

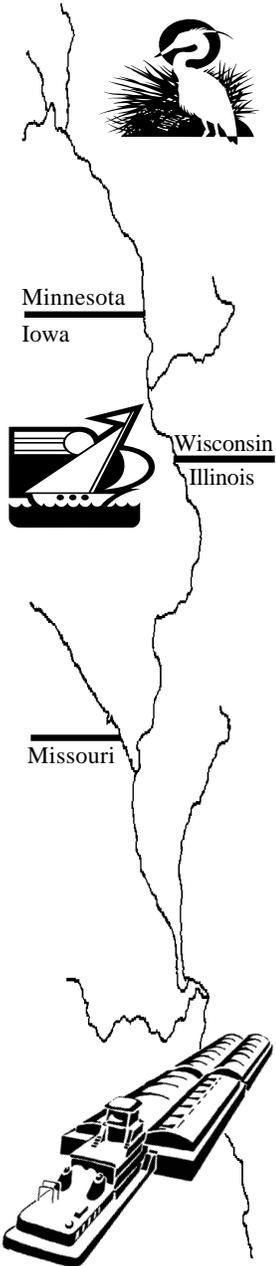


US Army Corps
of Engineers

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study

Public Collaboration Sought on Restructured Study

Study changes to be explained at March public meetings



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will present an overview of its newly restructured study of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway at a series of public meetings scheduled throughout the study area next month. At those meetings, the study team will explain changes in the study that was first launched in 1993.

The study was significantly restructured this past fall to encompass recommendations made by the National Research Council (NRC), the research arm of the National Academy of Science. The NRC determined that it was very difficult if not impossible to predict waterway demand for the next 50 years and suggested an analysis that would take into account various possible future world conditions. The NRC also recommended that this effort should be more comprehensive and should give equal consideration to planning for the environment.

As a result of these recommendations, the study no longer will attempt to pinpoint a single forecast for describing the needs of the river system over the next 50 years. Instead, the study team will develop a set of plausible future worlds and will use them to formulate and evaluate alternative plans.

These future "worlds" will be developed by

integrating economic and environmental information into a set of possible conditions that could influence decisions made on the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway. The analysis will allow for the formulation of alternatives that work well under a variety of different future conditions. The scenarios are not meant to be a prediction of the future or a proposed plan of action, however. They are meant only to cover a broad range of possible future conditions that affect the river system. From those conditions, the Corps will identify alternative responses for managing the resulting river navigation traffic or environmental impacts, says Denny Lundberg, Regional Project Manager.

Meeting Purpose

The first of the five public meetings will be held on March 12 in Peoria, Illinois, and subsequent meetings will be held in St. Louis, Missouri; Bloomington, Minnesota; La Crosse, Wisconsin; and Davenport, Iowa. Each meeting will begin with an open house between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., feature a formal presentation at 5 p.m. and end with a second open house from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The length of the meeting day—providing members of the public a variety of ways to interact with the study team and its partner groups and agencies—reflects another study

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shift toward more collaboration, Lundberg says. "We've certainly been engaging key federal and state agencies and NGO's (non-governmental organizations)," he said. "We now feel it is time to engage the general public in this new collaborative process for river planning."

The meetings are designed to provide the public with an update and will be a chance both to explain where the study is headed and to get public reaction to the direction, Lundberg says. "We want to see if there is general agreement with the direction in which we're heading."

The collaboration also will be evident in other ways. Representatives of some state and federal agencies as well as groups with a special interest in either the river's ecosystem or its economic value are actively participating through the Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee, Economic Coordinating Committee and related collaborative efforts. These active representatives will be introduced and be available to answer questions and explain their collaborative role in the restructured study.

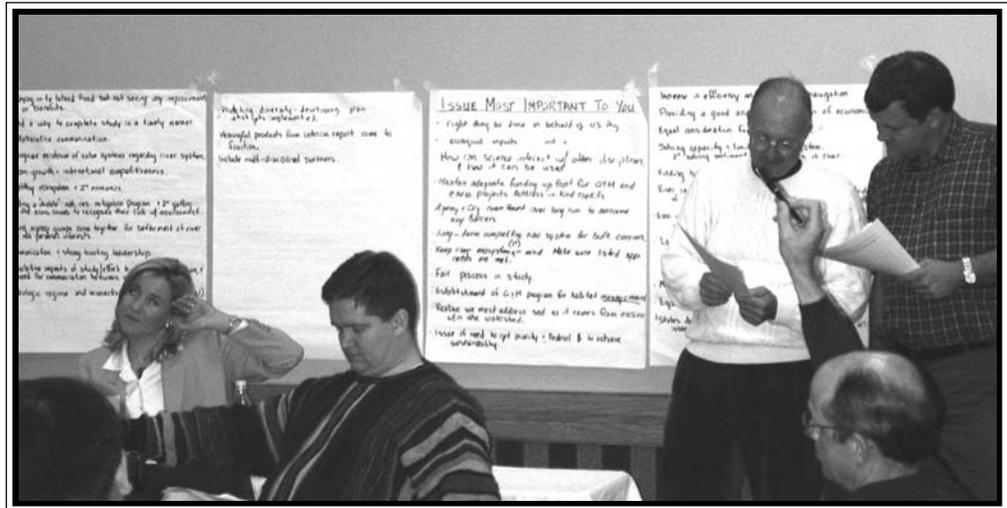
Scenarios Unveiled

The introduction of the potential future worlds to the general public also will be a key focus of the public meetings.

To develop these potential futures, the Corps has contracted with economic and environmental experts to produce a set of integrated scenarios. Sparks Companies Inc., an economic forecaster familiar with grain and other commodities, is working with Cadmus Group Inc., a firm with environmental expertise, as well as researchers from the University of Miami (Florida Everglades restoration project), the Upper Mississippi Environmental Science Center in La Crosse, Wiscon-

sin, and the Corps' Engineer Research and Development Center.

The economic experts are working to identify plausible future conditions by looking at combinations of realistic considerations involving world trade, land utilization and developments in the consumption and yield of crops. Future worlds that stimulate trade and lead to more U.S. exports, for example, might result in the need



The study's new emphasis on collaboration was evident at this joint meeting of the Environmental and Economics coordinating committees held in late November.

for improvements in the system of locks and dams through which grain is carried down the river for export. Other possible worlds would not require such improvements. For example, the team also will look at a combination of factors that may lead to increased grain being used domestically, a scenario unlikely to result in the need for infrastructure improvements.

The environmental experts, in conjunction with natural resource managers, are attempting to define environmental uncertainties for the future of the river system. These uncertainties will be integrated with the economic uncertainties to form potential future worlds that will serve as the basis for formulating and evaluating alternatives. The implementation of alternatives will be accomplished in an adaptive management framework and will include a monitoring component and a reassessment over time. This environmental group also is working to establish a set of sustainability goals and objectives that will be constant for any future world evaluated. ♦

Planning Process Moves Forward

The study’s planning process is seeking to ensure a balance of economic, ecological and social conditions that will meet the current, projected and future needs of the Upper Mississippi River System without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This concept of sustainability is a key focus of the study’s restructuring and will drive much of the planning process.

“When we explore alternatives for navigation improvements, we’ll also explore opportunities for ecosystem restoration,” says Denny Lundberg, Regional Project Manager. “We have to evaluate the two together to see if we can meet the goal of finding that balance between economic and environmental uses of the system.”

The restructured study will follow the Corps’ six-step planning process and as such will:

- Identify problems and opportunities
- Inventory and forecast resource conditions
- Formulate alternative plans
- Evaluate alternative plans
- Compare alternatives
- Select a recommended plan

The Interim Report, scheduled for completion in July 2002, will include steps 1 and 2, with a qualitative assessment of alternatives for steps 3, 4 and 5. The Interim Report may include recommendations if they could be accomplished under existing authorities. The full evaluation of alternatives will be included in the final feasibility study—scheduled for completion in two-to-three years. ♦

Sample alternatives under consideration by the study team:

Ecosystem Improvement Measures

- Nine Foot Channel Operation and Maintenance—Fish Passage; Water Level Management; Structural Modifications (chevrons, wing dams, etc.); Sediment Management (dredging, placement, etc.)
- Ecosystem Management—Habitat Modifications (backwaters, islands, side channels); Longitudinal Connectivity (migratory blocks, stepping stones, etc.); Naturalized Hydrological Cycles; Enhanced Diversity (plant and animal species, habitat, etc.)
- Floodplain Management—Sediment Management (dredging, traps, etc.); Lateral Connectivity (spillways, control structures, levee modifications); Enhancement of Isolated Aquatic Habitats; Greenways in Developed Areas

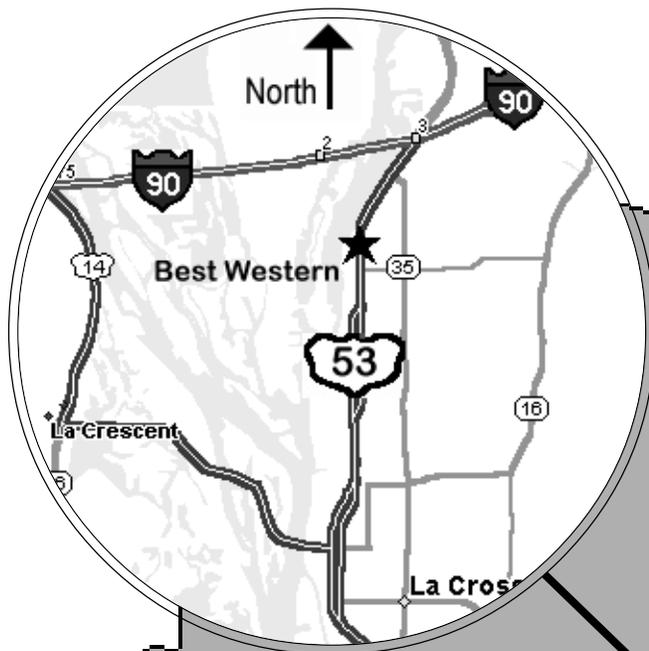
Navigation Improvement Measures

- Small Scale Measures—Traffic Management; Mooring Cells; Guidewall Extensions
- Large Scale Measures—Lock Extensions; New Locks

Alternatives Assessment Matrix

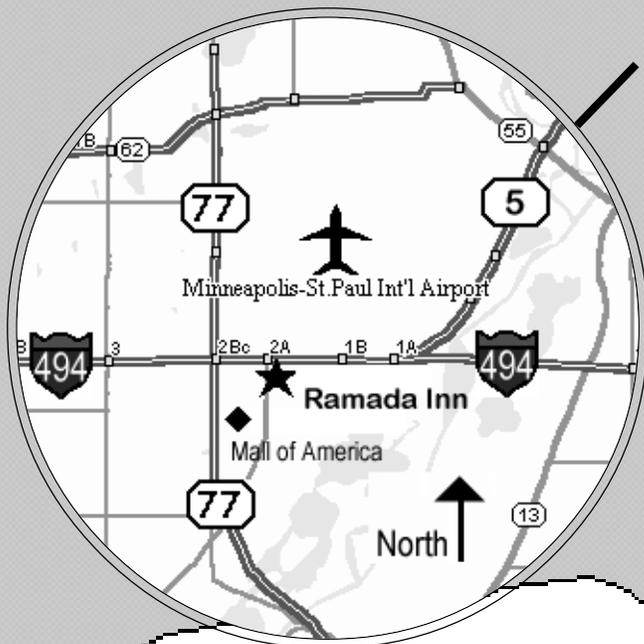
Alternatives	Future World 1	Future World 2	Future World 3
Navigation Measures			
Environmental Measures			
Floodplain Measures			

This type of matrix will be included in the interim report. It will be used to provide a qualitative assessment of the need for or viability of various alternatives such as those listed in the box, above right.



La Crosse

Bloomington



Meetings at a glance

Who Should Attend?

The meetings are for those interested in the economic and environmental uses of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway systems. Representatives from local, state and federal organizations and agencies, and the public are encouraged to attend to get an overview of the newly restructured Navigation Study.

Timeline

1-3 p.m.: Open House

5-7 p.m.: Public Meeting

7-9 p.m.: Open House

Format

Representatives from the Corps of Engineers will be present at each open house session to talk to members of the public on a one-to-one basis, to answer questions and to hear comments. Displays depicting the restructured Navigation Study and associated studies will be available for viewing. During the public meeting session there will be a short formal presentation on the study's history, restructuring and future. Presentations will be identical at each public meeting. After the presentation, members of the public are invited to present statements pertaining to the restructured study. A court stenographer will record all statements and questions. To ensure that everyone has a chance to speak, each speaker will be allowed 3 minutes to make his/her statement. Next, written questions will be addressed, followed by informal (unwritten) statements and questions. At the conclusion of the meeting session, the open house will resume, where additional statements or questions may be presented to the Corps. If you cannot attend any of the sessions, please use the newsletter's comment page to provide your comments. Comments relating to the new study direction must be submitted by April 5, 2002 in order to be considered with the comments received at the public meetings. Note: Each attendee will be asked to complete a registration card indicating if they have a prepared statement to make. While informal comments and questions are welcome, attendees may want to bring longer written statements to the meeting for entry in the public record and summarize them during the public comment time to stay within the requested timeframe. ◆

DIRECTIONS

March 12 – Peoria, Illinois

Holiday Inn Brandywine
4400 N. Brandywine Drive
Peoria, Illinois
309-686-8000

Directions: From I-74, take Exit 89 (War Memorial Drive). Take the frontage road—Brandywine Drive—to the hotel entrance.

March 13 – St. Louis, Missouri

Marriott Airport
10700 Pear Tree Lane
St. Louis, Missouri
314-423-9700

Directions: From I-70, take Exit 236 (airport exit). Note: Bring airport parking sticker to the registration table and you will receive a sticker for a reduced parking fee of \$1.

March 19 – Bloomington, Minnesota (Twin Cities)

Ramada Inn Minneapolis Airport
2500 E. 79th Street
Bloomington, Minnesota
952-854-1771

Directions: From I-94, take I-494 South to the 24th Avenue (Mall of America) exit. From 394, take I-494 South to the 24th Avenue exit. From 35W, go east on I-494 to 24th Avenue exit. Head south from the exit toward the Mall of America. At first set of lights, turn left onto 79th Street. The hotel is directly behind the SuperAmerica gas station.

March 20 – La Crosse, Wisconsin

Best Western Midway
1835 Rose Street
La Crosse, Wisconsin
608-781-7000

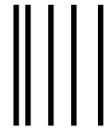
Directions: Take I-90 to Exit 3, Highway 53. Go south on 53 (Rose Street) about ½ mile. Hotel will be on your left.

March 21 – Davenport, Iowa (Quad Cities)

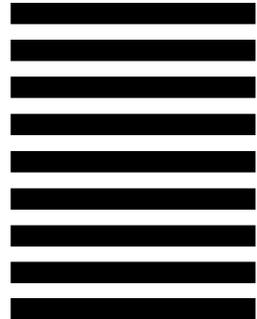
Best Western SteepleGate Inn
100 West 76th Street
Davenport, Iowa
563-386-6900

Directions: Take Brady Street (Exit 295A) off I-80 at the junction of I-80 and U.S. 61.

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US Army Corps
of Engineers

February 2002

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER - ILLINOIS WATERWAY SYSTEM NAVIGATION STUDY
COMMENT SHEET

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

note: Name, Telephone, and Address are optional and can be left blank

(Please provide your comments in the space below)

----- (fold here, and return to addressee) -----

Please check **ONE** category below that represents your primary interest in the study.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterborne Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government (Congressional) | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Business/Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government (All Other) | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Group | <input type="checkbox"/> State Government | <input type="checkbox"/> No Particular Affiliations; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> City/County Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Interest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) |

Privacy Act Statement:

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Authority: Chapter 5, ER 1105-2-100), routine uses of the information obtained from this form include compiling official mailing lists for future informational publications and recording additional views and public participation in studies.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Following is the study team’s response to some of the frequently asked questions about the refocused study.

Q: How is the use of scenario-based analysis different from the 50-year forecast used in previous analyses?

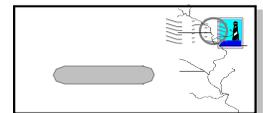
A: The previous 50-year analyses were based on one picture of the future world economy that resulted in the prediction of a level of future navigation traffic on the river system. The scenario-based analysis will consider a broad range of plausible future conditions (including various combinations of trends in world trade, land utilization and the yield and consumption of crops) and correspondingly will result in a broad range of potential future levels of barge traffic.

Q: Is the Interim Report being developed for inclusion into the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2002?

A: No. The Interim Report is being developed as a status report for the Administration and the Congress. It will provide a blueprint for moving forward with the feasibility study, provide an opportunity for stakeholder input to the study, and identify issues of authority and the funding and actions needed to resolve those issues. To the extent the report contains any interim recommendations, the recommendations would need to have ~~current~~ authority, a broad base of support from the various basin interests and be justified under a range of future conditions prior to any implementation. ♦



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Please check your mailing label for accuracy and make any changes on the label. Cut at the dotted line and attach the form to the inside of the enclosed comment sheet. Although we appreciate any comments you may have, you do not have to complete the comment sheet. Tape all three sides (please do not staple) when sending in your corrected address label. Fold the comment sheet and mail it so the postage-paid address is showing. Please return the corrected label by April 20. Thank you.

If we do not receive a response, we will continue sending you a newsletter at the current address on our database. ♦

In Brief

At its meeting on January 23 and 24, the **Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee** (NECC) decided the environmental scenarios for the interim report could either consist of a range of possible future environmental scenarios or take the form of one overarching vision that includes specific future goals and objectives for the river environment. The group also discussed implementation of environmental programs resulting from the Navigation Study and reviewed the status of environmental issue papers.

The first phase of a major renovation of the **Navigation Web Site** was unveiled on Jan. 15. Watch the site over the next several weeks for more changes that include an expanded search engine that will allow easy access to hundreds of study-related documents. The site also will contain the latest updates on the March public meetings. (<http://mvr.usace.army.mil/publicaffairsoffice/navigationstudy.htm>.)

The Federal Senior Principals Task Force met on January 29 to review the status of the restructured study. The main topics for discussion included the collaboration process, scenario development, issue papers and schedule. The task force emphasized the need to maintain a balanced approach between economic and environmental considerations. The next meeting has been tentatively scheduled for late March in St. Louis to provide an opportunity for more stakeholder participation.◆

Questions?

○ For general study information, call Denny Lundberg, regional project manager, at 309/794-5632, write ATTN: CEMVR-PM, or visit our home page at:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/publicaffairsoffice/navigationstudy.htm>

○ For information on Public Involvement meetings, call the toll-free telephone number, 800/USA(872)8822. Meeting announcements will be in the Public Involvement menu. Or call Kevin Bluhm, public involvement coordinator, at 651/290-5247, or write to the address below, ATTN: CEMVR-PM-A.

○ To be added to the mailing list for future newsletters, study updates, and meeting announcements, write to the address below, ATTN: CEMVR-PM-A, or call the toll-free telephone number and leave your information in the Public Involvement menu.

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