



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**[®]
St. Paul District

Public Notice

Project: Pool 6 Dredged Material Management Plan

Date: 14 June 2022

Expires: 15 July 2022

In Reply Refer to: Regional Planning and Environment
Division North

1. Project Proponent. St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, 180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1678.

2. Project Authority. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is authorized to maintain a navigable channel on the Upper Mississippi River (UMR). Authority for continued operation and maintenance of the UMR 9-Foot Navigation Channel Project is provided in the Rivers and Harbors Acts of 1930 (P.L. 71-520), as amended. Original authority for the Corps to work on the Mississippi River was provided in the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1878. In addition, pursuant to Section 1103(i) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. § 652(i)), Congress authorized the Corps to dispose of dredged material from the system pursuant to the recommendations of the Great River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) I study, which were implemented, in part, in the Channel Maintenance Management Plan (CMMP). The proposed project is authorized by the referenced legislation and its purpose is compatible with the annual Operations and Maintenance appropriation.

3. Project Location. The study is focused on the area in the vicinity of navigation Pool 6 of the Mississippi River, located between Lock and Dam Number 5A at River Mile 728.5 and Lock and Dam Number 6 at River Mile 714.1. The study area borders the city of Winona, Minnesota at the upstream end and extends downstream to the Village of Trempealeau, Wisconsin.

4. Purpose and Summary of the Proposed Project. The purpose of the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) is to provide a coordinated, long-term plan for managing dredged material in Pool 6 of the UMR for continued operation and maintenance of the UMR 9-Foot Navigation Channel project over a 20-year timeframe (2022-2042). This plan was initiated because of reduced access to previously used upland dredged material placement sites. Additional capacity is needed to manage the approximately 1.5 million cubic yards of dredged material the Corps expects to produce in Pool 6 over the next 20 years. Planning was conducted in two separate phases, with an initial draft plan and public review in 2020. The Corps considered the public comments from 2020 and worked with stakeholders to modify the proposed plan to reduce concerns where possible. The DMMP describes the proposed plan which identifies the placement sites the Corps proposes to use for managing dredged material in support of maintaining the navigation channel. The proposed plan provides a tiered approach to manage dredged material depending on quantities, local demand, and site availability. The twelve sites carried forward in the plan focuses on providing river sand for beneficial use when possible, but also includes several opportunities for community

collaboration and permanent placement options with large capacity. Finally, the Corps will continue to work with partners to develop one-time beneficial use sites where opportunities and authorities exist to do so, which may include projects designed for ecosystem restoration or enhancement purposes.

One of the proposed dredged material placement sites identified in the DMMP's selected plan – the Homer East site - would involve discharges of fill material into waters of the United States. The proposed fill activity at the Homer East site would occur in Homer, Minnesota, in Winona County (See Plates 6 and 9 in the Main Report). An estimated 1.55 acres of deep marsh wetland would be filled. Compensation would be provided by the purchase of wetland bank credits within the watershed. The number of credits would be determined after gaining access to the site and conducting an onsite delineation. The western, upland portion of the Homer site has been used previously by the Corps since 1986. A detailed description of the project features and the proposed use of the Homer East site can be found in the DMMP and Environmental Assessment.

5. Construction Schedule. The proposed plan is to provide for a long-term plan to manage dredged material in Pool 6 for the next 20 years from 2022 – 2042.

6. Permits/Coordination.

a. General. The proposed plan has been coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WIDNR), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service.

b. State. The filling for the proposed project is subject to regulation by the State of Minnesota in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. A request for Water Quality Certification will be made to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The MPCA has indicated that this public notice serves as its public notice of the application of Section 401 water quality certification under Minnesota Rules Part 7001. The MPCA has also indicated that the Section 401 process shall begin to commence upon the issuance date of this public notice unless the MPCA notifies the St. Paul District to the contrary, in writing, before the expiration date of this public notice. Any comments relative to the MPCA's Section 401 Certification for the activity proposed in the public notice may be sent to the following address:

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Resource Management and Assistance
Division.

Attention 401 Certification
520 Lafayette road North
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

c. Federal. A Draft Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact was prepared and coordinated in accordance with the National Environmental

Policy Act. Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service occurred during the planning process. A Section 404(b)(1) evaluation was prepared in accordance with the Clean Water Act of 1977.

7. Summary of Environmental Impacts. All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed. All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the proposed plan. The overall effects of the combination sites comprising the plan are not significantly different than those that occur under existing conditions. The minor differences are related to the use of different placement sites and transportation routes. The collective use of the measures of the proposed plan would result in minor adverse effects on noise levels, aesthetics, recreation opportunities, transportation, public health and safety, existing land use, tax revenue, air quality, water quality, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and biological productivity. Collectively there would be a substantial beneficial effect on commercial navigation due to improved efficiency in maintaining the UMR navigation channel.

The proposed plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the northern long eared bat. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Corps has determined that the proposed plan would have no effect on historic properties. The Corps' determination was coordinated with Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices. The Proposed Plan would not cause a disproportionately high and adverse impact on any environmental justice population. There would be no irreversible conversion of important farmland to nonagricultural uses.

8. Report. A Draft DMMP with integrated Environmental Assessment that describes the project and the environmental impacts in detail is available to the public and can be viewed at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Home/Public-Notices/>. The report includes project drawings, a Draft Finding of No Significant Impact, a Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) evaluation, and letters of coordination from regulatory agencies.

9. Public Hearing Requests. The Section 404(b)(1) evaluation is being distributed as part of this environmental assessment. Anyone may request a public hearing on this project. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within 15 working days of the date of this Public Notice. Interested parties are also invited to submit to this office written facts, arguments, or objections to this project before the expiration date of this Public Notice. These statements should clearly state the interest the project would affect and how the project would affect that interest. A request for public hearing may be denied if substantive reasons for holding a hearing are not provided or there is otherwise no valid interest to be served. All statements will become an official part of the project file and will be available for public examination.

10. Review and Comment. If you have any comments on the environmental assessment they should be provided before the expiration date of this notice. Persons submitting comments are advised that all comments received will be available for public

review, to include the possibility of posting on a public website. Questions on the project or comments on the Environmental Assessment can be directed to Bob Edstrom, Project Manager at (651) 290-5026 or at StPaulDMMP@usace.army.mil. Please address all formal written correspondence on this project to District Engineer, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, ATTN: Regional Planning and Environment Division North, 180 Fifth Street East, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1638.

Jonathan Sobiech
Deputy Chief, Regional Planning and
Environment Division North