

Summary of Other Program Elements

Attachment 3

Three additional program elements were authorized in the 1986 Environmental Management Program (EMP) enabling legislation—recreation projects, economic impacts of recreation study, and navigation traffic monitoring. While more limited in scope and funding than the Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project (HREP) and Long Term Resource Monitoring Program (LTRMP) elements, they were reflective of the diversity of uses and issues on the river system.

I Recreation Projects

- **Background.** The authority to construct recreation projects was included as part of the EMP in recognition of the growing demand for river-based recreation.
- **Accomplishments.** Although planning was initiated for four projects in the first year of the program, in accordance with Administration policy and directives of the Headquarters of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, no recreation projects have been implemented as part of the EMP.
- **Funding.** The authorized funding level for EMP recreation projects was \$500,000 per year. Prior to application of Administration policy guidance precluding recreation projects, \$9,000 was expended in the first year of the program on recreation project planning.

I Economic Impacts of Recreation Study

- **Background.** While recreation has long been recognized as an important use of the Upper Mississippi River, its economic value has not been fully understood. Thus, the purpose of the Economic Impacts of Recreation Study was to measure the economic importance of recreation expenditure to communities along the Upper Mississippi River. More specifically, the study produced estimates of the total number of recreation visitors, the activities they engage in, the amount of money they spend on recreation, and the patterns evident in their spending.
- **Accomplishments.** The study focused on use of recreational areas that are most closely associated with management issues on the Upper Mississippi River System (UMRS). These included over 600 developed recreation areas and sightseeing overlooks, 18,000 marina slips, and 2,800 permitted boat docks.

During the study year, more than 2.3 million recreational party trips to developed areas of the UMRS were made. These trips equated to over 12 million daily visits by recreationists. Approximately 75% of these visits were made by residents of counties that border the UMRS, with boating, fishing, and sightseeing constituting the most popular activities.

Regional economic modeling indicates that recreational activity on the UMRS supported \$1.2 billion in total expenditures and 18,500 jobs nationwide in 1990. For the 76 counties in the study area, recreational activity supported \$400 million in expenditures and 7,200 jobs. One-third of all spending in the 76 corridor counties was made by non-residents, representing “new dollars” to the region.

Results of the Economic Impacts of Recreation Study have been used to: compare economic development and alternative management options; evaluate facilities such as marinas and boat ramps; assess new programs and cost-sharing approaches; and, as part of the Upper Mississippi River System Navigation Study, estimate the environmental effects of recreational craft. In addition, the Waterways Experiment Station continues to use the data in advancing the methodology for assessing the economic impacts of the Corps’ nationwide recreation program.

- **Funding.** Funding for the study was specified in the authorizing legislation in the amount of \$750,000. That full amount was allocated and expended between FY 1986 and FY 1993.

I Navigation Traffic Monitoring

- **Background.** Section 1103(h)(1) of the 1986 Water Resources Development Act directed the Corps of Engineers to “monitor traffic improvements on the system for the purpose of verifying lock capacity, updating traffic projections, and refining the economic evaluation so as to verify the need for future capacity expansion of the system.”

When the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway navigation reconnaissance studies were initiated in FY 1989 and 1990, respectively, all traffic monitoring activities being carried out under the auspices of the EMP were discontinued and pursued instead in the context of those studies and the current UMR-IWW System Navigation Feasibility Study.

- **Accomplishments.** During the period of time that traffic monitoring activities were supported under the EMP funding authorization (FY 1986 - FY 1989), the following data collection and analysis efforts were undertaken:
 - Navigation data for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers were consolidated into a regional database.
 - Monthly and annual data collection was initiated on system traffic patterns, traffic delays, and barge rates.
 - Historical data on commodities and tonnages for all Illinois River locks were placed in an electronic database.
 - The General Equilibrium Model (GEM) was acquired to enable economic analysis on a system scale.
 - The Waterway Economic Efficiency Model (WEEM) was acquired to evaluate small-scale waterway efficiency measures.

- 1987 traffic data by commodity were collected and analyzed.
- Timing studies were completed for Locks 14 and 22 and Peoria Lock.
- During 1988 and 1989, a *Traffic Monitoring Newsletter* was published quarterly.

These traffic monitoring and analysis activities validated the need and initiated much of the data collection necessary for the subsequent navigation studies. The consolidated regional database that was established has proved to be useful in providing data to industry and State and Federal agencies.

- **Funding.** The EMP authorizing legislation did not specify funding levels for traffic monitoring, but rather authorized “such sums as may be necessary.” Between FY 1986 and FY 1990, \$206,000 of EMP funds was made available for the traffic monitoring component. Thereafter, all traffic monitoring activities were made part of the on-going navigation studies.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

I Navigation Traffic Monitoring

- Navigation traffic monitoring undertaken as part of the EMP in its initial years provided a valuable transition between the work initiated as part of the Master Plan and later efforts undertaken as part of the Upper Mississippi River/Illinois River Navigation Study.

<i>Program Implementation Enhancement Proposals</i>
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<i>Any future UMRS navigation traffic monitoring should be accomplished as part of the Corps of Engineer’s navigation-specific authorities and mission responsibilities.</i>
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I Economic Impacts of Recreation

- The Economic Impacts of Recreation Study provided useful information about recreational expenditures on the UMRS.

<i>Program Implementation Enhancement Proposals</i>
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<i>Any future studies of the economic impacts of recreation on the UMRS should be accomplished under other authorities.</i>

I Recreation Projects

- Cost-shared recreational projects originally authorized as part of the EMP have not been implemented to date due to Federal budgetary constraints in the early years of the EMP. However, ample general authority outside of WRDA '86 currently exists for the Corps to participate in development of such projects provided a local cost-sharing partner is available. Moreover, Section 208 of WRDA '96 directed that the “Secretary shall provide increased emphasis on, and opportunities for recreation at, water resource projects operated, maintained, or constructed by the Corps of Engineers.” Given the above-described facts, a separate UMRS authorization need not be included as a part of a future EMP since Corps policy now affords recreational projects increased emphasis when they are cost shared and constructed as an integral part of an existing Corps project.

<i>Program Implementation Enhancement Proposals</i>
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<i>Recreation features that provide public access or interpretive facilities such as boat ramps, piers/boardwalks, etc. can be cost-effectively incorporated into the construction of HREPs. Corps of Engineers policy and guidance should be reviewed and, if necessary, modified to readily allow the incorporation of such features into HREPs where a need has been determined and the project sponsor(s) support their inclusion.</i>
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