



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District

Resolution of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives, 21 June 2000.

Information Paper

St. Louis Riverfront, MO & IL

Investigations (ENR)

Location: The study area includes portions of the Meramec River Basin located in St. Louis, Jefferson, St. Francois, and Washington Counties in Missouri. The study area includes the entire Big River, a major tributary of the Meramec River, and the lower 50 river miles of the Meramec River. The Meramec River is a tributary of the Mississippi River, with its confluence approximately 35 miles south of St. Louis, Missouri.

Description: A 2004 reconnaissance study investigated problems and opportunities for flood damage reduction, aquatic habitat restoration, and harbor safety issues in the entire project area. The study recommended proceeding with an ecosystem restoration feasibility study for the Meramec River, pending completion of a reconnaissance report addendum. This addendum was initiated in 2011 and focused on declining aquatic environment in the Meramec River Basin within St. Louis and Jefferson Counties, Missouri. The report was signed, approved, and finalized in June of 2013. The Big River is a main tributary to the Meramec and is listed as impaired with over 55 river miles adversely affected by sediment containing cadmium, lead, and zinc. The EPA is actively working on the Jefferson County Superfund Site that encompasses the entire county. EPA will be addressing the Superfund Site and the overall CERCLA compliance of the site. The USACE Feasibility Study will focus on ecosystem restoration and will investigate the downstream transport of sediments, fish passage issues, and bed and bank instabilities that threaten the few remaining mussel beds known to be strong holds for the endangered species.

Status: EPA is working on a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for the Superfund site that covers the Big River. The EPA's study will result in a Record of Decision, but the completion date is uncertain. Any recommendations resulting from the USACE feasibility study will need to be coordinated closely with EPA. The state of Missouri and other agencies are interested in potential restoration projects throughout the watershed.

Importance: Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) has agreed to serve as a cost share sponsor for this study and signed the FCSA on August 27, 2015. In addition, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) has selected this project as one of 19 national waters of significance. UWFP is aimed at connecting urban areas and disadvantaged individuals within these areas with waterbodies that are inaccessible due to degradation. This feasibility study will identify potential aquatic ecosystem restoration projects that will contribute to the

shared local, state, and Federal interest and objectives in this watershed. Significant resources in the watershed include five federally-endangered mussel species that are listed within the Meramec and Big Rivers.

Risk: Sediments contaminated by lead, zinc, and cadmium continue to migrate down the Big River towards the lower Meramec and its confluence with the Mississippi River. These sediments, along with fish passage barriers, bank instability, and altered riparian corridor continue to pose a risk to aquatic habitat and humans.

Consequence: Impacts to the aquatic environment will continue, and in some cases increase, if no ecosystem restoration measures are identified and implemented. Some of the last remaining mussel beds of endangered species are downstream of the migrating contaminated sediment. Without the USACE feasibility study, the ecosystem will continue to be at risk as the USEPA's potential remediation will be focused on human health. The USACE ecosystem restoration mission is an essential part of the local, state, and Federal objectives in this watershed.



A mussel and Aquatic Species Survey on the Big River

Activities for FY 19: Carryover funding is being used to complete feasibility-level design, perform reviews of the draft final report, and prepare the Chief's Report.

Acquisition Strategy: No contracts are scheduled to be awarded in FY 19.

Activities after FY 19: Carryover funding will be used to complete and sign the Chief's Report by November 2019.

Project Sponsor/Customer: Missouri Department of Natural Resources (The USFWS and MDNR are co-administrators of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment account)

Congressional Interest: Senate: Blunt and Hawley (MO)
House: Clay (MO-1), Wagner (MO-2), Luetkemeyer (MO-3), and Smith (MO-8)

Phase	FY 19 Budget
Investigations	\$0