

MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

DECEMBER 2002

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER – ILLINOIS WATERWAY SYSTEM NAVIGATION STUDY



PURPOSE: These monthly status reports are intended to provide team members, partners, stakeholders, and other interested parties with a brief overview of significant events and activities occurring within the major components of the UMR-IWW System Navigation Feasibility Study. We welcome your comments and input on the status reports to ensure they provide timely and useful information. If you identify monthly events that we have overlooked, please let us know and we will correct it on the website. POCs: Denny Lundberg ph.: (309) 794-5632. or email address Denny.A.Lundberg@usace.army.mil or Scott Whitney ph.: (309) 794-5386. or email address Scott.D.Whitney@usace.army.mil

PROJECT MANAGEMENT (Lundberg and Whitney)

- **Study Schedule:** The following was developed to provide additional clarification for the major study milestones that many of you have seen on various schedules presented over the past several months. However, during several recent presentations, we have learned that many of our stakeholders are not familiar with the significance or specifics associated with some of these milestones.

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| (1) Alternative Evaluation | Dec 02-Sep 03 |
| Between Dec 02 and Sep 03 the Corps will be working on the economic and environmental evaluation of the need for navigation and ecosystem restoration improvements on the system. During this period, the stakeholders will continue to be engaged in the collaborative process through the Governors Liaison Committee (GLC), Economic Coordinating Committee (ECC), and Navigation Environmental Coordinating Committee (NECC). The public can monitor and comment on progress of the study through the study website at www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwwsns/htm | |
| (2) Tentative Integrated Plans w/BCR's | Oct 03 |
| (3) Public Meetings | Oct 03 |
| Tentative integrated ecosystem restoration and navigation improvement plans will be completed by Oct. 03 and be presented at a series of regional public meetings. The Corps will take comments on these tentative plans from stakeholders and the public. A recommended plan will be developed using input received from these public meetings and comments from basin interests. | |
| (4) Alternative Formulation Briefing | Nov 03 |
| Briefing with Corps HQ and state/federal agencies to gain input into the final study recommendations. | |
| (5) Draft Feasibility Report | Apr 04 |
| (6) 90 day Public Review | Apr-Jun 04 |
| (7) Public Meetings | May 04 |
| A Draft Feasibility Report with an initial Corps recommendation will distributed for public and stakeholder reviews. A series of public meetings will be held across the region to gain public and stakeholder input into the recommended plan. | |
| (8) Final Feasibility Report w/EIS | Sep 04 |
| The final Feasibility Report w/EIS and including a recommendation will be submitted to Corps Headquarters for final action. | |
| (9) Chiefs Report | Nov 04 |
| The Chiefs Report is the final Corps document and contains the final Corps recommendation. This report will be transmitted to Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Office of Management and Budget and Congress. Administration and/or Congressional action on any recommendations could take place in the Water Resources Development Act of 2004. | |

- **Regional Contact Database:** An updated version of the Regional Contact Database was completed in December and recently distributed to the study team and committees. It has also been posted to the study website under the “*Whats New*” section. Finally, we are still putting the finishing touches on our complete listing of contact information for the multitude of groups and agencies comprising our stakeholder group. This should be completed this month and will also be posted to the website.
- **Regional Interagency Work Group.** On 12 Dec. the regional group participated in a conference call with BG Riley. The primary purpose of the call was to review topics for discussion at the upcoming 17 Dec Federal Task Force meeting. Topics discussed included review of study progress, results of ITR on Sparks Scenario's, feasibility of probability assignment to scenario's, potential options for conducting a sensitivity analysis to address demand elasticity concepts in the economic analysis, and results of the environmental objectives planning workshop. Al Fenedick EPA, Rick Nelson FWS, Bob Goodwin MARAD, and Nick Marathon Dept. of Ag. participated in the call.
- **Federal Principals Task Force.** On 17 Dec the Federal Principals Task Force met in Washington D.C. to discuss status of the study, scenario probability issues and sensitivity analysis to incorporate spatial concepts in the economic analysis. Nick Marathon Dept. of Ag., Maggie Blum MARAD, John Meagher EPA, Donna An EPA, and Stan Austin EPA attended the meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL (Barr)

Environmental Sustainability Component

- **Stakeholder Workshops** – A series of four regional stakeholder workshops were conducted during November. The workshops, in Peoria, St. Louis, Moline, and La Crosse, were generally well attended, (30-40 participants each), with active involvement by stakeholders. The main goals of the workshops, to review and confirm UMR-IWW environmental objectives, and formulate management actions that best address the identified objectives, were met. Currently, DRAFT reports for the Peoria and St. Louis workshops have been distributed to workshop participants for their review and comment. These workshops reviewed and identified objectives for the Illinois River and Pool 24 to Ohio River portion of the Mississippi River. The La Crosse and Moline DRAFT workshop reports (which cover Mississippi River Pools 1-22) will be distributed to workshop participants by January 10, 2003 for two weeks of review. After this review period, the FINAL workshop reports will be distributed to the workshop participants, NECC, and all relevant stakeholders. The completed DRAFT reports are currently available at the USACE anonymous FTP site: <ftp://ftp.usace.army.mil/Incoming/MVR/NavStudy/> and will later be placed on the Navigation Study web site after they become FINAL. As part of the Navigation Study’s formal documentation process, a DRAFT Environmental Report that integrates the results from all four workshops will be distributed to the workshop participants, NECC, ECC, and GLC by the end of January 2003. This final integrated report will contain a full accounting of the site-specific objectives in the form of atlas maps and tabulated system, reach, and pool-wide objectives and management actions. Results from the workshops will also be provided to the Expert Panel in preparation for their first meeting in January.

- **Expert Panel:** Panel members have been selected and final contractual arrangements are being secured. A working group met in La Crosse, WI on 8 November to finalize the formation of the group and solidify panel tasks and a meeting schedule. The current schedule calls for monthly meetings to be held from January-April 2003. The following provides a brief overview of the participants and primary tasks of this panel:

EXPERT PANEL PARTICIPANTS:

COORDINATORS

- John Barko, ERDC-EL, Co-Chair
- Ken Lubinski, USGS-UMESC, Co-Chair
- Kenneth Barr, USACE-MVR, USACE Lead

GEOMORPHOLOGY

- Robb Jacobson, USGS, Columbia
- Robert Davinroy, USACE-MVS
- Jon Hendrickson, USACE-MVP

AQUATIC ECOLOGY

- Mark Bain, Cornell University
- Gordon Farabee, Contractor
- Chuck Theiling, USACE-MVR
- Dan Wilcox, USACE-MVP

TERRESTRIAL ECOLOGY

- Carl Korschgen, USGS-CERC
- Bob Clevenstine, USFWS

HYDROLOGY AND SEDIMENT

- Tatsuaki Nakato, University of Iowa
- Kevin Landwehr, USACE-MVR

WATER QUALITY

- Dave Soballe, USGS-UMESC
- Clint Beckert, USACE-MVR

ECOLOGICAL MODELLING

- John Nestler, ERDC-EL
- L. Jean O'Neil, ERDC-EL
- Steve Bartell, CADMUS

EXPERT PANEL DUTIES:

In November 2002, regional stakeholder meetings were held in La Crosse, WI, Peoria, IL, St. Louis, MO, and Moline, IL. The purpose of the meetings was to establish objectives and formulate management actions to achieve these objectives. The Expert Panel will review the workshop objectives and management actions and assist the study team in the formulation of alternative plans to achieve environmental sustainability. The expert panel will convene monthly between January and April 2003. The following is a list of the primary topics of discussion for these monthly meetings:

January - Review of goals and objectives.

February - Consider management strategies and alternatives.

March - Link goals and objectives with management strategies using conceptual models.

April - Synthesize for input to the Navigation Studies Feasibility Report.

- **Operation and Maintenance Related Alternatives** – As part of the environmental sustainability component, we have initiated efforts designed to focus additional attention to alternatives that would offset some of the ongoing environmental effects of operating and maintaining the existing 9-foot navigation channel project. These efforts will compile and analyze information derived from the scientific literature, recent initiatives, and a diverse array of multidisciplinary experiences and talent. The following brief summations are provided for two of these alternatives, fish passage and water level management:

Water Level Management initiatives are not new to the UMR-IWW. There are currently ongoing initiatives in all three UMR Corps Districts. This effort will maximize use of existing data developed for these initiatives, and seek to leverage the knowledge and expertise of the personnel and agencies currently involved in these ongoing efforts. The purpose of this project is to conduct a systemic evaluation of Water Level Management (WLM) opportunities on the UMR-IWW for use in the Restructured Navigation Study. The results of the investigation will be used to identify potential WLM actions to support environmental objectives identified as part of the overall Navigation Study. Primary tasks to be performed include:

- ✓ Development of a summary of past WLM initiatives and investigations.
- ✓ Development of a summary of major constraints to implementation of potential WLM actions.
- ✓ Development of benefit and cost information
- ✓ Preparation of a technical report summarizing the procedures, assumptions, and sources of data used to develop the benefit and cost information.

Improving Fish passage through UMRS Locks and Dams has long been a topic of concern by resource managers. This effort will benefit from a vast array of research data, investigative reports, and professional experience. Determinations will be made as to the site specific and systemic benefits, challenges, and consequences of implementation of various structural or operational forms of fish passage. A technical report will be submitted in June 2003 covering the various topics and considerations associated with this effort. The following provides a partial listing of some of the main topics that will be incorporated into the final technical report:

- ✓ Importance of habitat connectivity
- ✓ Longitudinal connectivity through navigation dams
- ✓ Lateral connectivity through levees and embankments
- ✓ Fish migrations, behavior, and swimming performance
- ✓ Alternatives for improving fish passage through UMRS dams
- ✓ Alternatives for limiting dispersal of exotic fish species
- ✓ Estimates of effects of improved passage through dams on fish populations
- ✓ Priority of UMRS sites for improving fish passage
- ✓ Summary evaluation of costs and benefits of improving fish passage through UMRS dams
- ✓ Monitoring effectiveness of actions to improve fish passage
- ✓ Recommendations for implementation

Environmental Impact Assessment Studies:

Most of these efforts have concluded their fieldwork and researchers are now performing data analysis or generating reports. No new information was made available during December.

- ***Aquatic Plants*** –
- ***Adult Fish Entrainment*** – A third and final winter sampling period will be conducted during mid- to late January.
- ***Larval Fish Data Collection*** –
- ***Lock 25 Fish Mortality Study*** - The winter sample work was completed in early December.
- ***Fish Towboat Avoidance Study*** – The third (winter) sampling period work is going to be conducted the week of January 13th. Data analysis has begun on the fall sample period and a draft report of the summer sample is expected by late January.
- ***Underwater Noise/Fish Avoidance Study*** -
- ***Field Data Collection For Backwater/Side Channel Sedimentation*** -

ENGINEERING (Hughey)

- **Conclusion to industry self help issues** - Industry Self Help and Switchboat costs and performance was completed and provided by January 3, 2003 for inclusion in the economic analysis. Switchboats will be modeled as a without project efficiency measure.
- **Meeting and site visit with Volpe** - The EWG provided read-ahead material, lock function descriptions, coordination with operations, and general support for the lock site visits by Volpe.
- **Economic modeling** - The EWG continues to provide input and support for economic modeling for without and with-project efforts.

ECONOMICS (Manguno)

- **Independent Technical Review (ITR) of Sparks Scenario Report** – Harold Hommes, Iowa Dept of Agriculture; Dr. Darryl Ray, University of Tennessee; and Dr. John Urbanchuck, AUS Consultants have been selected as the ITR team. A Sparks/reviewer discussion session was conducted on December 17 after receipt of initial reviewer comments. Final reviewer comments have now been generated following the discussion session. Documentation of the ITR process is underway.
- **TOW COST Model Development:** Model results for the without-project condition have been pushed back to January 17. Delay from original date of November 15 is to insure proper accounting of potential without-project industry actions (industry self-help and use of helper boats.)
- **Assessment of Scheduling and Traffic Management:** Contract with Volpe National Transportation Center was awarded in late November. A three-day meeting/site visit between Volpe and Corps staff was conducted during December 9-11. Activities included touring and meeting with Corps operation staff, and grain terminals employees. Site visits were made at LD25, LD21, La Grange LD, and a Naples, IL grain terminal. A meeting with River Industry Action Committee (RIAC) was also conducted.
- **Transportation Rate Analysis Review:** A Scope of Work with the Tennessee Valley Authority is being negotiated for an update of a limited sample of grain movements. The update will provide information on potential condition changes since the original rate analysis. Work will be initiated in January.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT (Bluhm)

- **Newsletter:** Kim Schneider was awarded the contract for the creation and distribution of 2 Nav. Study newsletters for this FY. Work for the first newsletter is underway. The schedule for the first newsletter calls for a draft newsletter for study team review by 15 January and the final for print by mid February. Stories are currently being written and Nav. Study team members are being interviewed for stories.
- **Navigation Study Web Site Statistics:** Monitoring software has been applied to the Navigation Study web site to provide trend information and statistical analysis. This monitoring software creates reports for usage and demographics of web sites. The design of the program allows the reports to analyze usage from the start of the web site or the past 12 months. We currently show all usage from when the web site was enhanced and put back on the MVR District server in April 02. Some basic data of interest shows that some 12,000 users have gone to the Nav. Study site, and over 5,500 were first time visitors. Downloads are a very popular part of the site. Almost 3,000 downloads of the

Interim Report have been requested and minutes from spring public meetings, GLC, ECC & NECC meetings have been popular. Most visitors to the site enter directly into the main, or home page. The site is seeing about 90 visits per day, with Mondays being the most popular day to access the site. From 9 to 10 in the mornings of the week are the most popular time of the day for visitors to view the site. Currently the analysis of visitor locations (City, State & Country) is being investigated.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- ***River Resource Alliance*** (Dec 11, 2002), St. Paul, MN. Denny Lundberg, Chris Brescia and Paul Bertels participated in a meeting of the River Resource Alliance in St. Paul, Minnesota. Topics discussed centered around status of the Navigation Study
- ***NECC Meeting*** (Dec 10, 2002) Davenport, IA. Topics discussed included the Expert Panel, Preliminary results from the Environmental objectives workshop, status of Water Level control and Fish passage workgroups. The NECC also said goodbye to two charter members; Rich Fristik (COE) and Bill Bertrand (IL DNR). Rich has accepted a position with the Corps of Engineers in Washington D. C. and Bill is retiring. Their productive participation on the NECC will be missed.

UPCOMING MEETINGS OR SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- *River Resources Coordination Team Meeting* (January 15) Conference Call
- *Mississippi River Citizen Commission Briefing* (January 14) La Crescent, MN
- *Expert Panel Meeting* (January 22-23) St. Louis, MO
- *Ecosystem Restoration Colloquium*, University of Miami (January 23-24)
- *NECC Conference Call* (January 28) 9:00-11:00 AM
- *ECC Conference Call* (TBD. based on final receipt of Sparks ITR documentation)
- *NECC Meeting* (February 24-25) Davenport, IA
- *GLC Meeting* (February 25) Davenport, IA
- *Expert Panel Meeting* (February 26-27) Davenport, IA
- *UMRBA Meeting* (February 26)
- *EMPCC Meeting* (February 26)
- *EMP Report to Congress Workshop* (February 27)