



UMRR Program - IL, IA, MO, MN, WI - Upper Mississippi River Restoration

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Location

The Program includes the Upper Mississippi River between the Twin Cities, Minnesota and the mouth of the Ohio River, the Illinois Waterway, and small portions of tributaries that have commercial navigation channels.

State(s)

IA, IL, MN, MO, WI

Congressional District(s)

IA-2, IA-4, IL-11, IL-13, IL-14, IL-15, IL-16, IL-17, IL-18, IL-2, IL-3, MN-1, MN-7, MO-6, WI-1, WI-2, WI-3, WI-5, WI-6

Status

The Upper Mississippi River Restoration (UMRR) Program consists of two primary elements: 1) habitat rehabilitation projects, and 2) systemic monitoring and research, and is recognized as the first large river ecosystem restoration and scientific monitoring program in the nation. One of the major strengths of the Program is a robust regional Partnership of five states, five federal agencies, many non-governmental organizations, and strong public support. Since 1986, UMRR has completed 55 habitat projects that improved critical fish and wildlife habitat on 102,000 acres in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin. From 2005 to 2015 UMRR projects benefited nearly 35,000 acres of habitat - nearly 50% of all habitat reported by the Corps nationally! Over the past 30 years, the Program has completed several major initiatives. These include: four Reports to Congress; the 2000 Habitat Needs Assessment; two Status and Trends Reports; two Habitat Restoration Design Manuals; a UMRR Program Strategic Plan and Operational Plan, two UMRR Long Term Resource Monitoring element Strategic Plans; and developed an explicit approach to Adaptive Management. The UMRR Program integrates the principles of ecosystem resilience and health into all aspects of the restoration, monitoring, and research.

2016 Report to Congress Highlights: 1) completed the 2015-2025 UMRR Strategic and Operational Plans; 2) signed the Advisory Groups Charter; 3) completed the UMRS Ecosystem Objectives Report with partners; 4) recognized the Program's 30 years of service to the nation, receiving commendations from several federal, state, and local leaders; 5) initiated the groundbreaking effort to define and integrate ecosystem health and resilience principles for the UMRS; 6) initiated development of the second Habitat Needs assessment to focus future habitat rehabilitation efforts; 7) completed construction of seven habitat projects; 7) continued construction on five habitat projects; 8) completed seven feasibility studies, 9) continued planning and design on eleven habitat projects; 10) completed a seamless LiDAR and bathymetric data coverage for 2.7 million acres of the UMRS; 11) continued to make major revisions to the Program's website and systemic Program data base; 12) continued collection of the annual systemic data on key environmental attributes of the UMRS to assess changes and evaluate ecosystem health; and 13) successfully submitted 47 scientific papers publication in professional peer reviewed journals.

Description

The UMRR Program was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 and re-authorized by WRDA 99. Some of the key provisions of the Program are: 1) it is a continuing authority; 2) the total authorized annual funding amount is \$33,170,000; and 3) the requirement for a Report to Congress every six years to evaluate the Program and document progress and its accomplishments, identify systemic habitat needs, and recommend adjustments as needed.

The UMRR Program was the first environmental restoration and monitoring program undertaken on a large river system in the United States. The UMRR Program has come to be recognized as the single most important effort committed to ensuring the viability and vitality of the UMRS' diverse and significant fish and wildlife resources since establishment of the National Wildlife Refuges on that system in the 1920's. This systemic program provides a well-balanced combination of habitat restoration activities, along with monitoring and research. UMRR has pioneered many new and innovative engineering and planning techniques for ecosystem restoration in large river systems. In addition, the science element of the UMRR has developed state-of-the-art techniques to monitor and conduct research on the river. Scientific monitoring, engineering design, and environmental modeling techniques have been shared throughout the United States and in more than five countries.

Additional information on the UMRR Program can be found at the following website:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/EnvironmentalProtectionandRestoration/UpperMississippiRiverRestoration.>

UMRR Program accomplishments to date include: 1) the completion of 55 habitat restoration projects benefiting approximately 102,000 acres of critical riverine and floodplain habitats; 35 additional projects are in various stages of construction and design, benefitting another 87,000 acres of habitat when implemented); 2) the collection of key environmental attributes of the UMRS (fish, water quality, vegetation, and invertebrates) and applied research that is leading to enhanced understanding of the dynamics of large floodplain rivers and successful multi-purpose resource management; 3) the development of extensive digital systemic databases,

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mapping products, and establishment of an information clearinghouse through which UMRS data and information can be universally accessed; and 4) a partnership of unparalleled dimensions between a multitude of federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the general public. The total annual value of these partnerships contributions to the UMRR Program averages \$1,000,000.

The 4th partnership-based Report to Congress on this Program was completed in December 2016. This report documented the Program's accomplishments to date and recommended that the Program be continued to serve the ecosystem restoration and resource monitoring needs on the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem. Without the UMRR Program, the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem will degrade at an accelerated rate and the progress that has been made to preserve this national treasure for future generations will be lost.

Summarized Project Costs

Authorized Federal Cost Per Year (Habitat Restoration element)*	\$22,750,000
Authorized Federal Cost Per Year (Long Term Resource Monitoring and science element)*	\$10,420,000
Total Authorized Amount for the entire UMRR Program*	\$33,170,000

*WRDA 1999 authorized the transfer up 20% of the amounts appropriated between the two elements of the UMRR Program.

Additional Project Information

The UMRR Program will continue to serve as a national and international model for large river ecosystem restoration, monitoring, and research. The past and future success of this Program can be attributed to the active involvement and strong support from Congress (reauthorization of the UMRR Program in 1999 and supported appropriations every year since 1986), state and federal resource agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the general public. Re-authorization of the UMRR Program in 1999 was supported by all five state governors; federal, state, and local agencies; and many non-governmental organizations. That support has grown steadily as the UMRR Program is the major ecosystem restoration and monitoring program on the UMRS, works to fulfill the direction of Congress to manage the UMRS as both a nationally significant ecosystem and navigation system, addresses long term stressors to the UMRS, such as sedimentation and an increased water table due to maintaining navigation pools during low flows, and continues to effectively respond to new stressors on the UMRS, such as the invasive Asian carps.

Additional Congressional Districts: MN-8, MN-3, MN-4, MN-5, MN-2, MN-6; IL-12; MO-1, MO-2, MO-3, MO-8. The UMRR Program was formerly known as the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program (UMRS-EMP).

Major Work Item (This Fiscal Year)

FY 2017: The FY17 appropriation for UMRR Program will allow the Program to complete construction on one habitat rehabilitation project, continue construction on five projects, initiate construction on one project, and initiate or continue planning, engineering and/or design on 14 projects. In addition, the Program will 1) continue development of a ground breaking effort to define and integrate ecosystem health and resilience principles into this five state regional ecosystem rehabilitation program; and 2) continue the second Habitat Needs Assessment to focus future habitat rehabilitation efforts. In addition, it supports collection and analysis of key environmental attributes the UMRS at USGS and the six field stations in five states. It will also support applied research that is designed to enhance the Program's overall capability to increase resiliency and health of the UMRS and monitor progress towards increasing health and resiliency. The UMRR Program has a long history of engaging the public and this will continue. In addition, continuation of work to fully operationalize the explicit approach for the use of adaptive management procedures. The UMRR Program completed a Strategic Plan which includes adoption of a vision to make the UMRS more resilient and healthier and to develop tools to help measure progress towards meeting the Vision. All aspects of the Program will be coordinated to ensure that they directly contribute to advancing the Program Vision. In addition, the UMRR Program will continue development of the website and regional projects data base.

Major Work Item (Next Fiscal Year)

FY 2018: The proposed budget for UMRR Program will allow for significant progress to be made in both the Program elements. The FY18 funds will be used to complete construction on XX habitat project, initiate construction on XX habitat projects, and continue construction on XX habitat projects. This will allow the program to continue planning, engineering and/or design of XX projects. It will also provide funding sufficient to accomplish

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base monitoring to track systemic trends in water quality, fish, and submerged aquatic plants for the UMRS and conduct six research efforts that will help to enhance habitat rehabilitation efforts. The UMRR Program has a long history of engaging the public and this effort will continue. In addition, funding will allow for implementation of portions of the Strategic Plan, and continue to operationalize the integration of adaptive management procedures into the formulation of habitat projects.

Authority Details

Section 1103 of WRDA 1986, as amended.

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