

2. District Commander will present an overview of current project issues in his district.

3. Local organizations and members of the public will have an opportunity to make presentations or offer views or comments on any issue affecting programs or projects of the commission and the Corps as noted above.

In conjunction with the public meeting in Vicksburg, Miss., open houses will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Mississippi River Commission building (1400 Walnut Street) and aboard the Motor Vessel Mississippi in celebration of the commission's 125th anniversary.

The MRC, established in 1879, is composed of seven members, each nominated by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate. Three of the organization's members are officers of the Corps of Engineers; one member is from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and three members are civilians, two of whom are civil engineers.

General duties of the commission include recommendation of policy and work programs, the study of and reporting upon the necessity for modifications or additions to the flood control and navigation project, recommendation upon any matters authorized by law, and making semi-annual inspection trips. The duties of the commission include the entire length of the Mississippi River from its headwaters at Lake Itasca, Minn., to Head of Passes, La., where the Mississippi River empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

The purpose of the public meetings is to maintain a dialogue, an exchange of viewpoints and ideas flowing between the public and the Corps. Presentations by the public are made orally, but a copy of the remarks should be presented to the commission for the official record.

The public hearing process is unique to the Mississippi River Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The benefits of hearing first hand the issues and concerns through the public hearing process are invaluable to the commission and the Corps. Also, the interaction with congressional, federal and state interests, local boards and non-government organizations and the public is crucial to the decision-making process of the commission.