



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION
P.O. BOX 80
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39181-0080

Executive Office

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OCT 31 2018

24 OCT 2018

UMRBA

Ms. Kirsten Wallace
Executive Director
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
415 Hamm Building
408 St. Peter Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Dear Ms. Wallace:

Thank you for your letter dated September 4, 2018, requesting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to allow deviations to the master water control manuals for the Upper Mississippi River System (UMRS) locks and dams for environmental pool management. I appreciate your time during recent visits where you were able to help me understand the benefits associated with environmental pool management. Your letter also requested that the Corps secure Fiscal Year 2019 work plan money to conduct reviews of UMRS master water control manuals and revise them to specifically allow for environmental pool management deviations.

I also appreciate and support the Upper Mississippi River Basin Authority's (UMRBA) interest in fostering environmental stewardship opportunities on the upper Mississippi River. As you noted in your letter, ER 1110-2-240 posits Corps water control policy and we use it in our evaluation of requests for deviations. Decisions are made on deviation requests on a case-by-case basis within our project authorities. Requests for deviations from approved water control manuals are evaluated based on the facts and reasons presented in such requests. Please provide Mr. Brian Chewning a list of UMRS sites and requests for deviations that you would like the Corps to consider approving. While I cannot make any definitive commitments at this time, I would like to find a way, perhaps through a pilot program or demonstration project, to work together to achieve the objectives of both of our organizations for the UMRS.

You reference a recent proposal for Pool 13 under the Upper Mississippi River Restoration (UMRR) authority for pool-scale drawdown. UMRR remains a viable option to address your interests in attaining environmental benefits within the UMRS navigation pools only if that feature is part of the formulated restoration project. However, the UMRR authority would not extend to the review or development of water control manuals.

The FY 19 work plan is currently under development. Funding to conduct reviews of UMRS water control manuals will be considered along with many other important activities that compete for limited federal resources. Again, I cannot make any commitments at this time.

I appreciate our collaboration with you and UMRBA and look forward to our continued efforts in advancing integrated solutions for the Upper Mississippi River. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Mr. Brian Chewning at (601) 634-5836 or brian.chewning@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard G. Kaiser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "K".

Richard G. Kaiser
Major General, U.S. Army
Commander