



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Memphis District

News Release

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Case against Grand Prairie Project Dismissed

Memphis, Tenn., Dec. 19, 2008 – At the request of the parties, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas dismissed the Grand Prairie case against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with prejudice on Dec. 17. The court's action ends a two-year-long lawsuit challenging the Corps' compliance with the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act regarding the Grand Prairie Project.

Opponents had charged that work on the Grand Prairie Project would adversely affect the habitat of the rediscovered Ivory-billed woodpecker.

The critical project is designed to provide new sources of water to farmers in the Grand Prairie area of Arkansas for agricultural irrigation. A key feature of the project will pump water from the White River under controlled conditions and deliver it to farms using a system of reservoirs, pipes and canals. Providing an alternative source of irrigation water will help protect and preserve the Alluvial and Sparta Aquifers in eastern Arkansas. The Corps intends to resume project construction this summer.

Col. Thomas P. Smith, the Corps' Memphis District commander, said, "The Court's action provides the opportunity to continue this critical project. We will work with project sponsors and the Congress on the way ahead."

Civil Engineer Paul Hamm is senior project manager for the work.

"This is good news for the people and the economy of eastern Arkansas," he said. "This region depends on agriculture and if the aquifers are permanently damaged, many farms and businesses will be severely affected. In addition, food production in the United States contributes to the national security."