



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

**Senator Bill Stouffer**  
Senate District 21

**Capitol Building, Room 332**  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

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**Contact: Aaron Baker**  
(573) 751-1507

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## **Spring Rise Plan Threatens the Well-Being of Missouri Farmers**

After all the efforts my colleagues and I have made to protect Missouri farmers from the ill-advised decisions of federal bureaucrats, I was disappointed to learn that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released plans this week to go ahead with the Missouri River spring rise. Apparently, the safety and livelihood of Missouri farmers is not enough to stop two man-made rises in river levels.

This summer, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ordered the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to essentially break a dam in South Dakota to promote fish breeding. Despite concerns that the higher river levels would be difficult to control, threaten Missouri River basin farmers with flooding, and wreak hardship on commercial carriers and hydroelectric plants, the corps released a report this week stating they will go ahead with not one spring rise, but two, in March and May. The water releases will last a total of 20 days.

The plan ignores a concurrent resolution that I sponsored and passed in September, encouraging the corps not to instigate the flooding. It also disregards efforts by Gov. Blunt and U.S. Senators Kit Bond and Jim Talent to discourage the plan.

In fact, I can't think of anyone who is happy with this plan. Farmers in Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri are afraid they'll be flooded out of their own fields and homes. And people upriver, in Montana and the Dakotas, worry that their drinking water and fishing reservoirs will be depleted. They have suffered years of drought, and they have to sit by and watch as the water leaves their communities to flood ours.

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The spring rise plan was created in an effort to boost the breeding of an endangered species of fish, the pallid sturgeon. However, no proof has been presented that shows the higher water levels will result in increased breeding. We're being fed pseudoscience. Environmental experiments should not come before the livelihoods of hardworking Missouri farmers. If we truly want to increase spawning of these fish, we should be considering other options.

I have traveled through the 21<sup>st</sup> Senate District to listen to concerns about the spring rise plan. I know how residents of the 21<sup>st</sup> feel about this short-sighted and potentially threatening federal plan, and I vow to continue my struggle against this assault on the well-being of Missouri farmers.

The corps is planning eight public meetings in communities along the Missouri River to outline their plan. I encourage everyone in the 21<sup>st</sup> to attend these meetings, learn about the process, and make known your opinions on the issue. I know mine have been made very clear. Thank you for your support.

If you have questions or comments about this issue or any other issue please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or send an e-mail to [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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