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US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

R2. Pool 9 Growing Season Drawdown

Upper Mississippi River System - Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program

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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. The Pool 9 Water Level Management Project is one of 23 initial NESP ecological component projects being implemented under this new UMRS program.

Pool 9 is 31.3 miles long, and extends from river mile 647.9 to river mile 679.2. It is located in Vernon and Crawford Counties, Wisconsin, Houston County, Minnesota, and Allamakee County, Iowa.

PROJECT FEATURES:

- Pool-scale drawdown of Pool 9 in the summer of 2009
- Advanced/supplemental dredging, as required
- Recreational access dredging, as required
- Report/EA, including public involvement
- Monitoring pre-, during, and post-project, including documentation

Problem Statement:

The lock and dam system created a series of pools, and altered the river's natural hydrograph. Over the decades, this has had an adverse impact on the abundance of aquatic vegetation, including in Pool 9.

To conduct and evaluate the drawdown will require the following monitoring information:

- Hydrodynamics (flow velocity and distribution)
- Hydrographic surveys (before & after DD)
- Sediment transport
- Water quality
- Vegetative response
- Species response
- Cultural resources

Current Status

- Attempted drawdown (1.0 ft. at dam) in 2003. Encountered Cultural resource issues which could not be resolved in time to do DD.
- EA 40% completed, Project report 50%
- Have conducted public meetings for a Pool 9 DD, and received strong support.
- A pool wide mussel population survey needs to be accomplished in 2008 to quantify potential impacts to T&E mussel species.

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).