



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
St. Paul District

Public Notice

Project: Mississippi River Pool 5 Dredged Material Management Plan - Wabasha and Winona Counties, Minnesota; Buffalo County, Wisconsin.

Date: September 13, 2019

In Reply Refer to:

Expires: October 18, 2019 Regional Planning and Environment
Division North

1. Project Proponent. St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, 180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1678.

2. Project Authority. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is authorized to maintain a navigable channel on the Mississippi River. Authority for continued operation and maintenance of the Mississippi River 9-Foot Channel project is provided in the Rivers and Harbors Acts of 1930 and 1932. Original authority for the Corps of Engineers to work on the Mississippi River was provided in the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1878. In addition, pursuant to Section 1103(i) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. § 652(i)), Congress authorized the Corps to manage dredged material from the system pursuant to the recommendations of the Great River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) I study, which were implemented, in part, in the St. Paul District 1996 Channel Maintenance Management Plan (CMMP). The proposed project is authorized by the referenced legislation and its purpose is compatible with the annual operations and maintenance appropriation.

3. Project Location. The plan addresses dredged material management for the navigation channel on the Mississippi River between Lock and Dam (L/D) 4 and L/D 5 between river miles (RM) 752.8 and 738.1. This project addresses dredge cuts in Pool 5 that currently includes: Upper Zumbro, Mule Bend, West Newton Chute, Below West Newton, Above Fisher Island, Lower Zumbro, Minneiska, Above Mt. Vernon Light, and Below Mt. Vernon Light. Communities located in the project area include Buffalo City, Cochrane, and Alma in Wisconsin, and Kellogg, Minneiska, and Weaver in Minnesota.

4. Summary of the Proposed Project. The purpose of this Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) is to prepare a coordinated, long-term plan for managing material dredged in Pool 5 of the Upper Mississippi River (UMR) for the purposes of continued operation and maintenance of the 9-Foot Navigation Channel Project. This plan was initiated due to a change in the availability of dredged material placement sites in Pool 5. There are nine active dredge cuts in Pool 5 where maintenance dredging has occurred since 1970, with around 4.7 million cubic yards (CY) of material dredged between 1981 and 2018.

The proposed plan includes periodically placing dredged material temporarily at the three designated island placement sites (commonly referred to as Above West Newton, Above Fisher Island, and Lost Island). Once the islands are designated as “full”, they would be offloaded at the West Newton Chute transfer site where the material would then be trucked to a newly acquired Rolling Prairie permanent placement site near Kellogg, MN.

5. Schedule. The plan allows for the management of at least 4.7 CY of dredged material over the next 40 years.

6. Permits/Coordination.

a. General. The proposed action has been coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

b. State. The proposed action will not result in the placement of fill material, the discharge of carriage water, or other work in State of Minnesota waters that would require a permit. No Public Waters Work permit or 401 Water Quality Certification will be required from the State of Minnesota. However, the Rolling Prairie site would be added to the MPCA Solid Waste Disposal Site (SDS) programmatic permit for Corps dredged material placement sites prior to dredged material placement activities.

c. Federal. A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact was prepared and are being coordinated in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. This EA is an integrated component of the DMMP.

Coordination with the USFWS occurred during the planning process and a USFWS Refuge Special Use Permit will not be required by the St. Paul District.

Coordination with the USDA/NRCS occurred regarding irreversible conversion of prime and important farmland to non-agricultural uses. Although Prime Farmland occurs on the Rolling Prairie site, the USDA/NRCS determined that there will be no irreversible conversion of important farmland to nonagricultural uses if the placement site is converted to prairie as planned.

Impacts to wetlands will be avoided during dredged material placement at the Rolling Prairie site to the extent practicable for the duration of the plan. However, if avoiding wetlands later becomes impracticable due to capacity needs, the District will conduct an evaluation in accordance with Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act, prior to placing any fill in wetlands.

7. Summary of Environmental Impacts. The proposed action includes the continued use of three temporary island placement sites (Above West Newton, Above Fisher Island, and Lost Island); an existing and active placement site (West Newton Chute) and the use of a newly acquired placement site (Rolling Prairie), of which the majority is upland and in active agricultural production. The majority of the Rolling Prairie site would be restored to native prairie after dredged material is placed providing minor beneficial effects to natural resources in the area. A small portion of the Rolling Prairie site would be managed as a dredged material beneficial use site. The proposed action would have no significant cumulative adverse or beneficial effects.

The proposed action would have minor long term beneficial effects on commercial navigation and to terrestrial habitat and biological productivity after the site has been restored to native

prairie. The proposed action may result in adverse impacts on current land use and farmland food supply. There would also be minor adverse effects on noise levels, aesthetic values, transportation, tax revenue, and air quality; and to terrestrial habitat and biological productivity in the short term while the site is actively being used for dredged material placement.

8. Report. A Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment that describes the project and the environmental impacts in detail is available to the public and can be viewed at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Home/PublicNotices.aspx> . Copies of the report can also be obtained at the Wabasha Public Library, 168 Allegheny Ave., Wabasha, MN 55981 and the Alma Public Library, 312 N. Main St., Alma, WI 54610. The report includes project drawings, a Draft Finding of No Significant Impact, and letters of coordination from regulatory agencies.

9. Review and Comment. If you have any comments on the environmental assessment they should be provided before the expiration date of this notice. Persons submitting comments are advised that all comments received will be available for public review, to include the possibility of posting on a public website. Questions on the project or comments on the Environmental Assessment should be directed to Mr. Bob Edstrom, Project Manager at (651) 290-5026 or at Robert.k.Edstrom@usace.army.mil. Please address all correspondence on this project to District Engineer, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, ATTN: Regional Planning and Environment Division North; 180 Fifth Street East; Suite 700; St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1638.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edstrom', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Acting Deputy Chief, Regional Planning and
Environment Division North