

**ILLINOIS RIVER BASIN RESTORATION
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
WITH INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

DRAFT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

I have reviewed the information in this Comprehensive Plan with Integrated Environmental Assessment, along with data obtained from Federal and State agencies having jurisdiction by law or special expertise, and from the interested public. I find that the recommended alternative for systemic ecosystem restoration of the Illinois River Basin would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. It is anticipated that implementation of the recommended alternative (Alternative 6) would cause the current trend of ecological degradation in the Illinois River Basin to reverse and, in time, result in overall improvement in biodiversity and ecological integrity. Therefore, it is my determination that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This determination will be reevaluated if warranted by later developments.

Factors that were considered in making the determination that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required are as follows:

- A. All future projects would require separate, site-specific National Environmental Policy Act documents that would follow all procedures and processes required by law.
- B. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should result in a reduction in sediment delivery to the Illinois River Basin as a whole.
- C. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should result in an increase in the quantity and quality of backwaters and side channels in the Illinois River Basin.
- D. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should result in improvements in the quality of floodplain and riparian habitats and improvements in the quality of in-stream (aquatic) habitat.
- E. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should improve access to diverse habitat such as backwaters and tributary habitat in the Illinois River Basin to restore and/or maintain healthy populations of native fish species.
- F. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should naturalize hydrologic regimes on the main stem of the Illinois River and its tributaries, reduce tributary peak flows, and increase tributary baseflows, thereby improving aquatic and riparian habitat.
- G. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should improve water and sediment quality in the Illinois River Basin.
- H. Implementation of the recommended alternative for this Comprehensive Plan should provide a level of restoration that would provide a measurable increase in ecological integrity/ecosystem health at the system level in the most cost effective manner.

*Illinois River Basin Restoration
Comprehensive Plan
With Integrated Environmental Assessment*

Draft

- I. Early and ongoing coordination with the appropriate State and Federal agencies has been maintained during the plan formulation process to address any potential concerns that may arise from implementation of this program
- J. Public comments received either during the public meetings or the public review process for the Comprehensive Plan with Integrated Environmental Assessment have been considered prior to signing this Finding of No Significant Impact.
- K. The Chicago, Rock Island, and St. Louis Districts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation executed a Programmatic Agreement (PA) entitled: *Programmatic Agreement Among the Chicago, Rock Island, and St. Louis Districts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Regarding Implementation of the Illinois River Ecosystem Restoration*. The Programmatic Agreement meets the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations 36 CFR Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties," and is appropriate to address potential concerns to any significant historic properties within the State of Illinois.

(Date)

DUANE P. GAPINSKI
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer