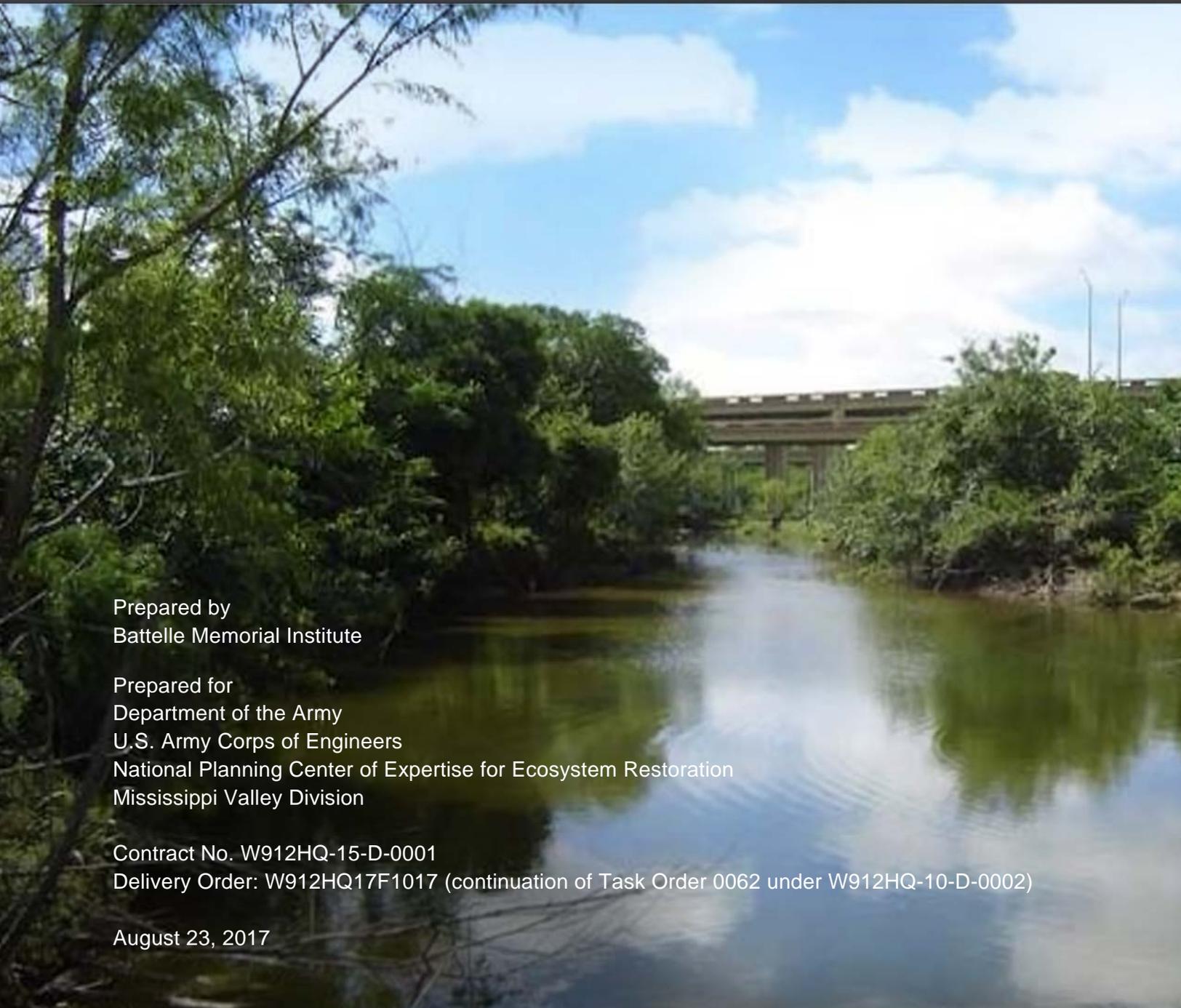


Addendum to the Final Independent External Peer Review Report Bubbly Creek Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study



Prepared by
Battelle Memorial Institute

Prepared for
Department of the Army
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
National Planning Center of Expertise for Ecosystem Restoration
Mississippi Valley Division

Contract No. W912HQ-15-D-0001
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DFR-EA	Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment
EC	Engineer Circular
IEPR	Independent External Peer Review
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers

1. INTRODUCTION

This addendum is a supplement to the Final Independent External Peer Review Report for the Bubbly Creek Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (hereinafter: Bubbly Creek IEPR) submitted on July 15, 2014 by Battelle. It was prepared to document activities associated with the IEPR Panel's review of the public and agency comments on the Bubbly Creek Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment (DFR-EA) and appendices.

This addendum briefly details the IEPR process that determined the need for Final Panel Comments associated with the public and agency comments on the Bubbly Creek DFR-EA. The IEPR Panel determined that no additional Final Panel Comments were necessary based on the information provided in the public and agency comments.

2. METHODS

This section summarizes the activities associated with the review of the public and agency comments conducted for this project.

Battelle received electronic versions of the public comments from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on July 19, 2017. Due to the low number of public comment pages (89), USACE was not required to organize them by source (agency or resident), nor to provide an Excel spreadsheet summary of the comments.

In accordance with procedures described in the Department of the Army, USACE, Engineer Circular (EC) *Civil Works Review* (EC 1165-2-214)¹, Appendix D, Battelle focused the IEPR Panel's public comment review on assessing scientific and technical issues with regard to the assumptions, data, methods, and models used in the project.

Each panel member was asked to independently determine whether the public comments contained any additional scientific or technical concerns regarding the project which were not previously identified and which should be addressed by USACE in the Bubbly Creek DFR-EA project documents. The Panel was charged with focusing on discipline-specific scientific and technical issues and not policy-related comments, per EC 1165-2-214, Appendix D.

Comments submitted by state and Federal agencies were provided to the Panel "For Information Only." Battelle understands that under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), USACE must address state and Federal agency comments as part of the consultation process; therefore, issues brought up by these agencies, and USACE's subsequent responses, were considered policy related.

The panel members reviewed comment letters from state and Federal agencies as well as emails, letters, and comment cards from a variety of non-profit organizations and members of the general public. The panel members were required to answer one charge question with regard to the public comments.

1. Do the public comments raise any additional discipline-specific technical concerns with regard to the overall report?

¹ USACE (2012). Water Resources Policies and Authorities: Civil Works Review. Engineer Circular (EC) 1165-2-214. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C. December 15.

The panel members submitted responses to this charge question, and Battelle reviewed those responses to identify any issues, areas of potential conflict, and other overall impressions. Each panel member's individual comments were shared with the full Panel. Battelle then discussed via email exchanges whether any of their identified issues should be carried forward as Final Panel Comments.

Based on the Panel's review, most of the public comments fell into the category of general support or opposition or were discussed in previous Final Panel Comments submitted in the Bubbly Creek Final IEPR Report. One issue noted in the public comments, but already covered in previous Final Panel Comments, included the potential to attract larger populations of resident geese, affecting herbivory on plantings and potentially water quality. The Panel did not repeat this concern in this addendum. Other issues raised in the public comments, but deemed by the Panel to not be additional technical concerns that warranted new Final Panel Comments include the potential of climate change to affect project design, water quality improvement, flow rates, and dissolved oxygen monitoring stations. All other concerns raised by agencies and other stakeholders were deemed by Battelle and the Panel to be related to policy and therefore outside the purview of the Panel's review.

The Panel would like to recognize the public comments suggesting that sediment contamination issues be fully addressed prior to execution of the restoration project. It is the Panel's understanding that USACE is coordinating with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; therefore, it is beyond the Panel's charge to raise the issue as a Final Panel Comment. The Panel encourages continued coordination to ensure that the restoration project succeeds from the perspective of improving sediment and water quality as a component of habitat and also improving the recreational potential of the waterway. The Panel also noted that several of the concerns raised in the public comments will be able to be addressed through the Bubbly Creek project's monitoring and adaptive management plan.

By the end of their review, the panel members had identified no issues within the public comments that needed additional clarifying information in order to strengthen the Bubbly Creek DFR-EA. Therefore, this Addendum to the Final IEPR Report does not include any additional Final Panel Comments and is provided as documentation that a public comment review was conducted for the Bubbly Creek IEPR.

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It can be done