



CORPS FACTS

Environmental Programs

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

One of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' critical missions is to strive for environmental sustainability. The St. Paul District recognizes the interdependence of life and the importance of the physical environment and proactively considers environmental consequences of its programs. Our goal is to seek balance and synergy among human development and natural systems by designing economic and environmental-friendly solutions that reinforce one another. Our environmental programs focus on the key areas of ecosystem preservation, restoration and protection.



Regulatory Program

The St. Paul District regulates structures and work in navigable waters of the United States under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and the discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin. With more than 10,000 lakes in Minnesota and a like number in Wisconsin, the district's Section 404 permit program is second in the Corps of Engineers for its physical size. The office averages around 6,000 jurisdictional determinations annually. The staff is committed to the national program goal of no net loss of aquatic resources while, at the same time, allowing reasonable development through fair and balanced permit decisions.

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 provides authority for the Corps to undertake restoration projects in aquatic ecosystems, such as rivers, lakes and wetlands. The Corps evaluates projects that benefit the environment through restoring, improving or protecting aquatic habitat for plants, fish and wildlife. A project is accepted for construction after an investigation shows it is technically feasible, environmentally acceptable and provides cost-effective environmental benefits. Costs for Section 206 projects are shared between the federal government (65 percent) and a non-federal sponsor or partner (35 percent), in accordance with the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. The maximum federal expenditure per project is \$10 million, which includes both planning and construction costs. The federal government will not pay the costs involved for obtaining the lands and/or easements and future operation and maintenance.

Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program

Habitat rehabilitation and enhancement projects are designed to benefit fish and wildlife by restoring lost habitat or protecting existing habitat features. Planned and engineered by the Corps, in partnership with other organizations and the public, typical habitat projects include restoring islands, constructing flow control structures or shoreline stabilization features and dredging backwater areas.

Most of these sustainability projects for the St. Paul District fall under the nation's Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program, formerly known as the Environmental Management Program. This program is meant to

Public Affairs | FS 14 | 2015

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – ST. PAUL DISTRICT

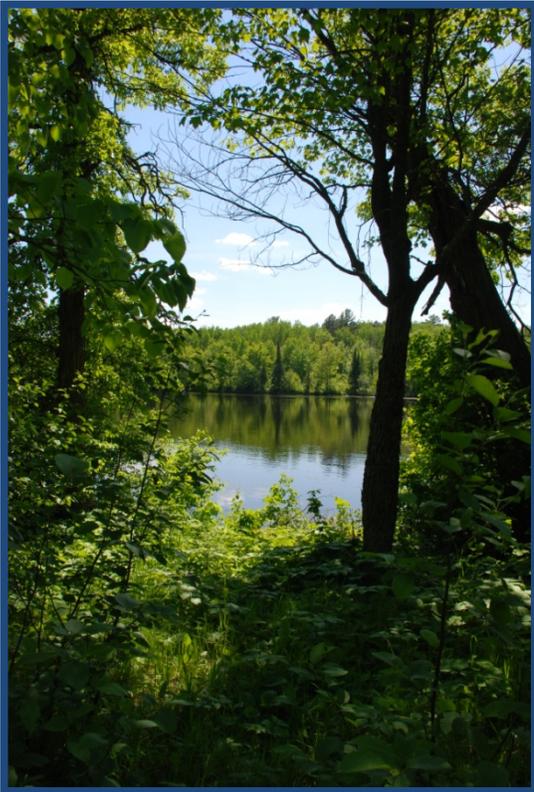
180 FIFTH STREET E., STE. 700, ST. PAUL, MN 55101-1678

www.mvp.usace.army.mil

restore, protect and guide future management of the Upper Mississippi River. The district has completed more than 27 of these types of projects, affecting around 46,300 acres of river and floodplain habitat.

Habitat Restoration

The Corps has the authority, provided by Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended, to plan, design and construct fish and wildlife habitat restoration measures. To be eligible for consideration, restoration measures must involve modification of the structures or operations of a project constructed by the Corps, or modification of an off-project site when it is found the Corps' project contributed to the degradation of the environment. To qualify under this program, projects must be justified – that is, the benefits resulting from constructing the project must exceed the cost incurred to design and build the project. Each separate project is limited to a total federal cost of not more than \$10 million, including studies, plans and specifications and construction.



Stewardship of land managed by the district

It is the policy of the St. Paul District to apply principles of good environmental stewardship to the natural and cultural resources located on Corps-administered federal lands. The district manages more than 67,000 acres of land and more than 284,000 permanent easements across the Upper Midwest – an area equivalent to around 546 square miles. On these lands, the district's natural resources staff is responsible for grassland, fisheries, forest and wetland management; regulating public use; managing water levels; establishing and enhancing vegetation; shoreline stabilization and more. The staff closely coordinates all of its activities on its river lands with other federal and state natural resource agencies.