



US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Harpers Slough Habitat Project, Pool 9, Iowa

Location/Description

Part of the Corps' Environmental Management Program, the Harpers Slough area is a 2,200-acre backwater area located primarily on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River in Pool 9, about 3 miles upstream of Lock and Dam 9. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The area is used heavily by tundra swans, Canada geese, puddle and diving ducks, black terns, nesting eagles, bitterns, and cormorants and is also significant as a fish nursery area. Many of the islands in the area have been eroded or lost because of wave action and ice movement. The loss of islands allows more turbulence in the backwater area, resulting in less productive habitat for fish and wildlife. Harpers Slough is one of the few remaining areas in lower Pool 9 where high quality habitat could be maintained.



The proposed project would restore about 25,000 feet of islands at the upper portion of the area using material from the backwater and near the main channel. About 8,000 feet of islands in the lower portion of the area would be stabilized. The project would slow the loss of existing islands, reduce the flow of sediment-laden water into the backwaters, reduce turbidity, and increase the diversity of land and shoreline habitats.

Status

A draft definite project report for public review will be completed in 2008. Construction of the project would be in stages because of the anticipated high cost of the total project. It may be possible to initiate the first stage in 2008, depending on the recommended plan and program funding levels.

The project is in the planning stage. General design for the project initially began in 1996, but was delayed because of program funding limitations.

Authority

The Harpers Slough Habitat Project is being 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 is being planned and designed as part of a cooperative effort of the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Iowa and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, and local interests.

Fiscal

Project design and construction costs would be 100-percent Federal because the project would be located on lands managed as a national wildlife refuge. Operation and maintenance costs would be 100-percent Federal (a responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Federal cost \$11,000,000

Non-Federal cost \$0

Total estimated cost \$11,000,000

