



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

Bill Stouffer  
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# Stouffer Proposes Resolution to Fight 'Spring Rise' on Missouri River

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*Higher water levels pose risk of flooding to Missouri  
farmers with no proven benefit to state wildlife.*

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JEFFERSON CITY – State Sen. Bill Stouffer, R-Napton, today encouraged Gov. Matt Blunt to support a resolution he has drafted for the 2005 special session that will challenge a Missouri River “spring rise” that would threaten Missouri farmers with extreme flooding. The Senate Concurrent Resolution calls for the General Assembly to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers not to carry out the increase in Missouri River water levels.

“Environmental experiments should not come before the well-being of hardworking farm families,” Stouffer said. “There is no proof this man-made ‘spring rise’ will benefit wildlife. What it will do, however, is increase the risk of flooding in the Missouri River basin and escalate drainage problems on Missouri farms.”

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requiring the corps to release more water downstream from a South Dakota dam. The reasoning behind the order for the ‘spring rise’ is that the rise in water levels will signal an endangered fish, the pallid sturgeon, to increase spawning.

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However, many downstream farmers from Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri are protesting the decision because of the negative effects the raised water levels will have on their farms. Aside from flooding, drainage problems will delay crop planting and increase costs to farmers. Further, the Missouri River navigation system will be required to have a shortened transport season during times of water shortage.

“Once this additional water has been released, there is no turning back,” Stouffer said. “No one knows if this will help these fish, but we do know what it will do to living, breathing human beings. The economic impact on the entire state will be enormous.”

Stouffer recently attended an Omaha, Neb., meeting of the Spring Rise Plenary Group, a committee comprised of representatives from federal agencies, states, tribes and interest groups. The group is working to come up with a compromise for all parties involved. An estimated 350 farmers attended the meeting to protest the plan to raise river levels.

Planning for a series of meetings with farmers and agribusiness owners in Orrick, Brunswick, and Franklin is also in the works. Stouffer is working to set up the meetings to further gauge support for the initiative to stop the ‘spring rise.’

All but one of the nine counties Stouffer represents in the Missouri Senate borders the Missouri River.

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*Senator Bill Stouffer represents Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray and Saline counties and northeast Clay County in the state legislature. He can be reached at his capitol office at (573) 751-1507, or toll free at (866) 768-3987.*