



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Louis District

# Information Paper

## Kaskaskia River Basin Ecosystem Restoration

### Investigations (ENR)

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**Location:** The Kaskaskia River Basin (Basin), Illinois, from the headwaters at Champaign, Illinois, to the confluence of the Mississippi River, its backwaters, side channels, and all tributaries, including their watersheds, draining into the Kaskaskia River.

**Description:** The Basin has six functional U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) business lines and contains three authorized USACE projects—Lake Shelbyville, Carlyle Lake, and the Kaskaskia Navigation Project. The Kaskaskia Navigation Project design (1961) failed to consider plan and profile degradation by reducing the rivers length by 31 percent. The profile change resulted in a destructive headcut that travels at a rate of 1-mile per year. Damages induced by headcutting have resulted in increased dredging, loss of private property, significant ecosystem degradation to the riverine environment.

**Status:** The authority requires a new start Feasibility Study for the Kaskaskia River Basin. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources would serve as the non-federal sponsor but was unable to secure its cost share in FY24.

**Importance:** Landscape changes and modifications to the Kaskaskia River mainstem have affected the hydrology and hydraulics in the basin, resulting in headcutting, streambank erosion, widening of the stream, and loss of riparian floodplain and aquatic habitats. As a consequence, the species diversity and richness of both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife have and continue to decline. The study area contains the largest contiguous stand of bottomland hardwood forest in the State of Illinois.

**Authority:** Section 5073 of Water Resources Development Act 2007.

#### Schedule:

- TBD, pending appropriation



*Figure 1: Incised, over-widened and aggrading Kaskaskia River channel upstream of Fayetteville, IL*

**Activities for FY24:** Confirm non-federal sponsor interest and prepare for budget submittal.

**Activities after FY24:** TBD

**Project Partner:** Illinois Department of Natural Resources (contingent upon cost share funding).

**Congressional Interest:** Senate: Durbin (IL), Duckworth (IL);  
House: Bost (IL-12), Miller (IL-15).

#### Financial:

Estimated Federal cost: \$1,500,000  
Estimated non-Federal cost: \$1,500,000  
Total estimated cost: \$3,000,000  
Total Federal funding to date: \$0