



TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy

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Cruising for a Bruising?

It's [summertime](#), and [when the weather is hot](#) it can give a person a bad case of the [summertime blues](#) or [summer fever](#). The only known cure (other than [more cowbell?](#)) is a vacation, and what better way than with a relaxing cruise? A [sea cruise](#) would be great but what about another, maybe even more romantic choice: a [river cruise](#).

On a river cruise there is a lot more scenery, far fewer hurricanes, and at each port o' call enthusiastic locals who probably spent a tidy sum to entice you to visit. The only other thing missing is a cooperative river which is not always a given, at least when that river is the Mississippi River. It turns out sometimes there isn't enough water for the cruise boats (which like their ocean-going kin, are getting bigger and more amenity laden) to dock or there is [too much water and the port areas are flooded](#). The problem is becoming more acute as extreme droughts (like a year ago) or high-water events (like this year on the upper river) are thwarting the best laid plans of vacationers, cruise lines, and the communities that host them (or who hoped to). It will take more than reliable precipitation patterns to sort this out since there's growing interest in using river water for nontraditional things (e.g., export, energy production, and environmental enhancement). If only there was someone, somewhere with the authority to think about this river holistically? Turns out there is. [Here's to you, Mississippi River Commission and Army Corps of Engineers!](#)

If you, dear reader, care about what that river is used for and who it benefits (and you really, really should) then [here's to you!](#) Learn about [the ongoing Lower Mississippi River Comprehensive Management Study](#). It is going to matter. Also, check out the MRC's upcoming meeting schedule below if you want to experience the river and the Commission up close and personal.

Too Much Dam Trouble

Dams are great solutions to many water problems until they become part of the problem. And when they become part of the problem it can be a "Whoa [Nellie!](#)" moment. That is the situation in parts of the Midwest where aging dams and heavy rains have teamed up to [force residents and communities to head for the safer ground](#). Note that we did not say higher ground because when dams fail higher may not be high enough or safe enough. That is because more than water is released then, it is high velocity water and sediment that is [augmented by the trees, buildings, road materials and heaven knows what else](#). Those downstream of a dam failure will be looking at much more than a flood, especially if the dam lulled them into believing their flood worries were taken care of and they did not purchase flood insurance. Just because your mortgage lender does not make you buy flood insurance does not mean you won't need it. ([Such cheerleaders for insurance, we are!](#))

Hey, Tulane Jerks, There's More Than One River, You Know?

It's true. As much as the Mississippi River commands attention, there are many other rivers worthy of attention. Even others in Mississippi and Louisiana, the Pearl River being maybe the biggest. It drains much of central Mississippi, flows through Jackson, forms the state border with Louisiana before emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. It harbors species both [endangered](#) and [extinct](#)! Well, the Corps of Engineers (remember them?) is working on plans for a dam (remember those?) on the Pearl in Jackson, and the latest planning step involves [alternatives to the originally proposed plan](#). What's the dam for, you ask? Well, officially it's for flood control. Unofficially it seems like it could create some super new real estate opportunities for lovely houses on the new "lake." [Public meetings for the project are forthcoming](#). Environmental groups and communities downstream have their complaints about the project, and given that the Corps of Engineers' decisionmaking no longer enjoys Chevron deference, maybe those groups will have a better chance of challenging the Corps on this?

Coming Up:

[Mississippi River Commission Inspection Meetings](#)
Cape Girardeau MO, Aug. 19, 2024
Memphis TN, Aug. 20, 2024
Lake Village AR, Aug. 21, 2024
Morgan City LA, Aug. 23, 2024

Water jobs:

[Staff Scientist](#); Healthy Gulf; Houston, Southeast Texas, or Southwest Louisiana (Remote)

[Chief Development Officer](#); Healthy Gulf; Gulf South (Remote)

[Director of Clean Water Protection](#); Harpeth Conservancy; Brentwood, TN

[Operations Manager](#); Harpeth Conservancy; Brentwood, TN



The [Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy](#) is a program of the Tulane University Law School. The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and legal stewardship of water.

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