



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

**Senator Bill Stouffer**  
Senate District 21

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

**For the Week of:**  
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**Contact: Aaron Baker**  
(573) 751-1507

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## **Broken Levees Can Not Stand Up To a Spring Rise**

Last spring, Missouri received more-than-average amounts of precipitation for our area that resulted in massive flooding. Levees broke along the Missouri River leaving farms, highways, and railroad tracks flooded, as well as homes across our state surrounded by water. The governor declared a state of emergency and National Guard troops were mobilized to help flood victims and protect areas that were prone to flood. Carroll, Chariton, Clay, and Lafayette were among seventeen counties included in a Disaster of Declaration request by the governor.

Even though the May floods are five months behind us, farms along the Missouri River and its tributaries are still seeing the impacts by flood waters. After heavy rains in October, the Missouri River rose once again to flood croplands in western and central areas of the state. For many farmers, the first round of floods was devastating and now, it's a catastrophe. Perhaps Missouri farmers would not have to face this type of devastation if the levees that were damaged by the floods in May were repaired.

The state's Agriculture and Environment Division protects Missouri's natural resources and also works to protect and enhance agriculture and the quality of life for rural Missourians by enforcing the law and advocating responsible public policy. According to the division, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a Nationwide Permit in place as well as a Water Quality Certification from the state to permit the much needed repairs on the levees. At least 40 levees on the river still need to be repaired.

On top of the 40 damaged levees, the Corps wants to implement plans for a spring rise in 2008, called for by the Annual Operating Plan for the Missouri River. The existence of the 40 broken levees from previous flooding makes any spring rise extremely dangerous for Missourians and their livelihood. Because reservoirs did not have sufficient storage due to the

continuing drought conditions in early May, the Corps decided against a spring rise in 2007 — had the spring rise commenced, the devastation would have been much worse. The National Weather Service dramatically changed its forecast for large amounts of precipitation on May 6 and after the levees broke three days later, a number of Missouri farmers and families suffered dire consequences.

This month, the attorney general asked the Corps to suspend plans for a spring rise next year until the levees had been repaired and until a full assessment of the impact of a 2008 spring rise for the Missouri River is completed. Farmers saw first hand the devastation to their crops and farmland in May and now Missourians are living the nightmare over again. Farmers not only face an economic challenge, but continue to fight for the blood, sweat, and tears they put into their land.

For more information about the damaged levees or plans for a 2008 spring rise, visit the Missouri Attorney General's Agriculture and Environment Division Web site at <http://ago.mo.gov/Agriculture-Environment.htm>. And if you have questions or comments about any other issue, please call my office toll free (866) 768-3987 or send me an e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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