



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

Information Paper

Mississippi River Headwaters Reservoirs Project Sites

Contact

Mark Wilmes, Operations Project Manager
(701) 451-0888 (701) 451-0890 (fax)
mark.d.wilmes@usace.army.mil

Location/Project Components

The Mississippi River Headwaters Project consists of six headwaters dams in north-central Minnesota. Cross Lake, Gull Lake, Big Sandy Lake, Lake Winnibigoshish, Pokegama Lake and Leech Lake make up the headwaters lakes system. They were constructed or reconstructed between 1900 and 1913 (work on Pokegama started in 1884 and Winnibigoshish in 1885) to aid navigation on the Mississippi River between St. Paul, Minnesota, and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. The navigation mission declined with the creation of the 9-foot channel and, as recreation grew in importance to the region’s economy, the mission shifted to flood risk management, recreation and environmental stewardship.

Operations

The project includes six Corps-managed campgrounds and several day-use areas serving approximately 2 million visitors and generating more than \$36.5 million to the local economy annually. The project’s multiple-use water resource management (flood risk management, recreation and environmental stewardship) affects several communities, thousands of property owners, countless recreational users, resource agencies, industry, the general public and Native American communities.

Since their construction, the reservoirs in the headwaters have prevented \$59 million in flood damages.

Fiscal

Site	13 Alloc	14 Alloc	15 Alloc	16 Alloc	17 Pres Budget
Headwaters	\$3,420k	\$3,344k	\$3,977k	\$4,240k	\$3,648k

Status

Funding represented in FY17 supports baseline operations and maintenance and all scheduled dam safety inspections. Several deferred maintenance projects completed in FY16 include:

- Paved the boat ramp area at Leech Lake;
- ADA accessible shower building and 50 amp electric upgrade at Winnibigoshish campground; and
- Restoration of the campground at Gull Lake from the storm damage in FY15.
- Completed the design to install a slurry trench to address upstream voids at Pokegama Dam. The contract to be awarded in 1st quarter of FY17.

The master plan for the six headwaters reservoirs sites is a strategic land use document that serves as a vital tool for the responsible stewardship of the resources will be released for a 30 day public review and completed 1st quarter in FY17.



Paved the boat ramp area at Leech Lake



ADA accessible shower building at Winnibigoshish campground.