



US Army Corps of
Engineers
St. Paul District

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration: Section 206, Paint Creek Restoration, Waukon, Iowa

Location/Description

Paint Creek is a coldwater stream in extreme northeastern Iowa. The 85.5-square-mile watershed is primarily agricultural, with the downstream portion passing through the Yellow River State Forest. The creek drains into the Mississippi River in the upper end of pool 10 near river mile 641, about 6 miles upstream of Marquette, Iowa, and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

Alternatives for stabilizing the creek corridor and reducing sedimentation on various reaches will be considered. Potential solutions could include stream-bank armoring, grading, seeding, and cattle fencing.

Status

The feasibility study was initiated in 2005. Preliminary conclusions indicate the project may be justified in terms of environmental benefits. However, construction costs were higher than what the sponsor found acceptable. The project was halted until project costs can be significantly reduced. No further studies or expenditures are planned at this time.

Additional

Paint Creek has experienced excessive bank erosion in recent years, which may result from a greater shift to row crops in the watershed; increased storm water runoff from the city of Waukon, Iowa; and past stream straightening and dike construction work. It is estimated that almost 4,000 cubic yards of sediment from Paint Creek is delivered to the Mississippi River each year. Although the Corps may not be able to participate in a potential project, significant benefits would be gained by improving streambank structure. Possible measures could include some combination of buffer strips established above critical channel bank reaches, bank stabilization using both conventional flattening and riprap techniques, in-stream habitat structures, and bio-technical engineering methods. Upland watershed measures, such as improved farming practices and water/sediment control basins also could be valuable, but would best be addressed by other Federal agencies.

Authority

Section 206 of the 1996 Water Resources Development Act, as amended.

Fiscal

The construction cost varies but could be \$10,000 to \$20,000 per individual site. A total of 80 sites had been identified. The non-Federal cost share is 35 percent, all of which may be contributed as work-in-kind. The remaining 65 percent of the project costs are a Federal responsibility. Operation and maintenance (O&M) is a non-Federal responsibility. At this time, no O&M requirements are anticipated.

Funds for fiscal year 2005 have been used to summarize work to date on the feasibility study. After fiscal year 2005, the project has been on hold in the event the project sponsor would find construction costs acceptable under the Corps Section 206 program. The District is currently writing a termination report to conclude project planning.