# NEWS RELEASE

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## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awards contracts for river engineering structures; work is funded by ARRA

**St. Louis, Mo.** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers today announced award of two contracts for construction of river engineering structures at two locations on the Mississippi River. Stone dikes, chevrons and weirs are planned for construction. The two contracts total $7,040,522.

Contracts for work at Devils Island and Red Rock Landing in the Mississippi River between river miles 40 and 105 were awarded to the firm of Patton-Tully Marine, LLC, of Memphis, Tenn. The firm is a woman owned, Hub Zone contractor.

The contract for work at Devils Island reach was awarded Friday, Feb. 19, for the amount of $2,900,430. It calls for stone removal and recycling as well as building new structures. Some of the new dikes will be offset from nearby dikes, effectively creating a gap in the dike and creating ecodiversity. Work will be accomplished between Mississippi River Miles 40 and 75.

The contract for Work at the Red Rock Landing reach was awarded Tuesday, Feb. 23, for the amount of $4,140,092. As at Devils Island, work will include installing new rock structures and modifying others, recycling the removed rock for use elsewhere in the project. Work will take place between Mississippi River Miles 90 and 105. Mile 0 is at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers.

The work is being funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) or Stimulus. This program is designed to put Americans to work or prevent job losses, while providing projects of lasting value to the nation. In this case, obtaining primary raw materials for these structures, multi-sized limestone rock, will employ quarry and transportation workers, as well as laborers and technicians who will build the structures.

The primary purpose of the structures is to channel the energy of water flowing in the river to scour the navigation channel and enhance safe and dependable navigation while reducing the requirement for costly dredging. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is mandated by Congressional authorization to maintain a navigation channel in the Mississippi River a minimum of nine-feet deep and 300-feet wide.

These structures also provide a secondary benefit to the environment by creating ecosystem diversity that benefits aquatic wildlife. Different shaped structures, including notched dikes and chevron-shaped structures, create varying water depths, including deep holes and shallower sand and gravel bars. They are also constructed of quarried stone that varies in size from fist-sized to the size of a desk, providing diverse breeding and hiding environments for a variety of aquatic species.

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In keeping with the Corps of Engineers Environmental Operating Principles, a broad range of stakeholder partners were engaged in the design of these structures, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, as well as the navigation industry that depends on the river channel for commerce. These groups review plans and suggest modifications to provide added benefits. The objective has remained to enhance safe and dependable navigation in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Recently external interest groups have expressed concerns that the construction of navigation structures has significantly increased water surface elevations at higher flows. As part of the navigation project, the Corps of Engineers have continuously monitored these structures and found no effect. In an effort to update ongoing evaluations, the Corps of Engineers has commissioned a series of reviews by external technical experts in the fields of river data collection, river engineering, hydraulics, and statistics. These experts studied the physical effects of navigation structures on water surfaces on the Middle Mississippi River.

These groups and experts include: The U.S. Geological Survey; the Biedenharn Group; Dr. V. Samaranayake of the Missouri University of Science and Technology; and the Iowa Institute of Hydraulic Research (IIHR) - Hydroscience and Engineering at the University of Iowa. Reports from all but the latter are available online at: **http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/CurrentCorpsTopics/Reports**. The report from IIHR will be posted as soon as the study is completed. The results of the completed expert external reviews all lead to the conclusion that there is no adverse impact to flood elevations as a result of river engineering structures.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers remains committed to engineering and scientific endeavors that provide proven public benefit in a sustainable manner.

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