

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2506**

March 20, 2023

The Honorable Michael Connor  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
for Civil Works  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street Southwest  
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Secretary Connor and Administrator Criswell:

I write today regard the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) ongoing Missouri River Flow Frequency Study,<sup>1</sup> the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Lower Missouri River Project, and the concerning lack of stakeholder coordination that has occurred to date on both efforts.

Since late 2022, my constituents have been seeking information from both the Corps and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) about the Missouri River Flow Frequency Study and Lower Missouri River Project. Regrettably, that requested coordination has yet to occur, even though much work has already been completed and new flow discharges are expected to be available soon. Prior to the release of any new flow rates, I request that you perform the coordination with levee owner-operators that should have been done at the start of this process.

There are at least 300 levees along the lower Missouri River, located in four states, with more than 80 levee systems spanning nearly 700 miles in Missouri's 6<sup>th</sup> District alone,<sup>2</sup> Missouri River levee data is crucial to determining updated flows and that information, together with any assumptions about those systems, should be validated with levee-owner operators before its use.

Upon commencement of this coordination, I ask that Corps and FEMA provide the relevant flood risk data developed under this effort to all Members of Congress with representing districts that may be impacted by this study and to affected levee owner-operators to allow sufficient time for the data to be reviewed and input provided back to the Corps and FEMA before any results have been finalized. It is essential we develop an understanding of the work being done and how it is intended to be used, especially in regard to water resources projects recently completed or underway. Providing this opportunity will enhance the effort and bolster public confidence in the model outcomes. Moreover, given the significant impacts anticipated, an independent review of the new model by the Corps' the Engineer Research & Development Center may be warranted.

Your assistance here will help to ensure that full consideration has been given to the needs of non-Federal entities to understand how the flows have been developed and, perhaps more

---

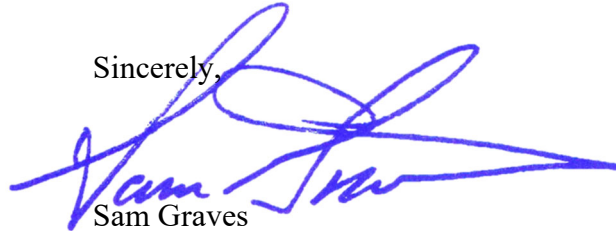
<sup>1</sup> United States Army Corps of Engineers, *Considerations and Analysis for Flood Risk Resiliency for the Lower Missouri River*

<sup>2</sup> United States Army Corps of Engineers, *National Levee Database, available at levees.sec.usace.army.mil*

importantly, how these new flows can be used by those along the river to increase resiliency in their operations, whether it be for navigation, flood protection, mitigation, or other purposes.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. If you have questions, please contact Jonathan Harder in my office at [jonathan.harder@mail.house.gov](mailto:jonathan.harder@mail.house.gov) or (202) 225-7041.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sam Graves", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sam Graves  
Member of Congress

Date Signed: March 20, 2023