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US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Y. L&D 8 Embankment Modifications

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 Lock and Dam 8 Embankment Modification is one of 23 initial NESP ecological component projects being implemented under this new UMRS program.

Problem Statement:

The installation of Lock and Dam 8 embankment in 1937 permanently separated portions of the river flood. As a result, nearly all river flow passes through L/D 8. The only hydrologic connection between the embankment is with a small flow of water through two existing culverts. This has resulted in altered hydrology, affected downstream habitat, as well as fragmented habitat.

Current Status

The project is still in the feasibility phase. Project Implementation Report and Environmental Assessment are scheduled to be completed in FY 2008.

The following project features will be considered as a part of this project:

- Restoring/improving flow conveyance through the embankment.
- Improving downstream habitat in secondary and tertiary channels.
- Protecting backwater habitat from future degredation.

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).