

Pool 8 Islands Phase I Habitat Project, Wisconsin

Location/Description

Part of the Corps' Environmental Management Program (EMP), the site is an open, lake-like reach of pool 8 on the right descending bank of the Mississippi River channel in Wisconsin, just downstream of Brownsville, Minn. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

Many of the islands in pool 8 have eroded or disappeared, which has increased wind fetch and associated turbidity in the backwater areas, resulting in a loss of valuable aquatic plant beds that migrating canvasback ducks use for food.

The project restored and constructed three islands totaling 13,000 feet long to reduce wave action in the backwater area. The islands were constructed with material dredged from the backwaters and the navigation channel and relocated from a channel maintenance placement site. Topsoil was obtained by dredging deepwater fish habitat within the project area and at Wildcat Creek.

The islands were protected with riprap, rock groins or willows and seeded to prevent erosion. The islands will maintain existing valuable habitat and provide conditions necessary for the reestablishment of aquatic plant beds in 1,000 acres of backwater habitat. This project is the first of five proposed phases of island construction in lower pool 8.

Grassy, Boomerang, and Horseshoe Islands in pool 8, Wisconsin.



Status

Construction of the islands was initiated in 1989 and completed in October 1992. The project was transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for operation and maintenance in 1994. The Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers selected this project, combined with Phase II, as one of the Seven Wonders of Engineering for 2002. It also received the Environmental Award of Excellence from the Chief of Engineers in 2004.

Authority

The Pool 8 Islands Phase I Habitat Project was planned under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program and constructed in accordance with a definite project report dated June 1989. The Environmental Management Program was authorized by Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 and reauthorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1999.

The project was planned and designed as part of a cooperative effort of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local interests.

Fiscal

Project design and construction costs were 100 percent federal because the project is on lands managed as a national wildlife refuge. Operation and maintenance costs are 100 percent federal (a responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Federal cost \$2,314,000
Non-federal cost \$0
Total cost \$2,314,000