

1. Administrative Details

Proposal Name: Upper Mississippi River Sustainable Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program

by Agency: American Rivers, of behalf of the Nicollet Island Coalition

Locations: IL,MO

Date Submitted: 09/23/2015

Confirmation Number: 2304983d-01f0-48d7-b30a-f596d9ec2fe8

Supporting Documents

File Name	Date Uploaded
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2. Provide the name of the primary sponsor and all non-Federal interests that have contributed or are expected to contribute toward the non-Federal share of the proposed feasibility study or modification.

Sponsor	Letter of Support
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Nicollet Island Coalition(Primary)	<p>The Nicollet Island Coalition is a diverse group of conservation, environmental and taxpayer organizations who advocate reforms to the navigation system to protect and restore the Upper Mississippi River to ensure a healthy, natural and sustainable Upper Mississippi River in the future. The Coalition respectfully proposes the Upper Mississippi River Sustainable Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program under Section 7001 of the 2014 Water Resources Reform and Development Act. This proposal seeks to modify Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act 2007 (P.L. 110 114) that established a program commonly known as the Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program (NESP).</p> <p>NESP, as authorized by Congress in 2007, has many beneficial components to both navigation and ecosystem restoration on the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway. The program contains many small-scales and non-structural solutions to navigation bottle necks and expands the ongoing ecosystem restoration and monitoring program in the basin. However, the program was authorized without a final economic analysis, which ultimately found that the new lock construction component of the program was without merit. This albatross around the programs neck has prevented the other beneficial components of the program to advance.</p> <p>As such, the Coalition proposes striking Section 8003(b) NEW LOCKS from Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2007 (P.L. 110 114).</p>
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Missouri Coalition for the Environment	<p>The Missouri Coalition for the Environment (MCE) is Missouri's independent, citizens' environmental organization for clean water, clean air, clean energy, and a healthy environment. Since 1969 the Missouri Coalition for the Environment has worked with our 800 members to protect and restore the environment through education, public engagement, and legal action. I am writing in support of Nicollet Island Coalition's Upper Mississippi River Sustainable Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program as submitted. The originally authorized Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program (NESP), as authorized by Congress in 2007 has many beneficial components to both navigation and ecosystem restoration on the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway. The program contains many small-scales and non-structural solutions to navigation bottle necks and expands the ongoing ecosystem restoration and monitoring program in the basin. However, the program was authorized without a final economic analysis, which ultimately found that the new lock construction component of the program was without merit. This albatross around the programs neck has prevented the other beneficial components of the program to advance. We recommend striking Section 8003(b) NEW LOCKS from Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2007 (P.L. 110</p>
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3. State if this proposal is for a feasibility study, a modification to an authorized USACE feasibility study or a modification to an authorized USACE project. If it is a proposal for a modification, provide the authorized water resources development feasibility study or project name.

[x] Modification to an Authorized USACE Project : Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2007 (P.L. 110 114), commonly known as the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP)

4. Clearly articulate the specific project purpose(s) of the proposed study or modification. Demonstrate that the proposal is related to USACE mission and authorities and specifically address why additional or new authorization is needed.

In 2007, Congress authorized the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), which included the following language: TITLE VIII—UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND ILLINOIS WATER-WAY SYSTEM SEC. 8003. AUTHORIZATION OF CONSTRUCTION OF NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS. (b) NEW LOCKS.— (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall construct new 1,200-foot locks at Locks 20, 21, 22, 24, and 25 on the Upper Mississippi River and at LaGrange Lock and Peoria Lock on the Illinois Waterway. (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—The total cost of projects authorized under this subsection shall be \$1,948,000,000. Such costs are to be paid half from amounts appropriated from the general fund of the Treasury and half from amounts appropriated from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

The same summer, the US Army Corps of Engineers provided the public its draft Economic Re-evaluation Report on NESP that was to include the benefit-cost analysis (the return on public investment). Unfortunately, the benefit-cost analysis was not released until weeks after Congress authorized NESP in the 2007 WRDA. This was a significant disservice to the public and Congress and allowed a program to be authorized without a complete picture of the costs and benefits. The Re-evaluation Report showed that a main component of the program – new locks – was not viable economically.

However, there are grounds to advance the small-scale and non-structural navigation solutions and a need to expand ecosystem restoration in the basin, which is also authorized in NESP. Navigation investments in traffic scheduling, mooring cells, rehabilitation and other measures can resolve the traffic delays that briefly occur during the busier shipment periods.

As such, we propose Congress amend Title VIII of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2007 (P.L. 110 114) by striking “Section 8003(b) NEW LOCKS” from the project and authorization.

5. To the extent practicable, provide an estimate of the total cost, and the Federal and non-Federal share of those costs, of the proposed study and, separately, an estimate of the cost of construction or modification.

	Federal	Non-Federal	Total
Study	\$0	\$0	\$0
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation (if necessary)

This proposal seeks to remove the lock and dam expansion component from the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program, to emphasize the importance of non-structural alternatives to improve navigation. This section is not applicable, as the elimination of a project component with a completed feasibility study should not require additional study.

6. To the extent practicable, describe the anticipated monetary and nonmonetary benefits of the proposal including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement to transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States.

This propose will remove \$1,948,000,000 from the authorized but unfunded backlog of Corps projects.

7. Does local support exist? If 'Yes', describe the local support for the proposal.

Yes

Local Support Description

The Nicollet Island Coalition is a diverse group of conservation, environmental and taxpayer organizations who advocate reforms to the navigation system to protect and restore the Upper Mississippi River to ensure a healthy, natural and sustainable Upper Mississippi River in the future. Our membership includes American River, National Wildlife Federation, Taxpayers for Common Sense, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Prairie Rivers Network, Sierra Club, Missouri Coalition for the Environment and the Izaak Walton League of America. Together, these groups represent hundreds of thousands of citizens nationwide and thousands of members in the Illinois - Missouri region impacted by this proposed project.

8. Does the primary sponsor named in (2.) above have the financial ability to provide for the required cost share?

No