## Board of Commissioners Sny Island Levee Drainage District 2022 Annual Newsletter



The landscape of fall is upon us. The harvest is all but over. Fall tillage is well underway; actually over for some. Anhvdrous tanks are moving throughout the system for fall application. The holiday season is just around the corner. Yes, it won't be long before we bring the curtain down on 2022 in the Sny. We take this time to look back on the happenings in the Sny Island Levee Drainage District in the past year to

reflect on where we've been, then look ahead to where we're going. Yes, we always take time to look back. Perhaps Sir Winston Churchill, the heroic leader of Great Britain in World War II, said it best in accepting <u>honorary citizenship</u> in the United States during a ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House on April 9, 1963. It was during that time the Congress of the United States, in a formal proclamation delivered by President John F. Kennedy, bestowed this honor on Churchill. It was the first time such an honor had been formally conferred in American history. Churchill was unable to attend the festivities in person, so his son, Randolph, read from a statement Sir Winston had prepared. Among Churchill's comments were the following, "Our past is our key to our future."

In past newsletters we've detailed the impact that historic figures such as President Benjamin Harrison and his Attorney General, William Miller, have had on the Sny's history. We can't forget Mr. Charles Clark who championed and shepherded the creation of drainage law in the State of Illinois leading to the official recognition of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District in 1879. Events such as the start of construction of our main stem Mississippi River levee on September 16, 1872; the completion of the "Sny Project" in the 1960s creating the system as we know it today; successful flood fights in 1965, '73, '95, '96, '98, 2001, '08 and '19; or the heartache, devastation and yes recovery from the Great Flood of '93 have each in their own way left indelible imprints in the life of the Sny Island Levee Drainage District. Yes, we look back for a while, but always move forward having learned valuable lessons, grown in strength and gained in character to better meet the unknown challenges the future is sure to bring.



months at both sites. With work finally moving forward. the Snv recognized "substantial completion" of Pump Station 1, accepting its ownership in December of 2021. The station is equipped with two, 1,500 h.p. MTU diesel engines powering two, 58" Pentair pumps, each capable of pumping an average of 150,000 gallons per minute. The addition of the

The scene to the left was taken from the Sny's annual meeting held on November 16, 2016. You might ask, "why is this of any significance?" This might qualify as another one of those major events worth remembering in the history of the Sny. It was at this meeting that formal plans were unveiled for the construction of two new pump stations and a nearly four-mile-long berm on the land side slope of the main stem Mississippi River levee at the north end of Reach 1. Planning for the pump stations began with discussions on the need to add pumping capacity to the system two or three years prior to the 2016 meeting. Significant interior flooding caused by heavy rain events in the summer of 2015 and another in December/January of 2015-16 moved that process to a "full speed ahead" mode. All of this resulted in the approval of a 16<sup>th</sup> Additional Assessment that financed this more than \$25,000,000.00 undertaking. Bleigh Construction initiated work on the new Pump Station 1 in November of 2018. Magruder Construction began work on the new Pump Station 3A in December of 2018. The threat of flooding in the spring/summer of 2019 delayed work for several





two new pumps at the Hull site brings the Sny's total pumping capacity at that location to an average of 700,000 gallons per minute depending on river conditions. Extensive testing of all the systems in this new "state of the art" facility took place this past spring. The new Pump Station 1 is now considered fully operational, having been put in use this past spring and summer. Rest assured, however, the existing "old" pump station 1 continues to be maintained and fully operational. The image on the left is a shot of both the ground floor and the second floor (operational floor) of the new Pump Station 1.

Both of the new pump stations are two story in construction with the top floors at each location constructed above the 500-year flood elevation. In order to secure the proper permits for the facilities, the new pump stations were required to meet "resiliency

standards" insisted upon in today's federal regulatory world. By having the operational floor above the 500-year flood elevation, even in the event of a catastrophic flood event, equipment most

 Fund Station 3R

 Completed in the 1960s

susceptible to flood damage would not be affected. Therefore, costs to repair these new pump stations under the federal government's PL84-99 program would be minimal. In addition, once levee the breach leading to the flooding is repaired, these new

pump stations could be used to more rapidly de-water the impacted area. It's important to note these new facilities, as well as the existing pump stations at these sites, are the largest pump stations on the Mississippi River north of St. Louis.



The new pump station at our **Pleasant Hill location** was accepted as "substantially complete" on October 12 of this vear. The station is considered operational in that we did run the pumps this past April. However, due fuel spill to а resulting from an error in wiring by a sub-contractor and the required cleanup, progress on

completing that facility was delayed for several weeks. A settlement on payment for the clean-

up was recently achieved. Now additional testing of the equipment is needed. But, if necessary, the pump station can be used. The new facility at our **Pleasant Hill site** has two 72" diameter Pentair pumps powered by two 2,000 hp MTU diesel engines. Each pump is capable of moving more than 200,000 gallons of water



per minute depending on river conditions. When added to our current pumping abilities at this

site, under ideal conditions we will be able to pump more than 900,000 gallons per minute. An added benefit with these new pumps at both locations will be much more efficient operations during the higher river conditions we have been seeing. Another obvious benefit with our new facilities is if we have an engine/pump malfunction now, we will have back-up units to take up the slack until repairs are made. The additional testing needed has been delayed this fall due to the dry conditions we've experienced that have led to the Sny elevation being extremely low. We have not run any of our pumping facilities since July. That's a "good news/bad news" scenario. The good news is we haven't had to purchase as much diesel fuel this year. The bad news, we could have used more "timely showers" throughout the late summer and fall.

As noted earlier, our pump stations have been shut down since July so we haven't had to purchase as much diesel fuel as in previous years. However, as we all know, fuel prices have escalated dramatically in the last couple of years. In 2022 we purchased about 69,000 gallons less fuel for our pump stations than in 2021, but we spent nearly \$287,000.00 more because the price went up so much. We paid an average of \$1.91/ gallon for pump station fuel in 2001 vs. an average of \$3.98/gallon this past year. Please note we work with three fuel suppliers on a bid basis for all of our fuel. The deliveries are awarded to the low bidder.

Another factor critical to the efficient and effective operation of our pump stations is part time pump station operators. It takes a lot of manpower to run our pump stations. These facilities often times run 24 hours/day, 7 days/week for weeks on end. We are experiencing a critical shortage of part time help to run these stations. If you or someone you know is interested in picking up some part time work, please have them contact the Sny office to discuss current openings at all three pump stations.



it hasn't been said before, it's important to note the Sny Island Levee Drainage District is the largest levee and drainage district on the Mississippi **River north of** St. Louis as well as the largest in the

State of Illinois. We are bounded on the north by Harkness Creek at Bluff Hall in Adams County and on the south by Wildcat Hollow in Calhoun County. Our pumping facilities handle the storm water run-off from not only our 116,000 acre drainage district but also from more than

80,000 acres of uplands or bluff areas that drain down into our district. Much of the upland run-off flows into one of our sixteen sedimentation basins of nearly 2,700 acres. It's in these basins the water is retained to allow the silt load to drop out before it's slowly released into our system of more than 260 miles of ditches taking the water to the Sny channel, the pump stations and ultimately the Mississippi River. The chart below details the fuel usage at all of our pump stations over the years.

Total Gallons of diesel fuel delivered to pump stations 1, 3A, & 4 "by month" per individual year.												Yearly	
	January	February	March	April	Мау	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total Gal
1996	0	0	43,708	21,650	108,839	58,505	22,202	0	0	0	29,207	7,400	291,511
1997	0	14,518	36,478	7,300	58,119	22,309	0	0	0	0	0	0	138,724
1998	0	30,005	36,204	80,214	59,260	44,014	45,005	15,001	14,435	0	29,701	0	353,839
1999	0	14,701	22,000	59,700	29,301	52,099	22,102	0	0	0	0	22,199	222,102
2000	0	0	0	0	0	37,105	14,900	0	0	0	0	0	52,005
2001	0	7,402	29,909	44,014	111,912	59,171	22,627	0	0	0	0	0	275,035
2002	0	0	15,057	29,800	112,357	44,506	0	0	0	0	0	0	201,720
2003	0	0	0	0	21,730	29,311	14,808	0	0	0	0	14,804	80,653
2004	0	0	44,123	14,732	29,916	43,718	0	14,694	15,000	0	0	0	162,183
2005	0	0	29,596	14,604	35,905	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80,105
2006	0	0	14,698	15,061	7,484	15,100	0	0	0	0	0	0	52,343
2007	0	0	0	37,038	29,583	0	44,702	21,911	0	0	0	0	133,234
2008	0	22,734	37,006	22,195	126,786	126,478	119,234	29,975	44,918	0	0	22,098	551,424
2009	22,384	0	37,587	51,600	90,230	37,084	7,600	22,697	0	29,728	74,535	22,549	395,994
2010	0	15,170	50,981	75,016	60,111	118,892	88,951	74,564	82,060	14,684	7,600	0	588,029
2011	0	14,760	44,874	82,244	82,694	89,616	22,454	14,600	0	0	0	0	351,242
2012	0	22,235	0	15,000	7,500	7,451	0	0	0	0	0	0	52,186
2013	0	0	22,501	97,087	156,097	103,911	22,585	0	0	0	0	0	402,181
2014	0	0	0	37,109	30,198	37,200	81,354	22,204	22,031	29,590	0	0	259,686
2015	0	29,718	0	0	14,520	125,588	125,849	22,205	0	0	15,002	80,999	413,881
2016	29,346	14,863	36,179	14,621	36,611	0	22,366	14,405	21,927	14,704	14,813	7,598	227,433
2017	14,845	7,503	15,113	37,515	134,157	51,795	7,002	0	0	7,359	0	7,338	282,627
2018	0	7,500	14,849	22,237	29,953	21,830	30,337	7,415	14,666	66,106	22,636	29,727	267,256
2019	29,592	37,395	67,447	140,895	176,117	110,891	59,532	29,537	14,892	51,993	29,542	22,427	770,260
2020	44,890	22,366	96,023	65,854	37,230	73,396	36,731	7,435	0	0	0	0	383,925
2021	0	9,004	75,245	44,266	45,001	14,928	44,591	14,645	7,301	14,213	0	0	269,194
2022	0	0	44,416	37,076	52,212	44,533	22,525	0	0	0			200,762

All of the information provided thus far discusses such items as pump stations, river levees, creek levees, sedimentation basins and district ditches. All are components of what we often refer to as our drainage system. And indeed, it is a system of levees, basins, ditches, concrete aqueducts, culverts and pump stations designed to work in unison to provide a flood control system second to none. Upon its inception in the late 1870s, the Sny was not what we know today. The work of our forefathers provided a foundation on which we could build. Our "system", as we know it today, came into being with the Sny Project in the 1960s. At that time, an investment of nearly \$3,400,000.00 by the Sny landowners coupled with about \$15,500,000.00 from the Federal Government led to the construction of our original three pump stations, all of our diversion channels that created six separate segments of the system known as Reaches 1,2,3 & 4 along with the Kinderhook "V" and the Pleasant Hill "V" as well as our initial sedimentation basins. What effect did all that work have? The value of land in the Sny in the 1960s totaled around \$45,000,000.00. That value today exceeds \$1,000,000,000.00.



Of major importance to the proper functioning of the "system" is maintenance. First, our interior drainage system is worthless unless we can keep the river out. In the aftermath of the '93 flood, much has been done to maintain the integrity of our main stem Mississippi River levee. Slopes have been properly

graded and berms added. We have been working with both the St. Louis and Rock Island Corps Districts to address shoreline erosion issues on the river side of the main stem levee. In last year's newsletter, we informed you of shoreline riprap added to a lengthy section of the river levee in Reach 4. This year, the St. Louis District addressed a shoreline erosion issue in Reach 3 along the main stem levee on the Delair Wildlife Refuge just south of Louisiana. Several hundred feet of riprap was added with that project completed just a few weeks ago. We have also made the St. Louis District aware of an erosion problem just north of Louisiana. They have assured us they are looking into it.





months when weather can also be a limiting factor. So far this year, we have cleaned just short of 10 miles of district ditches. At any rate, your pump stations cannot operate at maximum efficiency if we can't get the water to them. This past year we completed ditch excavation on the Hull Town Ditch just north of Hull. Water had been ponding in that area after recent heavy rain events and it was apparent the ditch needed cleaning. Our field staff also cleaned Sand Slough in Reach 3. We are currently working on cleaning the Long Pond **Extension of Mud Slough in Ross Township in Reach** 3. That section of Mud Slough will be finished up before the Christmas Holidays. The balance of Mud Slough from the former Kansas City Southern rail line to its entry into the Sny will be completed after the first of the year. The image on the right shows our operator, Greg Brummell, cleaning the ditch with our long reach 350L Cat excavator.

As far as interior drainage is concerned, our pump stations, whether brand new or vintage 1965, are of no value if we can't get the water to them. With more than 260 miles of "district ditches", we rely on you, the landowner, to inform us of drainage problems in your area. You see their condition more than anyone while completing your tillage, planting the crop and harvesting in the fall. Perhaps proper drainage has been choked off by silt deposits or maybe it's a culvert issue. Please help us by keeping us informed if problems exist. Once the crop is harvested, we'll look at addressing the problems. We have historically followed a policy of not digging ditches if the process damages That policy limits the amount crops. of time we have in maintaining ditches to less than five months out of the year, with some of those being winter



On the previous page, we were able to do the work on the Hull Town Ditch with our Cat 324 DL excavator. Due to the size of some of our ditches some of the work has to be done with the 350L, equipped with a reach exceeding 55', to effectively clean the waterway. Ditch work is scheduled before the 2023 planting season on the upper end of East Gibson Ditch in Reach 3, particularly where Brown and Brewster Basins empty into the ditch, the Grubb Basin outlet area of Boyd Ditch in Reach 2 as well as other sites in the system.

Another challenge to ensuring proper drainage is clearing another type of blockage in the ditch, beaver dams. This past year has presented more of a challenge to addressing the beaver issue in Sny ditches than ever before. We utilize a number of individuals in the District to trap beaver where dams are creating problems. Beaver became such a problem this year we raised the bounty paid. The Sny pays a \$25.00 bounty on each one trapped or shot in Sny ditches. The beaver tail needs



to be brought to the District office for verification before a bounty can be paid. If you currently do not trap for us and are interested, contact the Sny office for more information. We always try to match up trappers with problem areas near where they live so travel isn't an issue.



Keeping your ditch banks free of brush/woody plant growth will help alleviate the beaver issue. It won't stop it altogether, but it helps. After all, beaver will use corn stalks, weeds, other plant life and just plain mud to create their dams. But keeping your banks clear of brush also helps with ditch excavation. If embankments are clean, ditch excavation goes much faster. If not, projects take longer and leave a big mess in fields when brush has to be cleaned from the banks before and piled

excavation can take place. The Sny offers a brush control program that involves the Sny furnishing the herbicide for spraying "district ditches" if the landowner will apply it. This past



year, the Sny distributed 141 gallons of crossbow herbicide that landowners applied to "District Ditches" on their property. All you have to do is let us know what ditches you plan to apply the herbicide to so we can verify they are "District Ditches". We will then furnish it at no charge. The herbicide can be picked it up at the Sny Business Office in New Canton.

When the crops go in, we move our focus to maintaining levees and creeks. Whether it's mowing or brush control efforts, the work never stops. Corps regulations call for all aspects of the "federal project" to be mowed at least twice per year. The "federal project" includes the mainstem river levee, the north and south closing levees, the three diversion channel levees, along with Pigeon Creek and Dutch Horton Basins. When the basins constructed by the Sny are added in, the District mows about 150 miles of levees.

Our two 15' Bushhog mowers powered by two John Deere 7710 tractors get started by at least May annually and mow daily until inspection, Corps usually mid-November. During that same time, applying we are herbicide to control brush on our levees, cutting brush with our Alamo Brush Axe or clearing brush that obstructs flow in our creek channels.





Another aspect of that's Sny the constantly being monitored is on the regulatory side. What transpires in Washington, D.C. on a daily basis dramatically affects all facets of this drainage district, not only now, but in the

future. Sny officials are in Washington, D.C. at least twice a year to meet with our elected officials and agency leadership to focus on the impact Federal activities in D.C have on all of you. The three most important agencies we work with in multiple ways are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA. There are numerous changes in Federal regulations being suggested right now by both FEMA and the Corps. However, our focus for the last year has been on the 2019 pumping cost reimbursement we submitted during the disaster declaration resulting from the 2019 flood event. After following the process provided by FEMA Region 5 headquartered in Chicago in computing our additional pumping costs during the flood event, we received just under \$860,000.00 additional expenses for our pumping operations. It was several weeks later that we found that FEMA Region 7, headquartered in Kansas City, used a different method in calculating additional pumping costs. By following Region 7's process, the Sny would have received just under \$2,200,000.00 for additional expenses. In other words, if the Sny were directly across the river in Missouri, we would have received just under \$2,200,000.00. We then later found that a drainage district in FEMA Region 5 was reimbursed for pumping costs in the same manner as was used in FEMA Region 7. So here we have the same Federal Agency, FEMA, using two different methods to calculate costs arrived at for operating pump stations. ONLY IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT!! Legal counsel has advised us FEMA's regulations are clear that Region 7's method was appropriate. For over a year now, we have been working with the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with Senators Durbin & Duckworth as well as Representatives LaHood, Davis, Miller and Bost in an attempt to resolve the issue. So far, this bi-partisan, multi-agency effort has led to frustration. Senator Durbin's office is leading the charge to at least get a meeting set up so we can meet with FEMA leadership to work out an equitable solution. This needs to be resolved not only to bring to a fair conclusion on reimbursements from the 2019 flood event, but to clarify the process for requests for reimbursements from future flood events that are sure to come. We will keep you advised as this process continues.



Remember the phrase represented on the left? Illinois Farm Bureau led the fight to "ditch the waters of the U.S." rule proposed dating back to 2014. Farm bureau put together a coalition of groups to beat back proposals from EPA and the Corps of Engineers redefining "navigable waters" that would have placed severe restrictions on the maintenance of ditches, ponds and drains that are several miles from the closest truly navigable waterway. It would also have placed restrictions on farming practices on land adjacent to these re-defined navigable waterways. Farm Bureau's

efforts paid off over time resulting in a more common-sense definition of "waters of the U.S." to beat back the efforts of EPA and the Corps during the Trump administration. Guess what, re-defining waters of the U.S. has reared its ugly head again. Following a Federal Court challenge by EPA and the Corps of Engineers in 2021, a Federal District Court ruling resulted in the rejection of the more "common sense" rule and have reverted back to the pre-2015 interpretation of waters of the U.S. which is much more restrictive. This interpretation will remain in effect until a more palatable definition is arrived at. The Sny continues to monitor developments in this area.

Another Federal effort currently underway is the Corps of Engineers' is the <u>National Levee</u> <u>Safety Program</u>. Although it sounds good, there isn't one red cent in the program that will make our levees safer. It's purely regulatory, placing what we see as more restrictive burdens on local sponsors such as the Sny to do the job of protecting your land from the ravages of flooding.

Follow that up with the re-authorization of the National Flood Insurance Program and Risk Rating 2.0 which is the proposed new way to calculate flood risk behind Federal levees resulting in flood insurance premiums. At a meeting attended by Sny officials in Washington, D.C. over a year ago FEMA leadership stated it was anticipated flood insurance rates to go down on property owners protected by 100-year levees, which the Sny has. FEMA leadership repeated that same comment at a meeting of the National Waterways Conference in Baltimore, Maryland also attended by the Sny. However, just the opposite seems to have occurred. Recent premium notices received by landowners who have contacted the Sny office show increases of anywhere from 12% to 18%. Current FEMA flood insurance regulations allow for that maximum 18% increase to continue for several years to come. When the Sny achieved its 100-year flood accreditation from FEMA back in 2004, landowners behind our levees were not required to carry flood insurance. Regulations were also much less restrictive for construction

of new structures behind 100-year levees. That's not necessarily the case now. We continue to monitor this issue.

Proposed new regulations for the implementation of the PL84-99 program, the program instrumental in the repair of flood damaged levees and facilities are being circulated. The new regulations make it much harder for levee and drainage districts such as the Sny to be eligible for the program. Instead of being focused on the emergency response to damaged infrastructure, it focuses on flood-plain management over which most levee and drainage districts have no authority. Sny representatives are in attendance at a meeting in Kansas City and will be in attendance at another session in Rock Island in mid-December to learn more about these changes.



We are better able to monitor these types of Federal activities through our memberships in the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association and the Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association. Commissioner Koeller sits on the Executive Committee of MVFCA

representing the interests of not only the Sny, but the State of Illinois. Commissioner Brady Borrowman currently serves on the Resolution Committee. It is







The holiday season is rapidly approaching. All of us at the Sny want to extend to all of you the warmest and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year in 2023. We look forward to the continued opportunity to represent your interests in the year ahead. As an additional note, we have had a number of landowners who have failed to receive their assessment

notices in the mail. If you're comfortable with it, pass along your email address to Trudi Brummell, the Sny's Administrative Assistant, and we will be glad to send off an email to you alerting you to mailings that may be coming your way.

In observance of the holiday season, the Sny Business Office will be closed on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and January 2.

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Russell E. Koeller – President

Sonowma Brady Borrowman – Secretary

Max Borrowman - Commissioner

## SNY ISLAND LEVEE DRAINAGE DISTRICT STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 2021

	G	General Annual Maintenance		Debt Service Fund		Non-Major Governmental Funds	G	Total overnmental Funds
REVENUES					-		_	
Assessments - general	S	1916615				1	\$	1916615
Assessments - 16th additional assessment			\$	1 888 242				1 888 242
Disaster income		53 120						53 120
Material and pipe sales		51 555						51 555
Lease income		17 500						17 500
Farm income		33 919						33 919
Investment earnings		66 940		5 460	\$	2		72 402
Interest on 16th additional assessment				566 225				566 225
Miscellaneous		7 248		5 024			7	12 272
Total revenue	_	2 146 897		2 464 951		2		4 611 850
EXPENDITURES	_					1	_	
Current:								
General administration								
Pavroll		132 359						132 359
Office supplies		6 925						6 925
Building utilities and maintenance		11 499						11 499
Insurance		106 322						106 322
Legal and audit		342 073						342 073
Engineering		20 595						20 595
Miscellaneous		31 898						31 898
Pumping Operations								
Payroll		204 862						204 862
Operating expenses		712 569						712 569
Heavy Equipment Operations								
Payroll		66 459						66 459
Equipment expenses		19 530						19 530
Other Operations								
Payroll		18 195						18 195
Equipment expenses		57 428						57 428
Pipe and wire rope		44 154						44 154
Shop supplies and maintenance		14 167						14 167
Levee and ditch maintenance		74 434						74 434
Miscellaneous								
Payroll taxes		35 824						35 824
Employee benefits		130 855						130 855
Debt Service:								
Principal		208 913		1 594 000				1 802 913
Interest		27 468		622 560				650 028
Capital Outlay:		5 985 965					_	5 985 965
Total expenditures		8 252 494		2 216 560	_	-		10 469 054
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	-							
Sale of capital assets		446 565						446 565
Proceeds from note payable		48 459			_		-	48 459
Net change in fund balances		(5 610 573	)	248 391	_	2	_	(5 362 180)
Fund balances - beginning	-	8 136 196	_	2 354 254	_	1 604	-	10 492 054
Fund balances - ending	\$	2 525 623	\$	2 602 645	\$	1 606	\$	5 129 874

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