

April 3, 2008

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*Senator
Bill Stouffer*

DISTRICT 21

Senator Bill Stouffer – Cultivating Rural Missouri.

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Stouffer Report: Spring Rise

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 went 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. Fortunately, they stopped at Kansas City. We will see if it was enough.

In past years, I sponsored concurrent resolutions asking the Corps to stop these spring rises. This year, the attorney general tried suing to stop it, just to have a judge rule against him. It sometimes seems the courts do not want to listen to the folks in rural Missouri.

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

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. Even then, those same people say last month's flooding was sufficient to keep the pallid sturgeon vibrant for another year.

I have traveled through the 21st Senate District to listen to concerns about the spring rise plan. I know how residents of the 21st 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 in the years to come. I pray the Corps of Engineers will soon realize their annual spring rise causes too many troubles for too many hard working folks, and search for an alternative.

Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

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