

True enough, in the summer of 1946 President Truman signed the River and Harbor Act that finally authorized Corps' construction of the Arkansas River navigation system.

But then nothing happened. It would be another decade before construction would begin, and 15 years beyond that before the first barge would make its way to the head of navigation.

That quarter-century of events would be filled with drama aplenty. Throughout that first decade, the question of whether the waterway would be built was posed again and again. Ultimately, as Settle notes, that question was answered not by the Corps but by local interests and the Congress of the United States.



Building on techniques developed in willow mattress weaving around the turn of the century, stream and bank stabilization devices used today create their own unique river rhythms. For example, left photo, shows striking patterns on the Arkansas River between Mayo and Kerr Locks and Dams.

***Our lives float on quiet waters . . .
down softly flowing streams,
where silvery willows
shadow calm waves . . .***

— B.S. Wagstaff

