



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Rock Island District

United States Department of Defense

US Army Corps of Engineers - Rock Island District

UMR-IWW Navigation Study 1994 Public Meetings

Memorandum For Record (MFR)

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway (UMR-IWW) System Navigation Study, Scoping

The following is the Memorandum for Record (MFR) from COL Cox, Commander, Rock Island District, that summarizes actions taken before, during, and after the 1994 UMR-IWW Navigation Study Public Information Meetings. The purpose of this memorandum is to capture the chronology of events and general issues associated with scoping for the Navigation Study feasibility study

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CENCR-PD-W
13 November 1995
Tipple/5399

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway (UMR-IWW) System Navigation Study, Scoping

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to capture the chronology of events and general issues associated with the scoping for the subject feasibility study. Discussions at numerous meetings, in correspondence, and with agencies and individuals have provided many views, issues, and concerns regarding the study direction and scope. Many issues associated with the UMR and IWW were raised and documented during the November 1994 public meetings for identifying problems and opportunities regarding the feasibility of navigation improvements. The enclosed interim product entitled "Responses to Issues Raised at the Public and NEPA Scoping Meetings of November 1994" provides responses to thematic questions and statements raised at those public meetings.
2. The chronology for the scoping process associated with the UMR-IWW System Navigation Study is captured in the various meetings held and correspondence received for this study. Although issues and concerns have been posed at various points in the past, a reasonable starting point is with the Reconnaissance Review Conference (RRC) held on 9-10 December 1992. The Initial Project Management Plan (IPMP) was first released to the public in November 1992. While all meetings and correspondence hold importance in the study process, the following items or events capture many of the views, issues, and concerns presented during the UMR-IWW System Navigation Study IPMP development:

RRC	9-10 December 1992
Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee (NECC) Multi-Party Memorandum	26 November 1993
Public Information Meetings	October/November 1993
Governors' Liaison Committee (GLC) Meeting	16 May 1994

In-Progress Review	21 July 1994
Public Meetings	November 1994
Conceptual Study Plans and Comments	January 1995
Midwest Area River Coalition 2000 Meeting with the Corps of Engineers' North Central Division (CENCD)	4 May 1995
Comments from Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals	Various Dates

a. **RRC:** The most prevalent issues from the 9-10 December 1992 meeting were: the Reconnaissance Phase Public Involvement effort was inadequate and the Feasibility Phase should be improved to involve the public at a greater level; the IPMP environmental studies did not go far enough to address all the environmental issues associated with the UMR and IWW, looking only at the narrow focus of impacts potentially associated with incremental increases in commercial navigation traffic; and, that more emphasis should be placed on environmental restoration opportunities and developing avoid and minimize measures in view of Section 1103 of Public Law 99-662, the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (WRDA 86).

b. **NECC Multi-Party Memorandum:** The NECC members submitted this joint memorandum to state their continued concerns and recommendations for additional efforts to lead toward a more adequate Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In general terms, the recommendations involved: better defining future without-project conditions; developing a long-term plan for the 9-foot channel operation and maintenance needs and examining unmitigated impacts; completing mitigation planning for the Second Lock at Melvin Price Locks and Dam (past and future water level regulation impacts); examining restoration and enhancement opportunities; reconsidering currently omitted studies from the Plan of Study for Lock and Dam 26 Second Lock; and, including a long-range plan for protection and restoration of nationally significant UMR fish and wildlife resources.

c. **Public Information Meetings - October & November 1993:** The purpose of these 14 meetings was to provide the public with an introduction to the UMR-IWW System Navigation Study's background and components. Issues and comments were raised or reinforced by attendees concerning the environment, engineering, economics, and public involvement. The attendees reemphasized their desire for more information about the study more frequently.

d. **GLC Meeting - 16 May 1994:** Discussions included the States' desire to have the study include a Regional Economic Development (RED) analysis and a lengthy and thorough dialogue on the environmental issues raised by the NECC, including the Multi-Party Memorandum and subsequent and related correspondence. It was agreed that a special session of the NECC (7-8 September 1994) would be held to attempt to better define the environmental issues. The special session would also initiate development of conceptual study plans and related study cost estimates to address these issues so that the Corps of Engineers (Corps) could have information to base reconsideration of previous UMR-IWW System Navigation Study decisions.

e. **In-Progress Review Meeting - 21 July 1994:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency NECC representatives were invited to attend this Corps management meeting to further discuss the outstanding issues associated with the UMR-IWW System Navigation Study. Corps staff from the Districts, Divisions, and Headquarters were in attendance for this discussion.

f. **Public Meetings - November 1994:** This series of eight public meetings was held to provide a public forum to identify problems and opportunities regarding the study purpose of evaluating the feasibility of navigation improvements on the UMR and IWW. The previously referenced enclosure provides responses to the thematic questions and statements raised at these meetings.

g. **Conceptual Study Plans and Comments:** Plans for addressing environmental issues were drafted in consultation with the NECC. These conceptual plans were thoroughly discussed with CENCD and the Lower Mississippi Valley Division (CELMV) representatives in January 1995. The conceptual study plans included efforts to address additional effects of navigation traffic, cumulative effects of continued operation and maintenance of the present system, and forecasting the future river environment. Comments from the resource agencies are contained in the conceptual study plan package and generally indicate that the package is a positive step, but refinement and further definition are required.

h. **Midwest Area River Coalition 2000 (MARC 2000):** Mr. Chris Brescia, President of MARC 2000, met with the CENCD Division Engineer and other Corps representatives. Mr. Brescia requested the audience to present his view that the Corps is not required to do all that is currently outlined in the IPMP for this study to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and to discuss opportunities to move up the study's completion date.

i. **Comments from Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals:** Numerous letters, comments, and telephone calls have been received by the Corps. Many of these comments primarily address the environmental issues raised in the preceding items. Coordinating agencies have been part of this letter submittal, to include in part the: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (formally Illinois Department of Conservation), and Missouri Department of Conservation. Correspondence from other organizations and individuals have been received and also considered in decisions on the scope of the UMR-IWW System Navigation Study.

3. The following items or events are actions which have resulted in part from issues raised during the scoping process:

Corps Headquarters Guidance	1 March 1993
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Corps Response to Multi-Party Memorandum	17 February 1994
Enhanced Public Involvement Plan Approved	20 July 1994
Facilitated NECC Meeting	7-8 September 1994
UMR-IWW System Navigation Study & NEPA Memorandum	17 March 1995
RED Analysis and Innovative Lock Design Schedule & Cost Change Requests (SACCRs) Approved	19 May 1995
CECC-ZA Legal Opinion Regarding the Record of Decision (ROD) and Melvin Price Locks and Dam	24 July 1995
Reprioritization SACCR Approved	14 September 1995

a. **Corps Headquarters Guidance:** As a result of concerns raised at the RRC, this 1 March 1993 guidance was issued and called for the following IPMP modifications: expand study area to the mouth of the Ohio River; flume construction and physical effects analysis to support environmental studies; provide funding to decision points for the mussel, fish-specific, and plants/sediment studies; fund a backwater/recreation study, and; provide for increased engineering detail for the first detailed site-specific study potentially stemming from a recommended plan.

b. **Corps Response to Multi-Party Memorandum:** The response specifically addressed each of the Multi-Party Memorandum recommendations. The responses were given in view that the system environmental study initiatives are designed to identify and quantify impacts associated with incremental increases in commercial traffic. The response memo also restated that the Corps considers that an ecosystem management strategy would require 50 percent cost sharing with a non-Federal sponsor, in view of Section 105(a) of WRDA 86.

c. **Enhanced Public Involvement Plan Approved:** The plan was enhanced in response to concerns raised at the RRC, the GLC, the October and November 1993 Public Information Meetings, and related discussions. The plan included: increasing the number of public outreach forums from two to six; enhancing media, newsletters, and public information activities; funding continued Corps efforts for the GLC; and general increases in supporting public involvement tasks.

d. **Facilitated NECC Meeting:** The purpose of the meeting was to better define the major unresolved environmental issues, and to develop conceptual study plans to address these issues. Four issue categories were identified from which to develop the conceptual plans: (1) cumulative impacts of channel maintenance dredging and material placement; (2) cumulative impacts of channel training structures; (3) effects of impoundment and river regulation; and, (4) fish passage through dams. These basic discussions would be further developed, drafted, and reviewed by the NECC. The facilitated meeting discussions provided input for the development of the conceptual study plans discussed in Item 2.g.

e. **UMR-IWW System Navigation Study & NEPA Memorandum:** This Corps' Rock Island District (CECNR) memorandum states that the issues of cumulative impacts and projecting the future-without project environmental conditions captured by the conceptual study plans must be addressed in the system EIS for the study. Much discussion has centered around the degree to which studies must be undertaken to address these issues. In turn, the memorandum states that the original plan as described in the IPMP, with minor modifications and fully executed, is adequate to satisfy NEPA requirements. The minor modification includes additional effort to address cumulative impacts and projecting future without-project conditions which will be accomplished through reprioritization of existing study efforts.

f. **Regional Economic Development Analysis and Innovative Lock Design SACCRs Approved:** Through the GLC and Economics Coordination Committee, the States indicated their desire to have an RED analysis performed to quantify the economic impacts to their region and individual States. The innovative lock design effort is an assessment of design and construction techniques to reduce the construction cost of any potential large-scale improvements for incorporation into the plan formulation process. Three Corps divisions are coordinating these efforts for consideration on the inland waterway system. On 19 May 1995, a SACCR was approved for funding the RED analysis and a portion of the innovative lock design.

g. **CECC-ZA Legal Opinion, Subject: Commitments in the Record of Decision (ROD) and/or the Melvin Price Locks and Dam Project Linkage to the UMR-IWW System Navigation Study:** As a result of continued requests from members of the GLC and NECC for a Corps position on this matter, the subject legal opinion was completed on 24 July 1995. By memorandum dated 15 August 1995, MG Stanley Genega, Director of Civil Works, stated that the legal opinion was available for public release. By CENCD letter dated 18 August 1995, the legal opinion was provided to the GLC members. On 21 August 1995, the legal opinion was forwarded to NECC members.

h. **Reprioritization SACCR Approved:** Through approval of this request, the study was modified to more adequately address cumulative impacts and future without-project conditions as discussed in Item 3.e. As a result, existing study resources were transferred to further address: direct and secondary impacts associated with commercial navigation traffic; cumulative sedimentation effects; cumulative dredging effects; and, cumulative training structures effects.

4. In addition to those items listed above, many issue-related discussions have occurred at meetings during this period of time. Meetings have included sessions associated with the: GLC; NECC; Economics Coordination Committee; Engineering Coordinating Committee, and; Public Involvement Coordination Committee.

5. The scoping, as part of the UMR System Navigation Study, has yielded many issues associated with the UMR and IWW. The issues raised have helped refine and improve the study plan. In addition, issues raised beyond the study scope provided heightened awareness, resulting in actions that seek opportunities to address outstanding issues for the UMR and IWW region. These actions include a Corps Division Office initiative to pursue development of a Large Rivers Research and Development Program, and the upcoming Upper Mississippi River Summit.

Encl

/s/
CHARLES S. COX
Colonel, EN
Commanding

Other Documents for the 1994 Public Meetings

- [Distribution Memorandum](#) from COL Cox, Commander, Rock Island District, November 15, 1995, that accompanied this MFR and the Interim Report.
 - [Interim Product Report](#) - "Responses to Issues Raised at the Public and NEPA Scoping Meetings of November 1995"
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