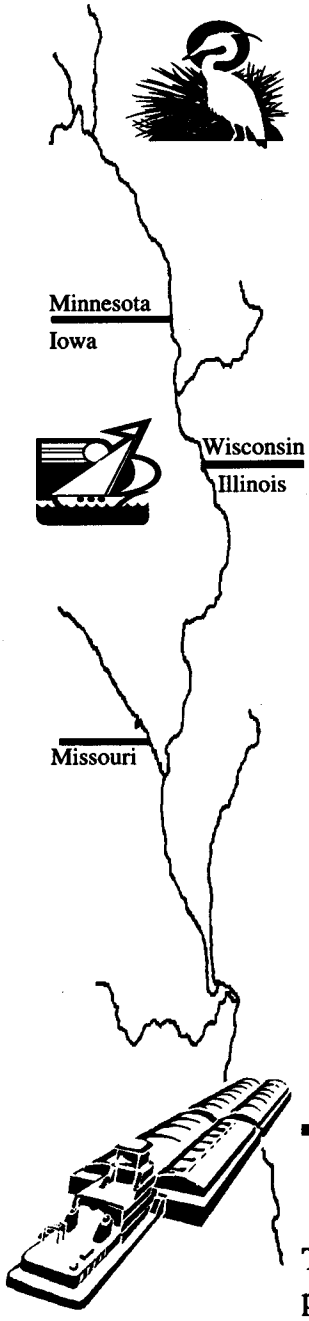
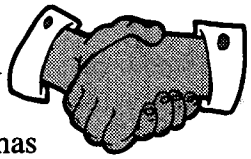
US Army Corps of Engineers

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study

UMR-IWW System Navigation Study Newsletter February 1995 Vol. 3 No. 1



WELCOME



Due in part to our public meetings held last November, interest in the study has increased. The Public Involvement plan for the Navigation Study called for expanding our outreach program to ensure all affected publics would be involved in the Corps planning process.

We have systematically acquired names of individuals and organizations with an interest in some aspect of the river in and around the study area. This has increased our public mailing list to include over 7,000 individuals and organizations.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide basic study information to the newest members of our mailing list. The Corps encourages your participation in the study and welcomes your comments. An interactive toll-free 800 number has been set up to hear your comments and concerns regarding the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study. If, after reading this newsletter, you have no interest in the study and would like your name removed from the mailing list, please call 1-800-872-8822 and leave a message on the voice mail system. If you prefer, you can write to us. More information on the address and how your name can be removed from our mailing list is on page 7. o

WHAT'S INSIDE

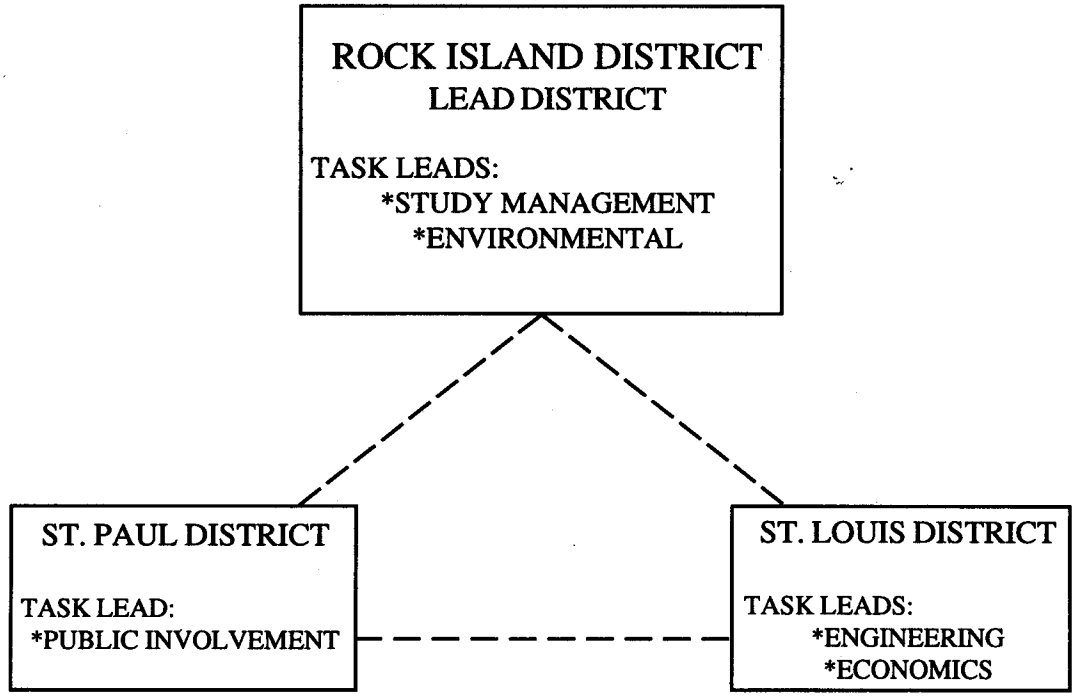
INFORMATION PACKETS AVAILABLE

The Upper Mississippi River- Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study Newsletter is published three times a year to inform the public about the Navigation Study. The newsletter is ongoing and assumes that the public has been informed throughout the study. Since the mailing list has been expanded, you may not have received all of the previous newsletters. To serve everyone better, we have compiled a packet of past newsletters that document the study progress since its beginning in 1993. If you would like to receive one of these packets, call toll-free 1-800-872-8822 or write to us at the address given on page 8 of this newsletter. o

NAVIGATION STUDY ORGANIZATION

CORPS OF ENGINEERS COMMAND AND CONTROL

The Commander of the North Central Division has primary responsibility for assuring the successful accomplishment of the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study. However, because the study area includes river reaches under the jurisdiction of Lower Mississippi Valley Division, constant coordination and communication between both divisions are necessary. Rock Island and St. Paul Districts are part of the North Central Division and St. Louis District is part of Lower Mississippi Valley Division. Direction from Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C. will be channeled through North Central Division and to Lower Mississippi Valley Division and the three districts.



COORDINATION COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE	COORDINATOR
•Governors' Liaison Committee - serves as link to governors of Ill., Iowa, Minn., Mo., Wis.	North Central Division
•Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee - links natural resource agencies to the study	Rock Island District
•Economics Coordination Committee - provides economic updates	Rock Island District
•Engineering Coordinating Committee - provides engineering updates	St. Louis District
•Public Involvement Coordination Committee - provides updates on public involvement issues	St. Paul District

ENGINEERING WORK GROUP ACTIVITIES

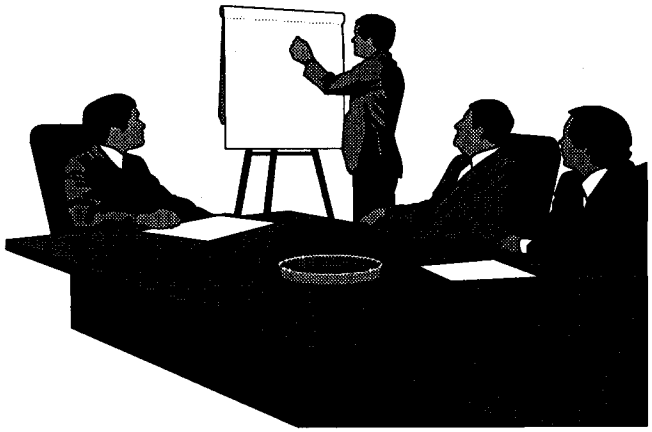
To meet the needs of the feasibility study, the Engineering work group must accomplish five primary objectives. Their description and status are described below.

Objective 1 - The work group gathered information on historic operation and maintenance costs. This information was used to project future operation and maintenance costs for the 50-year study time frame. The projection assumes current funding levels and policies will continue. However, as the system ages, this will not keep pace with maintenance needs. Consequently, deterioration of the system and loss of some traffic-bearing capacity would be anticipated. Preliminary work on this objective is complete and undergoing review by the study team.

Objective 2 - The work group has developed methods to estimate when many of the components of the system will deteriorate to an unacceptable performance level, affecting traffic movement. The timing of maintenance or rehabilitation that could be performed to ensure the system will not deteriorate is being identified. This represents an investment (or expenditure) above current operation and maintenance levels.

Objective 3 - This objective will determine the technical feasibility and costs of potential small-scale improvements. State and other Federal agencies, including those with environmental responsibilities, and representatives of the construction and navigation industries were invited to "brainstorm" a list of small-scale measures. A list of 91 structural and nonstructural small-scale measures was developed. These measures have undergone an initial screening process to select the most viable alternatives. These selected measures will have to satisfy more rigorous engineering, economic, and environmental criteria for potential inclusion into a recommended plan.

Objective 4 - This objective addresses large-scale measures; primarily, construction of an additional



lock at a present lock and dam site or expansion of an existing lock. If an additional lock is deemed the best option, costs are estimated and the best locations from an engineering perspective are determined. Then, like the small-scale measures, these large-scale measures may undergo further analysis. Preliminary innovative lock designs and construction techniques have been developed in an effort to reduce construction costs. These will be evaluated to determine if a lower-cost lock can still pass traffic in a satisfactory manner.

Objective 5 - Physical scale models and computer models are being developed to aid in the evaluation of small- and large-scale measures. This will improve cost estimates and aid in determining if a measure is engineeringly viable and constructible.o

ECONOMICS WORK GROUP ACTIVITIES

The Economics work group's current efforts involve data collection and model building in preparation for the plan formulation process. Progress is being made by the Tennessee Valley Authority on a contract to acquire commodity movement and transportation cost data. They are identifying the origins/destinations of commodities currently moving on the system and estimates of existing transportation costs. These costs will be compared to the cost of moving these same commodities to alternative destinations or by alternate modes such as trucks or trains. The impact on commodity flow patterns of relative changes in transportation costs between modes also will be analyzed. This contract is scheduled to be completed by May 1995.

Another major contract to be initiated this year will obtain projections of future traffic movements on the river. The scope of work is being prepared and the work itself will be performed by independent research organizations that can provide objective results. The completion date of this contract is scheduled just prior to the start of plan formulation so that the projections will be as current as possible.

A major effort to date has been the development of a navigation system simulation model. This economic model will be used to simulate navigation traffic patterns, delays, associated costs of delays, and benefits of alternative improvements. This effort is nearing completion. Remaining work consists of model testing and necessary refinements.

Another effort has involved assisting the Engineering work group in developing a list of small-scale measures for consideration as potential navigation improvements. Ninety-one structural and nonstructural small-scale measures were identified and screened for suitability for further analysis. Survivors of the screening process advance to the plan formulation stage to undergo further evaluation during our planning process.

The state representatives on the Economics Coordination Committee suggested an analysis of regional benefits generated in their respective states by navigation improvements which may be recommended. This analysis is not typically included in Corps feasibility studies. We have developed a scope of work to accomplish this regional economic analysis. o

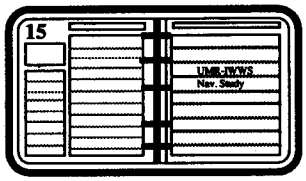
ENVIRONMENTAL WORK GROUP ACTIVITIES

The environmental impact assessment studies of the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study are currently focused on identifying potential effects of any proposed navigation improvements and resulting increased navigation traffic on environmental resources of the system. These studies involve preparing a system-wide Environmental Impact Statement. The Environmental work group has the largest effort in the feasibility study.

The Upper Mississippi River system has been recognized by the U.S. Congress as a "nationally significant ecosystem" and a "nationally significant commercial navigation system." This combination of attributes requires that the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study carefully assess the environmental impacts of improving the navigation system. This assessment encompasses ecological resources, historic properties, and recreational boating effects.

The environmental studies include evaluation of site-specific and system-wide impacts from navigation improvements to the system. This requires

UPCOMING MEETINGS



Governors' Liaison Committee

- February 15, 1995 - Hotel Sofitel, Chicago, Ill. 3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
- May 24, 1995 - Midway Motor Lodge, La Crosse, Wis. 3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Economics Coordination Committee

- February 15, 1995 - Hotel Sofitel, Chicago, Ill. 9:00 a.m. - Noon
- May 24, 1995 - Midway Motor Lodge, La Crosse, Wis. 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Engineering Coordinating Committee

- April 6, 1995 - Holiday Inn Airport West, St. Louis, Mo. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee - Holiday Inn, Moline, Ill.

- May 2, 1995 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- August 2, 1995 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

innovative environmental study plans. The Corps has enlisted the aid of leading environmental scientists and hydraulic engineers in developing these study plans. This effort has led to new methods for evaluating the incremental impacts of navigation improvements.

Public input and interagency coordination have identified additional issues and concerns which are being considered for inclusion in the environmental study package. o

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT WORK GROUP ACTIVITIES

The Public Involvement work group is actively working on the information gathered during the public meetings that were held last November. The Public Involvement work group began to analyze and distribute the information to the various work groups for their use in the plan formulation process. An overview of the public meetings is on pages 7 and 8 of this newsletter.

The work group is also working on the next public outreach portion that will involve alternative measures. The next navigation study newsletter will contain more information about the alternative measures being developed. o

COORDINATION COMMITTEES

Because of the nature of the study, we have formed five coordination committees with many persons, groups, agencies, and organizations to exchange information about the study. All meetings are announced in study newsletters (see page 4) and are open to the public.

Governors' Liaison Committee

This committee is comprised of appointees of the governors of the five midwestern states in the study area (Ill., Iowa, Minn., Mo., and Wis.). The purpose is to provide the Corps with the position of the governors on matters pertaining to the study. The committee meets quarterly at various locations in the study area.

Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee

This committee consists of representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the five state natural resource agencies. The first meeting was held in November 1992 and 11 meetings have been held to date. The committee has provided substantive input to the detailed study design process, and has assisted in identifying scientific experts and reviewing technical study plans.

Several environmental issues have been identified that are currently under consideration. These issues relate to cumulative impacts associated with operation and maintenance of the nine-foot channel and forecasting the future river environment.

The meetings are generally held in Moline, Ill.

Economics Coordination Committee

This committee was formed to provide economic study updates to representatives of the states and the navigation industry and to provide input to our economic work group.

The meetings have been attended by representatives of the Departments of Transportation from the five states, the Maritime Administration, the Midwest Area River Coalition (MARC 2000), and other interested parties. Meetings are generally held the morning of the Governors' Liaison Committee meeting.

Engineering Coordinating Committee

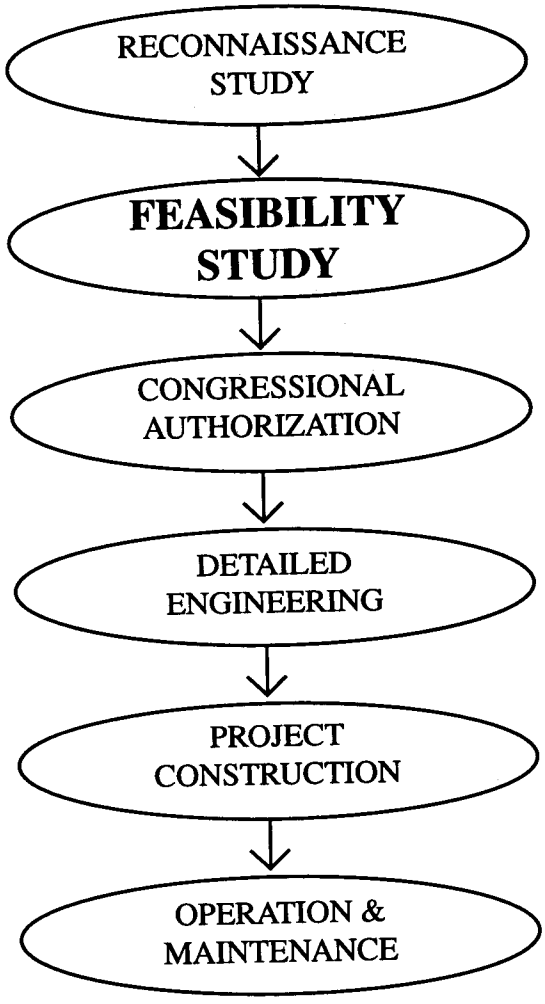
This committee was established to provide updates to and receive feedback from representatives of the five states and the navigation industry and other parties interested in the engineering studies.

Public Involvement Coordination Committee

This committee was established to provide updates to representatives of the five states and other parties interested in public involvement activities and issues, such as the public meetings held in November. o

CORPS "PROJECT PROCESS"

The Corps follows a six step "project implementation process." The process can be terminated at any time if such an action is warranted.



Preliminary look at alternative plans to solve problems identified in the system to determine if further study is warranted. This phase is complete.

WE ARE HERE. In this phase, the Corps studies problems and opportunities, including alternative measures. If an economically, environmentally, and engineeringly feasible plan is found, it may be forwarded to Corps higher authority in Washington, D.C. for recommendation and/or implementation.

Reports are forwarded to congress for consideration and potential authorization. Congress votes on the proposed plan to authorize construction. If the project is approved and funded, the process continues.

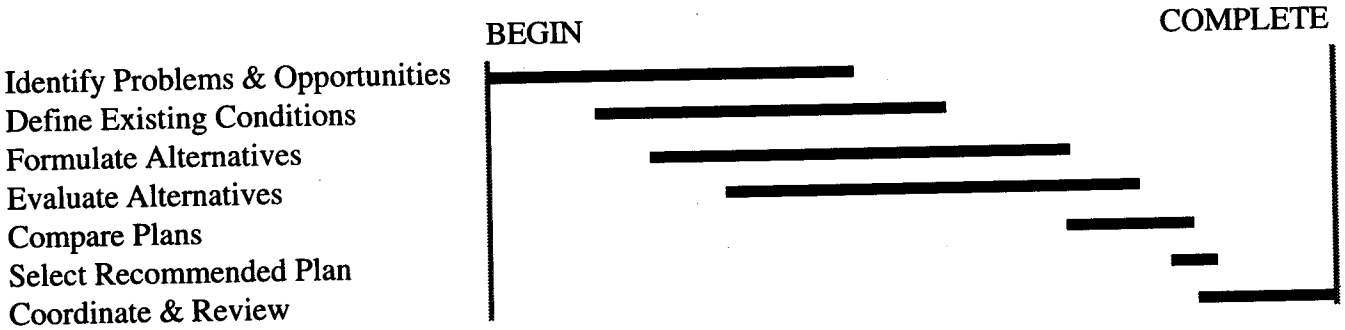
Plans and specifications of congressionally approved projects are finalized.

Congressionally approved projects are constructed.

Begins after construction is complete and continues for the life of the project.

CORPS "FEASIBILITY STUDY PROCESS"

These steps are followed in the Feasibility phase to arrive at a final recommendation. A determined effort is being made to actively involve the public in each step of the process. While the steps of the planning process generally are performed in the order below, the process is iterative. This means that as the study continues and new information and data are available and become known, they can be considered in the study process. o



PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD

In November 1994, a series of eight public meetings was held throughout the study area (St. Louis, Mo.; Peoria, Ill.; Chicago, Ill.; Davenport, Iowa; St. Paul, Minn.; La Crosse, Wis.; Dubuque, Iowa; and Des Moines, Iowa). The purpose of the meetings was to obtain public input for the problems and opportunities phase of the study as well as for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping process.

- photo by Denise Yale -

The majority of people attending voiced concern that the study is too narrowly focused on navigation improvements and not addressing the problems of sedimentation, cumulative impacts of operation and maintenance, and the need for a long-term plan for preserving fish and wildlife resources. Statements about these issues helped to reinforce the concerns expressed by the Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee since early on in the study. Statements were also presented or submitted by the navigation industry and agriculture industry in support of the study.

The total number of persons in attendance at the eight meetings topped 740 people.

-continued on page 8-

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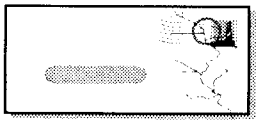

Is Your Address Correct? Do You Want to Continue Receiving this Newsletter?

☐ I DO NOT WISH TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER.

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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 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 March 10, 1995. Thank you.

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

The La Crosse and Dubuque meetings had the largest attendance with a combined total of 462 people, or 62 percent of the total number in attendance.

A special edition newsletter will be mailed in April that will contain a detailed analysis of the public meetings. o

NEW STUDY MANAGER

Dave Tipple of the Rock Island District was recently named study manager. Dave is the point of contact for general study information and coordinates with the various work groups. o

FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

Look for the following articles in the June issue of the newsletter.

* River modeling efforts

* Environmental study process

Questions?

...for general study information, call Dave Tipple, study manager, at 309/794-5399 or write to the address below, ATTN: CENCR-PD-W.

...or 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 612/290-5247, or write to the address below, ATTN: CENCR-PD-C/Bluhm.

...if you want to be added to the mailing list for future newsletters, study updates, and meeting announcements, write to the address below, ATTN: CENCR-PD-C or call the toll-free telephone number and leave your information in the Public Involvement menu.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island
Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004

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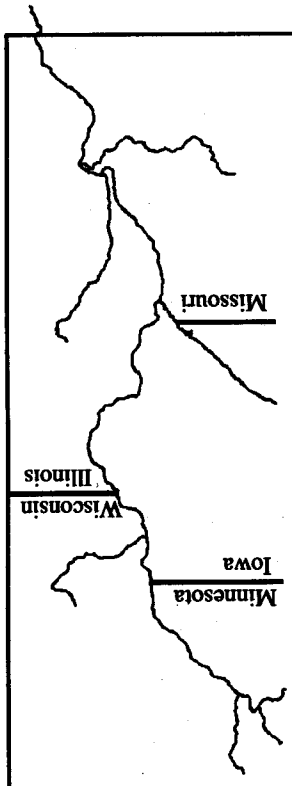

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