

FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE
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ST. LOUIS, Mo. Feb. 1 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) today said the Congress "bears the burden of the blame for archaic laws governing civil water works programs of the U.S. Corps of Engineers."

"Laws enacted in the late 1800's and early 1900's are not always suitable for the 1970's," Dole said.

The freshman Kansas Senator spoke here at a meeting of the Mississippi Valley Association (MVA).

"Over the years an elaborate procedure involving the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of the Budget and Congress has evolved," the Senator said. "Because of the complex regulations and guidelines governing each project it is often difficult to identify the weak and unnecessary elements."

Urging MVA members "to help locate inefficiencies in the procedures and in the federal law and to recommend alternatives," Dole added, "other members of the Senate Public Works Committee and I are considering new ways for our Committee to conduct oversight hearings on the general program of the Corps."

Specific problems, the Senator said, include the environmental consequences in development of the benefit/cost ratio, relocation of individuals and communities and "the considerable amount of time between authorization of a project and its construction.

"It is not unusual," Dole noted, "for a project once authorized to not be initiated -- much less completed -- for several years."

Dole also urged "earlier public participation" in the development of water resource projects.

"Too often the public's role occurs too late," he said. "By that time, the Corps has developed, through extensive research, a position on a particular project."

"Projects which deeply affect the livelihood of a community dictate meaningful interaction with the people involved -- at the inception of the project, not as a postscript."