



US Army Corps of
Engineers
St. Paul District

Zebra Mussels and Management Implications for Endangered Freshwater Mussels on the Upper Mississippi River System

Introduction

Since their first confirmed sighting in Lake St. Claire in 1988, non-indigenous zebra mussels quickly expanded their range throughout the Great Lakes and Mississippi River system, and continue spreading to inland lakes and tributaries such as the Missouri River.

In April 2000 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service formally issued a statement to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding zebra mussels and the continued operation of the 9-Foot Navigation Channel Project on the Upper Mississippi River System (UMRS).

The USFWS stated that commercial barge transportation facilitates the continued existence of zebra mussels in the UMRS. Zebra mussels jeopardize the recovery and survival of two federally endangered native mussels, the Higgins' eye pearl mussel and the winged mapleleaf.

In response, the Corps developed the Higgins' eye Relocation Plan and is leading the interagency effort to establish new populations on the Upper Mississippi River. The Corps is also funding research to obtain more information about the little-studied winged mapleleaf.

Additionally, Corps researchers currently conducting a reconnaissance study to address zebra mussel control and management of zebra mussels in the UMRS.