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Justin L. Lampert  
Manager – Midcontinent Office

November 30, 2023

Colonel Travis Rayfield  
Commander, Kansas City District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
601 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, 635 Federal Bldg  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Re: Lower Kansas River Water  
Control Manuals

Dear COL Rayfield,

The American Waterways Operators (AWO) is the tugboat, towboat and barge industry's advocate, resource, and united voice for safe, sustainable, and efficient transportation on America's waterways, oceans, and coasts. Our industry is the largest segment of the nation's 40,000-vessel domestic maritime fleet and moves 665 million tons of cargo each year safely and efficiently. On behalf of AWO's more than 300 member companies, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Lower Kansas River Water Control Manuals (WCMs).

The Kansas River is one of the major tributaries flowing into the Missouri River – a vital segment of the Western Rivers system that delivers essential commodities throughout the nation. Because of the river's key role in the system, three reservoirs, Perry<sup>1</sup>, Milford<sup>2</sup>, and Tuttle<sup>3</sup>, are Congressionally authorized for navigation releases to the Missouri River. This water is essential to the safety and viability of commercial navigation in the region; therefore, changes to these reservoirs' WCMs must satisfy the Congressionally authorized needs of navigation.

There are two ongoing studies relevant to operation of the Missouri River system: the Lower Missouri River Flood Risk and Resiliency Study and the Lower Missouri River Navigation Resilience Study. These studies will provide an important picture of flood risk and navigation on the Missouri River. As the Kansas River is such an important source of water into the Missouri, the WCMs should be considered in conjunction with these studies. Otherwise, the WCM changes will be implemented without a full understanding of the risks and needs of river stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> *Rivers and Harbors Act of 1954*

<sup>2</sup> *Flood Control Act of 1954*

<sup>3</sup> *Flood Control Act of 1938*

Thank you again for allowing the opportunity to provide comments on the Water Control Manuals. The Corps' commitment to addressing these comments is appreciated. AWO looks forward to working with the Corps to ensure future management of the Kansas River does not negatively impact commercial navigation on the Missouri River.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Lampert". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Justin Lampert  
Senior Manager – Midcontinent Office