses and follow-up procedures being required. This could be conducted by FEMA or the Corps, possibly through congressional action or through State and local agencies.

Next, under Topic F – Water supply/conveyance, drought planning was discussed. The issue of water supply vs. water rights was mentioned. The development of community-based models could maximize drought response. This could be monitored by the Corps, with the application of new regulations and funding. The State could assist by providing better planning, conducting demand forecasting, and through implemented monitoring techniques.

Topic B – Environmental Restoration: Environmental restoration was presented as a challenge, with the degradation of resources, water quality, and habitats also being mentioned. This challenge could be addressed by establishing baselines for monitoring, assessing waterway modifications, redefining the Corps mission, habitat restoration, and mitigation. This challenge would require the involvement of Federal, State, and local agencies.

Topic C – Emergency Response: This challenge presented concerned emergency response activities. Problems facing this challenge included too many Federal agencies involved in stream gage monitoring, lack of involvement by local people, and an aging Coast Guard fleet for navigation and safety. This challenge should be addressed through better emergency response planning, centralization of gage operations, standardization of gage readings to mean sea level (MSL) for public understanding, and the addition of sustainable O&M funding. Support from Federal, State, and local agencies would be required.

Topic B – Environmental Restoration: Lastly, the protection of the environment was addressed. Problems such as the transporting of hazardous waste on barges, the stopping of channelization, and the degradation of natural resources were mentioned. This could be dealt with by applying the proper level of effort to each specific problem, deauthorization of river projects, applying a watershed approach to management, and through the promotion of nonstructural flood damage reduction. Federal participants would need to pass sufficient legislation for funding. State participants would also require additional funding and research. Local participants would need to implement local regulations and have good planning efforts/communication.

12. Table 12 Report Out: Topic CC - Holistic system approach to entire Mississippi River Basin: Persons in this group chose to discuss one challenge. They felt a balance of water resource issues was important. To accomplish this balance, a process would need to be developed that included the involvement of all river stakeholders in the political decision making process. This would allow all the impacted people to voice their concerns, thus promoting a unified approach to problem solving. Additionally, NEPA and economic development policies could be applied on a system-wide basis and the entire river system could be studied (i.e. Comprehensive Mississippi River Study).
13. Table 13 Report Out: Topic N – Recreation: Persons in this group issued the following response. The value of recreation should be quantified and used as a criterion in benefit/cost analysis. Criteria of justified projects should be re-evaluated using existing agencies.
14. Table 14 Report Out: Topic PP - Information Education: Persons in this group felt education and resource allocation and policies based upon consensus were important challenges. One

way the group thought people could be educated was through television. If major TV/media outlets provided shows such as “Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?” dealing with water management issues, then people could see the seriousness of the issue. Additional education could be provided by various water resource agencies to children in schools. Topic O - Solving multiple problems at the same time: The other challenge that the group identified focused on the uses of water for our growing population. They felt new policies on water management and use were required and could be implemented through Congressional action. Additionally, a mechanism for networking all competing interests needs to be established to develop a general consensus. One point mentioned was that people react to threats to the common good or to a common enemy and water resource issues should be applied to one of these philosophies.

15. Persons in this group identified three challenges of concern. Topic O - Solving multiple problems at the same time and Topic LL - Policy on long range vision (35 years) with balance of watershed usage: The first challenge was to conduct multiple problem solving, rather than focusing on single issues. One way this could be accomplished is through the establishment of a water-basin commission, composed of people from all involved inter-governmental agencies. This commission would establish a long-term plan (20-30 years) to address watershed issues such as sediment control, nutrient reduction, navigation, and flood control. Additionally, this commission would be responsible for developing a budget and deciding on the allocation of funding.

Topic NN - Finding balance between operating and maintaining what we have and building/acquiring new things: The second challenge was for a balance to be achieved between operating and maintaining existing facilities/projects and building/acquiring new contracts. A minimum level of maintenance budget would need to be provided by OMB for day-to-day operations and current contracts. Similar funding needs to be provided for new projects that are approved and implemented. By doing this, assurance could be given that both current and future projects were properly maintained. Each project would also require a major maintenance budget for equipment scheduled repair every three, five, or 10 years. By dedicating funds to this need, other project funds would not be shifted away from their intended use.

Topic G - Marine transportation system and Topic MM - Waterway transportation – think more comprehensively intermodal: The third challenge dealt with waterway transportation. If waterway transportation was given limits, then what effects would this have on alternate shipping methods (i.e. roads and rail)? To help answer this question, the group felt the development of shipping simulation model was necessary. The model would need to show the various impacts (additional emissions, fuel usage, and new roads/rail lines) on roads and rail lines from an increase of 400,000,000 tons of added freight.

16. Table 16 Report Out: Topic N – Recreation: Persons in this group focused on the value of growth in recreation. They felt the guidelines, principles, and criteria under which projects are justified need to be reevaluated to reflect modified circumstances. Agencies that should implement these changes include the Corps, Fish and Wildlife, and FEMA (Federal), State

conservation, FEMA, and DNR agencies, and local farm, navigation, environmental, and flood control groups.

17. Table 17 Report Out: Topic SS - Comprehensive planning of watersheds and Topic UU - Full cost accounting which includes costs and benefits – water quality; low income communities: Persons in this group arranged their challenges into a system-wide vision. The stated challenges addressed the national waterway system, flood damage protection, and environmental stewardship. The system-view vision is defined by Congress and implemented by various Federal agencies. Things that would help in the system include fair cost-sharing and cost-benefit analysis and the establishment of an oversight organization (watershed-based) that prioritizes projects via specific principles. The organization could focus on localized issues utilizing local experts and interest groups.
18. Table 18 Report Out: Topic A - Aging infrastructure; Topic Q - Agreement on how challenges are solved; and Topic PP – Information Education: Persons in this group saw the rehabilitation of infrastructure (locks and dams) as a challenge of concern. Keeping infrastructure updated would sustain the national economy and allow America to remain competitive. The Federal role would be to plan, design, and construct facilities in an environmentally sustainable manner. Budgets that would match the capability of Inland Water Trust Fund (IWTF) would need to be submitted to Congress. State involvement would be to issue water quality certifications and to properly educate the public. On a local level, individuals and organizations would need to inform and educate communities for enlisted support. The private sector could contribute to the IWTF through increased fuel taxes.
19. Table 19 Report Out: Topic B – Environmental Restoration and Topic X – Flood plain compatible uses: Persons in this group saw the evaluation, restoration, and preservation of wetlands as a challenge. Methods of addressing this challenge include implementing an emergency wetland program, creating a permitting process through the Corps, and working with the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). One option to manage the flood control basin would be to prohibit residential development in the floodplain.

The transcription of notes from the small group discussions on responses and actions are included as Attachment B.³

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Mr. Creighton concluded the session by requesting that all notes be provided to the session recorders and for any additional comments to be written on stickies and posted for collection and inclusion on the web site. He also asked all participants to pick up a comment

³ The authors of this report made every effort to accurately transcribe the handwritten notes recorded during the small group discussions; however, some comments may contain errors due to illegibility of the original text.

sheet and fill it out before departing.⁴ He wanted everyone to know that the comment sheets would be used for evaluating the session and modification of future sessions. Lastly, he urged everyone to stay and converse after the session concluded and reminded the participants that Corps staff would be available for discussion. Mr. Creighton then asked General Anderson if he had any additional closing comments and the General declined. With that, Mr. Creighton thanked everyone for attending and formally ended the session.

⁴ In order to obtain feedback for internal use by the Corps on the effectiveness of the listening sessions, Corps personnel placed comment forms on each table for the participants to complete. These were collected by the Corps personnel as the participants left the meeting.

ATTACHMENT A

TRANSCRIPTION OF COMMENTS REGARDING IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

NO&M 25
ST. LOUIS LISTENING SESSION

Challenge	Why challenge is important?
Funding at proper level.	Too many items to do and fix.
Development and implementation of a comprehensive plan (25-50 years) on a watershed basis for land use and water resources.	What we do today will affect generations and generations to come. Therefore, actions in the watershed need to be on a consensus basis as opposed to special interest basis.
Potential national drought.	This country, or portions thereof, are faced with a high probability of drought conditions. Need comprehensive plan to address severe drought if it should develop.
Maintain dual transportation systems (trains/highways/waterway).	Keep transport prices low in country.
I am of the opinion that if the reasonable people of this country do not wake up and speak up, a very vocal radical environmental group representing a very small minority of our population will take our federal water resources programs and agencies in a direction that is not good for the future of our country! I am not a federal employee.	
Development and implementation of a comprehensive monitoring plan.	Agricultural is taking principal hit for hypoxic zone in Gulf of Mexico. Millions of acres have been taken out of production through programs such as CRP, WRP & EWP - Flood Plain Easements – yet no one can accurately comment on the effect of this.
The Corps of Engineers need to hold up and down the river, a seminar or workshop on flood fighting procedures, for local interests.	So many people who have worked flood fight have retired, and this would give the younger people some knowledge and understanding on what to do and look for during times of high water.
Corps of Engineers should stick to traditional roles of flood control and navigation improvements. Consider value of established farming communities along the river. Protect the farmland and the people. People should have the right to live and build in floodplains if they opt out of federal insurance programs and assume their own risks. The protection of people in the river valley should always take precedence over protection of other species.	
Establish birding trails along the entire length of the Mississippi River.	Birding trails attract a huge constituency of birders from this country and abroad.

	Moreover, birding activity inspires seasonal events and focused activities, many of which are related to the navigation system (locks & dams). Birding trails would increase the visibility of the Mississippi River.
Expand role of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	This is a professional organization – they have been good servants to the nation for years – they build professional, quality products which are investments into our nation.
Flood control: Involvement or requirement of urban areas to manage volume (quantity) of storm water runoff.	Minimizes the amount of water passed downstream. Holding water helps to reduce flood damages downstream.
Desires of local affected area are paramount in the decision making process.	These are the people who will be directly impacted.
Aging infrastructure. Lock facilities are over 50 years old. Some have been rehabilitated but still have maintenance problems.	Failures will increase, increasing transportation costs, increasing costs on world markets, and reducing income of producers. Answer – increase Corps O&M program budget.
Sedimentation Management – Basin wide, multi-agency strategy to reduce sediment in the rivers.	Sedimentation in the upper waters has been described as the greatest environmental problem in the waters. (Ala Illinois River Comprehensive Plan).
Flood Control: Move towards using “soft technology” (wetland, grassland restoration) for flood control. Use natural systems to hold water, pay land owners for using land to hold water.	Minimizes, reduces amounts of water, volume and velocity, of water passed down stream. Reduce fluctuation of water levels, stabilizes water temperature, stores water in the groundwater which could also addresses drought conditions.
Offer “doable” actions to improve our nation’s water resources. Many actions heard today are not feasible, particularly those with volatile political and public administration impasses.	We need solid planning that would expose implementable processes. Let’s confront the challenges that appear to be growing in intensity with plans that lead to consensus through intelligent “giving and taking” among interested parties!
More money for Corps programs.	Aging infrastructure – delaying needed rehab/repairs is increasing total cost significantly.
Increase intermodal ports/facilities on the Upper Mississippi River .	Significant opportunities to reduce transportation costs.
Flood control. Link planning avoidance of Federal agencies Corps, FEMA, Levee Districts to minimize risk and damage.	Save dollars and resource damages helps sustain the environment for future uses.
Land use planning and future development should be based on a watershed approach, not	If the entire watershed within proposed development is not considered, then the overall

project approach to ensure environmental sustainability. And the people must be informed and <u>involved</u> with the process.	water quality will be negatively impacted, ultimately having an adverse effect on the overall quality of life. “As the quality of water goes, so goes the quality of life.”
Give recreation and fish and wildlife equal consideration with other project purposes (flood control, navigation, etc).	Important to quality of life, sustainability.
Independent review of backlogged water resource projects in light of new technology, today’s economics.	To eliminate economically unjustified and environmentally damaging projects.
Recognize all constituencies, especially local community input.	Projects funded with taxpayers dollars should have taxpayer voter consensus.
Reform Corps; strengthen civilian role, provide scientific independent review of projects.	To give the Corps credibility and fair consideration of nonstructural solutions to water resource problems.
National vision and action plan for 5-25-100 year milestones, with mandatory follow-up and report system, based on cost and risk analysis, based on consensus.	
Mitigation.	Mitigation – environmental compensation – should be provided as an “emergency” or critical need basis. Currently it is an easy way to give agency/whatever permission to destroy anything.
Water quality standards that are uniform across the nation.	Consistency across the board is necessary to maintain and restore environmental water quality.
Develop the spatial data necessary to bring to bear on solutions to issues.	Several basic datasets for planning and analysis and implementation is not available; Soils, Elevation, Wetlands.
“Cannot be everything for everybody.”	Too many inequities, economically, socially. Too many diverse interest (local, states rights, coastal vs. upper river). Too much geography. Not enough funding.
Credibility of Corps under question; lack of independent technical review of projects and mentality of serving business sector/cost sharing partners as “clients” creates culture of building environmentally destructive, economically questionable projects.	Reform the Corps of Engineers
A & F	Highway systems are getting overloaded. More and more transport needs to go to water and rail. Current water transportation structures need upgrading to handle greater traffic - ASAP. Rail transportation also needs drastic improvement.

D & E – Flood control & flood plain management are essentially the same.	La would not exist without it.
VV	Current costs are unreal. When it costs \$129,905 to do a \$162,800 construction contract, something is wrong (a rip rap job). When it costs \$218 thousand to do a \$299 thousand job. When it costs \$854 thousand to do a \$2.5 million job.
Minimizing negative impacts to agricultural industry caused by environmental restriction and dredged material disposal projects.	Agricultural land is a sensitive natural resource and should receive the same degree of protection afforded to other natural resources such a wetlands/forests. In many cases, agricultural land shoulders a disproportionate share of the impacts from public works projects. Alternatives to impacting agricultural should be explored with initiatives.
Wetland mitigation - use of agricultural land for mitigation. Prime farmland should not be used for wetland mitigation. Only marginal land should be used where hydrology is sufficient. Alternative sites should be sought.	Prime farmland should be retained for long term food and fiber production.
Change flood control to flood management.	Because you CAN NOT control flood you can manage floods
Monitoring and evaluations should be associated with all the challenges.	Without proper monitoring and evaluation you will never know the success and failure of a project.
Structural flood control vs. non structural flood control, i.e., flood damage reduction.	<u>Recognize</u> the difference between the problems facing the Upper Mississippi River and the Lower Mississippi River Valley. As the plans are considered, they need to be considered as a site-specific approach. Some areas are suited for non-structural approaches while structural flood control measures may be the only answers for other areas. Place strong emphasis on the differences between the Upper and Lower Mississippi River Valleys.
Environmental monitoring needs to be associated with all aspects of restoration, enhancement and stewardship activities on the part of the Corps.	
Continuing navigation while dealing with adverse environmental impacts.	Environmental Losses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - loss of habitat - loss of flood plain connectivity - have resulted in endangered species - loss of wetlands

	<p>Things being done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental management program - upper river avoid and minimize program
Funding	<p>Adverse impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flood control - navigation - environmental protection/restoration.
Wetland permit processes need changes. Mitigation must result in net gain of wetland acreage and must be ecologically the same. Destroying wetlands & planting trees as mitigation is not appropriate. Cumulative effects of wetland permitting in watersheds must be consistent.	Water quality benefits. Habitat benefits, natural storage of flood waters.
Constructing, operating, and maintaining flood control while dealing with adverse environmental impacts.	Provide flood protection to humans and wildlife. Loss of wetlands - act as sponge and filter for overflows. Consider cumulative impacts of wetland losses.
Put the military leaders who ordered the cooking of the books in prison.	To make sure it does not happen again.
Political Action Committee/soft money reform	Allows corporate interest to overrule public interest.
Adjust our demands to fit the river.	Not doing this is the cause of all of our problems.
Export model is overheating “economy” and earth while destroying the river.	Greatest national international security issue is global warming - climate change - is exacerbated by having to market products all over (we are a net importer of food – we don’t “feed the world.”)
As the population increases there is increasing competition for a finite resource. Develop new policies on water management and use; Congressional action is needed.	
Educate public on water resources issues.	Water resource issues are boring. Need to develop interesting ballots and present to public. Interest groups need to understand each others issues.
Making a timely decision to restore and improve locks on Upper Mississippi & Illinois Rivers.	Locks have reached their design life. Trust fund money is available now but may be used for other purposes if not used in near future.
Are we going to go commercial only or recreational use only.	It determines what rivers (use, quality, environmental) will be like.
Education of the general public on the challenges of water uses and needs.	So that people can make informed decisions on what they need or want.
ACOE budget does not meet O & M needs.	Congress does not understand the full

ACOE is not able to maintain locks and dams much less improve them. Need to make ACOE needs more visible.	importance on marine industry to the nation as a whole.
Educate the public on vital importance of water resources. <u>Use water resource agencies</u> to teach elementary - high school students in why math and science is important in an applied way by focusing on water management issues.	
Reform the Corps of Engineers.	Until done, no confidence can be had in any decisions made on water projects.
Education of public on the real job the Corps is doing to protect the environment and maintain commercial navigation.	The public needs to have confidence in the Corps, not just be exposed to myths, half truths, and falsehoods generated by the enviro terrorist.
Aging locks on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers. Flood control - the need for appropriate flood control management. The Corp needs to educate the public concerning the multi-use nature of the river system.	There are dramatic differences between the U. Miss & L. Miss flood control management. Allow diverse groups to be included in a partnership for the use of planning, beneficial multi-use of our rivers. Enable the Midwest economy to be competitive in the global market place.
Establish a more reliable baseline for planning and design of projects through increased funding.	Current level of knowledge is inadequate for planning of a variety of projects because of incomplete coverage of flood plain elevation and underwater bathymetry. Both are extremely important pieces of information that are currently lacking.
We need an agency to assist in managing our rivers that we can trust.	Our current agency, ACE is dishonest and politically influenced, biased against environmental concerns.
A strong marine transportation system that can accommodate increased demands.	We need to limit our so-called "demands" to the ecological limits of the whole river system. This challenge is not stated correctly!
Corp always approves and builds water projects and can be counted on to do so regardless of their environmental problems.	No balance in water projects decision making. Even if mitigation is unlikely to be possible, projects go forward.
The Corps has no credibility on economic and environmental matters. Too many harmful and unnecessary projects are built.	No meaningful partnership can occur until major reforms are adopted. Continued environmental problems will occur or worsen.
Make environmental and economic value co-equal considerations in Corps decision making on Corp projects (including inclusion in benefits calculations of water benefits, wildlife benefits, and the like).	In past, Corps has failed to accord to environmental issues importance in its decision making process.

Corps honest consideration of nonstructural flood control to reduce continuing increases in flood damages attendant to the Corps structural flood control approach.	U.S. has suffered increasing flood damages related to reliance on structural flood control that has fostered unwise development in flood prone lands.
Incorporation of the full panoply of environmental impacts of projects and permitting into decision-making, including cumulative and secondary impacts.	Past Corps activities have ignore totally of environmental impacts related to their projects, resulting in significant destruction and degradation of wetlands, watersheds, estuaries, etc.
Restoring the Mississippi via removing dams and restoring wetlands and flood plains.	The barge industry is funded with corporate welfare. The river needs to be restored to natural functions.
Look at real cost of Corps navigation system in the absence of the federal subsidy paid by federal taxpayers.	Barge transportation has been inexpensive source of transportation ONLY because federal taxpayers have subsidized the system.
Shifting reliance on structural flood control to an approach that includes full consideration of nonstructural flood control opportunities.	The Corps' emphasis has always been, and continues to be, on structural flood control despite evidence that structural flood control merely fosters unwise development.
Providing education to communities in a way that is meaningful and respectful. Providing citizens with education through community forums, community-based organizations – schools, etc.	Communities can take ownership of changing their own communities. Communities will know what resources and opportunities are available.
Creating a “common language” in which everyone can understand. Creating education materials that does not use “technical” terminology.	Many low-income and poor communities along the MS Delta have high rate of illiteracy.
Not Flood Control” Flood plain management flood damage reduction	There are non-structural methods of addressing the needs of communities. Ultimately we cannot control “floods.”
Nobody missuses forest more than the forest service. Corps has done a great job in the past but lack the funding to maintain The levees and wetland restoration.	Waste of natural resources. Navigation and levees are suffering.
Enforce violations of 404 permits.	
Smart growth-Management of stresses placed on the environment by increasing human population. Best use of all natural resources (a global approach) to foster environmental quality and quality of human life.	If all modes of transportation are not used effectively used, the environment impact will be less than minimal.

Updated federal water policy.	Water resource issues based on either adhoc activities and/or out moded laws and policy. Congressional reform of planning/funding mechanisms necessary to assure that finite water resources can adequately meet societal needs and the public trust.
To require all NGO's who file lawsuits to delay or stop flood plain management to be required to show fiscal accountability to those persons "impacted" by their actions.	Too often outside NGO are funded by large foundations who have show political activity influence as opposing forces. The people affected are not always aware, require full disclosure by plaintiff of those funds.
Qualifying and quantifying impacts (positive and negative) of projects relative to multiple facets of the river: navigation, flood control, environmental quality.	Current procedures and protocols do not require each project area to comply with the same cost-benefit methods, modeling, planning, and implementation processes.
Improving infrastructure.	To remain competitive. To allow for future innovations in product creation and market development.
Education is not a bullet yet. Adaptive management.	
Aquifer protection and distribution of ag water from major rivers.	To protect potable water supplies for future generations. To insure the family farm to survive and help the economy to persist at present level or better.
Strictly adhere to new regs governing wetland permits in flood plain. Limit destruction of wetlands in flood plains. Do not allow any mitigation other than watershed specific.	Loss of wetlands causes flooding.
Environmental restoration: must go through cost to benefit study like other projects. Levee districts should be recognized for the role they play in maintaining the environment.	EMP projects supercede structural projects with no consideration of cost. Levee districts protect the habitat and environment for many forms of wildlife and should be recognized for this.
Aging infrastructure: need expansion of locks and dams. Levee's should considered part of infrastructure.	To keep U.S. competitive in a world market. To preserve local communities. Could be funded by the selling of hydro- electric power from the locks and dams and reservoir.
Flood control: Corps must be lead agency for flood control. Flood control in river valleys must be maintained by levee systems. Corps must be allowed to carry out their original mission statement.	Flood control would be severely depleted if the expertise of Corps is lost.
Property rights: Individual property rights cannot be diluted by the government (FEMA). The constitution provides for this.	If individual rights are sacrificed for the greater good the U.S. will cease to exist.

Restructure of USACE: The Corps structure is more than adequate. It should not be dismantled. Projects and appropriations should be left as is.	If this power is taken away from USACE flood control in the Midwest will be nonexistent.
Restoration protection of base flows. More complete monitoring programs. Evolve away from Federal land management. Flood compatible issues.	Leveraging Federal dollars. Consistent/managed/shareable.
Recommendation for an independent commission to oversee entirety of the Mississippi River basin is politically impossible in that it does not account for state and local interests and political boundaries, however, such an agency could be instrumental in coordinating studies and priorities.	
Reform of Corps. Sierra Club representative may have correctly stated his own opinion, but it inappropriately distorted the general public view of the Corps.	
Balance of all the multi-users of River.	With future limited funds more attention all need to be applied to balancing user.
Competition for Federal funds in future with budget caps and limited resources.	National transportation infrastructure will be competing in future with aging population needs – retirement/social security/health care.
Current transportation infrastructure constructed 50-70 years ago and current generation does not relate to needs.	Major education process will be needed to educate the current and future decision maker who will be allocating funds.
Barge delays at locks.	Critical to economic interests – use alternative, non-structural measures to handle increased navigation. Must not result in increased damages to natural systems.
To frame the question: Not navigation vs. environment, but navigation <u>and</u> environment – how to give them parity on the Upper Mississippi River.	This tremendous resource is at a crossroads. Where we go from here is critical.
Navigation is ok.	Economic well being of the country.
Gain compromise in the waterway operation and management.	Move forward into the future.
Better organization and cooperation between State and Federal government regardless of FY beginning and ending in infrastructure construction.	Would result in savings in constructing infrastructure resulting in more monies to be available for other services or additional infrastructure construction.

The public does not adequately understand how important it is that we maintain our role as a leader and low-cost producer in world markets of agriculture and other products.	We cannot “close the doors” and live off of our organic backyard gardens. We import a lot and must have more to export, not less, but must be cost-competitive. Our capitalistic system gives us a competitive edge, but we must work to keep our leadership role (and not give it away).
Apply benefit-cost analysis to environmental projects and efforts, to identify proper priorities (cost effectiveness) and avoid environmental boondoggles.	As more of the Corps’ funding (and funding of other agencies) goes to environmental matters, there is a serious need to make certain those funds are effective and not wasted.
How can Corps accomplish historical and newer responsibilities without adequate funding?	Corps is seen as agency with expertise in specific areas and therefore is given new and expanded tasks and missions without increased funding.
Lack of understanding of economics by many people, who make demands for policies without understanding impact on society.	Need better education in economic matters, role of business and capitalism in creating and maintaining our society, nation, and its wealth. Poor nations cannot afford environmental programs, they have other priorities.
Corps of Engineers is stressed financially by too many missions for current funding level. Corps expertise and high level of competence has lead Congress to give the Corps increasing responsibilities.	Corps is a valuable national asset. We cannot diminish its effectiveness by stretching it too thin. If funding is limited, we need to remove “mission creep.”
To define the word Balance!	It is keeping groups apart.
Environmental terrorism and process disruption tactics to “gut” ACOE.	ACOE are non-political honest brokers who need to remain in the process.
Reform the Corps? ACOE and CG are the <u>only</u> honest brokers in an extremely complicated process trying to meet conflicting needs.	What a crock! Civilianizing the Corps and placing under a “Sierra Club” civilian leadership for “waterways management” would be disastrous!
Maintaining Status Quo. Use MTS to sort out!	Not enough infrastructure to meet challenge of doubling of cargo throughput in next 20 years.
MTS. Education and advocacy for funding and understanding of value of western rivers navigation.	More focus on balanced approach with genuine understanding of issues.
Infrastructure. Provide sustainable O&M funding and infrastructure recapitalization for ACOE and Coast Guard assets that “service” western rivers.	Necessary to allocate scarce Federal resources. USCG inland ATON fleet recapitalization plan funded and executed.
Coordinated riverfront land use. All Federal, State, and OGA and public interests to share vision and execute balanced plan.	Change current diverse, conflicting directions for waterway use.

Reform of Corps into new agency for <u>civil</u> works.	
Think about water resources on a holistic basis – entire North American watershed, rivers, oceans, lakes, streams.	
Protection of vanishing species (particularly paddlefish).	

ATTACHMENT B

TRANSCRIPTION OF NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS

APPENDIX C

SUBMITTED PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND MATERIALS

