



*Photo taken north of Omaha's Eppley Airfield*

As you know, many Nebraskans are dealing with the effects of record water levels and flooding along the Missouri River. Families have lost homes, farmers have lost land, and communities have lost key infrastructure. Another concern is the floodwater encroaching upon Nebraska's two nuclear power plants.

Yesterday I reviewed operations at the Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station near Fort Calhoun. It was a jarring site - water surrounding the property, a boat tied to the nuclear plant, and employees wading their way across the grounds. To gain access to the facility, we had to traverse a series of catwalks put in place above the waters covering the parking lot.

Even among such conditions, plant officials conveyed a high degree of confidence that the facility is safe. It is dry, and multiple barriers protect it from encroaching water. The station's buildings are designed to handle flooding up to 1,014 feet above sea level. The river now is just over 1,006 feet, and the crest is forecast at 1,008 feet. Additionally, the plant's spent fuel is protected and its power supply is backed up by multiple sources, including diesel generators.

## Missouri River Flooding

June 28, 2011

---

Both federal and utility officials stated clearly that both Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station and Cooper Nuclear Station, which is located near Brownville, are safe and will remain safe. And as floodwaters rise, further efforts will be taken by the utilities and federal regulators to maintain the facilities' security.

Unfortunately, the Missouri River floods will remain a concern for some time to come. Last week, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stepped up the water release at Gavins Point Dam in Yankton to 160,000 cubic feet per second. Cities up and down the river have raced to prepare for near-certain Missouri river increases of at least 5-7 feet above flood stage. My office has been in daily contact with representatives of the Corps and has worked to assist constituents whose lives have been disrupted.

While the Corps has worked positively alongside many state and local agencies to provide the public with crucial direct and technical assistance, concerns about its water release and flood-control practices persist. On behalf of concerned constituents, I have asked the Corps' leadership to clarify these strategies in light of the agency's statutory obligations and operational conditions.

If you or someone you know is affected directly by the flooding and need assistance, please contact my office at 1-866-725-5255.