

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 27, 2012

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

It has come to our attention that the Army Corps of Engineers' impounding of Missouri River water has resulted in reduced water levels along the Mississippi River, and that these actions will effectively shut down commercial traffic on the Mississippi River between St. Louis, Missouri and Wickliffe, Kentucky, by mid-December 2012. We are writing today to request immediate action to remedy this situation.

We understand that, in accordance with its Annual Operating Plan, the Corps traditionally reduces flow from the Missouri River into the Mississippi River during winter months. However, due to this summer's drought, water levels are already lowered, and the Corps' plan to further reduce these levels through impoundment would make it impossible for over \$7 billion in crude oil, coal, agricultural products, and other goods to be shipped on the river.

It is our understanding that the Corps has the unilateral authority to address this situation by delaying the impoundment of water on the Missouri River and by assisting navigation by demolishing rock pinnacles in Grand Tower, Illinois and Thebes, Illinois. We ask that you do not delay in implementing these measures.

Ensuring commercial traffic on the heavily traversed Mississippi River is vital to power generation and the manufacturing, energy, and agricultural businesses that rely on access to inland waterways to ship their products. If the river channel is not maintained at its Congressionally-authorized height, I am informed a loss of income and jobs will result which could adversely impact the entire region, particularly the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

We encourage you to take swift action on this critical issue. If you are unable or unwilling to take these necessary steps, please provide a full explanation of reasons you feel may impede immediate action.

Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR



RAND PAUL, MD
UNITED STATES SENATOR