



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**®

St. Paul District

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**Public Affairs**

# Corps Facts

## St. Paul District

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The St. Paul District is where the “Mighty Mississippi River” starts its long journey through the middle of the United States of America to the Gulf of Mexico. The district covers an area of approximately 139,000 square miles. The district borders follow the edges of four river basins – Mississippi River, Red River of the North, Souris River and Rainy River. The latter three basins drain north into Hudson’s Bay. The district shares about 500 miles of border with three Canadian provinces. This area includes most of Minnesota, the western half of Wisconsin, the northeastern half of North Dakota and small portions of South Dakota and northern Iowa.

### **Mission**

The St. Paul District is responsible for supporting inland navigation by operating 13 locks and dams and by maintaining the nine-foot navigation channel on the Mississippi River. It helps communities reduce damages caused by flooding and operates 16 reservoirs for flood damage reduction, recreation, fish and wildlife habitat and water supply, as well as provides emergency response operations following natural disasters. It issues permits for work in wetlands and navigable rivers and is responsible for an environmental restoration program to improve fish and wildlife habitat. In addition, the district maintains 49 recreation areas open to the public.

### **History**

The St. Paul District began its service to the region on July 31, 1866. Civil war hero Maj. Gouverneur Kemble Warren opened the first engineer office with three missions: to examine the Mississippi River and its principal tributaries, to determine the best means of bridging the Mississippi between St. Louis and St. Paul and to devise the best means of establishing a four-foot channel from St. Louis to the Falls of St. Anthony. In 1883, the St. Paul District planned and developed the road network in the first national park, Yellowstone. In 1884, it completed America’s first major reservoir system, located in the Mississippi’s Headwaters at Leech, Winnibigoshish and Pokegama lakes. In 1910, it finished America’s first dam with a hydroelectric plan, Lock and Dam 1 in Minneapolis. And in 1970, the St. Paul District designed the first nonstructural flood control project in Prairie du Chien, Wis. Since then, the district has received five Chief of Engineers Award of Excellence – one in 1983 for the rehabilitation of Lock and Dam One; one in 1989 for the building of Weaver Bottoms Island in Lower Pool 8; one in 1996 for a flood control project in Rochester, Minn.; one in 1998 for a flood control project in Saint Paul, Minn.; and one in 2004 for the restoration of islands in Pool 8 of the Mississippi River.

### **Organization**

The St. Paul District office headquarters is located in downtown St. Paul, Minn. The agency employs around 625 people located in 41 field sites in five states. The St. Paul District is one of six Corps’ districts that make up the Mississippi Valley Division, the headquarters of which is located in Vicksburg, Miss.

### **Contributions**

In 2007, the St. Paul District’s budget exceeded \$126 million. Throughout calendar year 2007, its 13 locks hosted passage to more than 45,000 vessels, including 20,000 tows and 25,000 recreational craft. Since Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast on Aug. 30, 2005, more than 275 of the district's 625 employees have voluntarily deployed in support of Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, 128 more than once. Since 2002, more than 85 employees have voluntarily deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq in support of the Global War on Terror.