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“M.S. ‘Mitch’ Mitchell Floodway” advances to the President

(Sedgwick County, Kan.) – The Wichita-Valley Center Flood Control Project, known also as the Big Ditch, is a step closer to being renamed after the man who designed it, M.S. Mitch Mitchell.

The U.S. Senate passed a bill this week naming the flood-control project; the House of Representatives passed the bill in September. The bill must now be approved by the President.

Mitchell, who died in March 2017, was a local hero, affectionately known as Big Ditch Mitch.

“Mitch Mitchell is so deserving of this honor,” Sedgwick County Commission Chairman David Dennis said. “He was a visionary public servant whose exceptional work continues to serve our residents today. Thank you to our partners and especially Congressman Estes for advancing the renaming of the project in Mitchell’s honor.”

“We want to thank our partners in Washington and Topeka for helping us honor Mitch Mitchell and his significant contributions to the Wichita community,” said Mayor Jeff Longwell. “Mitch’s expertise and dedication safeguarded our city for future generations and we are proud to honor him.”

Mitchell was the Flood Control and Maintenance Supervisor for the City Council Flood Control Office for Sedgwick County and the City of Wichita from 1958-63. He supervised the innovative flood-control project, which diverted excess water around the City of Wichita. The project is one of the largest diversion projects in the nation. It spans 18 miles long with 50 miles of connecting channels. It contains 100 miles of levees and

150 control structures. It is credited with saving the city from flooding many times as well saving lives.

To honor Mitchell's leadership on the project, the Sedgwick County Commission and the Wichita City Council issued a joint ordinance and resolution in May 2017 requesting the project name change.

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