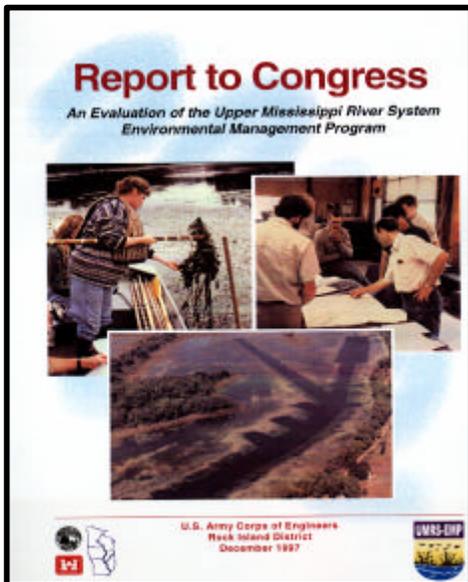


INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program (UMRS-EMP) Report to Congress (RTC)



1. DESCRIPTION: The authorizing legislation for the UMRS-EMP (Water Resources Development Act of 1986, Section 1103(e)(2) as amended) states that “Programs for the planning, construction, and evaluation of measures for fish and wildlife habitat rehabilitation and enhancement; implementation of a long-term resource monitoring program; and implementation of a computerized inventory and analysis system shall be carried out for 15 years. Before the last day of such 15-year period, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the States of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin, shall conduct an evaluation of such programs and submit a report on the results of such evaluation to Congress. Such evaluation shall determine each such program’s effectiveness, strengths, and weaknesses and contain recommendations for the modification and continuance or termination of such program.”

2. COST DATA: Baseline estimate: \$727,000; Current estimate: \$672,000 (Allocations thru FY97: \$545,000; Programmed FY98: \$127,000; no funds scheduled beyond FY98); FY98 Funds expended as of 31 Jan: \$68,600.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION: The Corps of Engineers worked closely with the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the U.S. Geological Survey – Biological Resources Division (Environmental Management Technical Center); and state natural resource management agencies in developing the report. Several other government agencies (e.g., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service) and non-governmental organizations (e.g., Sierra Club, American Rivers, MARC 2000), along with the general public, extensively participated in the process.

4. REPORT CONTENTS:

OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS

- The EMP is the single most important and successful program authorized by the Federal government for the purposes of understanding the ecology of the UMRS and sustaining its significant fish and wildlife resources.
- The degradation and loss of UMRS aquatic, wetland, and floodplain habitat can be substantially offset by...habitat restoration, protection, and enhancement measures.
- A habitat needs assessment (HNA) should be completed to establish a technically sound, consensus-based management framework or “blueprint” for the restoration, protection, and enhancement of the UMR ecosystem.
- Increasingly effective management of...the UMRS, is dependent upon long term monitoring to detect system changes and applied research to understand system dynamics and relationships.
- Implementing the EMP has resulted in an unprecedented level of communication and cooperation...However, greater public involvement, outreach, and education are also needed.

(over)

PROPOSED PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION MODIFICATIONS

- Assure that a Habitat Needs Assessment (HNA) is completed
- Delegate habitat project approval authority (\$1 million or less to the District level; \$5 million or less to the Division level)
- Assure that habitat projects can include obtaining real estate interests from willing sellers
- Assure that habitat projects can include upland sediment controls
- Continue and enhance habitat project pre- and post-construction monitoring
- Continue to include both large and small scale habitat projects and increase emphasis on using natural river processes and innovative design measures
- Identify factors that may be currently limiting program innovation
- Facilitate development of charters for the Environmental Management Program – Coordinating Committee (EMP-CC) and Long Term Resource Monitoring Program Analysis Team (A-Team)
- Increase the level of public involvement in the planning and implementation of the UMRS-EMP

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONGRESS

- Make the EMP a continuing authority
- Establish a 6 year reporting cycle
- Increase HREP authorization to \$22,750,000 per year
- Formally merge the CIA and LTRM elements
- Increase LTRMP authorization to \$10,420,000 per year
- Continue cost sharing based on WRDA 1986

5. REPORT DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES:

- Division delegation of report management responsibility to CEMVR (1/96)
- Regional Report Scoping Workshops (4/96)
- Interagency Alternatives Formulation Workshops (10/96 and 1/97)
- Distribution of draft report for initial agency review (3/97)
- Informational open houses (4/97)
- Partnership Issues Resolution Conference (IRC) (4/97)
- Distribution of draft report for public review and comment (8/97)
- Public meetings (8/97)
- Final report forwarded to CEMVD and HQUSACE for concurrent review (12/97)
- Initiate 45-day State and agency review of draft Chief's Report (2/98 [scheduled])
- Complete 45-day State and agency review of Draft Chief's Report (4/98 [scheduled])
- HQUSACE submittal of final Chief's Report to ASA(CW) (5/98 [scheduled])
- ASA(CW) receives OMB approval to submit report to Congress (7/98 [scheduled])
- ASA(CW) submits report to Congress (8/98 [scheduled])
- Program re-authorization considered as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 1998

6. **INTERNET ACCESS:** The Report to Congress is electronically accessible. The main report and other project formulation and coordination documents can be found at: www.mvr.usace.army.mil/pdw/emp/rtc_home.htm. Report Appendix A (LTRMP) & B (HREP) will be available in the near future at: www.emtc.nbs.gov.

7. **POINT OF CONTACT:** Mr. Jerry Skalak, project manager, Waterway Systems Branch, Planning Division, at telephone 309/794-5605, or at email address: jerry.a.skalak@usace.army.mil