



ENVIRONMENTAL

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS ★ MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION ★ BUILDING STRONG®

INTRODUCTION

Environmental sustainability and holistic watershed approaches are integral to the ecosystem restoration mission and overall project and program environmental approach of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The division manages more than 2,363,000 acres of public lands and waters. We are also responsible for maintenance and protection of more than 3,744 miles of boundary and 9,043 miles of shoreline.

In addition, on the upper Mississippi River system, the division manages more than 193,000 acres of public lands for environmental stewardship and recreation purposes in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and state natural resource agencies.

Environmental Operating Principles - In 2012, the Chief of Engineers issued seven reinvigorated principles that concisely reaffirm the Corp's proactive commitment to the environment and ensure incorporation of environmental considerations in all design and decision-making efforts.

NATIONAL

National Ecosystem Restoration Planning Center of Expertise (ECO-PCX) – Located in the Mississippi Valley Division, the center provides the nation with expert service in technical review, training, modeling certification, and research and development supporting ecosystem restoration programs and projects.

The Mandatory Center of Expertise for Curation and Management of Archaeological Collections —

Located in the St. Louis District, the center delivers centralized oversight, administration and policy development for Corps-wide national compliance with archeological collections requirements while supporting a range of allied disciplines (forensic archaeology, museology, knowledge management). The center maintains the Veterans Curation Program that trains veterans in archaeological collections processing and cares for our national collections.



MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED

America's Great Watershed Initiative – An effort emphasizing a collaborative approach to sustainable efforts in the Mississippi River watershed. A meeting was held in 2012 in St. Louis, Mo., and brought together more than 170 basin stakeholders, including the Corps. Continued work will include monitoring of river health including aspects of ecological, economic and social importance; as well as outreach and partnering.

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER

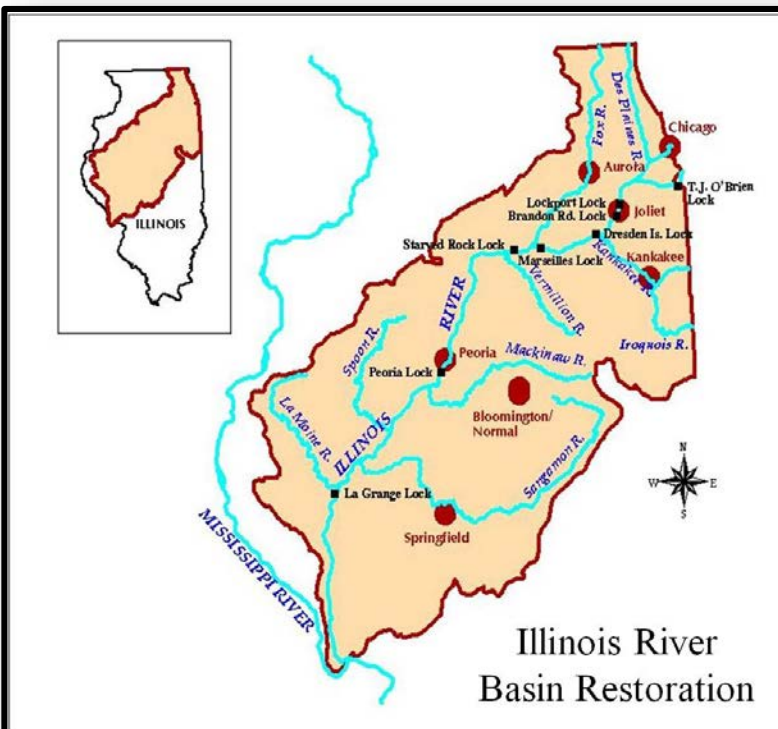
Endangered Mussel Species Conservation - The zebra mussel, a non-native invasive species, currently poses the largest threat to native mussels in the upper Mississippi River. Since 2000, the St. Paul and Rock Island districts have led an inter-agency effort to re-establish populations of the endangered Higgins eye pearly mussel and the winged mapleleaf mussel in the upper Mississippi River system in areas where zebra mussels will not be a threat.

Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program - An important effort to restore the vitality of the upper Mississippi River's diverse and significant fish and wildlife resources. The program has restored more than 105,000 acres of aquatic and floodplain habitat through completion of at least 55 projects. Additional projects are underway and will result in over 80,000 more acres of restored habitat.



Illinois River Basin Restoration Program

- Encompasses the entire Illinois River watershed within the state of Illinois, a nationally significant ecosystem. The primary purpose of the effort was the development of a comprehensive plan for the restoration of the Illinois River Basin, completed in 2007. It also directs the evaluation and construction of critical restoration projects within the basin; 16 projects have been identified to date. Three projects have been constructed and four have completed feasibility and are ready for construction. Two projects will have completed feasibility reports in 2017, in preparation for design and construction.



National Great Rivers Museum and Public Lands Management - The Corps manages more than 193,000 acres of public lands on the UMRS for environmental stewardship and recreation purposes in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and state natural resource agencies. Many of these lands, which are forested, provide valuable habitat to migrating and resident wildlife and are managed to sustain their ecological function and integrity. The UMRS Environmental Stewardship Team works together to provide systemic goals and practices that include; forest resources inventory, systemic forest management plans, long-term monitoring of forest resources and wildlife, coordination with partners and adaptive management tools.

Great Lakes and Mississippi River Inter-basin Study – The Chicago District is working with the Rock Island, St. Paul and St. Louis districts and regional stakeholders to explore options and technologies that could be applied to prevent the transfer of aquatic nuisance species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins through aquatic pathways. The GLMRIS report was released in 2014. The Rock Island and Chicago districts are currently studying alternatives at the Brandon Road Lock to prevent one way transfer to the Great Lakes.

LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Louisiana Coastal Area Study -

Planning is underway for the Mississippi River Hydrodynamic and Delta Management study. Combinations of large-scale management and restoration features to address the long-term sustainability of the lower Mississippi River Deltaic Plain are being evaluated, that will balance the interests of ecosystem restoration, flood risk reduction and navigation. The modeling component has resulted in an extensive repository of data and innovative computer tools that are supporting systems assessments and scenario planning.



Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act (La.) -

Since 1990, the purpose of the program is to plan, design, construct, maintain and monitor coastal wetlands restoration projects in coastal Louisiana. 90,000+ acres of wetlands are projected to be created, protected and/or restored via the approved 25 Priority Project lists. The program is managed by a task force composed of the state of Louisiana and five federal agencies and is chaired by the New Orleans District commander. In January 2016, five new projects were selected and approved for funding of engineering and design along with a demonstration project. Three existing projects received construction authorization and funding. As of January 2016, 210 CWPPRA projects have been approved, 102 have been constructed, 28 are in the engineering and design phase, 20 under construction, 5 support projects and 55 have been de-authorized or transferred to another program.

Lower Mississippi River Resource

Assessment - This is a comprehensive watershed assessment to identify information needed for river-related management, natural resource habitat needs and recreation access in a large part of the lower valley. The study area was the Mississippi River from Cairo, Ill., to the Head of Passes in Louisiana. An information assessment was completed in 2013, recreation assessment in 2014 and habitat assessment in 2015. The comprehensive plan was completed in 2015 and is scheduled to be presented to Congress in Spring 2016. The plan recommends a variety of projects and programs including: a science center and program for the lower river, watershed studies of major tributaries, restoration of eight 30- to 40-mile reaches of the river, 200 small ecosystem restoration projects, and a wide variety of projects to enhance recreation; e.g. boat ramps and bicycle trails. The plan identifies a variety of federal, state and local agencies, commercial enterprises and non-governmental organizations to implement the recommendations. The Nature Conservancy - Great Rivers Partnership is the sponsor and leads a group of non-governmental organizations who are actively participating in the study.



Lower Mississippi River Museum and Riverfront Interpretive Center - Located in downtown Vicksburg, Miss., the museum opened to the public in September 2012. It was created to provide an understanding of the risks and benefits for life surrounding the Mississippi River. It showcases the federal government's role in the Mississippi River's past as well as the collaborative efforts from all stakeholders in maintaining a healthy river system. The museum features displays regarding the devastating 1927 flood. Also, the decommissioned Motor Vessel MISSISSIPPI IV is land-docked alongside the museum; it has been restored and is open to the public.



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