

Pool 5 Drawdown Begins June 13, 2005

The drawdown of Pool 5 is scheduled to begin on Monday, June 13. It will be conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, in cooperation with the Water Level Management Task Force. This will be the third pool-wide drawdown on the Upper Mississippi River. River resource managers conducted similar drawdowns during the summers of 2001 and 2002 on Pool 8.

Details of the Pool 5 Drawdown

- ◆ The drawdown will begin on Monday, June 13, 2005.
- ◆ The target level water level reduction at Lock and Dam 5 is 1.5 foot; it will take about 7-8 days to reach this level.
- ◆ The drawdown will end on September 15, after which the water level will be slowly raised at a rate of about .2 foot per day.
- ◆ The water level will return to normal operating range by September 30, 2005.

Purpose of the Drawdown

Fish and wildlife habitat on the Mississippi River has declined for a variety of reasons. Plants that grow in shallow water and provide important food and shelter for fish and wildlife have been particularly affected. The relatively stable water levels created by the locks and dams have not allowed these perennial aquatic plants to persist over the years. Water level management offers a way to restore the necessary seasonal fluctuation in water levels that favors conditions needed for reestablishment of these plants.

Commercial and Recreational Boating Access

Advance dredging in the main channel will be done prior to the drawdown to ensure that impacts of the drawdown on commercial navigation will be minimal. Recreational boating and boating facilities are expected to experience only minor short term impacts due to the lower water levels during the drawdown. Recreational boating access was a concern during the planning process and a plan was developed to achieve a "reasonable" level of public access. (See article on page 2.)

Coordination and Planning

The drawdown was planned and coordinated through the Water Level Management Task Force of the River Resources Forum. Hence key river resource management agencies including the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the natural resource departments from Minnesota and Wisconsin were involved in the process as were representatives of the commercial navigation industry, environmental groups and private citizens.

Public input was sought in a variety of ways. A Citizens Advisory Committee was formed to help address recreational access and other issues associated with a Pool 5 drawdown. The Committee included representatives of local governments, businesses, and private citizens from Wisconsin and Minnesota. Numerous public meetings were also held in a variety of sites for additional input.

Finally an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared and made available for a 30-day public review. All comments received were considered and the EA was revised as appropriate. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was signed by the St. Paul District Engineer on May 6, 2005.

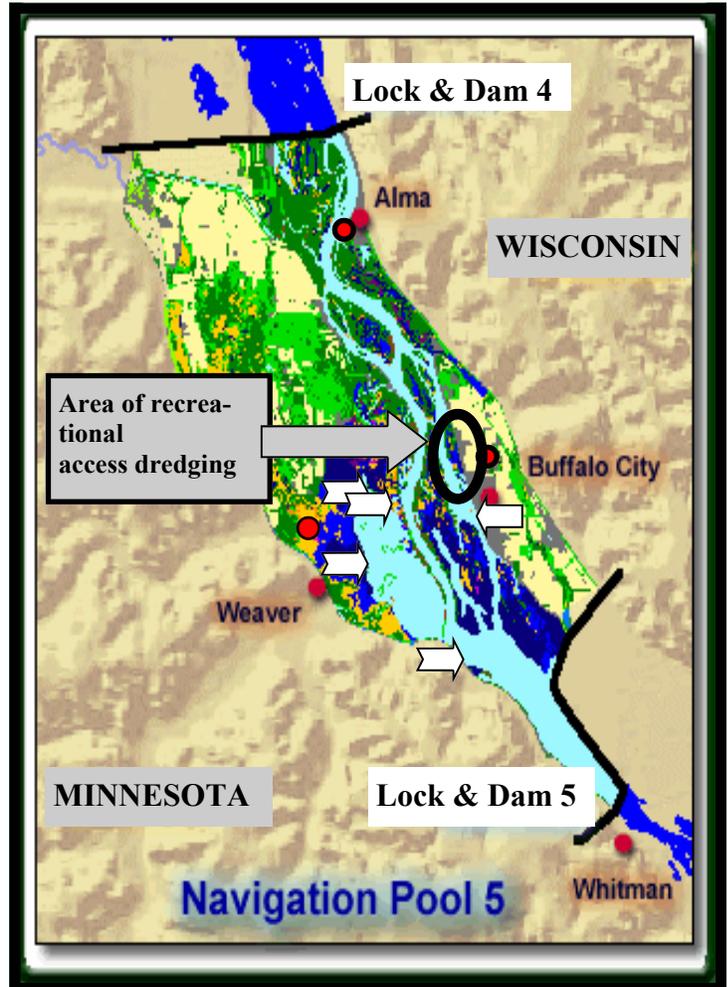
Boating Access During the Drawdown

In order to improve public access to the main river channel during the drawdown three areas outside the main navigation channel will be dredged prior to the beginning of the drawdown including Murphy's Cut by Halfmoon Landing, and two locations in Belvidere Slough. An additional boat ramp is proposed to be opened at the Above West Newton Chute Dredged Material Disposal Site at approximately River Mile 749.8 along the Minnesota bank.

Boat access channels that will probably be non-usable or restricted to smaller low drafting vessels in Minnesota include Minneiska Public Landing, Weaver Bottoms Landing, Goose Lake Landing, Clear Lake Landing, and Halfmoon Landing. In Wisconsin, four of the five boat access points should not be significantly impacted. The fifth boat ramp, at Upper Spring Lake Landing will be closed due to construction during the drawdown.

The accompanying map shows the locations of boat ramps (white arrows) which will be non-usable or restricted during the drawdown.

Reminder: Be careful while boating during the drawdown. Use extra caution as you boat through areas off the main channel.



Get Pool 5 Drawdown Updates

For more information or an up-to-date status report on the drawdown :

- ◆ Call 1-888-291-5719 for a weekly update on the drawdown or to leave a message regarding the drawdown.
- ◆ Check our website: www.drawdowns.com
- ◆ The Water Level Management Update newsletter will continue to be published during the drawdown period to provide more in depth coverage.

Monitoring to Measure Effects of Pool 5 Drawdown

How many years will the newly established plant beds persist? How does a drawdown affect birds, fish, and mussels? What are the impacts of a drawdown on recreational boating access and use? These are a few of the important questions that need to be answered to determine the success of the drawdown.

The way these questions, and many others, can be answered is through a monitoring program that evaluates conditions before, during, and after the drawdown is completed.

The comprehensive monitoring program planned for the upcoming Pool 5 drawdown effort is the most extensive conducted so far for any drawdown in the St. Paul District. The major areas to be monitored include vegetation response, fish and wildlife, mussels, cultural resources, recreational boat usage and commercial navigation.

One of the primary purposes of the drawdown is to promote the growth of aquatic plants that grow in shallow water such as arrowhead and bulrush. Pre drawdown monitoring will tell us the current amount of aquatic vegetation in the pool. By monitoring plant response during and after the drawdown scientists will then be able to measure the response of aquatic plants to the drawdown and determine how



arrowhead

long the newly established plants will persist. This work will be led by the Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center in La Crosse, WI, supported by grants from the States of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

The effects on fish and wildlife, including birds, will be studied by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Mussel survival will also be monitored to evaluate the impacts of a drawdown and to determine if they can escape to deeper water as the water level is gradually lowered.

Shoreline areas which may have cultural resources such as American Indian artifacts may be exposed during a drawdown. Compliance with cultural resources laws requires that a survey be made of known sites, and that monitoring be conducted to see if any new sites are exposed by the drawdown. For the Pool 5 drawdown, this work will be conducted by the Corps of Engineers, in cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

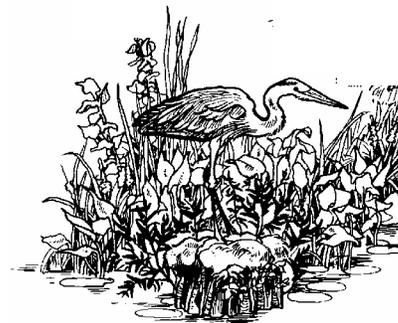
Finally, impacts on commercial navigation, and recreational access and usage, are important indicators of project success. The 9-foot channel must be maintained during the drawdown, and routine monitoring will ensure that the main channel is adequately maintained at all

times. For recreational boating, an aerial survey of usage will be conducted. The results of this survey will be compared to usage data previously collected to see if the drawdown had



any significant impacts on recreational access or usage. This effort will be conducted by the Corps of Engineers in cooperation with the States.

This comprehensive monitoring program will identify successes, and areas for improvement which will help make future drawdowns more effective. It will also help to determine when the process should be repeated.



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