

**PHILIP M. CRANE**

MEMBER OF CONGRESS  
12TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS



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ROBERT C. COLEMAN  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

May 7, 1987

Mr. Lee M. Thomas  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
WW Building, Room 1200  
401 M Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Thomas:

We are writing to encourage your financial support for a wetlands research and demonstration project which is located along the Des Plaines River in Illinois. It is a model project to assist the entire country in learning how to restore our wetlands.

It is estimated that 99% of Illinois' wetlands have been destroyed and the absence of wetlands creates a severe flooding problem. However, wetlands can be restored, and that is the goal of the Des Plaines River Demonstration Project. While the project is located in Congressman Crane's district, the Des Plaines River runs from northeastern Illinois joining the Illinois River downstream at Joliet. The Illinois River flows into the Mississippi River near St. Louis.

The research that will be conducted at this site has positive implications for national environmental and flood control policies. For EPA, work at this site will help determine the role that wetlands play in controlling non-point source pollution. The potential benefits of improved flood control, water quality, wildlife habitat and research could save taxpayers millions of dollars. Prairie Woods Audubon Society of Arlington Heights, Illinois, estimates that it now costs \$13 million per mile to clean up the polluted rivers of Illinois. This is a much higher figure than the total cost of \$10 million to complete the Wetlands project over a 5 year period. The federal government share is relatively small considering the long-term benefits.

There is no question that finding new methods to improve water quality and control flooding, especially from non-point water sources, is a need and a concern. The additional benefits the project will bring to both the human and animal communities are also worthy.

Four and a half million dollars in public and private funding with state, local and federal assistance has been spent to date on this project. To complete construction of the project, \$2.2 million is needed. Because of the direct benefit which EPA will derive from the research, we ask that you consider reprogramming \$950,000 toward this project in FY 1987 and support a \$1.25 million EPA appropriation in FY 1988.

If funds for reprogramming are not available, we request that you support a direct appropriation in FY 1988 of \$2.2 million for EPA to complete construction on the project. Your role in helping us to finish this project is critical.

Please let us know at your earliest convenience if you will be able to reprogram FY 1987 funds for this project.

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Alan J. Dixon

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Philip M. Crane

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Paul Simon

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John E. Porter

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