



MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

MAY 2003

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER – ILLINOIS WATERWAY SYSTEM NAVIGATION STUDY

PURPOSE: These monthly status reports are intended to provide team members, partners, stakeholders, and other interested parties with a brief overview of significant events and activities occurring within the major components of the UMR-IWW System Navigation Feasibility Study. We welcome your comments and input on the status reports to ensure they provide timely and useful information. If you identify monthly events that we have overlooked, please let us know and we will correct it on the website. POCs: Denny Lundberg ph.: (309) 794-5632. or email address Denny.A.Lundberg@usace.army.mil or Scott Whitney ph.: (309) 794-5386. or email address Scott.D.Whitney@usace.army.mil

ENVIRONMENTAL (Barr)

Environmental Sustainability Component

- **Expert Panel:** Panel members, following their final workshop in April 2003, initiated the preparation of a report on panel activities and deliberations over the past four months. The report is scheduled for internal finalization in early August before release to external review groups at that time.
- **Operation and Maintenance Related Alternatives:**
Fish Passage Recent accomplishments include preparation of a table of mussel species distribution by navigation pool and a table of aquatic habitat type areas and tributary river miles by navigation pool. A workshop was held on April 1-2 to identify the best potential locations for fishways at UMRS navigation dams. Preliminary engineering design, quantities, and cost estimates for fishways are being prepared. A workshop with most members of the Fish Passage Team was held on May 7 and 8 in Onalaska, WI to present and discuss sections of the draft report. The Fish Passage study report will be completed in June this year.

Environmental Impact Assessment Studies:

- **Adult Fish Entrainment** – The spring sampling period was completed the first week of May. It was the fourth and final evaluation of potential entrainment of adult fish through towboat propellers. As with previous samples, a specially designed net was attached to the stern of the motor vessel *Cooperative Venture* to filter fish passing through the propellers. Due to equipment problems, the lower Illinois River Waterway was not sampled, but the lower, middle, and part of upper Pool 26 was completed. Water temperature was approximately 17 °C, river stages were high, and strong currents prevailed. A total of 18 trawls collected 24 fish representing 4 species: gizzard shad (83% of total individuals), freshwater drum, smallmouth buffalo, and bluegill. Overall, the number collected was low compared to summer and autumn samples, but slightly higher than winter when no fish were caught. There were no apparent injuries from blade impact, but a few gizzard shad (<1%) displayed net-induced injuries consistent with previous sampling periods. A seasonal analysis (summer, autumn, winter, and spring) of fish entrainment through towboat propellers will be provided in the forthcoming final report.

- ***Aquatic Plants*** – New plant distribution information for Mississippi River Pools 14 through 19 has been incorporated into a risk assessment model that assesses the effects of navigation traffic on aquatic plants. The model has been programmed in Visual Basic to enable running simulations on standard personal computers. Initial simulations of without-project effects of navigation traffic are being conducted.
- ***Hydroacoustic Tow Avoidance Study Concluded*** – Fisheries biologists recently concluded a hydroacoustic field study examining fish avoidance of oncoming tows, in response to the Draft Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report from the Fish and Wildlife Service. Work was conducted on the lower Illinois River, near Grafton Illinois. Hydroacoustic sampling occurred during August, November, January, and May (all 4 seasons). This study is investigating fish densities in the navigation channel as well as documenting fish avoidance behavior to oncoming tows. To conduct the study, a hydroacoustic transducer was placed on the main channel border and positioned to collect data across the main channel, out to a distance of about 500 ft. Results of the study will be published as a Navigation Study report scheduled for public release later this summer.

ENGINEERING (Hughey)

- ***Independent Technical Review*** – Certification of the ITR comments received on July 2000 Engineering Appendix and interim reports is in progress. It should be complete by the middle of June 2003. More information on this topic can be found in the February 2003 Monthly Status Report.
- ***Rewrite of Engineering Appendix*** – Rewriting of the Engineering Appendix continues. Focus is on the incorporation of updated methodologies due to restructuring of the study, peer comments, ITR comments, and updated modeling requirements.
- ***Summary of Large-Scale Measures Screening*** – Work continues on the summary of Large-Scale Measures Screening Report. The report will be released this summer after undergoing an ITR review.

ECONOMICS (Manguno)

- ***Regional Economic Development (RED) Analysis*** – A meeting was held on May 15, 2003 with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and interested parties regarding the RED analysis. As described at the meeting, RED impacts will be evaluated for each navigation improvement alternative. The impacts will be associated with construction investment, shipper savings, and water compelled rates. Environmental restoration alternatives will also be evaluated for RED impacts resulting from construction investment.
- ***Economic Modeling*** – Preliminary Tow Cost Model (TCM) with-project model runs have been completed for several of the structural alternatives (identified in last months status report). Remaining alternatives will be completed in June. Preliminary with and without- project ESSENCE model runs are also underway and will be completed in June. These model runs are preliminary and do not include mitigation costs.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT (Bluhm)

- ***Public Meeting Format*** – The PI Workgroup has developed a list of options for the locations and structure of the upcoming October 2003 round of public meetings. This preliminary information has been refined by the study team and was shared and discussed with the NECC/ECC members during their April meeting. *Tentative format:* A series of seven meetings in mid to late October

'03. All meetings utilize an afternoon "open house" style informal session for anyone to attend and interact with the team and leave comments. The time of the open house will be from 3:00pm to 6:00pm. The formal meeting will start at 7:00pm and will begin with a formal presentation (35-45min.) to update the public since the last public meetings (March '02) and show the details of study efforts to date, including tentative plans. A Questions & Answer session will follow the presentation to clarify items discussed in the presentation. No statements or general comments are to be offered at this point. Following the Q&A's will be a 30 minute recess to allow the participants an opportunity to seek additional information from the study team and partners (open house displays) and to fill out their comment sheets. After the comment period break, the final segment of verbal comments and statements will begin. Once all comments and statements have been presented, the meeting will adjourn.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- ***River Resources Coordinating Team (RRCT) Meeting*** (May 7) Davenport, IA. Scott Whitney, USACE-MVR, provided a Nav Study overview to the RRCT members highlighting the following topics: (1) Plan Formulation; (2) Environmental Restoration Alternatives; (3) Navigation Efficiency Alternatives; (4) Pathways to Solutions; and (5) Schedule of Upcoming Events. Representatives from IA DNR; MO DOC, WI DNR, USFWS, and USACE were present.
- ***Governors' Liaison Committee (GLC) Meeting*** (May 13) St. Louis, MO.
- ***Moline Conservation Club Presentation*** (May 20) Moline, IL. Scott Whitney, USACE-MVR, provided a presentation to approximately 30 members. The presentation and Q&A session covered a variety of topics including EMP, Nav Study, Exotic Introductions, NEPA, etc.

UPCOMING MEETINGS OR SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Sierra Club Meeting, (June 7) Alton, IL.