

## ***Water: The Most Valuable Infrastructure***

*Water is our most valuable infrastructure, but without insightful, practical management it harms the people that it can help.*

People at home and around the world (specifically: Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangladesh, China, Brazil, and others) continue to ask ... what are the key elements that make life on the Mississippi and other US great rivers so successful? Good question ... we have discovered a few basic elements ... they are:

- Flood Control: levees and a systems approach to water management
- Economy Building Navigation
- World Envied Productive Land
- Reliable Water Supply
- Dedicated Productive People

We are amazed at how fortunate we are to live in a land footprint that offers us unmatched ability to produce for the nation's economy. However, many citizens have not considered the advantages of the great life-providing rivers, fertile land, strategic ports, and generations of dedicated, productive local people.

But for ... a practitioner's combination of the above economy building blocks of Flood Control – Navigation – Land – Water – local people, we would suffer the same fate as many countries do EVERY year along rivers. Devastation, financial loss, and the tragic end of many lives –many of which are poor.

There is no reliable navigation without flood control! Flood Control establishes the limits; helps define the rivers boundaries; protects people's homes that produce from the land and operate businesses; and because of the ample flow of water ... we have a water supply that most countries have never seen.

What does it take to plan and deliver a practical systems approach to living along great rivers? ... Local and Political Will along with A START that includes a plan. The Plan ... at its beginning is imperfect and not necessarily "right" ... but as you build the "concept" system that considers and pays for protecting people and accounts for unprotected lands, you understand ... that we are all much better served by a "systems approach" than before we

planned, started, built, and continuously MODIFIED the system. It takes multiple decades of political and physical work to modify a system to the point that it serves the region, valley and people that it protects.

Many countries today cannot and will not protect their citizens and land ... simply because they cannot agree on a draft or concept plan ... so, they NEVER START ... it's sad and costly and we hope that our local people along great rivers do not fall into the global and US crowd of disagreement, distrust and no action ... leaving people without a chance to be protected and productive. No worries ... we are conscious and within the project plans consider and adapt the economic engine being built to assure that our environment is secure for our children's children ... our present and their future depends on it.

The good news is our future is bright. We have the capacity, the land and people that are proficient and resolute. It's time for thoughtful action.

With clear direction from Congress our local people and industry are best prepared to deliver even greater benefits than those of the highly successful comprehensive MR&T system today:

- critical supplies of food for the US and for export at an affordable price ... delivered!
- a water commerce system that offers transportation rate savings currently above \$5.6B annually
- substantial capacity of cooling water and water volumes at reliable river elevations for energy production – nuclear, fossil fuel, and hydropower
- a practitioners' approach to river infrastructure investment that champions high return water infrastructure investments by state, by name
- a place along a river commerce super highway where massive steel companies receive/produce/export and other industries produce at a regionally and globally competitive price and pace
- container on barge systems to provide for the increasing future global shipping -- incoming and outgoing demands
- wise delivery, storage (including on land capture), and use of water supplies for consumption, industry, and irrigation