



**US ARMY CORPS
OF ENGINEERS
St. Louis District
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Public Notice

Reply To:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: CEMVS-OD-F
1222 Spruce Street
St. Louis, MO 63103-2833

Public Notice No.
P-2940 (2016-040)

Public Notice Date
March 11, 2016

Expiration Date
April 11, 2016

Postmaster Please Post Conspicuously Until:

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District (Corps) is soliciting comments on a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), which includes a Clean Water Act Section 404 and a Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 evaluation, on river training construction activities (Regulating Works) for the Boston Bar Side Channel Restoration and Island Creation Biological Opinion (Bi-Op) Project in waters of the United States, as described below and in the referenced web page link.

COMMENTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Comments on the Draft EA and described work should reference the Corps file number shown above and must reach this office no later than the above expiration date of the Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision. Comments should be mailed to the following address:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
ATTN: CEMVS-OD-F (Danny McClendon)
1222 Spruce Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63103-2833

REQUESTOR: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, Engineering and Construction Branch and Project Management Branch, 1222 Spruce Street, St. Louis Missouri 63103-2833, c/o: Mr. Mike Rodgers (314-331-8215) or Mr. Shane Simmons (314-331-8496).

LOCATION: The Boston Bar Side Channel Restoration and Island Creation (Bi-Op) Project is located along the left descending bank of the Middle Mississippi River (MMR) between River Miles 7.6 and 10.3 in Alexander County, Illinois, approximately 1.5 miles northwest of Cairo, Illinois (see Attachment 1). The MMR is defined as that portion of the Mississippi River that lies between the confluences of the Ohio and Missouri Rivers.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Corps is proposing to construct the Boston Bar Bi-Op project as part of its commitment to comply with Endangered Species Act (ESA) requirements as part of our operation of the Regulating Works Project. The Regulating Works Project utilizes bank stabilization and sediment management to maintain bank stability and ensure adequate navigation depth and width. Bank stabilization is achieved by revetments while sediment management is achieved by river training structures, i.e. dikes. Other activities performed to obtain the navigation channel are rock removal and construction dredging. The Regulating Works Project is maintained through dredging and any needed maintenance to already constructed features. The Bi-Op project is needed to implement short-term aquatic restoration measures which could reasonably be expected to improve habitat for the federally endangered pallid sturgeon and interior least tern. The Boston Bar project was designed to enhance connectivity to side channel habitat while not negatively impacting the

navigation channel. The proposed action includes the creation of sandbar habitat adjacent to Boston Bar using dredge disposal material from future channel maintenance dredging that occurs within the immediate vicinity. The proposed action also includes the modification of the river training structures around Boston Bar. At the upper end of Boston Bar, the plan calls for complete removal of two traditional dikes (10.3L and 10.1L) that divert flow toward the navigation channel and away from the entrance of Boston Chute, notching of the pile dike (10.3L) at the entrance of Boston Chute, and the construction of a side channel enhancement dike (SCED; 10.05L) at the entrance of Boston Chute. The SCED will be angled slightly upstream, to divert flow into Boston Chute rather than away. Lastly, the plan includes the complete removal of the dike/closing structure (7.9L) near the exit of Boston Chute (see Attachment 2). The primary purpose of modifying the river training structure configuration within the Boston Bar project area is to increase flow into the side channel, thereby increasing the duration of connectivity with the main stem of the Mississippi River and allowing fish access to this important habitat type. Furthermore, the increased flow through Boston Chute will likely reduce the accretion rate within the side channel, thereby increasing the longevity of this off-channel habitat. Fill material for the new SCED would consist of quarry run limestone consisting of graded “A” stone. Stone (3,500 tons) required for construction would be obtained from commercial stone quarries in the vicinity of the work area capable of producing stone which meets USACE specifications or from the removal of the adjacent dike structures. Placement of material would be accomplished by track hoe or dragline crane. Stone would be transported to placement sites by barges. All construction would be accomplished from the river and all work would be performed below ordinary high water. The proposed work would consist of the following: Removal of 650 feet of Dike 10.3L and removal of 250 feet of Trail Dike 10.3L to elevation 274 feet NGVD at river mile 10.3 along the left descending bank; removal of 575 feet of Dike 10.1L to elevation 274 feet NGVD at river mile 10.1 along the left descending bank; removal of 560 feet of Dike 7.9L to elevation 273 feet NGVD at river mile 7.9L along the left descending bank; and construction of a new 650 foot long Side Channel Enhancement Dike 10.5L to elevation 294 feet NGVD at river mile 10.5L along the left descending bank. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Missouri Department of Conservation, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and multiple navigation industry groups were involved in the extensive coordination and planning of the Bi-Op project. No significant impacts to the human environment are anticipated for the Bi-Op project. Therefore, no additional avoidance, minimization and/or compensation measures are proposed at this time.

Table 1. Features associated with the Proposed Action.

Structure	RM	Action	Length (ft)	Final Elevation (ft NGVD)
SCED	10.05(L)	Construct	650	294
Pile Dike	10.3 (L)	Notch	250	274
Dike	10.3 (L)	Remove	650	274
Dike	10.1 (L)	Remove	575	274
Dike	7.9 (L)	Remove	560	273

The Corps Project Management Branch has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), which includes a Clean Water Act Section 404 and Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 evaluation, and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed activities. These documents are available for electronic viewing (under Environmental Assessments, Assessments, Boston Bar Bi-OP Draft EA/w Appendices) at:

<http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Missions/ProgramsProjectManagement/PlansReports.aspx>

A hard copy of the Draft EA and related documents are also available for viewing at the Corps Project Management Branch in the Robert A. Young Federal Building, at 1222 Spruce Street, St. Louis, Missouri. Further project details, including drawings, surveys and maps are available by viewing the above referenced Draft EA webpage link.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Additional information may be obtained by contacting Mr. Danny McClendon, Regulatory Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at electronic mail address: danny.d.mcclendon@usace.army.mil

AUTHORITY: The authority for the proposed project is described in the Draft EA. The review for this project has been, and will be, processed under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and any and all pertinent regulations.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Activities occurring in Illinois are being reviewed by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) for water quality certification, or waiver thereof, for the proposed activity in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Certification or waiver indicates that IEPA believes the activity will not violate applicable water quality standards. The review by the IEPA is conducted in accordance with the Illinois water quality standards under 35 Illinois Administrative Code Subtitle C. The water quality standards provide for the IEPA to review individual projects by providing an antidegradation assessment, which includes an evaluation of alternatives to any proposed increase in pollutant loading that may result from this activity. The "Fact Sheet" containing the antidegradation assessment for this proposed project may be found on the IEPA's web site, at www.epa.state.il.us/public-notices/. In the event that the IEPA is unable to publish the "Fact Sheet" corresponding to the timeframe of this Joint Public Notice, a separate public notice and "Fact Sheet" will be published by the IEPA at the web site identified above. You may also obtain a copy of the "Fact Sheet" by contacting the IEPA at the address or telephone number shown below. Written comments specifically concerning possible impacts to water quality should be addressed to: Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Water, Watershed Management Section, 1021 N. Grand Avenue East, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276, with copy provided to the Corps.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Water Resources shall evaluate the activity for state approval of the proposed work in accordance with "an Act in relation to the regulation of the rivers, lakes and streams of the State of Illinois" (Ill. Rev. Stat.; Chap. 19, par 52 et seq.). Written comments concerning possible impacts to waters of Illinois should be addressed to Mr. Mike Diedrichsen, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resource Way, Springfield, Illinois, 62702-1271, with copy provided to the Corps.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held with respect to this project. Request for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding the public hearing.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Based on coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 7 federally threatened or endangered species could potentially be found in the area. The seven species, federal protection status, and habitat description are shown in Table 2. No critical habitat is located in the work area.

Table 2. Federally listed threatened and endangered species potentially occurring in the work area.

Species	Status	Habitat
Gray bat (<i>Myotis grisescens</i>)	Endangered	Caves: feeding – rivers/reservoirs adjacent to forests
Indiana bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>)	Endangered	Hibernates in caves and mines. Maternity and foraging habitat: small stream corridors with well-developed riparian woods; upland and bottomland forests
Northern long-eared bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)	Threatened	Hibernates in caves and mines; swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during spring and summer.
Least tern (interior population) (<i>Sterna antillarum</i>)	Endangered	Large rivers - nest on bare alluvial and dredge spoil islands
Pallid sturgeon (<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>)	Endangered	Mississippi and Missouri Rivers
Rabbitsfoot (<i>Quadrula cylindrica cylindrica</i>)	Threatened	Ohio River
Sheepnose mussel (<i>Plethobasus cyphus</i>)	Endangered	Shallow areas in larger rivers and streams

CULTURAL RESOURCES: Due to channel changes, the river has changed considerably in the last 150 years. In the late 19th century the work locations were actually on the Missouri side of the river. In 1908 they were on ephemeral sand bars in the middle of the river. It was only in the second quarter of the 20th century that Boston Bar began to resemble its current configuration. All the river training structures are constructed via barge, without recourse to land access; therefore, any effects are limited to submerged cultural resources. Primary among these are historic period shipwrecks. Given the continual river flow and associated sedimentary erosion, deposition, and reworking, it is highly unlikely that any more ephemeral cultural material remains on the river bed. During the summer of 1988 when the Mississippi River was at a particularly low level, the St. Louis District Corps of Engineers conducted an aerial survey of exposed wrecks between Saverton, Missouri, and the mouth of the Ohio River. The nearest observed wreck to the project features was located approximately three miles upstream. The river bed in the project area is surveyed at a minimum once every two years, with the latest processed survey having been completed in 2014. The multi-beam survey detected no topographic anomalies suggesting the presence of unknown wrecks.

The Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has reviewed the proposed project and concurs that the proposed actions would not affect any historic properties. Twenty-eight federally recognized tribes affiliated with the St. Louis District were consulted and no objections to the project have been raised at this time. The Corps will evaluate any additional information provided by the SHPO's, Indian Tribes, and the public in response to this public notice.

EVALUATION: Pursuant to NEPA, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, and accompanying regulations, the Corps has evaluated the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the described activity on the public interest. That evaluation and any decision made from comments received will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which may reasonably be expected to accrue from the described activity must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the described activity will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of these proposed activities as part of the EA process and the Clean Water Act Section 404 and Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 evaluation. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps in making a final decision on the proposed action. To make this decision, comments are considered to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments will be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Assessment, Statement of Findings and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also considered to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

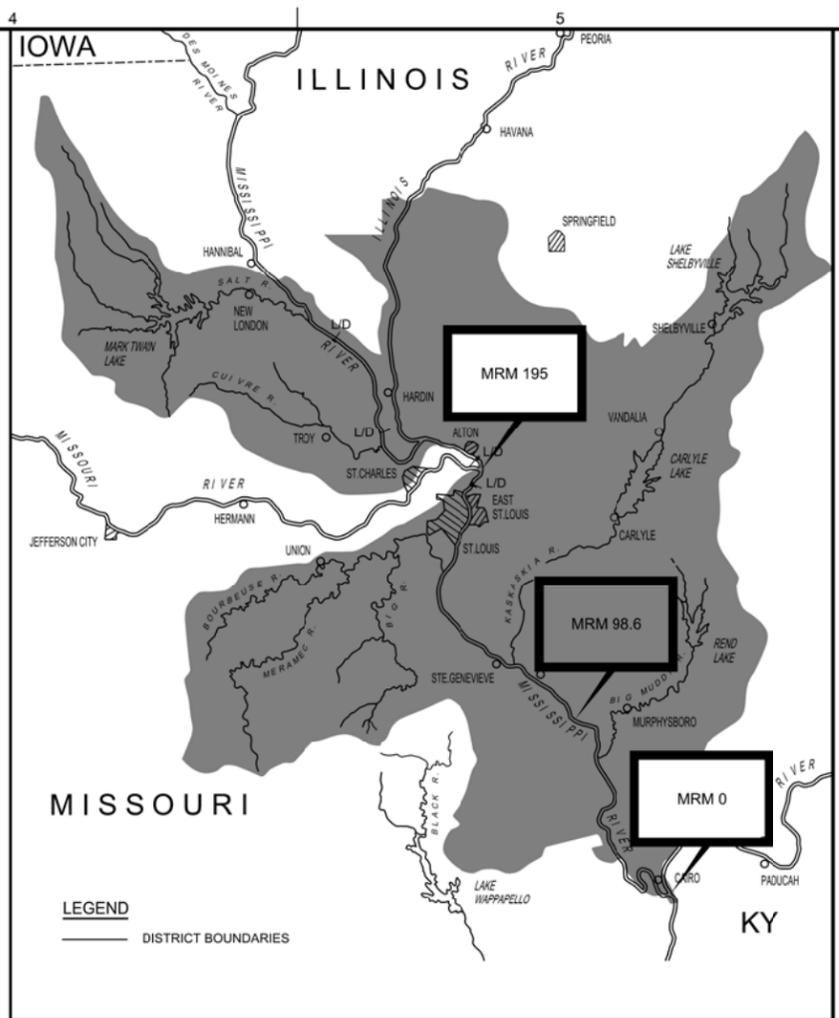
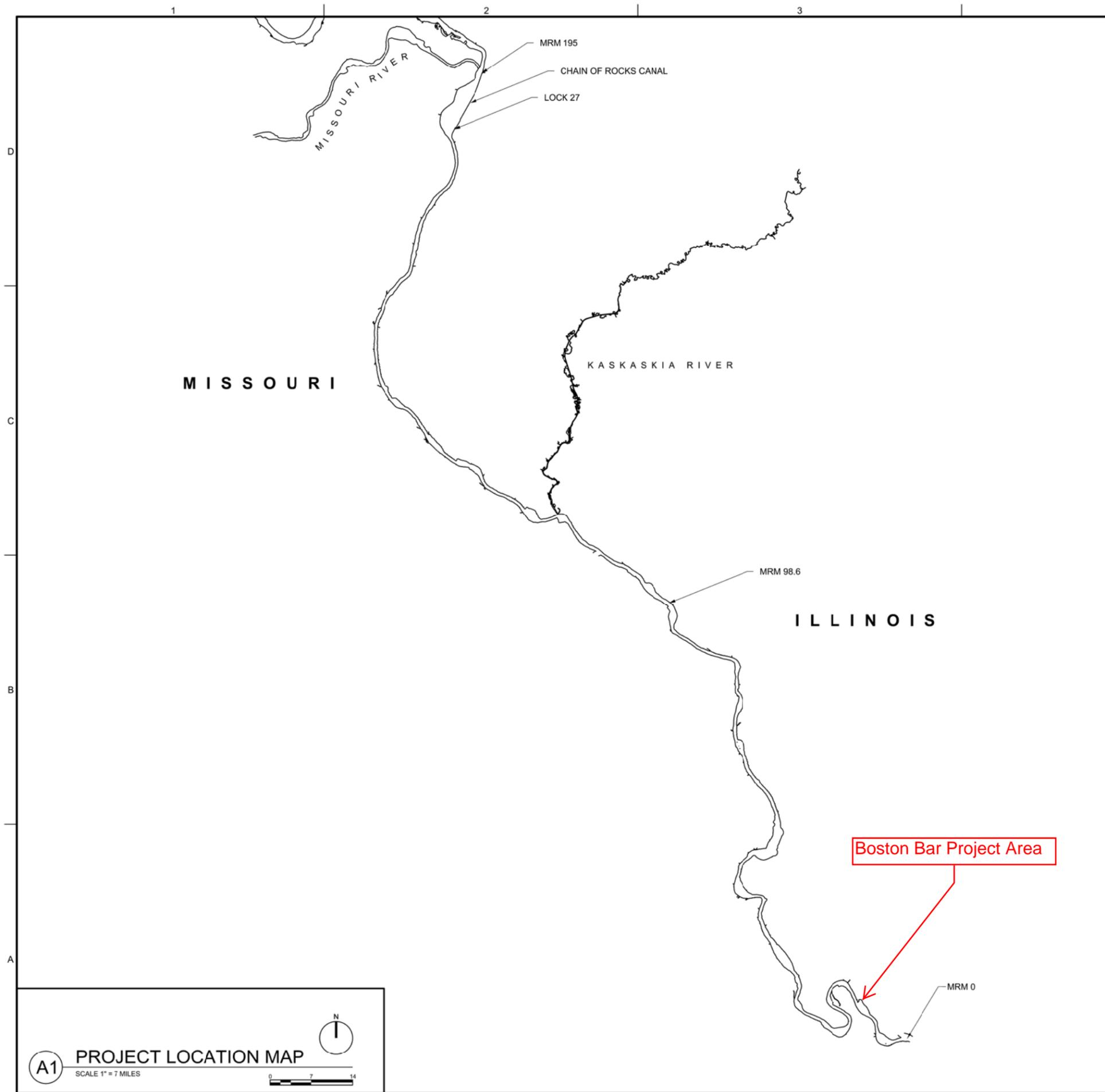
In accordance with 33 CFR 325.3, it is presumed that all interested parties and agencies will wish to respond to public notices; therefore, a lack of response will be interpreted as meaning that there is no objection to the proposed project. Comments are also considered to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

DANNY D. MCCLENDON
Chief, Regulatory Branch

Attachments

NOTICE TO POSTMASTERS:

It is requested that this notice be conspicuously and continually placed for **30** days from the date of issuance of this notice.



C4 VICINITY MAP
SCALE: NTS



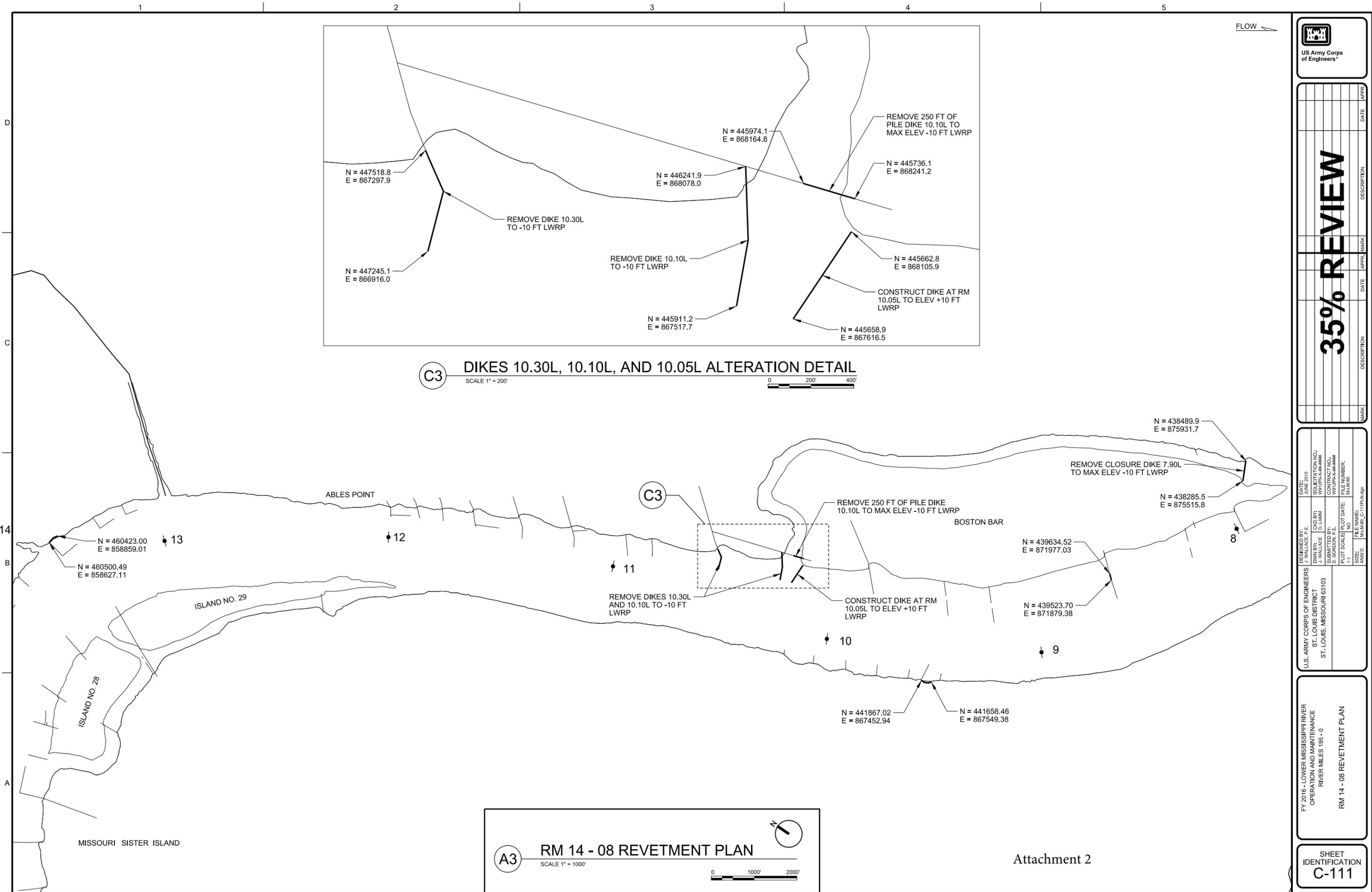
MARK	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPR

DESIGNED BY: J. WALLACE	DATE: 2016
CHECKED BY: D. LAMM	CONTRACT NO.: W1279-X-#-###
SUBMITTED BY: D. GORDON, P.E.	CONTRACT NO.: W1279-X-#-###
PLotted SCALE: 1:1	FILE NUMBER: MLM80
ANSI D:	FILE NAME: MLM80_G-000VIC.dgn

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ST. LOUIS DISTRICT
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63103

FY 2016 - LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE
RIVER MILES 195 - 0
PROJECT LOCATION & VICINITY MAP

SHEET IDENTIFICATION
G-003



C3 DIKES 10.30L, 10.10L, AND 10.05L ALTERATION DETAIL
 SCALE 1" = 200'

A3 RM 14 - 08 REVETMENT PLAN
 SCALE 1" = 1000'



35% REVIEW		DATE	APPR.
		DESCRIPTION	MARK
DATE	APPR.	DESCRIPTION	MARK

DESIGNED BY: E	DATE: 2015
DRAWN BY: J	SCALE: 1" = 1000'
CHECKED BY: D	PROJECT NO.: W912P9-0-#-##
IN CHARGE BY: J	CONTRACT NO.: W912P9-0-#-##
APPROVED BY: D	FILE NUMBER: MALM40
DATE: 2015	NO: 1:1
FILE NAME: IMLR-08_C-111.dwg	ANSI D

FY 2016 - LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE
 RIVER MILES 105 - 0
 RM 14 - 08 REVETMENT PLAN

SHEET IDENTIFICATION
C-111