



US Army Corps
of Engineers
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Information Paper

P1. Fish Passage – Mel Price L&D

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 Fish Passage project at Melvin Price Locks and Dam is one of 23 initial NESP ecological component projects being implemented under this new UMRS program.

Melvin Price Locks and Dam is located at River Mile (RM) 200.78 on the Mississippi River above the mouth of the Ohio River. The maximum head difference between headwater and tailwater at Melvin Price Locks and Dam is 24 feet. The project area is located in Congressional District 12 in Illinois.

The objective of this plan is to restore longitudinal connectivity at Melvin Price Locks and Dam for a wide range of migratory warmwater fish species. This project proposes the possible use of the auxiliary lock and the construction of a fish passage structure at Melvin Price Locks and Dam to enable the passage of fish. If successful, this project will increase access to upstream habitats which should result in an increase in the size and distribution of native migratory fish populations. Because the Melvin Price Locks and Dam fish passage project is among the first of this kind on the UMR, another general goal is learn from this project through

monitoring and evaluation and apply this knowledge to future fish passage projects.

The three components of monitoring and evaluation are 1) to gain information needed for project planning and design (pre-project monitoring), 2) to determine if the project objectives are met (project performance monitoring) and 3) to apply lessons learned to subsequent fish passage projects (adaptive management). Project performance indicators are derived from the quantitative project objectives and serve as the focus of monitoring effort.

Problem Statement

Melvin Price Locks and Dam blocks the upstream movement of fish most of the time. This dam as well as other navigation dams reduces longitudinal connectivity to aquatic and floodplain habitats which contributes to the degradation of the river ecosystem. This contributes to the following ecological issues:

- Impeded migration routes
- Reduced access to habitat
- Reduced geographic range of migratory fish species
- Reduced population size of migratory fish species
- Reduced population size and distribution of mussels

Current Status

In an effort that started in FY 2005 that continues to date, the multi-agency Study Team is progressing through the planning process. Tasks accomplished include assessing information needs, implementing baseline monitoring, and identifying potential non-structural and structural restoration measures for the Melvin Price Locks and Dam project area. FY08 initiatives concentrate on refining the alternative development and evaluation process that results in a recommended implementation plan and continuing pre-project monitoring. FY08 work will be captured in a Draft Project Implementation Report (PIR) and a 2008 Monitoring Report. Final drafts of the Monitoring Report will be completed in FY09 and the PIR in FY10 (tentative).

Authority

The Water Resources Development Act of 2007, TITLE VIII Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway System, authorized the project.