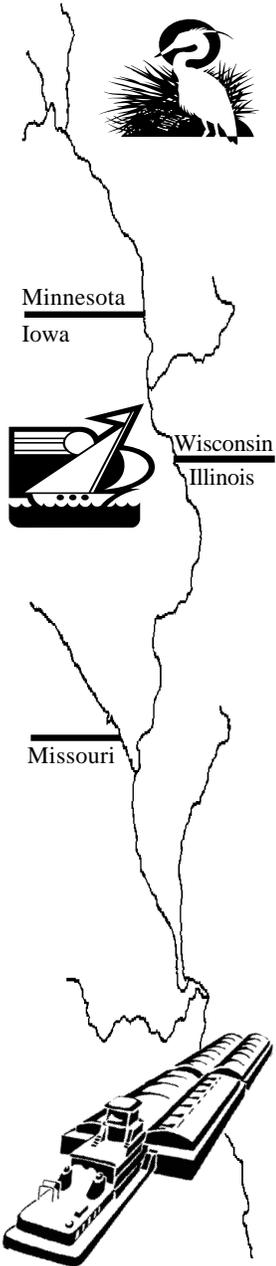




US Army Corps of Engineers

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study

Public Input Sought on River Improvement Plans



This October, the Corps of Engineers will present to the public a set of tentative alternative plans designed to achieve the sustainability of both the navigation system and the ecosystem of the Upper Mississippi River System. The public input will help the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers select a dual-purpose integrated plan. Details of that plan will be documented in the Draft Feasibility Report scheduled for release in April 2004.

The seven meetings that will be held throughout the five-state study region in late October come at a critical decision point in a complex study that has spanned more than a decade.

“We’re hopeful that a plan that is both economically viable and environmentally sustainable—with neither coming at the expense of the other—can be singled out through the work done at these meetings,” said Kevin Bluhm, the study’s public involvement leader. Even if no obvious plan is identified at this early stage, study team members will gather input on the spectrum of options presented and consider those comments, along with the input of other stakeholders in the river system, as they work to narrow a list of options down to a single recommended plan.

Following this meeting series, the next chance for significant public involvement

will be in May 2004, when hearings will be held on the conclusions outlined in the Draft Feasibility Study.

The last time the Corps of Engineers laid out a series of tentative plans for public input, the study was singularly focused on navigation efficiency, the original charge of the Navigation Study of the Upper Mississippi River System. The Corps restructured the study in late 2001 to take a more holistic approach toward the relationship between the environment, navigation and the floodplain. The tentative alternative plans presented next month will reflect the study’s dual purpose as well as an unprecedented level of cooperation among various government agencies and private organizations with an interest in the river system, said Denny Lundberg, regional project manager. The public meetings extend that collaboration to the general public.

What You’ll Learn

Meetings are scheduled for Oct. 20 (St. Louis, Missouri), Oct. 21 (Quincy, Illinois), Oct. 22 (Peoria, Illinois), Oct. 23 (Davenport, Iowa), Oct. 28 (Bloomington, Minnesota), Oct. 29 (La Crosse, Wisconsin) and Oct. 30 (Dubuque, Iowa).

At each session, the study team will present a list of tentative alternative plans that

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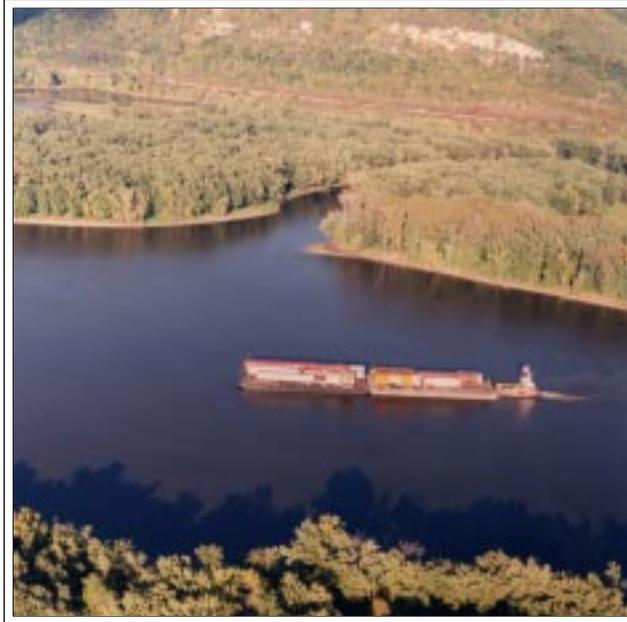
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meet or address navigation efficiency and ecosystem restoration goals for the river—representing differing levels of investment. Audience members will provide feedback on the alternatives during the public comment portion of the meetings or through written comment sheets. (See page 6 for a complete description of the meeting format). The study team will use input provided at the meetings to help identify a recommended plan. Other state and federal agencies also will use the information as they develop their recommendations for consideration in the selection process.

Why You Should Attend

At this stage of the study process, the evaluation of a final plan for river improvements is being conducted using the four criteria further defined below: risk, robustness, adaptability and acceptability. To get to this stage, the alternatives already have been screened using criteria that tests effectiveness, completeness, and efficiency.

The meeting structure allows for informal discussion with study team members and collaborative partners, a question-and-answer session on the plans presented, a large block of time during which attendees can complete a



comment sheet, and a final chance to ask questions or make a brief statement. All comments will be compiled and considered during the process of selecting an integrated plan for a sustainable future. If you are unable to attend the meetings, you can find a comment sheet, as well as a synopsis of information presented at the meetings, on the study web site: www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwwsns/.

What Happens From Here?

The meetings represent the start of the final step—plan selection—in a six-step planning process. Over the past decade, many leading scientists, engineers, economists, fisheries experts and others have participated in the complex evaluation of the river system needs. With that information, the study team has narrowed down and combined potential navigation and environmental management actions into the resulting alternative plans. The study team will

determine a recommended plan following consideration of input from collaborative partners and other experts, including a review provided by the National Research Council.

The recommended plan will be included in the Draft Feasibility Report scheduled for completion in 2004. The final report will be submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works in October 2004. ♦

EVALUATION CRITERIA AT A GLANCE

Those attending the public meetings will be asked to comment on navigation and environmental alternatives that are being evaluated by the study team in consideration of the following criteria:

Risk: How serious would the consequences be (economically and environmentally) if the wrong plan is selected?

Robustness: Does the alternative work well across a wide range of possible future conditions? Is it justified over a wide range of future traffic projections and economic model assumptions? Does it address environmental objectives across all components of the river ecosystem—hydrology, water quality, geomorphology, habitat and biota?

Adaptability: How easily can the alternative be modified to optimize net economic and environmental benefits?

Acceptability: Is the plan supported by basin/stakeholder interests, and does it comply with existing laws, regulations and public policies?

Alternative Plans Under Consideration

The plans presented in October will include the following navigation efficiency and ecosystem restoration alternatives still under consideration. Input from the public meetings will be used to select an integrated plan that will be documented in the Draft Feasibility Report (released for public review in April 2004).

Navigation Efficiency Alternatives

1. No action/Without project (operation and maintenance and periodic rehabilitation on the existing system continues).
2. Congestion fees on commercial traffic. Note: current U.S. law prohibits charging a fee for waterway use, but alternative plans may propose changes in existing law or regulations if deemed necessary.
3. Scheduling of commercial vessels moving through locks and dams.
4. Moorings (tie-off facilities that allow a waiting tow to wait closer to the lock chamber) at Locks 12, 14, 18, 20, 22, 24 and LaGrange; switchboats (hired vessels permanently stationed on both the upstream and downstream sides of a lock to assist and speed up the lockage process) at Locks 20-25.
5. Moorings at Locks 12, 14, 18, 24 and LaGrange; lock extensions (to make a 600-foot lock large enough to accommodate a 1,200-foot tow) at Locks 20-25; switchboats at Locks 14-18, La Grange and Peoria.
6. Moorings at Locks 12, 14, 18 and 24; new locks at 20-25, La Grange and Peoria; lock extensions at 14-18; switchboats at Locks 11-13.

Ecosystem Restoration Alternatives*

1. No action/Without project (current environmental management activities and rehabilitation efforts continue at historic levels).
2. Protect and maintain existing environmental diversity (current mosaic of habitat types and ecological diversity maintained into the future: no net loss).
3. Restore the first increment of habitats most directly affected by the navigation project.
4. Restoration to a level which includes management practices and cost-effective actions affecting a broad array of habitat types.
5. Restoration to include most environmental objectives that could be accomplished in the context of the navigation project.

* Individual actions for each of the alternative restoration levels are currently under development and will be presented at the October meetings.

Public Meeting Dates and Locations



October 20—St. Louis, Missouri

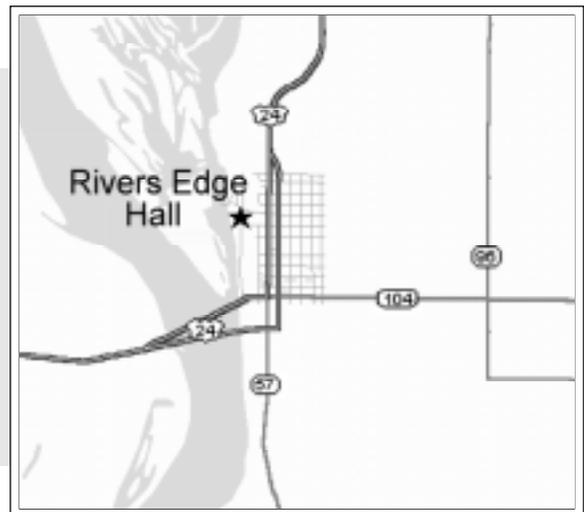
Spazio Westport
 12031 Lackland Road
 St. Louis, MO
 314-576-0488

Directions: From downtown St. Louis, take I-64 West to I-270 North or I-70 West to I-270 South. Take Exit 16A (Page Avenue East) to the first Lackland Road exit. Hotel is ½ mile from exit, on your right.

October 21—Quincy, Illinois

River's Edge Hall
 1231 Bonansinga Drive
 Quincy, IL
 217-223-2353

Directions: From I-24 (from the south), cross the Mississippi River and head north. Take Cedar Street west to Bonansinga Drive. Go south on Bonansinga to River's Edge.



October 22—Peoria, Illinois

Holiday Inn Peoria I-74 @ Northwoods Mall
 4400 North Brandywine Drive
 Peoria, IL
 309-686-8000

Directions: From I-74, take Exit 89 to 150 West. At the first stoplight, Scenic Drive, take a right. Make another quick right onto Brandywine and into the hotel parking lot.



October 23—Davenport, Iowa

Holiday Inn Davenport
5202 Brady Street
Davenport, Iowa
563-391-1230

Directions: From I-80, take Exit 295a onto Highway 61 (Brady Street). Go south for one mile. Hotel will be on your left.



October 28—Bloomington, Minnesota

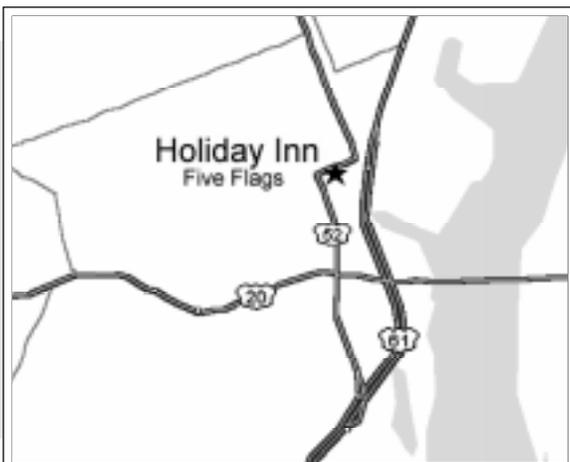
Ramada Inn (Thunderbird Convention Center)
2201 E 78th Street
Bloomington, MN
866-608-9330

Directions: From the east: take I-494 West to 24th Avenue Exit. Hotel is on the south side of the Interstate. From the west, take I-494 East to same exit.

October 29—La Crosse, Wisconsin

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

Directions: Take I-90 to Highway 53. Go ½ mile south to Exit 3 (Rose Street).



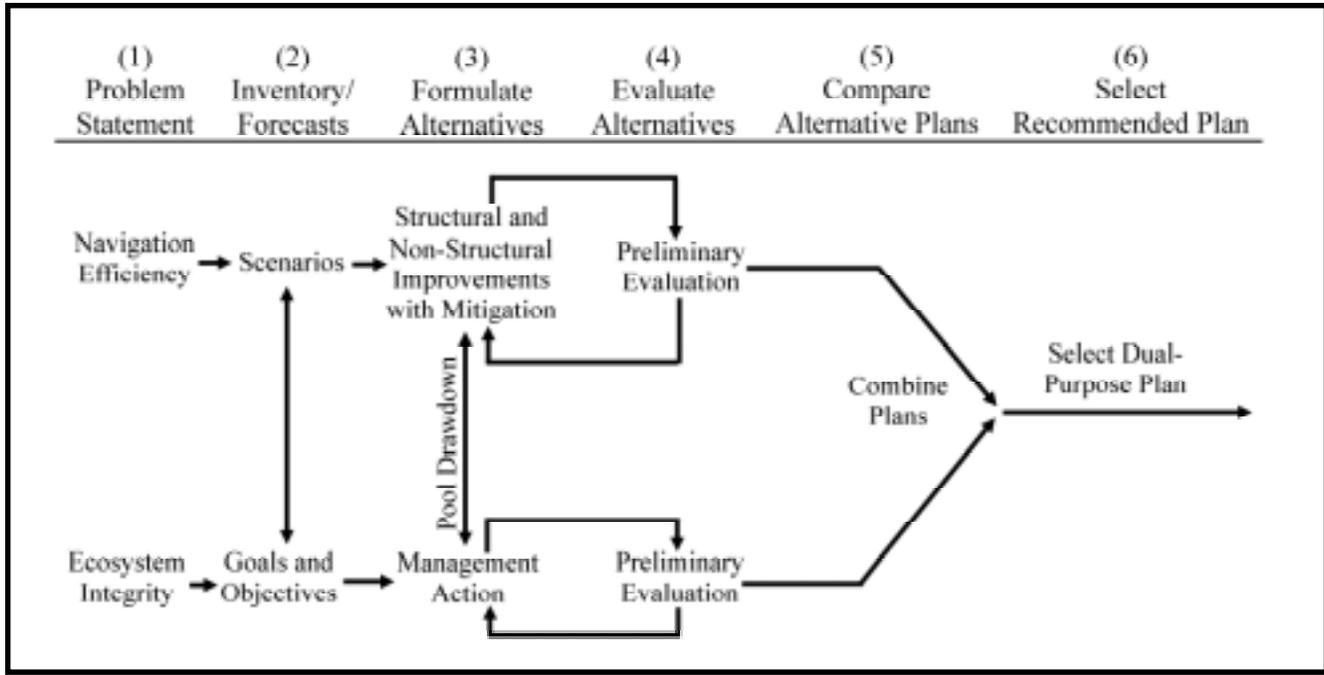
October 30—Dubuque, Iowa

Holiday Inn – Five Flags
450 Main St
Dubuque, IA
563-556-2000

Directions: From Highway 61 or 151, take Highway 151 North to the Civic Center exit. Go north on Locust to 4th Street. Turn right.

Plan Selection Process

The study team is beginning the final step of a six-step planning process that has spanned more than a decade. The meeting presentation will expand upon this brief look at where the project began and where it's headed.



Beginning Step 6 — Public Meetings Primer

Who Should Attend?

Meetings are being held in every state bordering the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway in an effort to reach those whose lives are touched by the river system—and few lives aren't. You should attend if you live on or near the river, fish or boat there, consume products carried by barges, or simply enjoy the natural beauty of the river system. Representatives of interested agencies, organizations and policymakers also are encouraged to attend.

How Should You Prepare?

For the latest information on study progress, look under the "what's new" or "newsletter/status report" links on the study's web site, www2.mrv.usace.army.mil/umr-iwwsns/. The Interim Report, also available on the web site, presents a comprehensive overview of the development and vision of the restructured study

What Happens When?

3-5 p.m: Open House. Representatives from the Corps of Engineers and partnering groups will be present.

6:30-7:15 p.m: Main presentation by Regional Project Manager Denny Lundberg.

7:15-8 p.m.: Presentation-related questions and answers.

8-8:30 p.m.: Completion of comment sheets.

8:30-meeting close: General questions, statements.

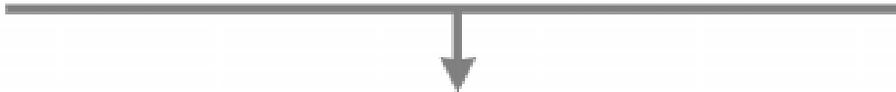
Planning Steps Defined

Step 1: Problems, Opportunities and Constraints

Problem: Potential for significant traffic delays on the navigation system within a 50-year planning horizon **and** changes to the ecosystem structure and function due to the operation and maintenance of the existing 9-Foot Channel Project and potential navigation improvements.

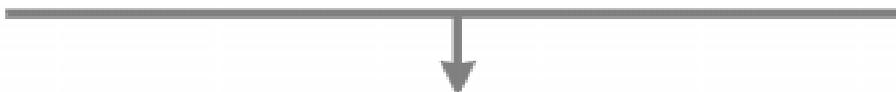
Opportunity: Reduce or eliminate commercial traffic delays and improve national and regional economic conditions while restoring, protecting and enhancing the environment.

Major Constraints: No change can be made in the authorized 9-foot channel; ecosystem and floodplain management issues addressed must relate to navigation system; study will not fully assess all possible future alternative transportation modes that could conceivably be developed.



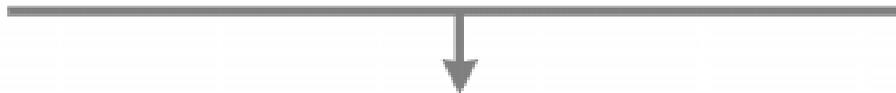
Step 2: Inventory and Forecasts

What will happen over the 50-year planning horizon if no action is taken? Navigation system changes will be evaluated over a range of varying views of future demand for the waterway system; the ecosystem's future will be evaluated based on a number of recent and historic studies and research efforts.



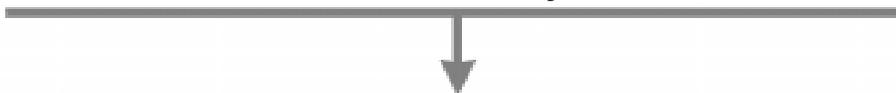
Step 3: Formulation of Alternative Plans

This process involves the evaluation of different combinations of management measures to find those that best meet the study objectives. On the navigation efficiency side, measures under consideration range from no action to construction of several new locks. Similarly, the ecosystem restoration alternatives cover a wide range of investment options, detailed on Page 3 of this newsletter.



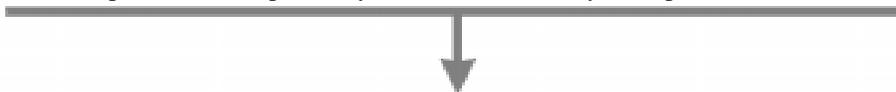
Step 4: Evaluation of Alternative Plans

This process is driven by model outputs that provide the net economic and ecosystem benefits of each alternative developed in Step 3. Economic and environmental models separately provide the impact information (traffic forecasts, fish loss, etc.) needed to complete the evaluation. On the economic side, plans will be evaluated by two distinct models, and results for each will be considered in the selection of a final plan.



Step 5*: Comparison and Integration of Alternative Plans

Alternatives from both study facets are combined based upon principles of completeness, efficiency, acceptability and adaptability. No one component of the plan may constrain the ability to implement the other.



Step 6: Selection of Recommended Dual Purpose (Integrated) Plan

Input from the October meetings will be used to help complete this stage in April 2004. The plan will be selected based on the criteria of risk, robustness, adaptability and acceptability.

* The Corps is starting this step in the plan selection process.

Independent Panels Evaluate Study

Science Panel Lends Environmental Expertise

Leading experts in geomorphology, aquatic ecology, terrestrial ecology, hydrology and sediment, water quality, and ecological modeling have met over the past several months to lend their expertise to the Restructured Navigation Study of the Upper Mississippi River System. The report, detailing the conclusions of the science panel, will help the study team to develop the environmental sustainability objectives that will become part of the integrated tentative alternative plans presented at the October public meetings.

The panel's draft report, completed in late August, outlined recommendations on alternative plans for the river system and suggested ways to define, evaluate and refine environmental objectives. The panel met monthly between January and April to review environmental goals, link goals and objectives with management strategies, develop management strategies and synthesize that information for inclusion in the Navigation Feasibility Report.

The panel concluded that the Corps of Engineers should adopt an adaptive management and assessment strategy for ecosystem restoration—a process by which activities can be changed in relation to their effectiveness in restoring or maintaining the desired ecological system. The science panel has recognized the complexity of the study's systemwide ecosystem restoration mission. Because the study forges so much new ground, the panel suggested the Corps carefully measure the performance of any new measures and make the lessons learned widely available so they can be incorporated into future projects.

National Council to Conduct Review

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has asked the National Research Council, the research branch of the National Academy of Science, to review the findings of the Restructured Upper Mississippi River, Illinois Waterway Navigation Study.

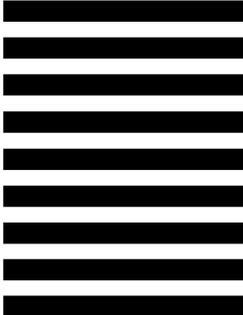
A panel of recognized scientists—led by John J. Boland of the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering at Johns Hopkins University—is focusing its review on key study issues, assumptions and areas of controversy. The academy first became involved with the Navigation Study in Autumn 2001. At that time, the NRC determined that it was difficult, if not impossible, to predict waterway demand for the next 50 years and suggested the analysis take into account varying potential future world conditions. The NRC also said the study effort should give equal consideration to planning for the environment, a key focus of the restructured study.

The review topics are expected to include the Corps' decision to use a traditional economic model for analysis as well as a new model still under development; the appropriateness of using scenario-based forecasts of barge demand by commodity; how non-structural alternatives (fee for waterway use, scheduling) should be incorporated into subsequent analyses; and the potential effectiveness of proposed environmental restoration, as well as how costs should be shared among involved federal, state, local and private parties.

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US Army Corps
of Engineers

September 2003

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)

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

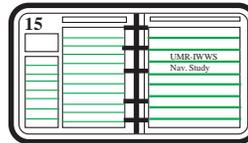
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterborne Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government (Congressional) | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Business/Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government (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.

Another Way to Have Your Say

If you can't make the public meetings, log on to the web site of the Restructured Navigation Study, <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwws/>. On the morning of October 20, a summary of the meeting presentation will be posted on the web site so that anyone will be able to review and compare the alternative plans under consideration. The site also will include a survey form or email link through which comments may be provided. Those comments will be compiled along with those received at meetings and considered in the process of selecting a single plan that could potentially be recommended to Congress for action and funding.



Upcoming Meetings

Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee

Davenport, Iowa Sept. 30 - Oct. 1, 2003

Economics Coordinating Committee

Davenport, Iowa Sept. 30 - Oct. 1, 2003

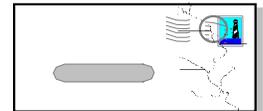
Governors' Liaison Committee

La Crosse, Wisconsin Nov. 18, 2003

St. Louis, Missouri Feb. 24, 2004

Check 1-800-872-8822 for final meeting times and locations or visit the calendar of events on our website: <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwws/>.

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

In Brief

In a recent study of more than 100 ecosystem management projects, collaboration was cited more than any other variable as critical to the project's success.



The draft report by a fish passage team recommends that natural fish passage channels be constructed at navigation dams where ecological benefits are likely to be greatest, and that their effectiveness be evaluated and reviewed.



Medium-to-large recreational cruisers adversely affect the Upper Mississippi River System. The big waves they produce re-suspend sediment and affect growth of aquatic plants in the main channel borders. The waves also contribute to erosion, a recreational boating study showed. Other recreational boat types, however, did not seem to cause noticeable damage to the river system.

Questions?

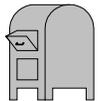
○ For general study information, call Denny Lundberg, regional project manager, at 309/794-5632, write ATTN: CEMVR-PM, or visit our home page at:

<http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwwsns/>

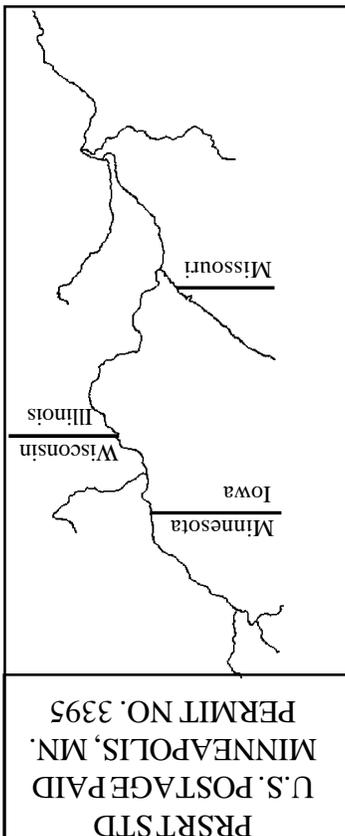
○ For information on Public Involvement meetings, call the toll-free telephone number, 800/USA(872)8822. Meeting announcements will be in the Public Involvement menu. Or call Kevin Bluhm, public involvement coordinator, at 651/290-5247, or write to the address below, ATTN: CEMVR-PM-A.

○ 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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