

WRRDA 7001 Submissions Package
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Proposal Name: St. Louis Riverfront – Meramec River Basin Authority Modification

Submission Date: 09/09/2016

Proposal ID Number: 9a602609-3dcf-422f-8386-9f47a2903c33

Purpose of Proposal: Urban development, agricultural, and historic mining practices throughout the Meramec River Basin have led to degraded aquatic ecosystem quality in several areas. The presence of lead-contaminated sediment throughout the Big River watershed, a primary tributary to the Meramec, have exacerbated these problems. These problems have degraded habitat for aquatic species, including multiple Federally-listed threatened and endangered mussel species. Because the current language in the study authority limits potential projects to the lower 75 miles of the Big River and the lower 50 miles of the Meramec River, critical restoration opportunities in the upstream reaches of the Basin cannot currently be addressed within the limits of the authority. Moreover, the State is interested in comprehensive, watershed-based solutions for all water resources challenges. By adding flood risk management as a specific purpose under the study authority in addition to expanding the geographic scope, future studies will be able to investigate comprehensive projects to benefit public health and safety, the economy, and environmental resources.

1. Administrative Details

Proposal Name: St. Louis Riverfront – Meramec River Basin Authority Modification

by Agency: Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Locations: MO

Date Submitted: 09/09/2016

Confirmation Number: 9a602609-3dcf-422f-8386-9f47a2903c33

Supporting Documents

File Name	Date Uploaded
Letter of Support-Section 7001 Proposal for Meramec.pdf	09/09/2016
umrba-wrda-2016-letter4-22-16.pdf	09/09/2016
Map of Current Meramec Study Area.pdf	09/09/2016

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
<p>Missouri Department of Natural Resources(Primary)</p>	<p>The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently serving as the non-Federal sponsor for the St. Louis Riverfront – Meramec Basin Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. This study is being conducted under a 21 June 2000 Resolution by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives, Docket 2642. This Resolution authorized investigations into improvements along the Mississippi River and its tributaries in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Jefferson County in Missouri and Madison, St. Clair, and Monroe Counties in Illinois. Because of the language in the Resolution, studies within the Meramec Basin are currently limited to the portion of the basin within St. Louis and Jefferson Counties. Missouri DNR requests that the study Resolution be amended to include Franklin, Gasconade, Maries, Phelps, Crawford, Dent, Washington, Iron, St. Francois, St. Genevieve, Osage, Reynolds, and Texas Counties in Missouri. Moreover, in recognition of the recent significant historic flooding along the Meramec River, Missouri DNR requests that flood risk management be added as an area of interest within the study Resolution. Projects implemented along the Meramec River or its tributaries could restore and maintain the ecological importance of the Meramec River and would benefit public health and safety, the economy, and water quality.</p>
<p>Upper Mississippi River Basin Association</p>	<p>Expansion of St. Louis Riverfront Authority – Our states hold as a general principle that Upper Mississippi management must recognize the interconnectedness of its subwatersheds in executing the myriad water resource management responsibilities. The 2004 Reconnaissance Study for the St. Louis Riverfront Project lent important insights about the degraded condition of the Meramec River and opportunities to improve its ecosystem and provide downstream benefits to the Upper Mississippi, as the Meramec feeds into the Mississippi just below St. Louis. The 2000 House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee resolution authorizing the Riverfront Project Study restricts the geographic scope on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River to the St. Louis and Jefferson counties, affecting the subsequent ongoing Meramec River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. Recognizing the critical potential upriver restoration opportunities, we respectfully request that the forthcoming WRDA extend the geographic scope of the St. Louis Riverfront Project to allow the Meramec feasibility study to include the entire basin. Extending the geographic scope to encompass the entire basin would allow for the Corps and State of Missouri (as the cost-share sponsor) to study the potential for projects</p>

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 Feasibility Study : St. Louis Riverfront, Missouri and Illinois, Meramec River Feasibility Study

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.

Urban development, agricultural, and historic mining practices throughout the Meramec River Basin have led to degraded aquatic ecosystem quality in several areas. The presence of lead-contaminated sediment throughout the Big River watershed, a primary tributary to the Meramec, have exacerbated these problems. These problems have degraded habitat for aquatic species, including multiple Federally-listed threatened and endangered mussel species. Because the current language in the study authority limits potential projects to the lower 75 miles of the Big River and the lower 50 miles of the Meramec River, critical restoration opportunities in the upstream reaches of the Basin cannot currently be addressed within the limits of the authority. Moreover, the State is interested in comprehensive, watershed-based solutions for all water resources challenges. By adding flood risk management as a specific purpose under the study authority in addition to expanding the geographic scope, future studies will be able to investigate comprehensive projects to benefit public health and safety, the economy, and environmental resources.

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	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000

Explanation (if necessary)

It is anticipated that the modification to the study authority will not increase the cost of the current Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. However, the modification may accommodate the need to develop additional studies throughout the Meramec Basin. Any subsequent studies are not anticipated to exceed the typical limit of \$3 million total.

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.

Expanded ecosystem restoration study within the Meramec Basin could benefit public health; aquatic species, including several that are Federally-listed as threatened or endangered; and recreation. These benefits would be achieved through reductions in excessive and contaminated sediments, increased aquatic and floodplain connectivity, and increased riparian habitat quantity, diversity, and complexity. Future flood risk management studies could provide National Economic Development benefits through reduced flood damages as demonstrated by the severe December 2015 flooding throughout the Meramec Basin.

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

Yes

Local Support Description

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources is submitting this request as the non-Federal Sponsor. In addition, support for additional restoration work in the Meramec Basin has been expressed by local watershed groups such as the Meramec River Tributaries Alliance and Meramec River Recreation Association; The Nature Conservancy; and other agencies such as the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

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

Yes

Primary Sponsor Letter of Support

(As uploaded)

Letter of Support_Section 7001 Proposal for Meramec.pdf



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon, Governor • Sara Parker Pauley, Director

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

www.dnr.mo.gov

September 9, 2016

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: CECW-CE (Lisa Kiefel)
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

RE: Request for Modification to the Study Authority for the St. Louis Riverfront, Missouri and Illinois, Meramec River Feasibility Study for Inclusion in the February 2017 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Annual Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development Per Section 7001 of WRRDA 2014

Attention: Ms. Lisa Kiefel:

In response to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Request for Proposals, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources requests the modification to the study authority for the St. Louis Riverfront, Missouri and Illinois, Meramec River Feasibility Study be included in the February 2017 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Annual Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development.

Our request is to modify the study authority that is currently outlined in the 21 June 2000 Resolution by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives, Docket 2642. Because this resolution limits studies to St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Jefferson County in Missouri, we request that Resolution be amended to include Franklin, Gasconade, Maries, Phelps, Crawford, Dent, Washington, Iron, St. Francois, St. Genevieve, Osage, Reynolds, and Texas Counties in Missouri so that comprehensive watershed-based solutions can be developed. Moreover, we request that Flood Risk Management be added to the Resolution to more clearly highlight flooding as a problem within the Meramec Basin.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources has the financial capability to serve as the Non-Federal Sponsor and we understand our role as the Sponsor will be to provide 50 percent cost share for any additional studies that may result from the modified authority.

Expanding this study authority would allow the Corps and the State of Missouri (as the cost-share sponsor) to study potential projects to restore and maintain the ecological importance of the Meramec Basin, benefiting public health and safety, the economy, and water quality. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Respectfully,

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Robert D. Stout
Chief of Policy



Other Non-Federal Sponsors Letter(s) of Support

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umrba-wrda-2016-letter4-22-16.pdf



Upper
Mississippi River
Basin Association

ILLINOIS, IOWA, MINNESOTA, MISSOURI, WISCONSIN

April 22, 2016

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
The Honorable Barbara Boxer
U.S. Senate
Committee on Environment and Public
Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable William Shuster
The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6256

Dear Senator Inhofe, Representative Shuster, Senator Boxer, and Representative DeFazio:

We are very pleased with your commitment to improving the nation's water resources by undertaking a new water resources development act, which we believe offers an opportunity to ensure that important investments authorized by Congress can be effectively advanced. On behalf of the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association, I am writing to express our five member states' interests in advancing the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) authorized by Congress in 2007 and resolving challenges for non-federal sponsors to execute project partnership agreements (PPAs) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). We also wish to express a note of caution regarding the need to develop consensus prior to authorizing a public-private partnership (P3) on inland waterways. In addition, we respectfully request that the geographic scope of the St. Louis Riverfront Project is extended to allow the Meramec River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study to effectively examine and address critical upriver influences that impact the Upper Mississippi River System (Upper Mississippi). Formed by the Governors of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin in 1981, UMRBA represents its member states' common water resource interests and works collaboratively with state and federal agencies that have management responsibilities on the Upper Mississippi as well as with partners from the navigation industry, environmental nonprofit organizations, and local communities who work directly to improve the river.

Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP) – The Governors of the five Upper Mississippi states have clearly and repeatedly articulated the need to implement NESP to ensure that Congress' vision of the Upper Mississippi as a nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant navigation system remains for many generations. Our states strongly support NESP for its dual purpose approach to advancing navigation and ecosystem improvements in an integrated, balanced, adaptive, collaborative, and fairly funded manner.

415 Hamm Building
408 St. Peter Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
Phone: 651-224-2880
Fax: 651-223-5815
www.umrba.org

The Upper Mississippi is an incredibly valuable commercial transportation corridor that directly connects the Midwest to international market – lowering input costs for manufacturing, energy, agriculture, and other economic sectors while also facilitating exports – and it is a tremendous ecological treasure that draws in \$17.1 billion annually in revenue from tourism and outdoor recreation while also supplying affordable drinking water to many of our residents. The states further recognize that the river is an economic engine for the national economy and plays a key role in achieving international food security, moving 60 percent of the nation’s corn and soybean exports. The river is a critical component of the national surface transportation system and provides a highly valuable corridor for important migratory fish and wildlife habitat.

NESP was born through thoughtful and deliberate dialogue and compromise and is widely supported by Congress; the Inland Waterways Users Board and the navigation industry, more broadly; a diverse collective of sport and recreational conservation groups; agricultural commodity groups; labor interests; and local communities.

Congress has repeatedly recognized the substantial national benefits that would result from implementation of NESP, directing the Administration to implement NESP in the 2014 Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) and in annual appropriations measures. However, the Administration has largely ignored Congress’ requests, citing the need to reevaluate the national merit of NESP without taking any action to do so.

Therefore, we respectfully request that Congress adopt an amendment to NESP’s authorization stating that the program is in the national interest as the overall benefits of the program exceed its costs. Similar language in other Corps programs and project authorizations has eliminated unnecessary, costly economic analyses that are cumbersome and do not reflect many national economic benefits, such as alleviating traffic on already congested land-based transportation modes.

Project Partnership Agreements (PPAs) – In a February 3, 2016 letter to you, we articulated the challenges to the states in executing the Corps’ PPAs and respectfully requested that Congress consider resolving these issues in the forthcoming WRDA. In recent years, the Corps has taken a more restrictive approach to indemnification that is inconsistent with states’ constitutions and statutes as well as nonprofit organizations’ policies. The Corps also now legally binds non-federal sponsors to undefined and unbounded operations and maintenance obligations on ecosystem restoration projects.

These challenges impair the ability of states, local governments, and nonprofit organizations to execute PPAs. This is a national issue affecting cost-share projects throughout the country. Congress recognized these challenges in WRRDA 2014 and requested that the National Academy of Public Administration evaluate the PPAs. However, there has been no subsequent progress. Therefore, we respectfully suggest that the forthcoming WRDA include provisions to resolve these specific issues.

We have partnered with The Nature Conservancy and Audubon to develop legislative language to resolve the PPA issues in a fair, practical manner. This includes provisions that 1) create a more shared approach to liability consistent with state law, 2) set a reasonable limit on the duration of a project sponsor's obligations for operations, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement (OMRR&R) to 50 years or when project objectives are achieved, and 3) account for the value of donated goods that nonprofit organizations contribute to a project as a cost share credit. We welcome your consideration of these provisions. As Congress and the federal government continue to prioritize non-federal cost share projects, we believe that these challenges to PPA execution must be resolved in order for existing and newly authorized projects to be successfully and efficiently implemented.

Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) – The lock and dam infrastructure on the Upper Mississippi is in dire need of substantial investment in both repair and modernization. It is the result of many years of inadequate federal investment in the inland waterways system, and particularly the Upper Mississippi. There is an incredible, longstanding discrepancy between the Upper Mississippi's contributions to the Inland Waterways Trust Fund and the return investment in the region's navigation infrastructure. In addition, Upper Mississippi lock and channel maintenance is consistently underfunded. Given the tremendous need for the Upper Mississippi to remain a functional transportation corridor, Upper Mississippi stakeholders are concerned about the future state of the infrastructure.

Our states have urged the Administration, Congress, industry, and other key stakeholders to identify and explore innovative financing and project delivery approaches where appropriate to maximize infrastructure investment on the waterways. We supported authorization of a pilot project program in WRRDA 2014 as a means to examine the benefits and feasibility of innovative approaches to financing. We have also asserted that any such financing mechanism must be fair, equitable, effective, and generally enjoy consensus. The nation's inland waterway system is an interconnected system of its major rivers and tributaries and must be treated as such. Financing mechanisms that single-out a particular lock or sub-system must also consider implications to the entire system nationwide. Recognizing that the inland river system is a public good that is shared by many diverse interests, any financing mechanism must also consider impacts to all user groups. For these reasons, our states have historically opposed lockage fees. We are open to discussing nontraditional financing mechanisms that would deliver improved operational efficiency and reliability.

To date, there has been insufficient dialogue, and certainly no consensus, on a specific approach to financing a P3 project on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. Consultation with the diverse set of basin partners must occur and consensus must be achieved before Congress should consider authorizing a P3 project on the Upper Mississippi. Our states have identified a suite of implementation questions that still need to be addressed through thoughtful and deliberative dialogue among the river's key stakeholders in order to ensure that a given P3 approach is a sound investment and receives sufficient support to be viable. Some of the more pressing questions relate to the structure and operation of a governance model for a P3 financing authority, the process and decision makers involved in selecting and prioritizing P3 projects, and assumption of risk if

an investor withdraws. In addition, the Upper Mississippi has a strongly rooted history of integrated, balanced management that has been instrumental in sustaining its many economic, ecosystem, and social values. Any P3 project must seek to sustain the river's ecological resources and maintain the strong, collaborative partnership among all the river's users.

Expansion of St. Louis Riverfront Authority – Our states hold as a general principle that Upper Mississippi management must recognize the interconnectedness of its subwatersheds in executing the myriad water resource management responsibilities. The 2004 Reconnaissance Study for the St. Louis Riverfront Project lent important insights about the degraded condition of the Meramec River and opportunities to improve its ecosystem and provide downstream benefits to the Upper Mississippi, as the Meramec feeds into the Mississippi just below St. Louis. The 2000 House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee resolution authorizing the Riverfront Project Study restricts the geographic scope on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River to the St. Louis and Jefferson counties, affecting the subsequent ongoing Meramec River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. Recognizing the critical potential upriver restoration opportunities, we respectfully request that the forthcoming WRDA extend the geographic scope of the St. Louis Riverfront Project to allow the Meramec feasibility study to include the entire basin.

Extending the geographic scope to encompass the entire basin would allow for the Corps and State of Missouri (as the cost-share sponsor) to study the potential for projects in secondary tributaries to restore and maintain the ecological importance of the Meramec and Upper Mississippi Rivers, benefiting public health and safety, the economy, and water quality. For example, the Big River, a tributary to the Meramec River, and its floodplain are contaminated with lead from historic mining and smelting operations. Restoration is critical within the Big River to prevent further spread of contaminated sediment to the Meramec and Upper Mississippi Rivers.

Thank you for your consideration of the Upper Mississippi basin states' perspectives on this critical legislation. We appreciate your substantial undertaking in advancing a water resources measure that will allow the nation to better address its critical water resource needs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 651-224-2880 if you have any questions or would like to discuss the Upper Mississippi basin states' positions in further detail.

Sincerely,



Dru Buntin
Executive Director
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

cc: Staff of Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Staff of House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Staff of House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment

Map Document

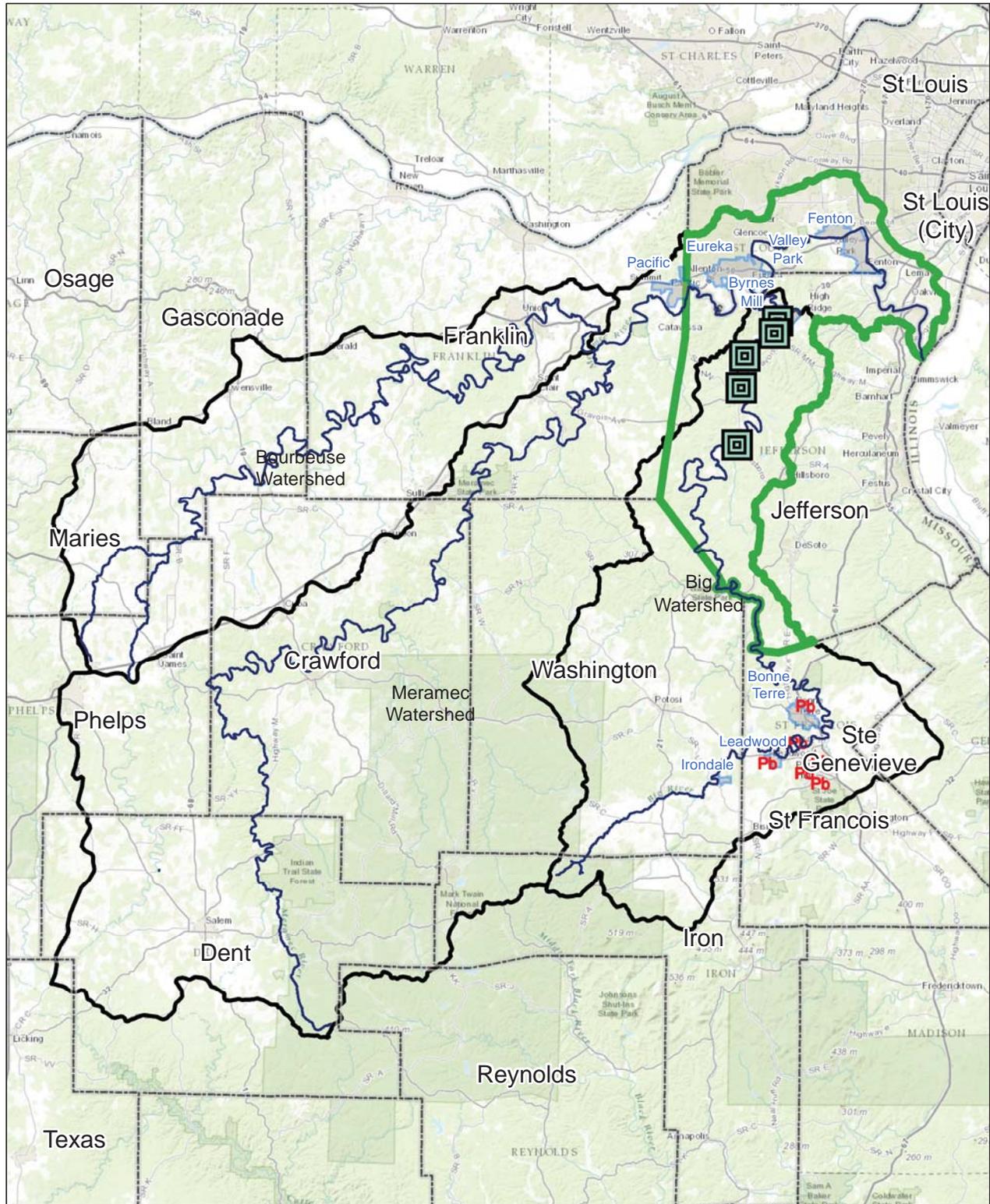
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Map of Current Meramec Study Area.pdf



US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Louis District

Meramec River Ecosystem Restoration



	Mill Dams		Counties
	Tailings Piles		HUC 8 Watersheds
			Project Area
			Municipalities

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