



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ST. LOUIS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1222 SPRUCE STREET
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63103-2833

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

December 18, 2007

Planning, Programs, and
Project Management Division,
Environmental Branch

SEE REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

Dear Reviewer:

The St. Louis District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has enclosed for your review a copy of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) addressing the proposed Pools 25 & 26 Islands Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project, in Pools 25 and 26 of the Mississippi River, Lincoln and St. Charles Counties, Missouri. Also enclosed is a copy of the plates accompanying the EA as well as the Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation.

The purpose of the proposed work is to improve conditions of aquatic and terrestrial habitats on islands in Pools 25 and 26 of the Mississippi River. Planning objectives include increasing the spatial extent of the oak-hickory community in floodplain forests, restoring and maintaining connections between the river and adjacent backwater habitats, creating and maintaining deepwater habitat in backwater areas, and maintaining islands.

The proposed project consists of three components to improve terrestrial and aquatic habitats: 1) planting of tree and shrub seedlings to reforest 110 acres of abandoned agricultural fields on Westport and Dardenne Islands, 2) improving the connection between the river and island interior sloughs on Westport and Bolter Islands by removing sediments from small natural channels, and 3) improving water depth in interior sloughs of Westport Island by installing a water control structure, and creating a deep hole in a slough on Bolter Island.

The EA and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation evaluate the probable impacts of the proposed action and other alternatives that were considered. This action would provide long-term benefits to a variety of riverine fishes and terrestrial wildlife on Westport, Dardenne, and Bolter Islands, without any reduction in the wellbeing, health, and safety to local and regional human populations.

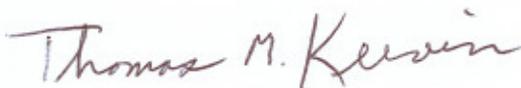
These documents are being circulated for a 5-week public review period, commencing from the date of this letter. These documents are also available from our website, <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/pm/pm-reports.html>. Because the proposed project will require authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the District's Regulatory Branch has issued a public notice that also is seeking public comment

(<http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/ConOps/permits/pn.htm>). If, at the end of the comment period, no comments are received that alter the determination that no significant environmental impact will result, the FONSI will be signed and kept on file at the St. Louis District office.

Questions concerning these documents may be addressed to Mr. Timothy George of our Environmental Branch, telephone 314-331-8459.

All comments on these documents must be submitted in writing, either to our address above, ATTN: CEMVS-PM-E (Tim George), or by email (Timothy.K.George@usace.army.mil). All comments should contain the complete name, address, and telephone number for the public record and to facilitate response to comments, when necessary. All comments must be received prior to close of business January 23, 2008.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Keevin, Ph.D
Chief, Environmental Branch

Enclosures

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