

# Spring Lake Islands Habitat Project, Buffalo City, Wis.

## Location/Description

Spring Lake is a 300-acre backwater lake on the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi River in Pool 5 at Buffalo City, Wis. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Natural islands along the west side of Spring Lake had eroded and many had disappeared since the creation of Pool 5. Previously, these islands protected the lake from the effects of the main river channel and reduced wind fetch and associated wave action. Loss of the islands was degrading the fish and wildlife habitat in the lake because of higher turbidity levels and undesirable conditions for aquatic plant beds. Quiet, protected areas are valuable for fish and wildlife habitat. Aquatic plant beds provide a valuable food source for migrating birds.



The project consisted of building islands along the west side of the lake and within the lake to restore habitat and diversity. Material was dredged from Spring Lake for island fill and topsoil to create additional deeper areas for fish habitat. The project will slow the degradation of about 200 acres of valuable backwater fish and wildlife habitat, directly affecting two-thirds of the lake.

## Status

Project construction began in September 2004 and was completed in June 2006. Planting of trees on the islands will complete the project in 2008. General design for the project was completed in August 2003.

## Authority

The Spring Lake Islands Habitat Project was planned under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program. This 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 between the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources and local interests.

## Fiscal

Project design and construction costs are 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 \$4,395,000  
Non-federal cost \$0  
Total estimated cost \$4,395,000