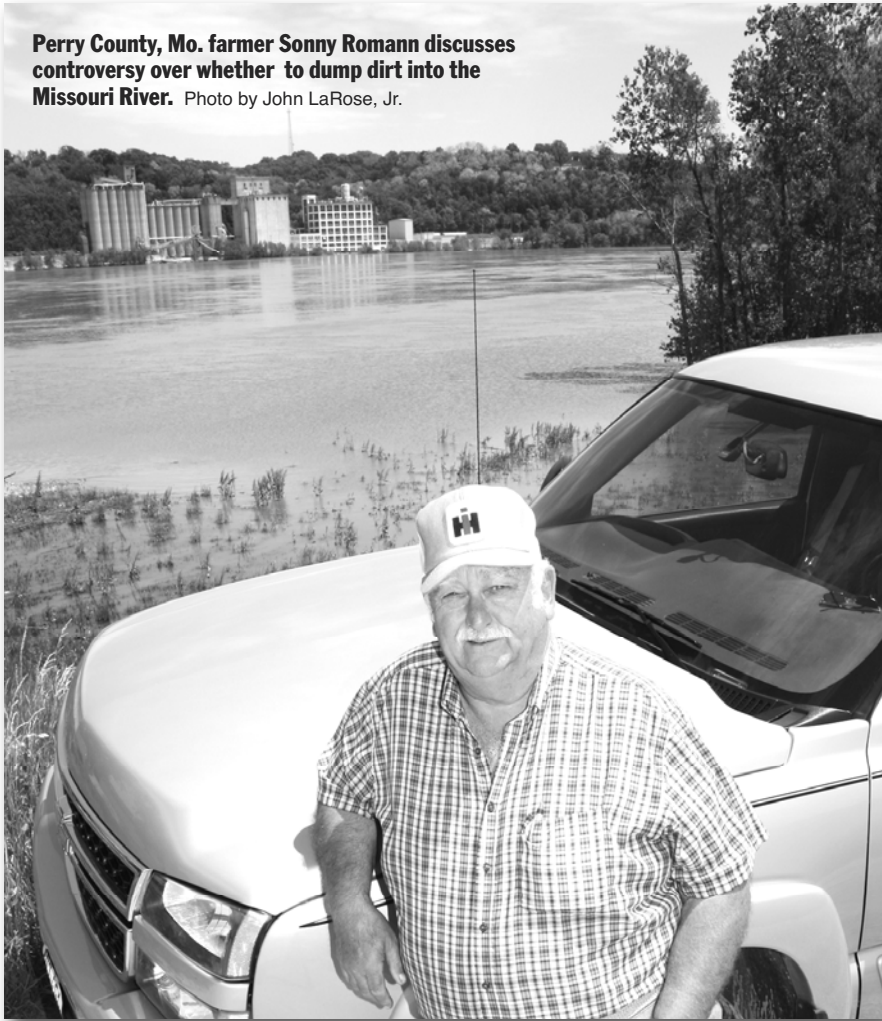


# Man-Made Flooding

*Environmentalists' Wishes Have Been Placed Before Human Habitat*

**Perry County, Mo. farmer Sonny Romann discusses controversy over whether to dump dirt into the Missouri River.** Photo by John LaRose, Jr.



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**F**armers say they are the victims of a double standard in the controversy over whether to dump dirt into the Missouri River to provide habitat for some endangered species, including the pallid sturgeon.

"They will take our government payments away if we don't follow no-till practices to keep the soil out of the waterways," said Perry County farmer Sonny Romann.

The Army Corps of Engineers had planned four projects along the Missouri River, one at Barney Bend and one at Rush Bottom, both on the Missouri/Nebraska border; and one at Baltimore Bottoms and at Jameson Island in west central Missouri. The effort is to provide habitat for endangered species. The effort was postponed a couple of days when the late March floods wreaked havoc along Missouri's waterways.

The double standard occurs because farmers work diligently to prevent soil erosion into streams, and these projects would dispose sed-

iment containing natural levels of phosphorus into the river, contributing to the massive "dead zone" of oxygen deprived water in the Gulf of Mexico. When that happens, will the government place the blame on farmers and ignore the fact that the pollution came from other sources too?

In late March Sen. Kit Bond (R-MO) petitioned the Administration and President George W. Bush to stop the effort to promote more flooding for the purpose of habitat experimentation. He said it's time to weight the needs of struggling Missourians against the value of providing habitat. He stressed the need for a river plan that balances the needs of environmental restoration with the needs of the people.

Despite the natural floods, federal disaster declaration and Bond's warning, the Administration triggered a man-made spring rise on the Missouri River designed to encourage the mating habits of the pallid sturgeon fish.

"There may have been enough flooding to satisfy the pallid sturgeon in recent days, but apparently never enough to satisfy the administration," Bond said in a press release.

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