



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Memphis District

# News Release

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## **Corps of Engineers will work with environmental agencies to protect endangered woodpecker**

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 4, 2005 – Rediscovery of the once-believed-extinct ivory-billed woodpecker comes as welcome news to the Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – especially since the discovery took place on or near wetlands previously managed by the Corps.

“We are thrilled about the rediscovery of the ivory-billed woodpecker, and are cooperating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, and others to ensure none of our projects will harm it or its habitat,” said Col. Charles Smithers III, commander of the Corps’ Memphis District.

The Corps recently turned over ownership and control of the land where the woodpecker was sighted to the USFWS after managing it as wetlands mitigation land for more than two decades. The Corps also currently owns 1,870 acres of mitigation land in the vicinity of the sightings. This land is licensed to the AGFC for management. The USFWS and AGFC are two agencies responsible for protecting endangered species.

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“It is great to see that the mitigation program associated with one of our past projects could have played a role in helping the woodpecker survive,” Smithers said. “We are also exploring ecosystem restoration opportunities in the Cache River basin.”

Smithers said that it does not appear that the rediscovery will have a major impact on existing Corps work. He did say, however, that the Corps plans to re-examine its projects closely in light of the new finding and that project reassessments will be performed jointly with key resource agencies.

In addition, Smithers said, as with all Corps projects, any future work in nearby areas will also be closely coordinated with the resources agencies. He added that the Corps will identify its roles in assisting recovery efforts for the ivory-billed woodpecker and its habitat.