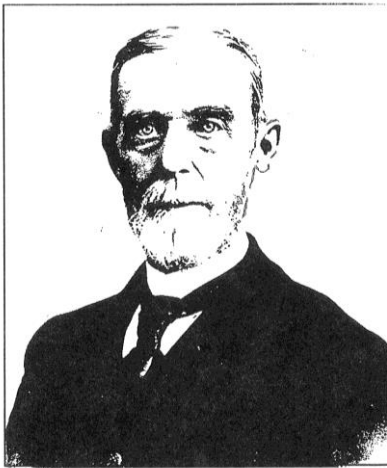


## 2015 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

### SNY ISLAND LEVEE DRAINAGE DISTRICT

The life of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District is marked by significant events, milestones as some might say, that have shaped its future. An insurance man from Hannibal, Missouri,



*C.N. Clark*

(C.N. Clark) who owned land in the Sny basin had a vision that the area could be a vibrant economic engine in west central Illinois if provided levee protection and a drainage system. Mr. Clark was so passionate about this that he gave up his insurance business and worked for the passage of legislation that resulted in the creation of drainage law in the State of Illinois in 1871. On September 18 of that year, the Sny Island Levee Drainage District became the first levee and drainage district in the state. Mr. Clark was faced with choices shaping the future of the Sny and he met them head on. He could maintain the status quo of having land susceptible to constant flooding from the river or from lack of drainage. Or, he could pursue an action of creating legislation that would prove to be the foundation not only for opportunity in the Sny basin, but also throughout the

State of Illinois. He chose the opportunity to grow and thrive rather than the status quo.

And so construction of our levees began on September 16, 1872 using teams of horses pulling dirt scoops. This effort continued until a suspension of work in the fall of 1875 due to financial issues. Not only was the work suspended, but the legal process creating the Sny was declared unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court in 1876. That same year, flooding on the Mississippi caused severe erosion on much of the levee as well as breaches in three separate sites.



Again Mr. Clark and other landowners in the Sny faced choices that would dramatically impact the future of not only the Sny, but levees and drainage districts throughout the State of Illinois. Do nothing and the entire concept of organized levee and drainage districts would fall apart or fight for an opportunity to grow and thrive. They chose opportunity rather than failure. Mr. Clark, with the assistance of many landowners and an attorney from Pittsfield named A.C. Mathews, put together legislation that amended the Illinois Constitution of 1870 allowing owners of lands in Illinois to construct drains, ditches and levees for agricultural, sanitary or mining purposes across the lands of others, and provide for the organization of drainage districts. Voters approved the constitutional amendment on November 5, 1878 leading to the re-establishment of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District on May 24, 1880.



United States, serving during Harrison's Presidency. The Sny prevailed and moved forward.

River flooding and drainage issues continued throughout the history of the system. Levee breaks; be they in river levees or creek levees were commonplace. Poor drainage was the norm. Increased seep water led to additional drainage problems with the implementation of a 9' navigation channel and locks & dam system on the upper Mississippi in the late 1930's. Flood Control Acts in 1946 and 1954 led to the opportunity for the Sny landowners to make a choice. They could seek federal assistance through these acts and agree to a \$3,400,500.00 special assessment to cover the local share of a massive federal project with the federal

Over the years numerous other hardships would challenge this District. Bond litigation brought against the Sny in the late 1870s threatened to bankrupt the District. Again, the future of the Sny depended on making a choice. Do nothing and the system would be bankrupt and potentially fall apart, or fight for Clark's vision of the Sny and the opportunity it offered. They chose opportunity rather than risk failure. The litigation ended up in the United States Supreme Court with the Sny initially represented by the former President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison. Upon Mr. Harrison's death during the legal process, the Sny retained representation by William H. H. Miller, the 39<sup>th</sup> Attorney General of the





government spending more than \$15,500,000.00 to provide the opportunity to continue the



vision of the Sny that Mr. Clark had. Or, they could continue on the path of river flooding and poor drainage, risking the demise of the system. The choice of opportunity met with overwhelming support and the Sny Island Levee Drainage District as we know it today was constructed with the completion of all facets of the project by the end of 1967.

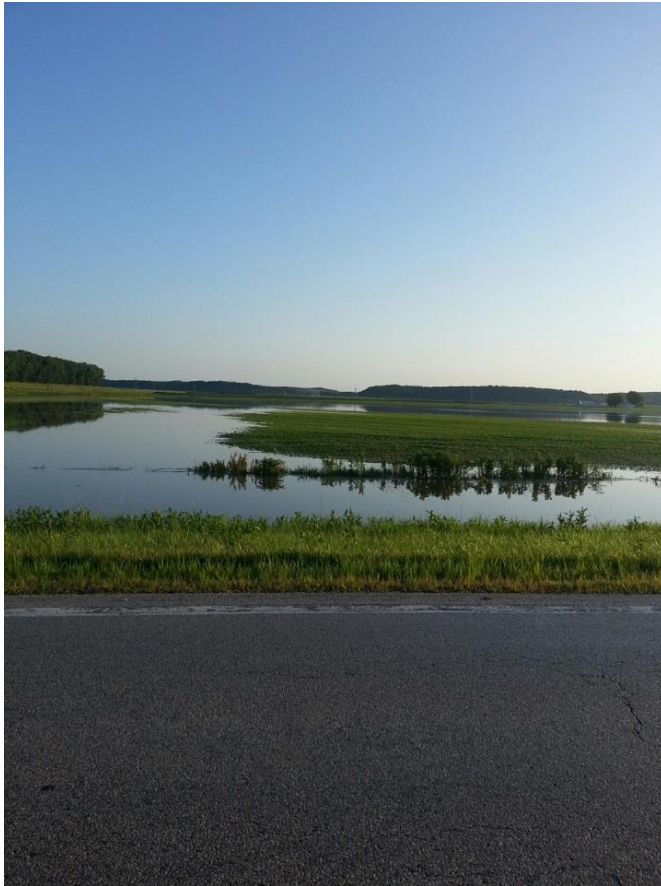
Why is this historic background of any significance to us in today's Sny? That question might best be answered by an old proverb, "You don't know where you're going until you know where you've been". Today's Sny faces choices, not unlike many faced by Sny landowners throughout history. In today's Sny, farmers have significantly improved the drainage of their land through the use of efficient ditching practices and the installation of drain tile. Run-off gets to the Sny channel and on to the pump



stations much faster than ever before. River conditions are dramatically different in today's Sny. Developments in the valley such as the utilization of more efficient drainage practices upstream and what seems to be a tilt toward more intense wet weather patterns have led to more frequent, higher river stages. (Did you know that four of the top five flood events in the history of the Hannibal, Missouri gauge occurred between 1993 and 2008?) The

efficiency of today's Sny pumps is based on pumping against lower river stages, not the higher floods we've seen since 1993. Also remember, the pumps were designed and installed when diesel fuel prices were a few cents a gallon; not dollars per gallon. In other words, the

Sny project that was designed, installed and fully operational in 1967 is not capable of efficiently handling interior drainage and river conditions we're experiencing today. After all, the Sny Federal Project is entering into its 49<sup>th</sup> year of operation.



Regrettably, these scenes have been repeated far too often in recent years. Just last summer thousands of acres of crops were either totally lost or severely damaged by intense rainfall. The Illinois State Water Survey announced that rainfall in the month of June was the highest on record in the State. Local rainfall totals from mid-April to mid-August were in the 35" to 40" range. In optimum conditions, the Sny's three pump stations are capable of pumping approximately .25" of rain fallen over the entire watershed in 24 hours. Another way of looking at it is the Sny's three pump stations will pump 1,100,000 gallons of water per minute under optimum conditions.

*The question is, where do we go from here? Do we stand pat with the system as it currently exists and do the best we can to manage interior drainage issues and river levee segments in need of strengthening? Or, do we move forward with a plan to modernize the system that equips the Sny to better manage current as well as future challenges we're sure to face?*

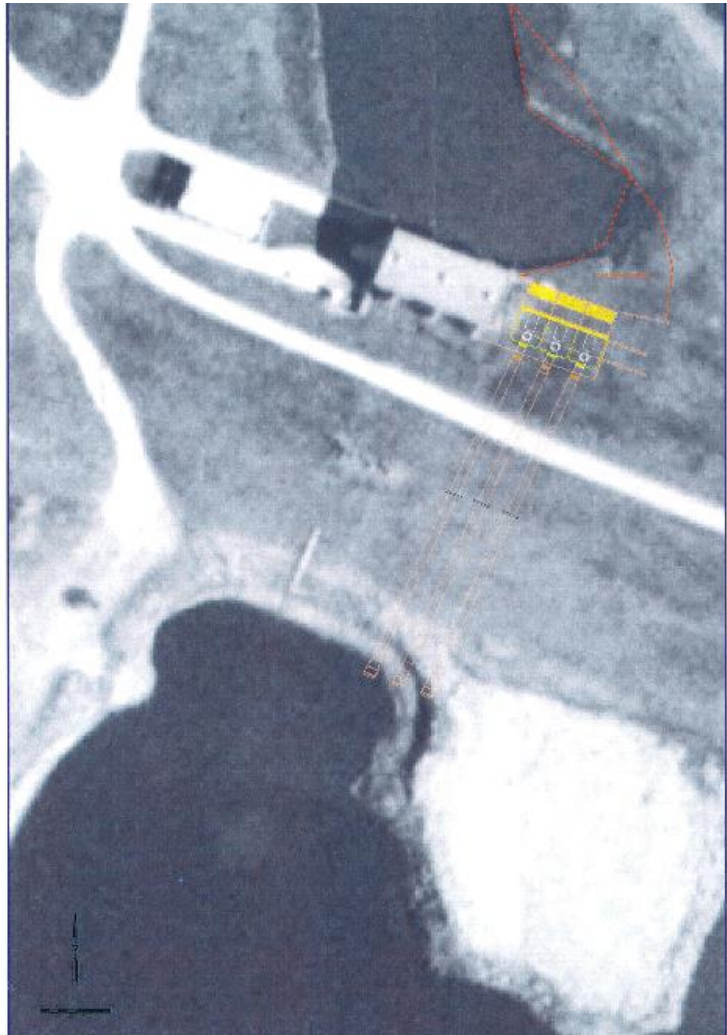






The Commissioners moved forward by making a concerted effort to gain input from the landowners of the District. Telephone calls were made to landowners requesting their presence at meetings scheduled in the Fellowship Hall of the New Canton Methodist Church to discuss the challenges faced by the District and options available to meet those challenges.

These meetings began with the 2014 Annual Meeting and continued with a meeting in August of 2015 and another at the 2015 Annual Meeting. The main topics addressed were the operation of the District's three pump stations, flood protection from the Mississippi River and the 100-year accreditation of the District's Federal Project. The turnout of landowners at all three meetings was outstanding. Options to pursue included increasing pumping capacity at Pump Stations 1 & 3A by installing additional pumps, method of powering new pumps, the cost to replace Pump Station 1 and increasing the efficiency of pumping operations at Pump Stations 1 & 3A by installing flared ends to existing discharge pipes. Pump Station improvements included options to add from 3 to 5-60" pumps at 3A and up to 3-60" pumps at Pump Station 1.



The current capacity at Pump Station 1 is 400,000 gallons per minute. The capacity at 3A is 540,000 gallons per minute. These numbers are based on pumping under optimum conditions on the Sny and the river. Each 60" pump added at either location would add approximately 100,000 gallons per minute capacity. Cost estimates on these options ranged from \$10,000,000.00 to \$24,000,000.00. Resolving the seepage problems that exist due

**Pump Station 1 - Hull**



to a design deficiency during initial construction at Pump Station 1 calls for adding two new seep wells at the site and construction of a sheet pile cut-off wall to prevent the undermining of the Pump Station. Voids currently present under the station would be repaired using a hydraulic grout solution. Cost estimates to address seepage issues at Pump Station 1 ranged from \$500,000.00 to \$842,500.00.



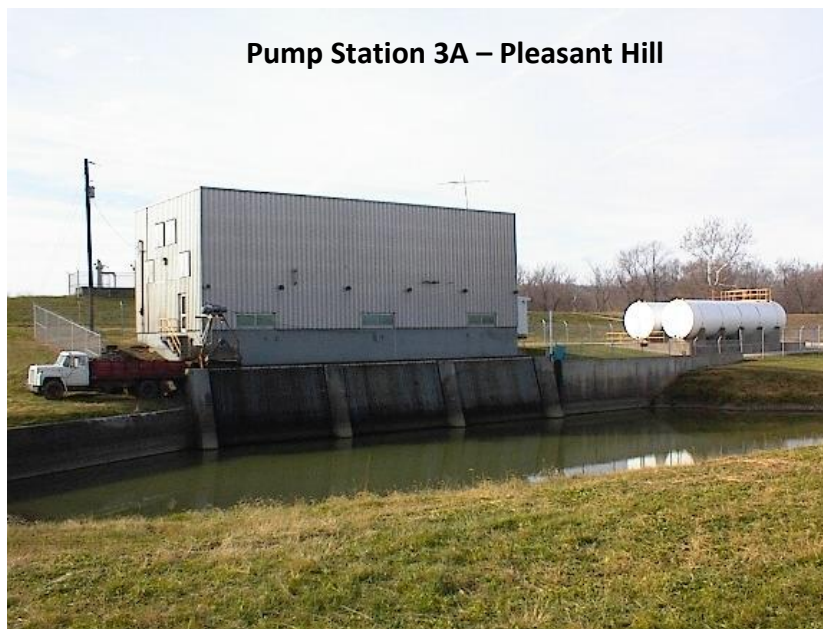
**Boring Procedures Underway  
Fall Creek Township**

The river levee aspect of the discussion calls for strengthening the main stem Mississippi River levee from the south end of the '93 Break Site north approximately 4 miles to Brockmeyer's Crossing by adding up to 200,000 cubic yards of sand to the land side slope of the existing levee at an estimated cost of over \$2,000,000.00. A key aspect of the river levee project was locating a source of sand meeting proper specifications on the land side of the levee and moving that sand to the levee using 30-40 ton quarry trucks. Borings were taken from two sites in an effort to locate acceptable material. The samples taken at these sites are being evaluated in comparison to Corps specifications for acceptable material.



A general opinion that came out of the meetings was that modernizing the system was necessary. There was a definite need to enhance the pumping capacity at both Pump Stations 1 & 3A. Strengthening the river levee was a must. Completing any necessary repairs at Pump Station 1 needed to be a priority. As it stands right now, we are continuing to work closely with our consulting engineers to refine the numbers on the various options available to us. We continue to evaluate potential sites for sand to improve the landside slope of the mainstem river levee from the south end of the '93 Break Site north. We are also looking at financing options that will address the final costs. In any event, the District is required to move through a "court order" process that could take a year to get through before any of the work decided upon begins. This process involves a strict notification process for all landowners as well as public hearings before a Circuit Judge from the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District in Pittsfield. Corps of Engineers permits will also be required for all aspects of the proposed projects. In the meantime, we will make every effort to keep you advised.

### **2015 PUMP STATION OPERATIONS**

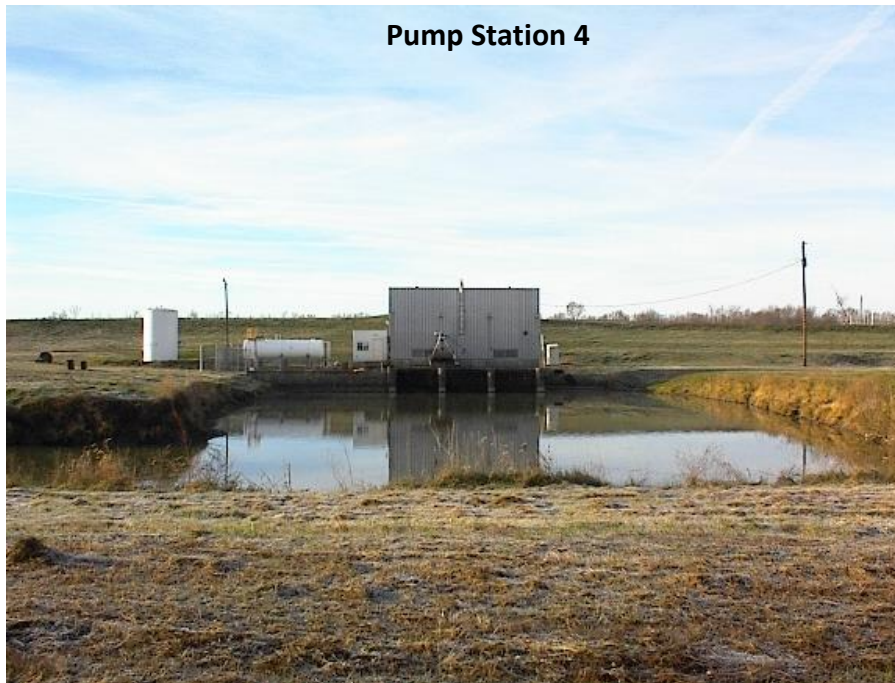


**Pump Station 3A – Pleasant Hill**

As a result of record rainfall not only in the District but throughout the State of Illinois in June that carried over to mid-July, coupled with another period of heavy rain in December, the District's three pump stations experienced yet another busy year of operation. 24 hours per day, seven days per week operations were common throughout much of the summer as well as in December. Pump hours for 2015 totaled 15,339. Nearly 414,000 gallons of diesel fuel

was purchased, nearly 81,000 gallons in December. In comparing this calendar year's operation to past years, we need to look at two separate time frames; from 1996 – 2007 and from 2008 – 2015. Please note that the average amount of fuel purchased per year from 1996 thru 2007 was 170,287. The average pump hours per year during that time frame were 6,834. From 2008 through this year, the average gallons of fuel purchased per year was 376,828. Average pumping hours per year during that time frame were 14,940. As you can see, trying to define a "normal year of operation" is challenging. Normal for the 12-year period from 1996 – 2007 is quite different from normal from 2008 till now. It's also

interesting that there have been two disaster declarations impacting the Sny in 2015. The initial disaster declaration was this summer due to the record rainfall in the State resulting in widespread flooding. Unfortunately, we did not qualify for Federal disaster assistance for that event. The State of Illinois included Pike and Calhoun Counties in yet another disaster declaration due to intense rainfall and flooding that occurred in December and early January. We are waiting for a decision from the Federal Government as to whether or not assistance will be provided.



**Pump Station 4**

For the most part, we had a decent year operationally at our pump stations. During the height of our interior flooding in the summer, we had a minor breakdown on engine #1 at Pump Station 4 on a Saturday morning. Altorfer Cat from Hannibal had a technician on site before noon and had us back up and running before 6:00 P.M. **A HUGE PAT ON THE BACK TO ALTORFER FOR THE**

**SERVICE PROVIDED!!!!!!** We had another issue with engine #3 at Pump Station 4 later in the summer, but that was also handled with very little down time. Operations at Pump Station 3A went well throughout the year with only very minor issues occurring resulting in hardly any down time.

However, at Pump Station 1, we had a failure occur on pump #2 July 29. It was determined the failure was caused by a broken grease line resulting in the failure of a lower bearing on



**Pump Impeller for 78" Pump – Pump Station 1**



**78" Pump Bowl – Pump Station 1**



the pump bowl/shaft. Sny staff dis-assembled the pump shaft, impeller and bowl and delivered it to Averkamp Machine in Quincy for repairs. With assistance from Averkamp Machine staff and Doyle Equipment, Sny staff completed the installation of the repaired 78" pump making it operational on December 18.

## **FIELD OPERATIONS**

Field operations including levee mowing, brush control, ditch excavation and levee work suffered this year due to the intense rainfall in June and July.

Ditch maintenance was confined to the time frame starting with the end of the 2014 fall harvest and ending in late March to avoid conflicts with the planting of crops. Even with the challenges faced in 2015, we were able to clean out nearly 12 miles of District Ditches and install numerous field drains and crossing culverts. If you have access to your own excavation equipment and would like to perform your own maintenance on a District Ditch, please contact us. We have no objection to your completing the necessary work on your own; we would just like to be aware of it so we can agree on how the work is done and note it in our ditch excavation records.

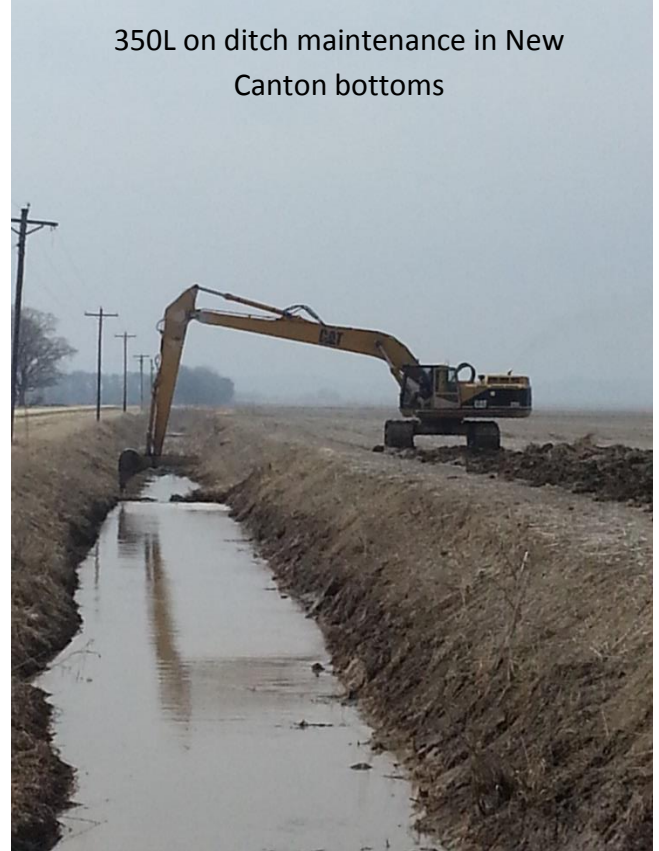
**Cat 235 Working West of Hull**



Cat 235 restoring Atlas Creek basin  
levee washed out by interior  
flooding



350L on ditch maintenance in New  
Canton bottoms



Our levee mowing operation started in late April but had to be delayed for over two months due to rainy, wet conditions as well as the need for the mowing crew to man pumping operations. By the time our mowing operations were re-started in July, what was initially covered in late April and May needed mowing again. In other words, we had to start all over. Our levee mowing continued until mid-November.

As you know, we maintain a supply of polyethylene as well as galvanized drainage culverts. If we are working in the area of a drainage ditch that requires the installation of either field drains or field crossings, we will install your newly purchased culverts as a part of the ditch excavation whether purchased from the Sny or another vendor. We are happy to provide this service to you, but cannot be responsible for damage that may occur to the culverts during installation and will not guarantee it for proper flow. Also, the Sny cannot be responsible for future damage that may happen to the culvert as a result of flow through it as well as damage to adjacent crops that may result from the installation.

Our program of providing herbicide to landowners to apply to brush on District Ditches continued in 2015. This past year we worked with Praireland F.S., with locations in Kinderhook and Pleasant Hill, to provide you with the herbicide you need to control the growth of woody plants along District Ditches running through your property. The control of brushy growth on an annual basis promotes the growth of grasses on ditch banks, helping to



stabilize them. In addition, ditch excavation work is completed much faster and cleaner, eliminating the need to pile brush in your fields.

### **ON THE LEGAL FRONT**

The legal challenge filed against the Sny by Norfolk Southern and Kansas City Southern Railroads continues to work its way through the Federal Court system. The railroads challenged the amounts assessed against them in the 15<sup>th</sup> Additional Assessment process. A trial was held late in 2014 at Federal District Court in Springfield. Judge Mills' ruling was filed this past summer detailing a verdict in favor of the Sny. The railroads then challenged Judge Mills' ruling to the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago. Arguments before a panel of three Appellate Court Justices are scheduled for April 5 in Chicago.

### **LEVEE ACCREDITATION**

In 1999, the Sny began a levee accreditation process with the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that culminated in 2003 with the Sny being accredited by FEMA as having a 100-year flood protection system. This was a huge accomplishment by the Sny that would not have been possible without the assistance of the Corps. This accreditation allows for



Meeting with General Wehr  
Commander of Vicksburg Division

much lower flood insurance rates for the residents of the District and facilitates the creation of economic development opportunities within the District boundaries. To the surprise of Sny officials, in December of 2009, 10 years after the levee accreditation process was initiated by the Sny with Rock Island Corps officials and six years after the 100-year accreditation was achieved, Rock Island staff informed the Sny that the Corps did not recognize the Sny's 100-year accreditation. **PLEASE NOTE THAT AT NO TIME DURING THE TEN YEARS BETWEEN WHEN THE LEVEE ACCREDITATION PROCESS STARTED WITH THE CORPS AND WHEN THE CORPS ANNOUNCED IT DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE SNY'S FLOOD PROTECTION STATUS DID CORPS OFFICIALS GIVE ANY HINT THAT THEY DID NOT RECOGNIZE, APPROVE OR**

**AGREE WITH FEMA ACCREDITATION.** Since 2009, the Sny has been working with the

Corps of Engineers, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, legal counsel, engineering consultants, local, state and federally elected officials in an effort to retain our 100-year flood protection accreditation.



Letters supporting the Sny's 100-year flood protection accreditation have been sent to the Corps of Engineers from State Senator John Sullivan, State Representatives C.D. Davidsmeyer & Randy Frese, United States Congressmen Rodney Davis and Darin LaHood, the Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri Rivers Assoc., the Pike County Economic Development Corporation, the Great River Economic Development Foundation, Quincy Mayor, Pleasant Hill Mayor James Leeds, Hull Mayor, the Pike County Farm Bureau and the Illinois Farm Bureau. However, many challenges remain with the Corps of Engineers and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Keeping up with the constantly changing rules and regulations being handed down, especially at the Federal level, is challenging to say the least. In an effort to keep up with this regulatory environment, the Sny maintains affiliations with two flood control associations and an organization whose sole area of influence is the nation's waterways. The Sny maintains membership in the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association with Commissioner



Koeller serving on that Board's Executive Committee representing Illinois. In addition, Commissioners Borrowman and Lundberg have both served on either the Membership or Resolutions Committees with Superintendent Reed chairing the Engineering Committee two different terms. The Sny also belongs to the Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri Rivers Association to maintain focus on flood control issues impacting the upper valley. The District also has membership in the National Waterways Conference with



Upper Mississippi meeting in Quincy

Superintendent Reed serving on its Board and the Legislative/Policy

Mississippi Valley Flood Control Assoc. meeting in Abraham Lincoln's House of Representatives office in Washington, D.C.



Committee. The Sny also maintains a membership in the Pike County Farm Bureau which is second to none in providing up-to-date information on wide-ranging issues at the local, state and federal levels.

*Brady Borrowman*  
Brady Borrowman – President

*Russell E. Koeller*  
Russell Koeller – Secretary

*Dan Lundberg*  
Dan Lundberg - Commissioner

2015 has indeed been a challenging year. There is much more to face in the years ahead if we are to preserve this great heritage we have that is the Sny Island Levee Drainage District. We truly appreciate the cooperation and support that you the landowners of this great district provide us each day as we all work together to make this organization better for future generations.

If you would like to access this year's or previous years' newsletters electronically, they can be found at [www.snyisland.org/newsletterhtm](http://www.snyisland.org/newsletterhtm)

SNY ISLAND LEVEE DRAINAGE DISTRICT  
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES  
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS  
YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 2014

	General Annual Maintenance	Capital Projects Fund Reserve Fund Fall Creek	Debt Service Fund	Permanent Fund Reserve Fund Seepage	Total Governmental Funds
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Assessments	\$ 1 867 887		\$ 295 042		\$ 2 162 929
Material and pipe sales	55 593				55 593
Lease income	17 750				17 750
Farm income	41 330				41 330
Investment earnings	4 484	\$ 1 378		\$ 5 058	10 920
Miscellaneous	201 174				201 174
Total revenue	2 188 218	1 378	295 042	5 058	2 489 696
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
Current:					
General administration					
Payroll	110 876				110 876
Office supplies	5 889				5 889
Building utilities and maintenance	9 365				9 365
Insurance	81 885				81 885
Legal and audit	325 646				325 646
Engineering	85 968				85 968
Miscellaneous	41 467				41 467
Pumping Operations					
Payroll	126 965				126 965
Operating expenses	1 017 616				1 017 616
Heavy Equipment Operations					
Payroll	85 632				85 632
Equipment expenses	30 858				30 858
Other Operations					
Payroll	38 050				38 050
Equipment expenses	73 393				73 393
Pipe and wire rope	48 016				48 016
Shop supplies and maintenance	7 447				7 447
Levee and ditch maintenance	53 479				53 479
Miscellaneous					
Payroll taxes	33 126				33 126
Employee benefits	93 435				93 435
Debt Service:					
Principal	73 310				73 310
Interest	103 051		23 952		127 003
Capital Outlay:	1 625				1 625
Total expenditures	2 447 099	-	23 952	-	2 471 051
<b>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES</b>					
Transfers	( 29 674)		29 674		( 0)
Special assessment bond issued	1 700 000				1 700 000
Loan Repayment	(2 349 187)				(2 349 187)
Sale of general capital assets	365				365
Net change in fund balances	( 937 377)	1 378	300 764	5 058	( 630 177)
Fund balances - beginning	(1 166 678)	565 940	-	1 822 393	1 221 655
Fund balances - ending	\$ (2 104 055)	\$ 567 318	\$ 300 764	\$ 1 827 451	\$ 591 478

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

The financial information presents a statement of revenue and expenditures for the fiscal year ending October 31, 2014.