



# Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program

The Cottonwood Island Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project was completed as part of the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program; a program authorized by Congress in 1986. It has two primary missions to protect and restore aquatic and wetland habitats throughout the Upper Mississippi River System and to carry out system-wide monitoring and research to gain a better understanding of the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was designated by Congress as the program's lead agency. The program is implemented in close partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin.

Erosion and sedimentation are widely considered to be major causes of the river's most severe environmental problems. Sediment is continuously filling in the system's critical backwaters, side channels and wetlands. Suspended sediment decreases light penetration, which results in reduced aquatic and wetland plant growth. The erosion of islands and shorelines by wind and watercraft-generated waves causes additional erosion. The net result of erosion and sedimentation is the degradation or complete loss of important fish and wildlife habitats.

Environmental Management Program habitat projects, like the Cottonwood Island Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project, are designed to offset the negative impacts of erosion and sedimentation. This is done by protecting existing critical habitats; restoring backwaters, side channels and floodplain wetlands; and developing areas that mimic the natural system. Through the Environmental Management Program habitat diversity can be maintained and productivity increased.

The performance of each project is closely monitored so its effectiveness can be fully considered in the construction of future habitat protection and restoration projects.

# Cottonwood Island Dedication Ceremony



July 5, 2000



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®



# Cottonwood Island Habitat Rehabilitation & Enhancement Project

The Cottonwood Island Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project is located in Lewis County, Missouri, adjacent to Pool 21 of the Mississippi River, between river miles 328.5 and 331. It lies within the Upper Mississippi River flyway, a major migration route for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Habitat improvements made here are benefiting migrating and nesting waterfowl, wading birds, fish and other wetland-dwelling species.

This habitat rehabilitation and enhancement project was completed as a cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Significant features of the Cottonwood Island Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project include mechanically excavating the lower 4,900 feet of Cottonwood Chute to a nine-foot depth with four holes fifteen feet deep. This will provide overwintering habitat for fish in the area.

The project also involved the planting of mast-producing trees on the dredged material, three forest management areas, and an agricultural field. Mast-producing trees are trees that produce nuts, such as the pin oak, bur oak, swamp white oak, pecan, and sycamore. The tree plantings will enhance the habitat value by reintroducing a mast-producing component into a forest dominated by silder maples and cottonwood.

Pothole areas were excavated to restore sloughs and depressions that provide secluded habitat for migratory bird nesting and feeding.

Six wing dams were notched to increase flowing water, deepen the pool behind the wing dams, and stimulate an in-stream meander between the wing dams.

These changes will attract a diverse fishery and river-bottom community. This project substantially improved the overall availability, quality and diversity of several important habitat types and will produce important wildlife benefits for many years to come.

# Schedule of Events

## Introduction

Mr. Gordon Farabee, Policy Specialist for Missouri Department of Conservation  
Mr. Leo Foley, P.E., Corps of Engineers Project Manager

## Invocation

Keith Ehresman  
Madison Park Christian Church

## Presentation of the Colors & Pledge of Allegiance

American Legion Post 37 Firing Squad

## Remarks

Honorable Kenny Hulshof  
Congressman for Missouri  
Ninth District

Colonel James Mudd  
Commander, Rock Island District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mr. John Blankenship  
Assistant Regional Director  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Mr. Jerry Conley  
Director  
Missouri Department of Conservation

## Tree Unveiling

**Special Thanks to  
Mid River Wetland Restoration  
for Donating the Ceremonial Tree**