



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

May 2006



PUBLIC MEETINGS PLANNED

You are invited to attend a public meeting to discuss and provide comments on the draft findings of the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan. Four public meetings will be held the end of June 2006. See page 3 for further information about the meetings.

BACKGROUND

The Flood of 1993, and several studies, reports, and ongoing initiatives, prompted interested parties to support an Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan integrating existing and potential projects into a coordinated system for flood damage reduction and floodplain management. Previous studies concluded that a systemic, integrated approach to floodplain management may be beneficial in reducing flood damages.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESCRIPTION

The Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999. This was a collaborative effort among the St. Paul, Rock Island, and St. Louis Districts of the US Army Corps of Engineers. In compliance with WRDA, the Corps coordinated this effort with other Federal agencies including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the US Department of Agriculture; the States of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin; and appropriate non-Federal organizations/interest groups.

The goal of the Comprehensive Plan was to develop a systemic flood damage reduction plan which is comprehensive and able to address both flood damage reduction and environmental sustainability goals. The team evaluated systemic flood damage reduction plans for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. In developing the plans, both structural and nonstructural flood damage reduction alternatives were considered. In addition, various system needs associated with flood damage reduction, such as floodplain habitat restoration and recreation needs, were considered. The plans were evaluated using traditional Corps procedures including engineering, economic, environmental, and social considerations.

DRAFT REPORT COMPLETED

The “Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan for Systemic Flood Damage Reduction and Associated Environmental Sustainability” draft report was completed in May 2006. The report provides details on the twelve alternative plans that were developed to address flood damage reduction for the entire Upper Mississippi River System, as well as the no action plan, and explains how these plans were evaluated. The report also offers conclusions and recommendations, which are summarized below.

Conclusions:

- The team developed a set of tools capable of analyzing the hydraulic, economic, and environmental effects of systemic flood damage reduction alternatives.
- The existing flood damage reduction systems currently prevent over 97% of the potential (average annual) flood damages on the system.
- The hydrologic body of knowledge of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers has dramatically increased as a direct result of the previous Flow Frequency Study and the Comprehensive Plan. The systemic modeling is a useable product for the future, if maintained for the Corps and other Federal, state, and local agencies. It allows the determination of system-wide hydrologic impacts to actual and proposed changes. This modeling has the potential to substantially change the way this river system is managed.
- Specific findings of the hydraulic analysis of alternatives include:

- o The levees above Lock and Dam 19 at Keokuk, Iowa (reaches 1 and 2) can be raised without causing more than a one-foot increase in the 100-year flood profile. Likewise, the levees on the Illinois River (reach 4) can be raised without causing more than one foot of rise in the 100-year flood profile. (See the map on page 5 of this newsletter.)
- o Several flood damage reduction measures (levee setbacks, realignments, and removal of bridge obstructions) have only a very localized reduction of water surface profiles.
- o Temporary emergency actions such as flood fighting and emergency operations can generally occur, but there are some locations that the emergency raise can cause significant negative impacts on the water surface profile.
- None of the twelve systemic flood damage reduction plans had positive net national economic development (NED) benefits. For many plans, the benefit-to-cost ratio (BCR) was below 0.1.
- Implementation of a large, systemic flood reduction plan would result in significant regional economic benefits related to the short-term increase in employment and construction spending. The Tennessee Valley Authority estimated that every dollar spent on comprehensive flood control at the 500-year (for urban areas) and 100-year or greater (agricultural areas), which includes Plans A (Confined 500-year levee protection), B (500-year levee protection), and D (~100-year agricultural levee protection), would generate as much as \$5 in increased gross regional product. Also, employment is projected to increase by more than 20,000 jobs annually in the five-state Upper Mississippi Valley Region resulting from upgrading levee protection provided by implementation of either Plan A, B, or D.
- Significant systemic ecosystem restoration opportunities exist within the Upper Mississippi River System floodplain; however, there are no cost-justified systemic flood damage reduction plans that would support the inclusion of ecosystem restoration projects.
- Examination of the need for reconstruction of components of the existing flood control systems should be undertaken to ensure that the existing system functions into the future providing billions of dollars of benefits.
- The Army Corps of Engineers is willing and interested in serving in a continued facilitation role in the interest of flood damage reduction if requested by one or more Upper Mississippi River Basin states. The purpose would be to regularly review the water resources problems, needs, and opportunities in a collaborative framework working with other Federal, state, and local agencies and non-governmental organizations, stakeholders, and interested publics. The Corps could likewise, through this continuing process, be a catalyst to address the problems and needs collaboratively. This activity could require authorization and would require appropriation. The Corps would bring its leadership and expertise in technical areas such as hydrology and hydraulics, economic and environmental analysis, and engineering to bear to address the changing problems, needs, and opportunities of the region.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that a feasibility study for the Fabius Levee and Drainage District, Missouri, be conducted upon negotiations and signing of a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) with a study sponsor.
- It is recommended that a reconstruction authorization be established for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers drainage and levee districts. Further, it is recommended that up to \$1,000,000 total (up to \$50,000 per district) be authorized to initiate reconstruction analysis with development of the Project Management Plan and the Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement for individual drainage and levee districts. The feasibility phase reconstruction analysis would then be accomplished on individual flood damage reduction systems to evaluate whether rehabilitation of the aging infrastructure is needed to ensure that the systems provide their substantial benefits in the future.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

We are now in the public review period for the “Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan” draft report.

A copy of the draft report is available on the project’s website at <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/UMRCP/>.

The report also is available for viewing at the following public libraries: Joliet, Illinois; Ottawa, Illinois; Peoria, Illinois; St. Paul, Minnesota; LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Dubuque, Iowa; Davenport, Iowa; Burlington, Iowa; Quincy, Illinois; Hannibal, Missouri; Alton, Illinois; Columbia, Illinois; and Chester, Illinois.

Public comments on the draft report will be accepted through July 13, 2006. Comments may be submitted by mail (see the address at the bottom of the comment sheet attached to this newsletter), by completing the comment sheet attached to this newsletter, or by attending a public meeting and leaving a written statement or completing a comment sheet at the meeting.

PUBLIC MEETINGS SCHEDULED

Public meetings will be held at four locations within the study area. The purpose of the meetings is to provide information about the draft report – the draft alternative plans, conclusions, and recommendations – and to obtain public feedback on the draft report.

All interested persons are welcome to attend a public meeting. The format for the meetings at each location will be identical:

5:30-6:30 p.m. – Registration/open house
6:30-7:00 p.m. – Formal presentation
7:00-7:30 p.m. – Questions and answers
7:30-8:30 p.m. – Statements/comments

During the registration/open house portion of the evening, attendees are invited to visit displays and speak with Corps of Engineers team members one-on-one about the draft report findings.

The formal presentation will discuss how the draft alternative plans were selected and explain the plan’s draft conclusions and recommendations.

After the presentation, Corps staff will answer project-related questions and take statements and comments about the draft report.

The meetings will be held at the following locations:

June 26, 2006
Illinois Central College
Downtown Peoria Campus
Perley Building, Room 203
115 SW Adams Street
Peoria, IL
309-999-4550 (for directions only)
www.icc.edu

Parking is available at the Niagara Deck next to the Perley Building, 111 SW Adams Street, and at One Technology Plaza Deck, 222 SW Adams Street.

June 27, 2006
Southeastern Community College
Building 100 (Callison Hall) - Room 123
1500 West Agency Road
West Burlington, Iowa
319-208-5048 (for directions only)
www.scciowa.edu

Park in the North lot off Gear Avenue and enter on the west side of the building.

June 28, 2006
John Wood Community College
Paul Heath Community Education & Fine Arts Center
Rooms D022 & D023 (Lower Level)
1301 South 48th Street
Quincy, Illinois
217-224-6500 (for directions only)
www.jwcc.edu

June 29, 2006
Chester City Hall
City Council Chambers
1330 Swanwick Street
Chester, Illinois
618-826-2326 (for directions only)
www.chesterill.com

If you know of someone who has an interest in the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan and did not receive a copy of this newsletter, please encourage him/her to attend any of the public meetings.

PUBLIC HEARD AT SEPTEMBER 2002 OPEN HOUSES

Identification of floodplain problems, needs, and opportunities; economic and environmental concerns; and methods

for reducing flood damages within the floodplain were all major topics of discussion at a series of four public open houses held during September 2002 in St. Louis, Missouri; Quincy and Peoria, Illinois; and Dubuque, Iowa.

Public comments were received in many ways: from the August 2002 newsletter comment sheet, the open house comment sheet, email, and letter correspondence through the mail. The written comments submitted were sorted by theme and organized into 11 categories: erosion, siltation, sedimentation, ecology and natural resources, water quality, river issues, structural measures, nonstructural measures, development, water control, and other issues.



September 9, 2002, Public Open House in St. Louis, Missouri

Major problems and opportunities needing to be addressed by the team were seen as:

- ecology and natural resource issues (loss of wetlands and wildlife areas, or the opportunity to restore and increase wetland and habitat areas)
- structural measures (enhance levees, floodwalls, containment areas protecting floodplain areas, or the opportunity to remove them and improve the environment)
- nonstructural measures (problem of obtaining funding for buyouts, easements, etc., which is also an opportunity to acquire more land to set aside for floodplain and habitat use)
- water control (problems of backwater storage, runoff in watershed, water level management, or opportunity to develop methods for handling flood water distribution)

- development (restricting, relocating, or removing structures in the floodplain, which in turn allows for more land to be returned to floodplain use)

Opinions on which methods for reducing flood damages within floodplain areas should be investigated centered around:

- structural measures (raise or lower levees, build new levees, or remove and reconnect river to natural floodplain)
- ecology and natural resources (restore natural habitats to act as buffers, store flood water, and improve water quality)
- nonstructural measures (buyouts, easements, farming and conservation practices, crop programs, upland treatments, mitigation)
- floodplain development (restrict, relocate or remove)
- water control (backwater storage, runoff in watershed, water level management)

Structural measures for reducing flood damages were also viewed as the most detrimental to the ecosystem, followed by issues of river dredging and channelization.

Nonstructural measures were viewed as having mostly positive effects on the ecosystem, followed by ecology and natural resources with restoration of wetlands and habitat. Structural measures viewed as being positive reflected the opinion that removing them would increase the floodplain and create more wetlands.

Major environmental concerns in the floodplain areas were ecology and natural resources, water quality, sedimentation, and siltation.

The public comments received as a result of this public outreach effort were used as part of the scoping process for the conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act and were distributed to team members for consideration and analysis as they developed the draft alternatives.

HOW DOES THE COMP PLAN FIT IN WITH THE FLOW FREQUENCY STUDY?

The Upper Mississippi River System Flow Frequency Study was initiated in October 1997 to develop flow frequencies for the main-stem Upper Mississippi, Lower Missouri, and Illinois Rivers. The Flow Frequency Study was completed in February 2004 and the final report and data are available online at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/pdw/pdf/FlowFrequency/Documents/FinalReport/default.asp>.

The Comprehensive Plan relied on the results of the Flow Frequency Study's profiles and hydraulic analysis of the existing condition profiles. Several of the Flow Frequency Study's hydraulic engineers also were responsible for the hydraulic analysis of the proposed flood damage reduction plans considered in the Comprehensive Plan.



QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan, please call Mr. Rich Astrack, 314-331-8491. You also may write to Mr. Astrack at:

District Engineer
US Army Engineer District, St. Louis
ATTN: CEMVS-PM-F (Astrack)
1222 Spruce Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63103-2833

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After the public review period, the Corps of Engineers team will review all comments and make a final recommendation to Corps Headquarters in Washington, DC.

The final Comprehensive Plan will result in a Report to Congress which will respond to the authorization and report project conclusions.

For more information, visit the project's website at
<http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/UMRCP/>

US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island
PM-A (Jackson)
Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004
Return Service Requested

**UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR SYSTEMIC FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION
AND ASSOCIATED ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

2006 COMMENT SHEET

1. Are there any alternatives or issues you feel were not addressed in this Comprehensive Plan?

2. Please provide any additional comments you have regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan conclusions and/or recommendations.

Thank you for your interest in the Comprehensive Plan and for providing your comments.

Please mail your completed comment sheet by July 13, 2006, to:

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US Army Engineer District, Rock Island
ATTN: CEMVR-PM-A (Jackson)
Clock Tower Bldg, PO Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004

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