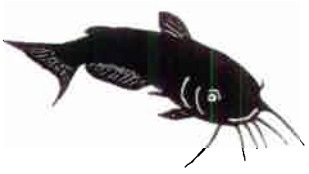
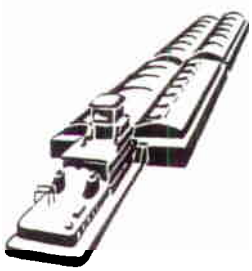
Interim Report For The Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study



Open House Meetings

Held November and December 1995



March 1996

US Army Corps of Engineers

St. Paul District
Rock Island District
St. Louis District

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study Open Houses After-Action Report

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A - Summary of Public Comments received at the Open House meetings
B - Summary of Public Comments received after the Open House Meetings

Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway
System Navigation Study
Open Houses
After-Action Report

1. **Introduction.** This document serves as an after-action report for the Upper Mississippi River - Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study open houses held in November and December 1995. This report will discuss the rationale behind the open house format, the open house findings, and the lessons learned. A master copy of this after-action report, with all attachments, is stored in the Economics and Social Analysis Branch at the Rock Island District Corps of Engineers office. The attachments include: October 1995 newsletter, news release, work group handouts, comment sheet, completed comment sheets with statistical summary, work group evaluation forms, and slides and photographs taken during the open houses.

2. **Background.** This series of open houses is the third opportunity taken by Corps of Engineers representatives to meet directly with the public to discuss the Navigation Study. Ongoing public involvement takes place through: the Governors' Liaison Committee, Economics Coordination Committee, Engineering Coordinating Committee, Navigation Environmental Coordination Committee, Public Involvement Coordination Committee, newsletters, and the navigation study toll-free interactive telephone system.

The public involvement work group began preparing for the third round of public outreach in May 1995. Criteria used to select the appropriate format for this series of public involvement considered where the study started, where it is to-date, the need to present findings to the public and receive their input, and the direction the study is anticipated to take in the future.

3. **Open-House Objective.** The purpose of the open houses was to inform the public of the progress of the study regarding those measures -- both small- and large-scale -- that have been considered and eliminated and to give the public an opportunity to discuss, comment and provide additional information on the measures.

4. **Open House Locations.** Because of the expansive study area, the public involvement work group determined that the best way to reach the largest majority of people was to hold open houses in strategically-selected areas along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. The locations selected met several criteria such as: the ability to accommodate large display boards; the ability to accommodate large crowds; the location of the city in comparison to the number of names on our study mailing list in that area; meeting the needs of the five states within the study area; and funding levels. The final cities chosen were: Bloomington, Mn; Prairie du Chien, Wis; Bettendorf, Ia; Peoria, Il; and St. Louis, Mo.

5. **Medium.** Newsletters containing study information and an invitation to the open houses were sent to the more than 9,500 people on the Navigation Study mailing list. News releases were sent to more than 700 media outlets in the study area and a follow-up news release was sent to cities and the surrounding communities where the open houses took place.

6. **Open House Format**

a. Time. The open houses were held from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at each location. The flexible time frame allowed attendees to come and go as they wished.

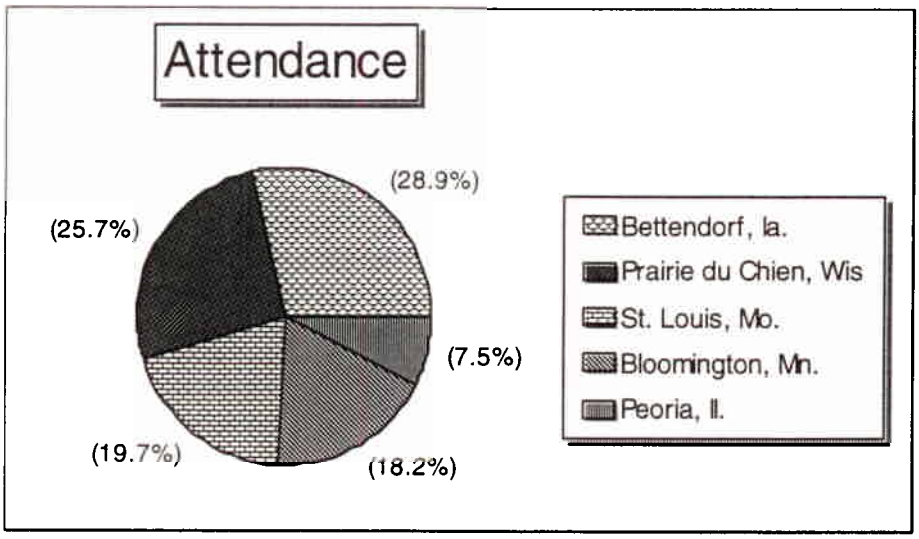
b. Displays. Attendees viewed an animated opening presentation which briefly discussed the study's background and the format of the open houses; then they had the opportunity to visit the study management and plan formulation, economics, engineering, environmental, and public involvement work group areas. Each area had large display boards exhibiting information on the study's progress. Handouts to complement the displays were available.

c. One-to-one communication. Corps of Engineers representatives from each of the work groups listed above were on hand to provide information and answer questions about the Navigation Study on a one-to-one basis. The format provided ample opportunity for attendees to view displays and to ask any questions of concern. The Rock Island and St. Paul Districts' Public Affairs Officers were on hand to field questions from the media and to assist in answering general questions from the public. Technical support was offered by Operations Division and Upper Mississippi River - Environmental Management Program personnel (these personnel attended the open houses within their individual Districts) to answer questions relating to these programs.

7. **Open House Preparation.** Once the open house objective, locations, and format were determined by the study team, the Public Involvement Work Group made final arrangements for the open houses. Work required to organize a public outreach activity of the magnitude of the open houses included: reserving meeting rooms at each location and designing a floor plan for each room, coordinating all display work between work group technical managers and Information Management staff, designing and mailing the open house announcement newsletter, designing and coordinating the opening presentation with contractor, reserving ground transportation and hotel rooms at all locations for all team members, and coordinating and collecting all equipment needed for the open houses.

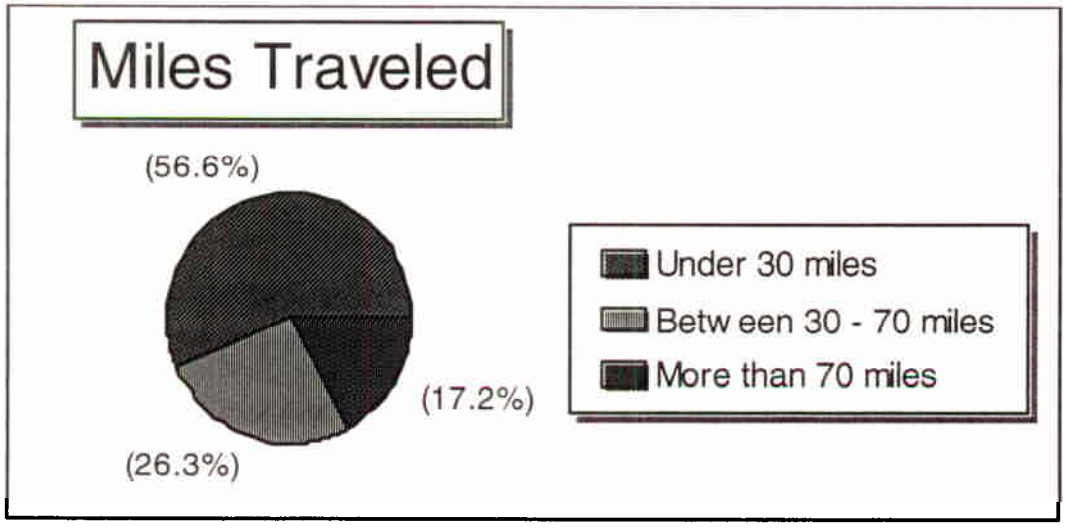
8. **Profile of the Open House Series.** After the open houses were completed, the public involvement work group collected and analyzed the demographic profile of the attendees and their opinions on the open house format. The following paragraphs discuss the demographic and format information provided on the comment sheets.

a. A total of 610 people attended the five meetings: 111 (18.2%) in Bloomington, Mn; 157 (25.7%) in Prairie du Chien, Wis; 176 (28.9%) in Bettendorf, Ia; 46 (7.5%) in Peoria, Il; and 120 (19.7%) in St. Louis, Mo. To obtain demographic information and to assess the effectiveness of the open-house format, each person attending was given a comment sheet to fill out. Four hundred and ninety-five people, or 81 percent, returned the forms and 301 people provided written comments. The demographic results of the open houses are discussed in the following text and displays.



b. About 70 percent of those attending had not been to a previous Navigation Study meeting. Twenty-three percent had attended a November 1994 meeting, and 10 percent attended one of the first meetings in October/November 1993. Four percent had no answer. The totals equal more than 100 percent because more than one answer was accepted.

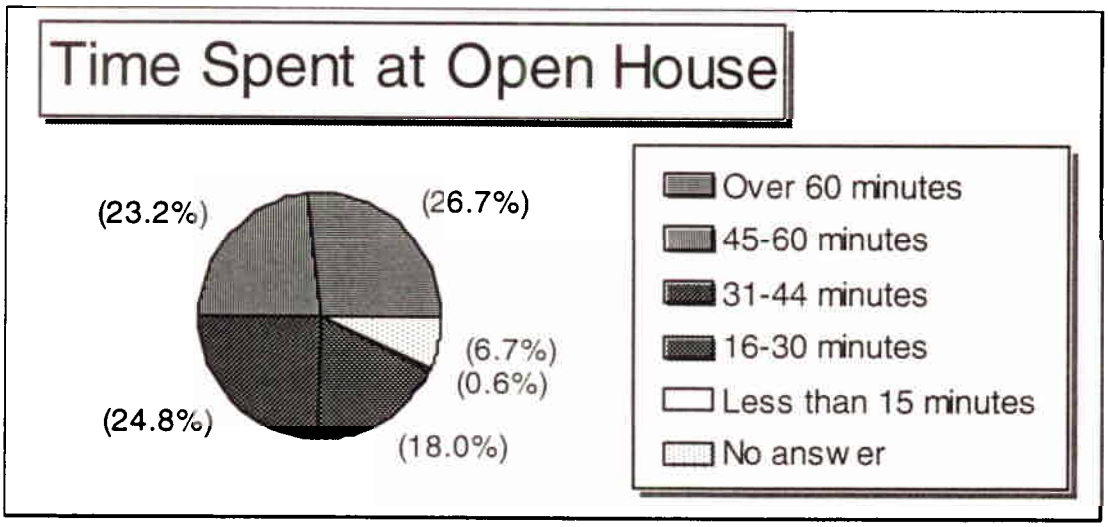
c. Over half (56 percent) of the meeting attendees drove under 30 miles to attend. Another 26 percent traveled between 30 to 70 miles, and 17 percent traveled more than 70 miles to participate in the open houses. This information could also mean that learning about the Navigation Study progress was important to the public since many people traveled a significant distance to attend the open houses.



d. Open-house attendees were asked to fill out a comment sheet after each session. Participants were asked, among other things, questions about the meeting format. The responses follow.

(1) When asked if they had a chance to talk to a study team member on a one-to-one basis, 95 percent responded yes. More than 87 percent of the respondents said the open house format was conducive to sharing their views with a team member, 82 percent thought their questions were answered, while 5.5 percent of that total felt their questions were not answered. Eighty-one percent thought the displays provided information necessary to learn about the study.

(2) One hundred thirty-two (26.7%) participants spent more than one hour observing the displays and talking to study managers while 115 (23.2%) participants spent between 45-60 minutes at an open house. One hundred twenty-three (24.8%) participants spent between 31-44 minutes at an open house, 89 (18%) spent between 16-30 minutes, and three (0.6%) people spent less than 15 minutes participating in an open house. Thirty-three people did not answer. Almost 75 percent of respondents spent more than 30 minutes at the open houses.

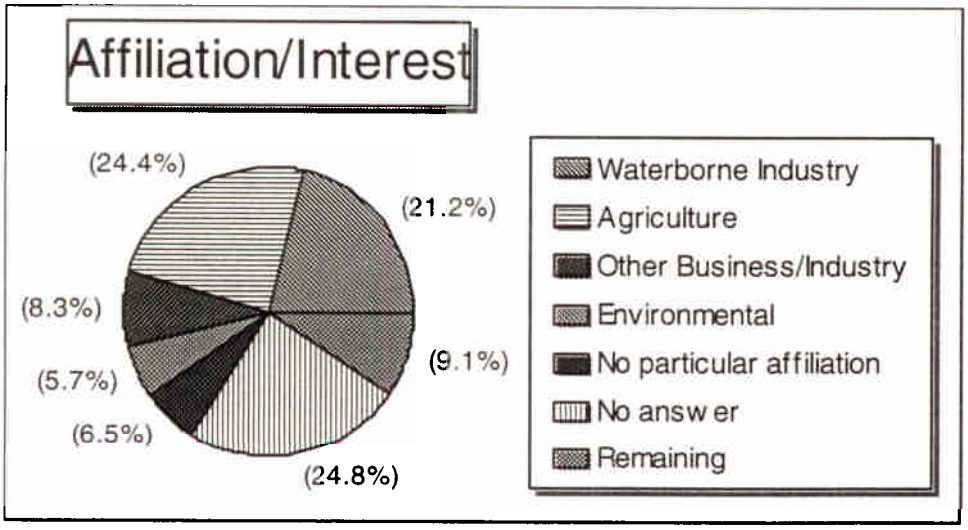


(3) Of the six hundred ten open house attendees, three hundred and one individuals provided written comments on the comment sheet. All comments were fit into seven different categories: including environmental concerns, economic concerns, study costs, lock improvements, recreation concerns, meeting format, and other comments. A majority of the respondents expressed favorable comments for the Navigation Study. A small contingent of the respondents expressed unfavorable comments to the Navigation Study or the possibility of any improvements to the waterway system. The remainder of the comments did not express a position.

Twenty-four percent of the respondents stressed the economic benefit and the dependence of many industries on river transportation. Twelve percent expressed concerns about possible

environmental damage from the existing system or any future increases in navigation traffic. Six percent of the commentors indicated that they would have preferred a different meeting format that would have allowed for all comments and questions to be heard by the entire audience, such as a public hearing format. Four percent indicated that recreation is important and three percent indicated that study costs are of concern.
Although this after-action report does not answer questions on the comment sheets, those study-related questions are considered as part of the overall study process. A more detailed list of general observations compiled from the comment sheets, is in paragraph 9. The complete list of all written comments submitted during the open houses is in attachment A. Attachment B contains all written comments submitted after the open houses.

(4) The comment sheet included a space in which open house attendees were given the option of listing an **affiliation or interest**. Responses were divided into the following categories (which coincide with the categories listed on the newsletter comment sheet): **agriculture** (121 or 24.4%), **waterborne industry** (105 or 21.2%), **other business and industry** (41 or 8.3%), **no particular affiliation** (32 or 6.5%), **environmental** (28 or 5.7%), and **remaining** (including media, Federal Government (congressional), Federal Government (all other), state, city/county government, education, regional planning, and recreation) (45 or 9.1%). One hundred twenty-three (or 24.8%) attendees did not list an affiliation or interest.



9. **General Themes.** The following section reflects general themes heard at the open houses. These themes are summaries of statements the public made on comment sheets at the open houses. A complete summary of the written comments is provided in attachment A.

- The open houses provided the opportunity for individuals to explore, at their own pace, any of the study areas. This was generally accepted, but several persons in attendance did not feel this type of meeting format was useful for themselves.

- People are interested in seeing changes to the current navigation system, the balance of what is done and where is the main focus.

- Many people are divided, but concerned, about who should pay for any changes and/or continued use of the navigation system.

- Economic considerations to river businesses, laborers, and communities need to be considered.

- How to handle pleasure craft at locks, user fees, lockage times, etc. should be examined.

- Agriculture in the Midwest is economically affected by the future navigation system.

- Study all effects of the navigation system and analyze other off-river options to move commodities.

- Need more meetings for all issues to be discussed.

- Commitments made from the Plan of Study (POS) have not been met and are not being kept.

- Any development should not directly endanger or harm the environment.

- Corps should focus on other forms of transportation rather than river (barge) only.

- More actual modeling studies about the effects of barge traffic need to be done.

- Study is adequate, need to finish study as quickly as possible so any needs can be addressed.

- Open house format was good and easy to follow. Corps staff was knowledgeable and answered questions.

- Very informative and interesting.

- Open house format prohibits public from hearing others' comments; a presentation would have been helpful.

- Feelings that the Corps has predetermined plans, doesn't "really" listen to public, will build what it wants anyway.

- Desire to see more interim products/reports.

- Spend less money studying and start work on improvements.

- Navigation is important to agriculture and the nation economically.

10. **Study Team Observations.** At each open house, the study team had the opportunity to talk with individuals on a one-to-one basis. At the close of each open house, work group representatives were asked to summarize what they felt were the main issues/comments/ questions expressed by the public in their individual display areas. The observations that the study team made are not all-inclusive but are intended to capture the general comments/thoughts they heard at the meetings. A synopsis, by work group, follows:

a. Project Management
- o representation at committee meetings and on committees
- o show how the agriculture industry benefit from navigation industry
- o look at river as though navigation traffic does not exist
- o charge fees to lock users
- o don't store empty barges along shore
- o display is informative
- o format doesn't allow others to hear my input

b. Study Management Work Group
- o who pays for what (Federal, Trust Fund, etc.)
- o not allowing enough time to do environmental studies
- o explain change in study costs from last year
- o industry expressed interest and support for study
- o want information about alternative plans (note: plan development comes later in the study)
- o does Trust Fund have enough money to cover its share of improvements?
- o sedimentation of backwaters is of concern
- o expand focus to a broader, big picture; focus on river as ecosystem
- o farmers and agriculture industry show support/interest; want study completed sooner
- o appreciate opportunity to learn about study
- o subsidies of barge industry
- o Corps doing study to protect our jobs
- o constrained budget and timing to meet needs
- o in compliance with Federal Advisory Committee Act?

c. Engineering Work Group
- o locks & dams make us dependent on the navigation system
- o if locks fail/close, wouldn't be enough rail cars to pick up slack
- o this is supposed to be a study, hear you've started plans and specifications (note: potential plans and specifications would occur subsequent to system feasibility study)
- o are you considering a 12' channel?
- o 1200' locks will increase traffic; 2400' locks will be next
- o cost of a new lock; how can country afford cost of new locks?
- o who pays operation and maintenance costs/mitigation costs?
- o industry should pay more of costs; why subsidize navigation industry?
- o Mississippi will become a barge canal
- o use rail shipping more

- o remove locks and dams
- o erosion control; siltation in backwaters; recreation impacts
- o small scale alternatives good idea
- o navigation system is reliable; needs to remain so for the future; critical to agriculture
- o support for study from farmers and shippers
- o construction time for large scale measures; number of lock sites considered
- o tows degrade river environment
- o display is well thought out

d. Environmental Work Group

- o zebra mussels; air emission
- o sedimentation; siltation; water quality; turbidity; loss of backwaters; bank erosion
- o fishing not what it used to be
- o will environmental results affect what is done
- o do entire POS as promised
- o appears to be a balanced approach to study
- o make tows smaller; engines getting bigger
- o Federal Advisory Committee Act violation
- o navigation critical to agriculture
- o Missouri River water regulation and its interaction with this study
- o display not user friendly, may have discouraged questions
- o all displays well done; informative
- o study has predetermined outcome

e. Economics Work Group

- o economic impacts by state; benefits to average citizen; cost/benefit to future generations
- o consider impact on balance of payments
- o subsidies to barges; who pays; transportation costs; show transportation costs in dollars per bushel
- o efficiency of barge vs. rail; how are capacities being compared?
- o is plan formulation within constraint of Trust Fund?
- o study all modes of transportation
- o will barge companies influence results
- o basis for regional economic development input-output model
- o increase capacity now - why wait?
- o need to include subsidies for all modes in analysis
- o perception that Corps plans 1200' locks at all sites
- o farmers need the river; barges most efficient mode for farmers
- o foreign countries want reliable deliveries
- o do study faster; support for study
- o cost of operating system and of existing delays on system
- o barge transportation subsidized greater than rail
- o very informative/interesting display

f. Public Involvement Work Group

- o enjoyed open house format; room layout and displays good for intended purpose
- o knowledgeable study team; great presentation
- o not adequate opportunity for comment
- o cleared the air for me
- o appreciate format; good effort; good meeting; glad I took the time to come here
- o went to the "other" meeting first but knew we were in the wrong place
- o this changed my opinion of Corps

g. Technical Support (Operations Division, Environmental Management Program)

- o dredging effects at specific areas
- o operation of locks and dams; flood control; water level fluctuations
- o worthwhile presentation; excellent way to present difficult information
- o spending a lot of money on things that should be left alone
- o glad habitat problems being addressed
- o lock gate; lock lift; DMMP; 12' navigation channel; GIS; GPS

11. **Summary**. The November/December 1995 open houses met the objective of informing the public of the progress of the study. Although we did not receive many comments that specifically dealt with small- or large-scale measures, we did have a great deal of discussion and provided an opportunity for the public to comment. The majority of comments we received at the meetings were in regard to other topics on the River such as environmental and economic concerns. Much of the success can be attributed to early and detailed planning and constant coordination with and cooperation of the entire study team. Also adding to the success was the support provided by the technical personnel who attended the open houses and personnel from District elements who provided assistance in many areas before and during the open houses. The open houses were in every way a team effort.

The information received at the open houses is being distributed to the Corps technical work groups for consideration and analysis as we enter into the plan formulation process. The main focus of these open houses was to get public input on the small- and large-scale measures that we have identified. As the study progresses, we will again provide a public forum to solicit comments from the public about the Navigation Study.

Distribution List

Distribution List

Distribution List:

CF:
Project Manager (Gmitro)
Study Management Work Group (Astrack, McGrath, Tipple, Thompson)
Technical Managers (Hughey, Sweeney, Barr, Bluhm)
Planning Division Chiefs (Post, Dutt, Hanson)
Hempfling CENCD-PP-PD
Beranek CENCD-PE
Arnold CELMV-ET-PF
Fournier CENCR-PA
Jackson, Simmons CENCR-PD-C
File (Master Copy with attachments and background data) CENCR-PD-C File
Governor's Liaison Committee Members (no attachments)
Public Involvement Coordination Committee

Attachment A

Attachment A

Attachment A

UMR-IWW System Navigation Study
Open House Comments

Bloomington, MN
November 30, 1995

Afternoon Session

This study needs to be completed for the economic benefit of the Upper Midwest. We need to maintain a sound and reliable navigation system. The work done by the Corps is a great benefit to all. Much thought needs to be given to the economic impact to the nations well being if care is not given to maintain and improve navigation.

For Minnesota farms and the agriculture community in MN it is the utmost importance to maintain or enhance our transportation activity on the Mississippi River. The reduction or lost of barge transportation would be a economical nightmare for the Midwest in general and would make Minnesota uncompetitive with the rest of the nation.

I am very appreciative of this meeting, which allowed myself and others in the grain industry to share our views and ideas. Some additions I would like to have seen: 1.) Information on the valve a viable River system puts into the pockets of farmers. 2.) More on the recreational aspects of the River i.e. percent of usage of recreation as opposed to industry. Thank you.

I believe the current study is very good. The idea of doubling the size of the locks makes a lot of sense. River traffic, especially barges, will be moved up and down the River much faster. The cost savings incurred by the barge lines because of fewer delays can then be passed on eventually to the consumer.

Need to reconsider lock user fees for pleasure craft. Need to allocate lock wear and tear to all users. Need to keep in mind all environmental impacts of switching River freight to other modes of transit, others rail, truck may have larger negative impacts in long run.

As usual the Corps of Engineering study is complete whether one agrees with the final results is another question. I object to the cost of using public funds to pay for the benefit of paying for the benefit of the private shipping industry. Operation and maintenance of the navigation system cost taxpayers $140 million annually. Government funding should be phased out so that economic forces can determine the true level of demand for the system. I'm not satisfied with the reports I hear and see by displays to avoid negative environmental impact. We need to improve our environment not make it worse. The River is not simply a shipping channel, it is a significant ecosystem supporting invertebrates, fish, birds (both resident and migratory) and many animals. The sign stating that "using technology to make a better tomorrow" I think is an oxymoron especially as it pertains to flood control. We know now that the best way to deal with floods is simply to keep out of the flood plains. Let nature have its beneficial way. P.S. Don't you have any pens? These pencils are terrible.

Need the River for barge shipping of ag. products to and from Minnesota. Rail is not available within 60 miles of River for grain shipping (load and unloading).
Well organized presentation. I encourage the Corps to continue with the study and attempt to conclude on time, without adding additional costs.

Really found the open house very informative. The depth of the studies is quite amazing. I'm especially impressed with the dire need to upgrade and rehabilitate the lock system. The benefits of a viable, efficient River transportation system are passed along a "chain" of entities, rural America to corporate America.

The Corps has presented their story as they see it quite well and the study team members agreeably answered questions. However, am not convinced further degradation of the River will not take place as a result of the additional large locks and increased traffic. We should be taking steps to reduce chanelization of the River not increase it; to cut back on flooding hazards by allowing the flood plain to act as the natural sponge and purifying agent. Over the years the quality of the Mississippi River has been compromised over and over destroying wildlife habitat and the purity of the water. The tax payer continues to pay while the shipping business and developers reap the profits. The barge business should finance more of the cost of the improvements - If congress wishes to balance the budget this is a good place to begin.

There should be more information about the commerce that would result from the proposed improvements. Everyone is interested in the environmental issues, but those of us who work in the barge industry recognize that we (the industry) could not pay for the proposed changes any more than trucking could pay for highways 100%.

A complete bibliography of study documents in past - going back to IPMP - would be helpful - with an order form.

Extend the completion date to allow adequate environmental studies.

I understand the benefits to the barge shipping community - I have serious questions about the environmental impact of increased traffic and impact to construction sites. - I would like to have the shipping industry required to pay an increases share of the costs of River protection, lock and damn maintenance, and increased construction costs. - I think limits should be set on maximum number of barges and intervals on all sectors of the River - particularly in the segment that overly are impacted by too much travel - More controls on pleasure craft, shore erosion is already a serious problem. - At a time when government is attempting to cut back in costs, medicare, national parks, wilderness protection - how can this project be affordable. The River is already impacted by industry, municipal sewage, etc.

Not enough information can be supplied at each individual display. There needs to be more in-depth talking presentations to learn more about the different aspects of the nav study. - I would not drive as far as I did to attend an open house or meetings of this nature.

Many good displays. Every informative.

I missed the informational meetings where a presentation was made. I think it would have been helpful.

For someone who has followed the Nav Study from its inception, it was not possible to determine advances/findings/changes in the study since the last public meeting. Info presented was very general. What progress has been made since the last session? What are the immediate next steps - how can the public get involved. When will be the next opportunity for public involvement?

A good education!

The River barge/lock & dam system is vital to our economy. It is extremely important to find ways to enhance the use of the River system for barge traffic for both now and in the future.

The River system and its efficiency is extremely important to the economic and social viability of MN, Iowa, Wisc. and the Dakotas. The transportation efficiencies transfer directly and indirectly to production agriculture. - The importance of this study must not be diminished in any manor. Balance of economic, social & Environmental concerns must be met. - The information was presented very well. - Harvest States Cooperatives

-Represents 150-200,000 farms
-Sales of over 5 Billion
-Owned by farmers
-Wheat, durum & soybean processor
-Food company
-Largest grain loader in Twin City Area

Would urge the Corps to keep the process moving along quickly and to not allow the process to get bogged down. - The River system is important to the future economic growth of the U.S. While ecological and environmental issues may be important I feel the economic value and potential will being of the River industry should take precedence over other issues.

I am affiliated with commercial navigation. My biggest fear is that this study will bog down and not stay on its time table. This River has been studied to death. I believe the Corps is doing good, balanced work but needs to focus on completion.

An open efficient Mississippi River System is crucial for both my firm and its customers as we haul grain to River ports for movement beyond.

Move the open house closer to St. Paul.

I feel it is very important to the total economy of Minnesota and specifically agriculture that we maintain or increase the ability to move grain and bring inputs such as fertilizer, etc. on the Mississippi River. - I feel we need to be concerned about the impact on the environment. I feel farmers are more important than some of the wild life along or in the River. I believe the River can be updated and still maintain a good environment along the River. - the River is also important for recreation.

I appreciate the amount of money and effort being put into the environmental issues. - I am unhappy with the with the lack of economic comparisons of transportation alternatives for the "stuff". - There still is no talk of alternatives for the River! - I remain anxious watching the study progress and fear for the health of the River in years to come. Once we take another step to improve transportation, we take a step backwards for the River - we will not have a treasure for our children and/or children's children. - Who is working to restore the River?

I think it is critical that water transportation's impact on international trade be an integral part of economic study. It is my understanding it is not part of it, but will be included in a regional study.

1) Would suggest a registration list to make certain names/affiliations of all attendees are recorded. The comment sheet can accomplish same purpose but only to the extent of those completing same. 2) Suggest simple handwritten name tag for identification/greeting/visit among attendees. 3) Despite best efforts of COE, organizations, etc. to get out the word of meeting dates/sites, good and effective communication falls short...any number of potential attendees still unaware (this is just one of those nearly impossible goals to achieve). 4) Good job, thank you for your efforts, keep up the good work, stay focused on the study, complete in a timely manner, and continue to tolerate the views of those far to "right" of economic and human realism which I believe those of us in industry posses.

National Economic Efforts? GNP - What would the demise of commercial navigation mean to the cost of a loaf of bread in MN.

Evening Session

I think a time for citizen comment and dialogue is also necessary.

While I am encouraged by the increase effort and funding which is being assigned to the environmental aspects of the planning and assessment, I am still concerned about several aspects: A. Will enough "indicator" species be studied to adequately determine the impacts on all species? B. Will there be enough attention given to the impacts of sedimentation and sediment build-up over long periods of time. C. Will adequate emphasis be put on "secondary" impacts - Riverside commercial build up, etc.

I think that all the study team members did a good job of presenting their results. I also think that the Corps of Engineers will do its best to minimize the damage to the environment, if this project goes ahead. BUT...
1. In fairness, barge shippers should not be subsidized in any way with taxpayers' money. They should not be required to pay back all the billions (trillions?) of dollars we gave them in the past, but present subsidies (e.g. maintenance of the locks and dams) should cease immediately and certainly no future money should be spent on "improving" the locks. If the barges can not compete in the marketplace with trains and trucks, so be it! 2. Even if the users were willing to pay all the costs of maintenance and "improvement", the project should not be done because it would further increase the massive degradation of the environment caused by the existing system

in the last 60 years. (more traffic implies more damage). 3. Our long-term goal should be to remove all the dams from the River, perhaps over the next 100 or 200 years. the so-called economic benefits of the system are suspect, the flood-control aspects have been shown to be a farce, and the environmental damage is irrefutable. In view of this, we should certainly not be expanding the locks and facilitating further increases in traffic.

I applaud the Corps for a comfortable interesting format. In my visit I learned a great deal and more importantly, where to go to learn more.

Very educational - thanks to all.

Can we afford this? Will it be affected by the Budget? If so why do it?

Open house format kept information very general and a lot of value of public education/input was lost because only one point of view was presented. The engineering display was the most informative. While my questions were answered by the personnel the answers did not convince me of the value of the project for the following reasons: 1) Economic assessment is not convincing - the forecast for increased loads seem very optimistic. 2) Why should government and the public be responsible for expanding an industry that could not function without the exorbitant subsidies that it receives. 3) Environmental impacts are focused solely on direct impacts of towboat/barge traffic - not on secondary and tertiary impacts, especially in the backwaters. 4) Some of the environmental impacts being studied are irreverent - e.g. testing tensites study? of macroplytes when macroplytes rarely occur in the main channel except in the improved areas. 5) Time span of environmental impact work is too short to adequately determine the effects of increased barge traffic.

Good information answered all questions I had. Thanks

I was disappointed that no forums for formal presentations by opposing views was available.

Your study will not be adequate until it addresses the implications for the Mississippi River ecosystems of continued management of the River as a barge channel.

I provided comments at the two previous meetings - and have not received answers yet. I do plan on looking through the recent 11/17/95 reports to see if indeed my past comments were adequately addressed.

Regulation of the Mississippi River for navigation has changed the physical conditions and processes that its plants and animals depend on. This study does not address this fact (the international conference on sustaining ecological integrity of large floodplain Rivers held in LaCrosse, WI in 1994 identified several fundamental processes/relationships essential for maintaining River health - the navigation system as managed today interferes with all of them). Yet, if multibillions $ are reinvested in navigation infrastructure without considering how continuing to regulate the River will affect it, we will not have achieved intelligent use of the River or tax money. The environmental studies do not include any assessment of what continuing this single purpose use of the River will have on its ecology. The economic studies

do not consider the value of ecosystem services or products lost due to long-term regulation of the River. Why?

This was a terrible place to hold a public meeting. A smaller city or town on the River would have reached more people and would have been less intimidating. I understand that the feasibility study is not including previously agreed to environmental studies that, at a minimum, were needed to asses and measure environmental impacts. Environmental risks associated with expansion are by far the most critical concern. Why has the Corps excluded recommended studies and time frames needed to properly assess environmental impacts? It is very difficult to believe any of the information provided here when you pick and choose to do what ever you want to. These public meetings are an absolute farce. Based on the comments I heard at two of the public mtgs. held in 1994 I'm extremely disappointed that this study is continuing, especially with a "business as usual" approach. What good is public input when it isn't even used, let alone acknowledged. This expenditure of public monies is a complete waste when applied to the long-term sustainable health of our country. Our government should ensure that future generations inherit a healthy, self sustaining Mississippi River instead of condemning it!

Bull Shit!!! leave the River alone take out locks and dams. This isn't your River.

Highly enjoyable. There were only about 10 people at the Bloomington Open House when I was there which allowed a lot of 1 on 1 conservation. This is a nice alternative to the hearing process of 1994.

Please give first #1 consideration to preserving the River. It's the only right answer for 1) ecology 2) recreation 3) economics long term. use science and care first - the economics and preserve the River is the best long term way for all of the above!

Prairie du Chien, WI
December 4, 1995

Afternoon Session

I was present at the early afternoon session. Many of my questions are focused on the economic modeling. 1) Will there be an investigation of time delays caused at navigation channel constrictions. For example, once the bottlenecks at the upstream and downstream L&D's have been eliminated, will a channel constriction between the dams cause delays where once does not currently exist due to less traffic. 2) I was informed that origins of commodity movements to the River is being investigated. How will the destination site at River be determined? Will the analysis be sensitive enough to determine if shipments go directly to the nearest Port on River or another site further away. - Natural resources-will the POS recommendations ever be done? The COE's recent legal opinion regarding the POS (Plan of Study) would lead one to believe that even the best intentions of all agencies involved can be compromised by the legal interpretation of a few words. My recommendation is that the next time the COE commits to environmental monitoring in conjunction with a navigation project, stick to it.

Would have made provision to have folks sign in to collect names and addresses. If someone took the time to come, you should have a record to keep in touch.

The format does not contribute to public discourse nor does it make the COE to hear the full scope of public concern. It dispossess turnout because most people prefer a more open format in which to express their opinions. The information provided appears to be intended to justify navigation "improvements" rather than evaluate the need for or impacts of increasing L&Ds etc. The engineering station was particularly guilty of this. There should be information on the cost for taxpayers over time, not just related to the cost share of construction but also the long-term bite of operation and maintenance. The grotesque subsidies to the barge industry should cease.

1. Many people perceived the open house structure as an attempt to avoid addressing criticism publicly. 2. I believe the COE has the best civil engineers in the world. I would like them from the top levels put this expertise to addressing the issue of sediment build-up. 3. Washington needs to hear the COE, the UMR states, the DNR's, the DOT's, the Dept. of the Interior, the commercial interest, the environmentalist, the recreation uses, the public all saying we want to maintain a healthy multi-use River; we can work together to pool resources; we want congressional backing.

An informative and user friendly approach; opportunity for the public and the Corps to hold open and frank discussion without becoming adversarial.

This is a cheap way to move grain. The locks need to be improved 1200'.

I can not see the need from a economic standpoint and the impact on the environment.

Very informative open house which provided good objective information on the study itself. I think it would be beneficial/informative to start providing some of the known benefits and other

information. Benefits should include these to each individual. Keep up the good work of this study.

It seems to me as you increase barge traffic on the River the environmental damage will be increased by leaps and bounds. The constant churning of the water in the channel will cause severe bank erosion and silting in of sloughs and back waters. Why not leave things as they are and restrict barge traffic.

More informational meetings should be made available to the public. More relaxed atmosphere. You do have good timing this meeting. Perhaps one in the middle of River traffic season.

Very nice display and very informative. Would say Corps is on a concerned path for all users of the Rivers.

Show progress of measurements of studies.

Film presentation could have been more informative. Recap of more specifics would be a plus.

Would like to see dredge material placed out of River channel. Lock system expanded to 1200 ft. were feasible.

I felt the information was informative and useful. Only being on the River a short time the study was unfamiliar to me, however I feel the information being accumulated will be helpful for the environment and economy to provide better service for future barge traffic to reduce transportation cost which adds value back to the product being transported. For our company grain and this ultimately helps the consumer.

Upper Mississippi River is very important for grain movement on the River. Maybe we need to control the number of barge units (if needed) and let movement take care of itself on a yearly basis. Environment considers, must not be over weighted because they have more money, to voice their side. If locks have been maintained over the years, maybe they are large enough to handle what they can! Farmers need this freight system, south for better prices, but does it have to be enlarged for the next 50 years?

I am a farmer in Howard County, Iowa. There is not one mile of railroad in Howard county. I am totally dependent upon the Mississippi River for shipping my waxy corn to Japan. My soy beans also are shipped on the Mississippi River. Our phosphate fertilizer comes upstream on the Mississippi and is backhauled by the same trucks hauling our grain to the River. We need this vital transportation system imp[roved and modernized to keep our farmers and our nation competitive. I appreciate the opportunity to visit your open house.

Participated in similar study at LaCrosse a couple years ago representing NCGA to MARC 2000, was very interested in what is happening to River trans. for the long haul.

To keep the whole Mississippi River system open and running is great benefit for all of the people farmer to farmer.

Must keep barges, locks and dams in functioning order to keep the economical well-being of the five state River area in good financial state.

I use the River for recreation and the presence of barges and tugs is not a problem to me.

We need an economical River system for commercial use as well as recreational. Working to improve the environment in and around the Rivers are important, but should not totally control the project. Use of common sense as a guiding force should be urged.

We need the River, but its time the top people quit struggling to be the power people. Let get the locks back in shape to handle the traffic.

When I read about these studies in the newspaper, invariably its the viewpoint of an environmental group (i.e. sierra club-audubon society) the industry that uses commercial navigation is almost mute. This was a good idea to make more people knowledgeable about what's going on. Curious why the secondary locks are not used in the St. Paul District.

The worst thing in history was taxing the railroads till we lost most of the system and built roads for trucks to tear up. Lets see to it that we don't leave our Rivers too! With the elimination of firm programs and increased emphasis on exports it becomes more important to maintain and improve our River transportation system.

I am encouraged by your environmental management programs. It would be good if it could be expanded.

Try and use a common sense approach to do what needs to be done. Don't spend too much time studying and get at some of the things that need to be done now. Just how much more will River traffic increase than what was needed in 1995. Don't get too much hung up on environmental issues.

I think that we should put some money into our River transportation because the dams we now have - have done a good job considering as to when they were built. But I question the figure I got on the price a new dam would cost. Then the next thing I haven't heard anything about is how they are going to finance this project if it is gone thorough with. I couldn't help but notice how much the environmental gets on the feasibility study versus the rest and if the dams are built that figure in on top of the study.

We in ag need this River, our cost of transportation of grain down River is very important. Fertilizer coming up, oil coal so important to economic.

Can we afford not to increase traffic? Or if we increase traffic, how long before the downstream stations can handle the extra demand at ship terminals? Was disappointed to see the Environmental portion of the study was close to 1/2 the total.

I found your meeting to be helpful in understanding River traffic.

Very informative display.

I feel the seminar was informative. I believe the improvement of the locks on the Mississippi River is necessary. Naturally I feel it is necessary to research the environmental impact and to take it into consideration but also the necessity of using the River for transportation must not be overlooked.

Excellent meeting.

No one ever suffered from too much information! Complete the study and then enlist some significant political help. It will be absolutely necessary. P.S. the exhibits could have used stronger lighting. The video of the outdraft problems at Lock 22 was very interesting.

Appreciate opportunity to view study components, progress of each. Hope economic study reflects dependence of farm (and rural) economics have on River transported, not to mention the jobs either directly associated with the River or indirectly (grain elevators, truckers, RR personnel).

I believe it to be very important to the economy of the Mississippi valley that barge traffic not only be maintained but that it be enhanced.

We need to keep a lock & dam system that works as efficiently as possible for the transportation of all products and commodities. Recreation should be secondary although very important. The environment needs to also be watched out for. The cost of building or major repairs needs to be shared by everyone! Everyone in the midwest benefits, so they all should share in the cost and maintenance.

I think the Corps needs to continue to operate and maintain the lock and dam system and to constantly be upgrading it also. As time goes on the navigation demands on the River will probably continue to increase and the snags and holdups need to be eliminated. In so doing environmental concerns need to be addressed but benefits of a more efficient navigation source should have the higher priority.

The open house format does not allow for communication of opinion among attendees. This format allows the Corps to divide at confuse (baffle with bullshit) if you will permit. If the Corps was honest with the public on all counts, I'm sure that the benefit of having locks and dams does <u>not</u> outweigh the true cost of operating and maintaining them, nor include the environmental cost they create. A study team member told me that there are no long term changes planned north of pool 14. Then why the $44 million study and open house.

We must do all we can to efficiently and effectively utilize the waterways. This is a valuable asset we have. I think the study is an good idea - planning is important to reduce mistakes - we do not want to erode our environment. I think - hope - we can learn to enhance our environment and still harness and use its energy.

Please do not make changes on the Mississippi River that will harm the shoreline aquatic life, waterfowl, wildlife ecology, environment, beauty, cause more silt, sediment, wetlands, woodlands, water & quality, etc. Please direct the focus of any changes you make with the environments your top priority and the commercial interests last, even after the tourism interests. I most certainly wish you would have had this hearing in LaCrosse again and because of the ?? impact of this study I think they should be held in the state capital cities.
Study cost estimates-fully funded @ study mgmt are not the real $ expended - they do not reflect elements either scaled back or eliminated. An honest public mtg would be a forum with the opportunity to publicly discuss issues. An honest mtg would list the exceptions identified at previous mtg and how they are being addressed and resolved. I believe that the rank and file ACOE folks working on study elements are reasonable folks willing to compromise to meet mutual needs for both economic and environmental interests. What happens once it gets to division or Washington - why don't hose folds understand how valuable this River is and that by engineering environmentally responsible solutions that not only can a nav system be maintained and enhanced but that the environment can win also and other $ benefits can be derived and contributed into the NED??!!

The River system is very important to the economy of this country as well as environmental, recreational, historical needs. I believe your study is very important, and hope congress has the wisdom to continue what you are accomplishing. The ideas developed so far for minor and major changes to improve the congestion problems of the present and future look to be successful. Hopefully, the different interests represented by the River system will work together to improve conditions rather than using this forum as a means to oppose one another. Treated properly, this River system can serve all needs and still be around for our children and grandchildren to enjoy.

Better coordination is needed between St. Paul & Rock Island Districts on control of water levels. The Prairie du Chien area with its narrower channel has its water level greatly affected by the gate positions at Dubuque (in Rock Island District) (PDC in the St. Paul district). High water at Prairie du Chien this past summer has greatly affected tree uprooting in the back water bottoms due to the soft ground. Also, bank erosion has increased. With a 9 foot channel for navigation, same consideration should be given to a "slow no wake" in the entire River bottoms when the River level is above 10 or 11 feet to prevent more erosion. better coordination is also needed between the Corps and the news media, especially TV news programs, and the Weather Bureau in LaCrosse. People at the weather bureau have no idea where gates will be positioned or whether readings are taken at head or tail waters, thus they cannot give accurate forecasts.

Impact to scheduled recreational versus lockages was not thoroughly investigated.

We need studies to improve our efficiency and loading capacities of existing volume barges.

This study seems to be channeling more effort into the environmental effort and impact than it is into the economic impact and the effect it will have on not only those who use the River but also those populations who live in the states bordering the River.

Enjoyed the displays but enjoyed more the one on one interaction with study team members. The extra wide basis on grain this summer personally cone me $20,000.00. As a result I'm extremely interested in the study outcome. For the central United States to fully use its economic potential, this River must be upgraded so that commodities, petroleum, fertilizer, etc. can be moved at low cost. We can be the world's most efficient source of food, if we can move it to them. It won't do any good to produce 10-12 bil bu. corn crops, if we can't get it to them at lowest cost. The economic study display would be of greater benefit to me if it had its analysis in $/bu. instead of $/ton. Also a comparison with rail then would dramatically show the Rivers value. I've stressed the economic side because its important, but I also appreciate the environ & rec side too. I believe we can make it together. I've changed my farming practices to no-till and cut my soil erosion by 3/4's.

The most publication about the scoping meeting last year was most interesting. Question 10 page 16 indicates that the public was concerned about what the Corps would do if they determined the Navigation Impacts to the environment were too great, what would that do to the feasibility of constructing big (1200') locks into the system. The answer to question 10 seems to indicate that the lock improvement would go in regardless of the impact to the environment. The Corps would either try to avoid and minimize or if necessary provide compensatory mitigation. Never was it stated that if impacts were too great to the natural resources would the Corps abandon the idea of constructing bigger locks. Which gets to the basic concern raised by the natural resource community since the beginning. The lock improvements are a done deal and the truth is, is that this is not a feasibility study but a pre-construction study.

I live in Dresbach, Minnesota. We (homeowners) need to save Dresbach Island. We also need to save our shoreline which is getting eroded by barge traffic and large boats. We need some markers moved away from the shoreline. I felt it was very helpful to come to this program. Please keep open to our (public citizens) concerns. Thank you.

These are huge decisions on the economic situation of production agriculture in my area, recreation has valid points on each side. I really believe the River can be maintained for commerce and the environment. barges have become the villain without concern for the reality that barge traffic of grain in this area to the market place is the main game in town by a long margin. This is a beautiful part of the country and the Mississippi is the center of it.

Evening Session

It appears that all aspects of the study are narrowly defined in a way that will ensure the results - if plan to subsidize the expansion of the current lock and dam system.

I support the study. Its necessary to keep the Midwest competitive in the world market.

Like to have more explanation on river fluctuations - Hope to hear soon.

Don't like open house formats - need open discussion so that all ideas are shared.

I didn't find much information available. All the studies use "in process" and we couldn't really evaluate or critique most of what was presented. I assume that future issues of your newsletter will contain some hard information.

As a farmer I can see the need for improving the waterways for the future. I also like fishing and I believe your approach to preserving habitat and fixing damaged areas is good. I think your headed in the right direction. Common sense tells me that after 50 or 60 years the lock and dams are going to need updating to handle future traffic efficiently. Your biggest problem will be satisfying environmental concerns. Good Luck.

I am in favor of maintaining the river and improving the locking system. I am a farmer and use the river for moving my grain down for export.

The sooner the job is done the better! We need this project!!

I agree that there are needs for improvements in our river system and they need to be done totally in harmony with the existing nature and maybe having in mind to help improve them. Along with the improvements it seems to me that we need to have regulations on the water craft that are using the system.

Good display and format.

Good meeting - need more meeting notices published. Need more handouts.

Navigation is necessary but not the most important use of the river. The tows are too large now and are causing damage which will never be repaired. Cost to the shipper and the ultimate cost to the consumer is of small conservence when compared to the recreation and human needs of generations to come. The river is being destroyed and we are helpless in stopping it. A few benefit at the expense of many - why?

I would like to have the sloughs and backwaters deepened by dredging or excavating with a drag line! The site and fill could be hauled back to the farms as that is where it came from. This would help during the spring floods as these places used to have up to 15 feet of water not the 15 inches we have now during the summer at normal levels. As common sense will tell you more water would be in a slough or backwater that was 15 feet deep as one only 15 inches.

This idea disgusts me and every outdoors person that wishes to use the river. If this ever goes anywhere you can plan on a huge confrontation from us. Get ready for war.

Good job!

Our lock system is needed for the survival of the upper midwest economy. With the increasing of traffic and service the locks have - I believe the upgrading is necessary.

Sounds good, but with studies like this I always wonder if the findings are all really going to be considered or if it is actually a dog and pony show to keep everyone happy. Seems like too often

that a predetermined decision is made and the data that supports the decision is used and the data that doesn't is sort of ignored. Don't know who a person finds out if what he's hearing is really the whole story. Read a lot and hope, I guess. My point is that I hope this study is sincere.

The study is so complex that its extremely difficult to understand all of the information in each of the study elements. For anyone to make an informed comment, you would need to spend a significant amount of time in study and conversation with the various element coordinators. The displays were attractive but did not inform you very well. I would be surprised if the Corps received much meaningful input at this open house.

My concerns on the Mississippi River to the Corps support of the problems and/or solutions were not addressed in any manner. My concerns are with fishing and public access and not building bigger and faster locking systems for the barge company's or grain elevator dealers. Perhaps future Corps should think about getting back some of the 46 million from the main users (barge companies/Grain elevators) that they plan on spending instead of general public funds (tax dollars).

Corps seems to be doing a very good job of presenting scope to complexity of the study. Personally I'm not sure the "highest and best" use of the river is barge/tow navigation. From an environmental/resources/tourism standpoint, it may be better to not have the locks and dams.

Interesting. Informative. Keep the public informed.

Be sure doors are open when public arrive. Lock door lends to "negative attitude." Information good - continue to keep people informed.

I didn't quite know what to expect upon arrival but was pleasantly surprised at what the Corps was up to, very informative, a great group of moderators as a farmer and a member of the IA Corn Growers Asso. I'm here to support the Corps projects on these waterways for myself and our association. I also understand the problems and concerns of all the people involved with these waterway projects those for and against, I think your "inform and educate approach" will be met with the best results. Good luck.

There should be a true public hearing at each phase so people can hear various points of view and add their own comments and criticisms accordingly. My opinion is that the Corps of Engineers should give us back our river as it existed before the 1930's/ I have many fears, including that pressure for longer tows will increase and will lead to pressure to further straighten the river, regardless of damage to the environment, wildlife, esthetics and the local economy. Our local economy is increasingly dependent on recreation and pressure to increase barge traffic can only have negative effects on this local economy.

Concerned north central Iowa farmer. We send a lot of grain over here to be loaded on barges. We are concerned as to what direction you are going here would like to see barge traffic improved. We also have a lot of fertilizer trucked into central Iowa from the barges over here on the river. What happens with the Crop and the locks and dams is very important to us.

My business is managing a grain elevator in Northern Iowa. I know that for the grain farmers in NE Iowa that the river is very important for markets of our grain. It is the only way feasible to get the value of grain to the gulf. We need the river system to be consistent in hauling our grain to export.

Bettendorf, Iowa
December 5, 1995

Afternoon Session

Concerned about keeping a navigational channel for grain movement and higher costs of moving grain if system is allowed to deteriorate.

Keep going. Lets finish and start construction.

Very educational.

While the format was acceptable more study teams members would have been helpful.

I was contacted by an area legislator who asked us to attend. We found the displays extremely informative and would like to receive updates if possible on the study. Also, interested to hear study results that address concerns about flooding and flood prevention.

I believe that modernization is essential if the river is to continue to be used for commercial navigation. The benefits are not only economic but accrue to the entire midwest environment and well being. The damages caused by long delays at locks, the waste of fuel, the air and water pollution, damage to fish and wildlife could all be reduced by getting the goods on the river to their destination quickly, and efficiently. The alternatives to river navigation, even if they are feasible would do much more damage to land and water resources through creating new land corridors that would be hazardous not only to the natural environment but to people. let's keep and enhance our cheap, safe, historic, river transportation.

It is vital to the agriculture industry to improve and maintain an efficient navigation system on the Mississippi River. It is important in respect to the future economic health of our region and country. While doing the least amount of harm to natural habitat should be a consideration, it should not be the major influence.

We need 1200 Ft locks to move the barge traffic faster and more economical cheaper transportation lets me ship material further and still be competitive in price.

This project is a make work for the Corps. Private monies should be used for the locks.

The Upper Mississippi River has been and will continue to be a vital part of the Upper Midwestern and national economies. Maintaining and enhancing the transportation capabilities of this valuable resource should be a priority. We should also continue to assess the economic impact of changes made in the lock and dam system. Any changes implemented should demonstrate and adequate return on this investment from improved efficiencies in transportation's. Sensitivity to the environment should be a factor in any consideration of changes or improvements.

As I am a farmer in Scott County I believe it is vital to the whole states economy that the Mississippi River Lock and Dam system be upgraded and maintained. The river provides us cheap transportation for exporting grain and shipping products up the river.

Should have more personnel at each station. Would be better to have staff give a presentation and have question after talk.

I would hope that the process of the study does not fall prey to politics. While I agree that environmental issues need to be addressed with today's best research, I hope that the actual cost vs. benefit is evaluated. For commerce to take place on any level there will be an environmental impact. As a farmer I work hard to maintain the eland in my care. I see many city developments go forth with little apparent concern. It seems to me the public is concerned with the environment as long as it doesn't cost them individually. As a farmer I feel the river traffic is vital to my continued economic survival. It urge the Corps of Engineers to undertake the large-scale improvements to the system. Any improvement, however, will be seen as just that. An Improvement. Again I am not encouraging the "trashing" of the environment to achieve these goals. I feel there is middle ground. If the Corps of Engineers simply accepts public opinion by sheer numbers at the meetings, those that use the river for commerce will always be fewer then those who look at it. Thank you for your time.

Whether the exporting shipping needs will be satisfied is my concern.

The meeting was informative. I was impressed with the professionalism of the displays as well as the individuals conducting the meet.

Extremely helpful and considerate.

Need the river for moving grain and other needs in farming.

Commercial traffic on the Mississippi is critical to the economic health of the Quad Cities and the Midwest. Improvements on the lock and dam system are essential to commercial traffic. The study should be expedited and the work begun.

Let's maximize our use of the Mississippi - its economic benefit is huge. Lets not negatively affect agriculture - the midwest is heavily dependent on it.

I am a concerned farmer and also a pleasure boat owner. it is crucial to us as farmers to keep the Mississippi River open and smooth running to barge traffic to the Gulf. With out a doubt it is our most economical means of transportation for commodities to be sold and exported. In-order for farmers to make a profit higher yields are needed, thus more and more grain will be produced in the future. Because of this we are going to be needing more and more use of the river to economically transport our grain. Train and truck are out of the question for economically transporting our grain. I also have a pleasure boat and travel the Mississippi River for recreation. I enjoy the river and don't mind paying boat registration to use the river. Shady Creek fair port and Buffalo are excellent facilities. Keep it up.

Very informative and good presentation. Handouts will be helpful to learn more about study. We need to improve the economic benefits which are available by river transport.

The displays while visually appealing did not provide information that I could understand - as a non-technical person. In other words, they didn't tell a lay person what is going on in regards to the studies. The various charts and graphs - again nice looking - were like a foreign language - I feel like I'm being "techno speak" talked to - to make me feel ignorant about the issue. With that said, my overall feeling is that all the study in the world still can't tell us what the real effects of human engineering on such a large and complex river system will be. Samples and models made, based on one site, won't hold true when applied to the multitude of site types that are found along the river. The Mississippi River is a world treasure and should be treated as such - not as a means to an end for commercial shippers to grow rich. Increased traffic on the Upper Miss will only degrade the river habitat and its plant and wildlife populations.

I came with a neighbor to show our interest and to support the navigation repair and update lock and dams necessary to maintain sufficient water flow to ship our grain to market. The upper miss waterway system of locks and dams had to help wildlife in a positive way over the last 60 or more years by making backwaters and water flow conducive for their livelihood. The farmers are as interested as anyone in the environment but we also have a product that anyone needs as valuable as a breath of fresh of air.

Like the open house format. Feel need to get farmers/producers and small elevators support by relating slow traffic to freight sales then to low basis levels at terminal elevators. The relationship certainly exists.

Questions asked were basically about the materials presented in the displays. Are the "improvements" feasible? Sure they are as long as the money is there. What if this "money" was used to improve the rail or truck system. Costs would surely be reduced for those modes of transportation. Will the river environment suffer? Sure it will - if the cost of the taxpayers and the river not the barge companies - which will benefit more than anyone else. I hope that all of the environmental studies will be completed before any decisions are made to what if any "improvements" will be made.

Team members seemed to be present only to answer questions and avoid answering those that may present a point of view. Many of the answers I received were vague and not conducive to discussion. The displays were not as detailed and in-depth as should be for a project or organization as large scale or well known as this is. One individual didn't have information available about the local area.

The study indicates to me that any environmental concerns I had concerning this project are being adequately addressed. The proposed improvements to the waterways are absolutely essential to the economic vitality of the Midwest for generations to come. I support the most cost beneficial alternatives that are defined in the study.

Informative displays. Knowledgeable Corps Reps.

Interesting and informative. Very much appreciated the opportunity to learn a bit about hopefully improvements to river navigation systems economics and today's environmental demands are certainly a challenge to achieve that delicate desirable balance. Thank you for your efforts.

I was deeply concerned about these issues especially since I farm and my crops are delivered to river grain terminals. I am still concerned just as much after viewing the displays. Environmental groups can have an effect on the eventual project. This would affect my lively hood and also our ability as farmers to compete on a global basis with other countries. I do my best to produce a crop as economically as possible but have to live with varying basis (price) levels and problems with barge transportation. This eventually makes a difference on what the cost of our crops are to foreign customers. if barge traffic could be streamlined and delays minimized, everyone should benefit. Farmers, production workers of ag equipment, fertilizer manufacturers, and coal for power facilities would keep electrical rates down. Good study!

I felt the open house was professionally conducted. I enjoyed the presentations.

Need more general meetings where questions are answered for all to hear.

I did not receive info as to why increased river traffic is anticipated.

As an information opportunity for the public, this display was to superficial. The Nav expansion project and study is very complicated with differing viewpoints and conflicting data. What I saw was from the Corps point of view only (predictable) and did not address merits of alternative transportation, future crops predictions, domestic utilization of future Ag products, or environmental costs as well as current recreational benefits from the UMRS. I learned more (much more) in your Nav Study newsletter. Please five the public all the facts - the process may be of some interest but economic/environmental tradeoffs is where the public must decide the future of navigation on the UMRS. This open house is too sketchy for a relatively uninformed public to even know what questions to ask your representatives.

I believe the decision has already been made to build the new locks. What about the pleasure boaters and fisherman - not enough being done for them.

We need the river markets for grain and other bulk commodities.

1. You folks made a commitment to address quite a list of environmental concerns connected with l&dam 26. Only a few were covered in the plan of study. You are saying the same about the navigation study and I am tending to assume another token effort. Please take the environmental issue seriously.
2. Do some barge to rail comparisons based on an improved rail system. You will improve barging efficiency if l&d's are rebuilt. Project the same for the rail system to be fair. Are you incorporating existing but in many cases, abandoned rail network? 3. Nice time lapse locking video. 4. Helpful and cordial.

According to the studies shown and I was informed about - we don't have much to say as to what the Corps plans and intends to do. Hopefully someone will supply a better alternative.

Instead of increasing navigational ability, seek to limit usage by imposing a locking fee as the present free ride caused the railroads to decline. Need a balance and more emphasis on balance of economic and environmental concerns. the Mississippi River is world famous, attracted tourist from around the world. A dead river will add to the decline of the USA, and its role as a model for other countries. This procedure of "public education" is a sham re having the effect of changing anything. The bottom line is the composition of congress and the contributions the large industries makes to political campaigns.

The "open house" format is a good meeting technique. It allows the attendee to focus on area of special interest, to obtain more detailed information than may be offered through an informational meeting, to spend as much time as desired and to express ideas or relate concerns more thoroughly. The corps has done a good job of developing broad based alternatives. These alternatives appear to address the concerns of all interest groups. The Corps is to be complimented for their effort in involving all interested groups in development of environmental assessment procedures.

I read about the open house in the newspaper. I attended for the purpose of learning about what was planned for the future.

I would like any development not to cause harm to the environment of the river system.

The study needs to be completed on a timely cost effective basis. It cannot be studied to death and you cannot please everyone. The COE is doing a good job with the study. Keep it up.

No expanded locking system or larger dams (Alton) etc. The Corps should be given here job transportation responsibilities with rail beds. Land banking and maintenance of beds the tax payer took the land long ago (it should be public - remain public right of way). There must be cooperation between transportation modes. Highways, railroad, river should not compete only those using the transit routes.

These last two from this session were attached letters.

I am deeply concerned about the long term health of the Mississippi River and the wildlife that depends on the river for habitat. Many biologists have voiced their concern and furnished you with information gathered from studies that show that the river as an eco-system is already in decline. I am distrustful of your real intention to gather facts instead of doing whatever is necessary to further your own objectives. Expanding the lock and dam system as proposed will threaten the interests of fishermen and other river recreation enthusiasts, as well as play havoc with the lives of countless creatures that live in, on and around the river. Has the Corp taken into consideration what will happen when the river becomes a dead river, as has happened on several smaller rivers? Can your study honestly contemplate all the biological ramifications of such a scenario? I hope the study will look into the future with the whole picture in mind, not just short term economic gain of a relatively small group of people. What about the loss of tourism dollars

and revenues generated by recreation enthusiasts? What about the ducks, geese and other birds that use the Mississippi as a migratory route? Why not build a transportation system that doesn't go right through the middle of an irreplaceable ecosystem like a railroad?

The corp study has brought to my attention many problems the river faces. Most of these problems stem from the policies that the corps has followed since the 1930's. The Corps has consistently had blatant disregard for the Mississippi's ecosystem thinking of this river only as a means of transportation, not as a living entity. If we maintain and operate the locks and dams as they are now the river will continue to degrade until there is a biological crash. If the locks and dams are expanded and barge traffic increases, this degradation will happen more quickly and our country will go more deeply into debt. Some of the reasons for the decline in the health of the river are: The river has been slowed down by the locks and dams, creating what looks like lakes, eliminating islands, and creating a huge sedimentation problem in the marshes. The river does not scour the bottom of the marshes anymore because the water doesn't flow through swiftly. Also, plants in the marshes do not germinate properly when the river is not allowed to have its own adjustments in levels. there is also the problem of erosion on the islands from increased wave action (as a result of the lake syndrome) and from barges tying up on islands. These are just a few of the problems that have been caused by barge traffic and the lock and dam system. When I learned of the dilemma that the river is facing and of the millions of dollars the lock and dam system costs taxpayers (for the sole reason of keeping the barge and agri-business happy), I came to the conclusion that we should get rid of the lock and dam system. We can build more railroads (which have the advantage of running all year and would boost the mass transit system). We can also manufacture more of our bulk products here at home (thus creating more stable jobs in the midwest). there is a choice and within the next decade will be the turning point for the Mississippi. Will it be a dead canal in the 21st century, or will we make the tough decision to restore it to good health?

Evening Session

Common sense is 95% of everything.

I feel we need to get on with the program and stop studying it to death. The importance of improved navigation is significant economically. The waterway was developed as a transportation system and is vitally important in our economy. Grain, coal, fertilizer, salt and petroleum and steel products are vital to our economic well being.

Open conference we need to maintain and improve our locks and dams system - 28 -19 making traffic more efficient. Open a produce of farm products we will need this system for years to come. I strongly feel we need to up date our system for the next 50 years.

I am a farmer in Scott County, IA. All of my grain is shipped by barge. Without river traffic I would lose 25 cents to 40 cents @ bu. I appreciate all the work the Corps has done in the past to keep the barge traffic moving.

Locks need to be enlarged to further ease river traffic flow. many products can be transported up and down stream with less cost, as well less fuel burned per LB of product moved. The

environment should not suffer because of a more efficient operation of the locks. Any improvement to expand the locks should be done soon as possible.

As a grain farmer and consumer of products shipped up and down the river, we consider an improved Mississippi River system essential for our continued well being. Since we have an ever increasing population, we have to improve the river system. Anyone to wishes to turn back the clock should think about limiting immigration or, not limiting river improvement.

Due to the fact that we farm and raise both corn and soybeans we are quite dependent upon marketing of these products. The river enables us to harvest our grain at the least cost of delivery. We feel we really need this type of transportation to continue as efficiently as possible to ensure our basis for grain pricing. We feel this is much more important than recreation on the river.

We need the locks and dams. Whatever is done we do not need to get rid of any but improvement is needed.

I much preferred the open meeting format. Ideas need to be discussed by two or more educated view points to reach any neutral understandings.

I think a public forum with differing viewpoints is important. The Corps presented only their version of the study. There is other scientific opinion that should be presented in conjunction with this. An open meeting is conducive to consistent answers from Corps staff.

Most pressing concern is the trade-off to the environment because of increased navigation. I'm concerned environmental concerns are not or will not be adequately addressed because of the economic benefits (almighty dollar). Additional navigation will have adverse environmental effects - will you be willing or are you prepared to mitigate losses due to navigation expansion?

Lets get on with the study and hopefully you can shorten the time it takes to build new locks. Barge rates affect the price I receive for my grain and the amount I pay for fertilizer.

Graphics on slide presentation were patronizing. Informative on the standpoint of how the study will be approached, but I would have liked more definition of large and small scale measures. I would have liked to see a list of studies/literature utilized for evaluating plans and what agencies have conducted these studies.

Lost cost water transportation is the most valuable asset in the midwest - how else can we cheaply export our grain and grain products. 1200' locks will greatly improve efficiency on the mid and upper river by reducing transit time not by increasing the number of tows. Instead we will be able to do more with the same amount of barges and boats. We must realize the economic impact the river has in terms of jobs for everyone in the upper river.

1) Would like a meeting in Davenport, Iowa. 2) Don't like the way the meetings were set up, no possibility of real public input. 3) The newsletters and the P.R. campaign put on for this study appear to bias strongly at just providing a justification for going ahead and going through

with the project. 4) I think more of the modeling studies should be conducted on the actual river in several locations on what effects of barge traffic new on river. 5) I feel it is absurd that you suggest that the barging industry is actually losing money because of traffic flow.

I feel that the locks and dams on the upper Mississippi River should be expanded and made larger to handle the increased barge traffic that has occurred over the last 10 years. The use of the river to transport grain, farm products and farm inputs (i.e. fertilizer) is the most efficient method available. This benefits not only farmers and agri-businesses but all consumers as well, in the form of lower food costs.

As a corn/soybean producer. I rely heavily upon the river for my living. Most of our corn goes to a processor near us, but the river's cheap transportation to the gulf provides important competition for our crops. If the river transportation system is allowed to deteriorate, there will surely, over time, be a shift of cropping systems south, and a slow, but steady decline in economic activity in the northern midwest states. Our slim profit margins can take very little pressure. On the other side, however, I do believe that extra money should be spent, if necessary, to decrease environmental impact. These dollars will go a long way in appeasing the environmental lobby and increased habitat and wildlife on the Mississippi. As a corn/soybean producer I'd rather pay a little more in shipping costs to keep the huge benefit the river provides. The lesser of two evils, the best of both worlds.

It would appear that all sides of the issues are being addressed. The study has been quite expensive and extensive. It needs to be finished as quickly as possible, so that the work needed to be done can move ahead. the need for navigation (commercial and recreational) is very evident.

The Mississippi River is vital for barges to be used efficiently to deliver grain. Whatever improvements are decided upon are important to our farming operations. Our markets are located worldwide and we think internationally concerning this.

I have been a farmer grain producer all my life, am 71 years old. We have trucked grain from Grinnell, IA 120 mi west to Mississippi River for 25 years. We in the United States have the bread basket of the world especially in the central area of Iowa, ILL, Minn. We have the greatest transportation systems, truck, rail, river in the world, also. I support all effort made to continue and keep up necessary improvements and repairs of the Miss River Waterway.

I found the open house very informational and easy to follow. The questions I had were quickly and adequately answered by knowledgeable people who were more than willing to discuss any of the matters related to the river study. The environmental group was particularly interesting to chat with, while pro-environmental people would rather just shut down the system. The majority of us realize the greater economic impact that this river system gives to the country as a whole. MARC2000 is to be commended on putting on a very good forum. Thank you.

Very well done! Video of lockage in engineering display very entertaining.

Based on my many years of farming I am inclined to feel that improving navigation on the Mississippi River is not only desirable but also necessary, barge movement of agriculture commodities is by far easier and cheaper than either rail or highway. For the dollar invested, it only makes common sense to have navigation facilities which meet the demands of both current and future use.

Some of the Corps people gave lovely responses which bare no relationship to the question that had been asked. Not enough information on actual plans. Some of your signs had grammatical errors.

Interesting.

Please keep study going. The river is important to export and this country. Make the improvements. We need to move our grain.

I liked the movie. I liked the introduction.

Quite a dog and pony show. I'm walking away with an empty feeling about the whole project.

I found the displays very well done from an artistic point of view, but they didn't tell me a thing about what you intend to do. I.E. lots of words and very little substance.

Very informative.

Keep up the good work, and finish the study.

Very nice open house! Display were very informational and team members were well trained and extremely helpful. Thought the handout material was beneficial as well. Good job.

Want a balance between environment and industry/economic needs.

Good job - keep the river open to commercial traffic!

Keep this river open to barge traffic.

Item 7 - Basically our views were not discussed. The discussion was basically center on the project and the Corp of Engineers objectives. Item 9 - The displays did express some of the information and what was on going. However, the display detail cost was somewhat of a question. Did it display estimated cost or actual cost (monies) spent to date. Information available was collected which will probably aid in a better understanding of above items. Let's get to building these locks. Three more years of study is not needed. You know now what the study is going to say so let's get to the task at hand and start upgrading the locks.

I feel that the time period for the study needs to be shortened as much as possible - We need to do this project and the sooner the better. If for no other reason for cost savings alone.

As a hunter and fisherman and a skipper of barges I'm interested in the river from both a professional and private basis. It is important to figure out how to maintain a navigation channel while reducing the sediment being deposited. We must learn to handle both. The opponents are set on destroying navigation and returning things to primitive times. This is an impossible alternative. If I had the answer I'd be helping but I think we have to work to maintain both recreation and navigation.

Interesting and informative.

Enjoyed the historic property display. Displays were very professional.

A very informative open house but I thought something were misleading about lock operations.

I appreciate the time availability to discuss concerns. We need improvement to lock and dam system.

Keep up the good work - get your studies done on time. Support your studies and work 100 %.

Peoria, IL
December 6, 1995

Very informative; especially liked the Environmental work group display.

Re question 10--format was okay but I would have preferred a sit down session with presentations on each aspect of the study.

Need more detail on why so much money needs to be spent: concerned that this will all result in an effort to increase lock size and barge traffic on river. Not happy that public is kept from hearing and seeing other public comments that would be possible at a public forum meeting.

I feel you already have mind made of what you think is "best". I feel so helpless--all your suits and ties--so smooth--so smooth. It matters, you know, ...you just don't CARE. Suggest you read "In the Absence of the Sacred" by Jerry Mader. I know you won't, but if you do--Thanks. "PROGRESS" is not always better!

Studies need to be expedited. Every barge delay results in increased tariffs--Thus less money to the farmed for his product. If we are going to feed this world, we need an improved infra structure--we need it yesterday. If farmers are to depend on the market for their price, we need an efficient way to deliver our product. If we are going to feed an increasing world population, we have to have a way to deliver. If environmentalists want to turn the river back to the way it was 200 years ago--then the should go without autos, electricity, TV and radio--as if it was 200 years ago. They should live in caves. The flooding problem at the rivers is caused by the paving over of uplands. Let the solutions lie in the uplands.

1) Format was very helpful in conveyance of information.
2) Evaluation the system is critical to future of a region.
3) Keep on execution the meet timeline.
4) Provide more information of "facts" to relent misinformation.

Need bigger signs.

A lot of information to absorb, hard to take issue with material presented but environmental study is to narrow in scope.

Presentation were well crafted and thorough and the open house well organized. I believe this is important to get the information and details out in an unbias way. Keep up the effort to undertake and complete the study. It is very important to the barge industry as well as all the farmers that produce crops for the world markets. I believe improvements can be made to the river system that would be environmentally compatible.

Would be very helpful if index of Corps studies/reports were available and places to order such reports.

Provide good insight to Corps activities. The good for multi-agency work is strongly needed to meet societies needs and interest in the most effective and efficient manner. Well worth the trip.

Small is beautiful. When will this bigger is better end. This river will end up as a 300 ft. wide expensive ditch for barges.

Continue these open houses in the future.

The one-to-one discussions were excellent. The Corps people present weren't public relation types but the actual people responsible for the study. My overall rating of the open house is excellent.

Info on the traffic congestion, and COE Plans to minimize helpful. (i.e., small/large scale, improvements to L/D system).

Describe what specific work is planned at which lock etc. or shore lines.

Why don't you hold this open house meeting near Chicago to get greater Chicago area response?

I feel that a minimum of a 1/2 hr speaker presentation would have been beneficial to get an overall picture of what the study is trying to do in general

I am a farmer, the rivers are very important to me in my business. We have built a strong infrastructure in our county competitive in the world market. I hope you continue to repair and build new lock and or dams as necessary to keep the river system working smoothly. Thank you. Keep up the good work.

Good chance to understand the Corps problems in their operation. I think we better understand why it takes so long for improvements in the system.

We support the Corps efforts to fully study the economic necessity of the waterway system and the improvements required to maintain current traffic levels and expand operating efficiency of our waterway system. We understand environmental issues need to be considered for future construction project, however they must be balanced with employment and economic issues already established and potential growth.

Would like to see more info on economic issues. 1) # of grain elevators, processing plants, oil docks, etc. 2) # of jobs in item #1; # of jobs on barge lines 3) Value of S/B cargoes--impact on deficit 4) value of N/B cargoes--reduced price to consumers--reduce cost to value added industries. Utilities, manufactures. 5) Life span of current economic growth.

What's it going to cost? How is going to pay for it?

While the discussion with Gov. people were helpful and they were informative I feel they do not realize some of our concerns. I and others feel that this entire river system needs to be equally shared nature lovers, developers, large interest and others.

I didn't realize that the Corps of Engineers was involved in so much. I am impressed with the vastness of this study. It looks as though you are covering all the bases, Environment, Ecology, cost effectiveness, etc. I am in full agreement with what you are attempting to ascertain, and wish there was a way for more people to become aware of what you are doing.

I support the "Corps" efforts whole heatedly. As a farmer whose grain is transported totally on the Illinois River to the Mississippi, the future of the Navigation system is very important.

It looks to me like your study encompasses enough. If you go too broad, you may never get done or have enough funding. I feel the environmentalists want a world were nothing else matters.
I am glad that there was an evening program as this would be the only way I could attend. Very well thought out and planned out displays, personal and hand out items. No doubt that there missions are important our present life and generations in the future and must be contended with. I am on the transportation board of the Illinois Fertilize and Chemical Assn. and involved with truck transportation. Truck and water transportation are working together and need each other to move products for the industries they serve.

I'm not convinced that increased barge traffic is economically and environmentally in the watershed region. The barge industry is already heavily subsidized and increased traffic is probably gain to increase turbidty? I'm not so concerned about the environmental effect of new locks. Your HEP studies appear adequate. The environmental insults of increased traffic up and down the length of the river do not appear to be adequately studied.

In spite of the abundance of personnel and printed material and professional displays, very little actual facts were available. Perhaps if I had time to talk to the study participants I could have learned more, but I had to hurry. The printed material--and I collected on of each--were also of extremely limited value. The environmental impacts of the study are too limited--and the study was designed that way.

I had previously been unaware of this expansion project. It appears the process is well underway now that I finally hear about it. I do not like the open house format because it is difficult to get the over picture and, being largely ignorant on the subject, I know little about it and do not know on what criteria a project of this scope should be evaluated on. Being separated from the general public involvement prevents a full understanding of the issue. On the subject of the Environmental Assessment, I am curious as to what the baseline of the study is. Is the goal to maintain the current poor condition of rivers? What level of degradation is considered acceptable?

If all other (environment) areas are not to be funded, increasing lock and dam use should not receive more fed money either. Deal with what you have, don't ask for more.

St. Louis, MO
December 7, 1995

Afternoon Session

We need to put the effort forth to complete the study and then do whatever necessary to keep the waterway as efficient as possible to allow our industry to be world wide competitive. Waterborne commerce is still the cheapest most cost effective transportation mode possible.

Reps were informative and pleasant.

Good opportunities to better understand measures being explored. My interest is in potential channel changes and trade offs affecting traffic flow. I think the bottom line is, you fix it and we'll mark it!

Would like to see more interim reports - in greater detail than in the open house.

The Mississippi River Basin Alliance, a coalition of over 50 conservation and environmental justice organization, continues to object to some of the basic premises upon which the study has been undertaken and continues. We continue to be concerned about the study's adequacy in the area of cumulative impacts on the environment of the river, its back waters and wetland areas. We are concerned that with overall budget cuts for the study and with the completion date set 12/99 that the environmental work will get "short changed." We are also concerned about the presumed expansion of grain production and its impact on downstream water supplies (i.e. pesticides in drainage water) and on the hypoxia zone expansion in the gulf (a direct result of fertilizers in the upper basin states).

I would like to see the Corps continue the fine job of keeping the navigation infrastructures open and operating. Keep the barges and grain moving!

We need to finish the study on time or sooner if possible. There are a lot of smaller items that are involved in this study that are cost effective and could be implemented now. The waterway transportation system is one of the nations greatest assets. We need to improve our economic potential for the future.

I found this meeting to be a great opportunity to express my opinions, ask questions, and share information with the Corps. The replacement of the locks is a great idea and should be done, but the Corps should not forget about channel maintenance.

I would be interested in knowing about any future studies which involve the Kaskaskia, Mississippi Rivers or any smaller rivers in the St. Louis area.

This is an important study as part of a comprehensive effort to preserve one of this nation's valuable assets. Its inland waterway transportation system. Having spent 5 years in Peoria I witnessed first hand what can happen to a river that is not maintained adequately. This study must be completed in timely fashion so that the inland waterway system remains a viable and

valuable resource. I applaud the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the ability to balance all the various interests and move ahead to solve the challenges facing our rivers.

I believe that you should try to keep as much common sense in these studies as possible. I wish you could speed up the process because increasing turn around will greatly decrease shipping costs.

In order to meet the needs of the future with expansion and help our nations economy we need to build or update our river system for the next century needs so we may be competitive in world markets. It is environmentally friendly to use our rivers to the maximum and also the most economic.

Very good display. I'm very supportive of your efforts to upgrade the information for the river areas.

The Corps of Engineers needs to move forward faster, off of the study and towards improvement of the Lock and Dams to increase the ability of the navigation system. Decreasing lock times is the first step.

I was impressed with the huge size of this project and the enormous amount of money involved - such that the relatively tiny amount of many concerned (savings) in the Corps plans of the Kaskaskia lock and dam seem too small for you to make the proposed changes.

This format was much better than last year's public meeting. Nice to have the one-on-one approach.

It seems odd that nearly half the cost of this study is related to the environmental effects. I agree that it is imperative that we leave our children (I have 3) and all future generations an environment we have not wrecked. however, it seems we are trying to go overboard again like we always do. People live, work, go to church, pay taxes, etc. in many areas served by rivers. The economic and life style concerns presently seen to be taking a back stage to protecting the habitat of a moss or tree or some other narrow concern, or tearing down levees and leting the river meander uselessly across the "flood plain" as it did 150 years ago. The reality is people need a place to live, jobs, food. Our infrastructure needs to maximize that and provide for growth for future generations to enjoy.

Critical to agriculture. Move up timetable.

Spend less time on study, and implement changes now.

Spend less time and money studying and move on improvements/changes to relieve congestion problems.

Important to finish the study within scheduled time. The viability of the Upper Miss and Illinois Rivers for navigation is vital to the region, the nation and my company.

Important for agriculture

Would like copies of preliminary studies to read at home.

In the northeastern part of St. Charles Co Mo our major problem is levee breaches on the Mo River. The water then crosses overland and goes into the Mississippi River above L/D 26 in Alton, IL. If the miss is low when this happens I feel a new channel could be cut between the 2 rivers if water runs cross country long enough. I hope this study will look into this problem. If the Corps feels this could disrupt navigation and hurt the flow of goods we might be able to set a better levee on the Mo river so this would not happen.

As a farmer, my future and my sons depends on servicing world grain markets around the world. I also know that with my cost of production in the U.S.A. that the infrastructure for delivering my products is what will keep me competitive with my competition around the world. The U.S. must maintain and improve this wonderful advantage, the Mississippi River system. Thank you.

My concern is the potential environmental problems that happen if the Missouri River crossover flow in St. Charles CO MO at Portage Des Sioux and at the U.E. Sioux Plant. There are several hundred thousand C.F.S. of Mo. water flowing into the Miss upstream of the Melvin Price Dam. I believe the possibility exists for a new channel to develop exists. Which would make the Melvin Price Dam obsolete and severely impact navigation on the Miss. There are also 8 pipelines in this area. Should one of them break, the problems at St. Louis would be terrible!

We adamantly support the study of the Corps.

Too much money spent on Environmental impact. Study takes too long.

One way possible to increase time is to have auxiliary and main locks located at some congested areas. This would allow traffic to continue to move in case of any repairs that might for a closing at one of the locks. This I would guess would be very expensive to do.

We need to expand the river capacity for increased exports of farm commodities and import of inputs. it shouldn't take 6 years to study this and another 3 years to implement. We need to put this on the fast track. We need the river for economic vitality in the midwest.

Everything needs to be done to improve transportation of grain.

Work for a shipper that uses the inland waterways. We @ Holman support the Corps position with the study and would like for the study to keep on the time schedule now.

It is very important that we continue to upgrade and keep in repair the upper river system, as a grain grower our markets depend on a navigable river. When we talk with foreign buyers, one of their main concerns is, are we going to be able to get our grain to the gulf on a timely basis with a bigger degree of reliability. I thank you for the opportunity to voice my concern.

Cost of transportation is ultimately paid by the shipper in other words each individual farmer or user is the one financing the question of the systems. Any delay or breakdown directly affects the economic well being of individual producers. Operating barges in production agriculture (farming) are very narrow so even a small increase in cost of shipping can create an operating loss. The upgrade of the system is essential for the economic well being of the upper midwest.

The study should continue as the future of the Midwest depends on the river and the reliability as source of commerce and environment.

Keep up the good work. Doing a fine job - presenting the facts - without improvements, USA agribusiness will suffer. USA most economical world supplier of grains. Without improvements where do the buyers go?? to our competition i.e. South America, Australia, Canada.

Very good presentation enjoyed.

I am a farmer. Agriculture supports the Corps work.

As an ag producer the outcome of this study is extremely important. My two concerns are: 1. That the outcome of the study will indicate the immediate importance of updating and improving the system that we have, 2. That the time allotted for the study is too long. I feel every minute lost between now and the completion of this project will have a compound effect on our present and future ability to maintain our export market share.

We need the river, both for coming up the river as well as down. Please build for 21st century.

Proceed with study - faster! Study is important to the USA and my company. Don't let the bastards get you down!

Speed up the study time would give more money for new work and maintenance.

I feel that improvements to the river is important to me because it will improve the ability of the American farmer to sell products for export on a more dependable time table.

Locking time and procedure interesting.

In favor of improved river transportation.

Well thought out and informative.

How do we educate the public on the value of systems to improve our economy?

Spend more time cleaning up the river less time on studies.

It seems that too much money is spent on studies rather than maintaining and developing the river system.

I represent MFA Incorporated Columbia Mo. We are very interested in both the Miss and Mo rivers as to continued barge traffic. River transportation is essential to inputs and outputs for our farmer owners. It is crucial that a viable cost efficient river transportation system be preserved. You are doing some very positive things on the Miss. I stress time. Lets get going. Don't forget about the Mo.

Evening Session

1) Stop wasting my tax dollars on this study! 2) Use recycled paper. 3) Consider an alternative of creating jobs and saving my tax dollars by removing all the locks and dams (This address purpose and need because there would no longer be any congestion). 4) Consider an alternative of making the barge corporations pay for all the lost (including but not limited to O&M, New construction, existing dams, environmental damage). This would address the purpose and need as if the barges had to pay their fair share, other forms of transportation would take up the slack. 5) Stop trying to deceive the public with the comparing the cost of barge to train without including subsidizes. 6) Hold a public hearing.

-Most questions could be answered - not all. -Would be helpful to know who represents each state on the advisory groups you have. -Corps staff was helpful and courteous.

Good job!

Keep up the good work.

The Illinois - Upper Mississippi locks and dams are deteriorating at a time when tonnage are increasing. This navigation system is vital to the economy of the midwest and to the agricultural economy of the midwest. it is important to conclude this study as soon as possible and get on with the business of modernizing this most important navigation system.

Attachment B

Attachment B

Attachment B

UMR-IWW System Navigation Study
Additional Open House Comments
Received After the Open House Meetings

The Mississippi River is the only reasonable way to get Ag. products north to south and vice-versa. The U.S. must compete in a global economy and so the extra costs of moving corn south to the Gulf will be borne by the farmer, as will the extra cost of moving fertilizer north. This "double whamy" occurs often in our economy, and the result is fewer opportunities and a shrinking Iowa population. We must maintain this valuable tool in order to keep Iowa's economy strong. Thank you.

I believe that the movement of goods by barge on the Mississippi River must remain economically feasible, As farmers, working on a small profit margin, we must be able to get our grain to export markets with the lowest possible transportation costs and in a timely manner. Railroads are no longer reliable. Any lock improvements to address delays would be helpful.

Corn exports have gone from 1.3 billion bushels to over 2 billion bushels. This strong demand will continue as China requires more grain to feed its people. This strong demand **SHOULD** translate into higher prices to midwest farmers. Instead, basis levels reached their widest level ever during the late summer and fall 1995 in the upper Midwest as lock delays forced freight rates higher. The higher prices for exports never made it to the farmer because of the high cost of transportation. The country elevators didn't make extra money because all the grain couldn't get shipped. The barge companies didn't make the extra money because of all the lock delays. We need a faster, more efficient river system to take advantage of the growth in exports.

Will the study assess the use of Federal funds that are estimated to pay for the cost of upgrading the locks, be compared to using those funds for other transportation alternatives - e.g., the cost of upgrading rail service to the Gulf & Great Lakes - providing similar shipping volumes over a one yr. period rather than a shorter navigation season. If the analysis is not being contemplated, why not? Why shouldn't it be analyzed - I think it should.

Let's reduce Barge Traffic on the Mississippi.

Please do not spend taxpayers money on "improving" the Illinois River waterway. We should not be spending our money on barge traffic since trucking is already more efficient than barges. Besides using tax money, it will make the waterway more dangerous for fishermen and boaters.

Why don't barges pay for maintenance of locks? It's their business expense.

We are aware of the fragile state of our IL rivers and of the damages your plans would incur. (signed by 11 members of Bradley University)

Twenty years ago when we tried to stop the new dams and dredging for Pres. Bush's lock and dam going east at southern Illinois, we lost. He made his oil passage all the way across country

and look what he did to the last wild river in Florida before we stopped him. It cost us millions for the Army Corps to ruin the entiance and now it has destroyed the water flow to the everglades - and they are dying. No more dams & locks for barges!!

The Corps has already made a large artificial river and wants to enlarge this. The citizens of this country have had too much of nature ruined and now to ask to ruin more is out of the question. I wish the corps would operate the way nature does and we would all benefit. The barges are too big, too fast, and too much subsidized by the Corps. I hope the corps remembers who pays their salaries.

I'm against the improvements that the Corps plans to make on the Illinois & Mississippi River for the barge traffic. You've done enough damage to the river - quit spending tax money to do more.