



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Rock Island District

Information Paper

Q4. Floodplain Rest. – Emiquon West, IL

Upper Mississippi River System - Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program

Contacts

Brad Thompson, Team Leader

Ph. (309) 794-5256 fax.(309) 794-5710

bradley.e.thompson@usace.army.mil

Scott D. Whitney, District Project Manager

Ph. (309) 794-5386 fax (309) 794-5710

scott.d.whitney@mvr02.usace.army.mil

Location/Description

The program area comprises the Upper Mississippi River System, as defined by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (WRDA 1986), which includes the Upper Mississippi River from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Cairo, Illinois; the Illinois Waterway from Chicago to Grafton, Illinois; and navigable portions of the Minnesota, St. Croix, Black and Kaskaskia Rivers. This multi-use resource supports an extensive navigation system (made up of 1200 miles of 9 foot channel and 37 lock and dam sites), a diverse ecosystem (2.7 million acres of habitat supporting hundreds of fish and wildlife species), floodplain agriculture, recreation and tourism. Based on the recommendation of the recently completed UMR-IWW System Navigation Feasibility Study that examined system needs over the next 50 years, the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) was implemented to achieve the dual purposes of UMRS ecosystem restoration and navigation improvements. Floodplain Restoration at Emiquon West is one of 23 initial NESP ecological component projects being implemented under this new UMRS program.

Floodplain habitats are integral components of large river ecosystems because of the seasonal flood pulse that inundates them and connects them to the river. The project will result in restored floodplain and wetland plant communities on 2,200 acres adjacent to the Illinois River, which existed prior to agricultural conversion. The ability to provide a reliable water source and river connection will provide valuable mid-migration habitat and food for migratory birds. A diversity of native plant, wildlife and fish species include numerous threatened and endangered species are expected to benefit from the project after hydrologic and habitat restoration. The project area will export primary production to the Illinois River.



Problem Statement

Loss of floodplain connectivity, due to a number of factors including the formation of drainage districts and flood control structures, has isolated large areas of the Illinois River floodplain and allowed large-scale conversion of aquatic habitat to row crop agriculture. This resulted in substantial loss of fish and wildlife habitat and declines in floodplain ecosystem services such as nutrient cycling, sediment storage, and flood reduction. Loss and degradation of this habitat also resulted in declining populations of waterfowl and other migratory birds.

Current Status

The project management plan (PMP) is currently under development in coordination with the USFWS and stakeholders. Following completion of the PMP, Project Implementation Report activities will be initiated as funding allows.

Authority

Pending new authority, our current activities supporting UMRS navigation and ecosystem improvements are performed under authority provided by Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-611).

Fiscal (FY05-07)

Estimated Federal Cost	\$385,000
Allocation through FY 2005	\$0
Allocation for FY 2006	\$35,000
Expected Capability for FY 2007	\$350,000