

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) today urged residents, business owners and workers in areas affected by the Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway levee repair to take part in a public comment period on a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers draft notice of Environmental Assessment (EA).

"At every point in the process of levee repair and restoration, the Corps needs to hear the voices of people in Southern Missouri who depend on the land floodway for their livelihoods. For some, there is deep meaning in the churches, homes and community structures located in the floodway. For others, they rely on the jobs and income from their land and work. We must take advantage of every opportunity to express the importance of this project," Emerson said.

The draft notice includes a finding of No Significant Impact from the six proposed repair actions outlined in the document.

"How these repairs are made to the three breaches blown in the levee by the Corps of Engineers will directly affect how the floodway functions in the future. Our priorities must be to preserve the lives and livelihoods of the people who live and work in the floodway, as well as continue to allow the floodway to serve as a failsafe for the Mississippi River flood protection system as a whole. The protection of the land behind the levees is absolutely essential to the economies of Mississippi County and New Madrid County. We must have a repair that reflects the value of this part of Missouri in the past and its importance to our future," Emerson said.

The [public notice](#) (PDF), which can be obtained from Emerson's Eighth District Congressional offices or from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, directs comments to the following address with a deadline of September 6, 2011:

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