

ISSUE DATE: 25 January 2019



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

PUBLIC NOTICE

EXPIRATION DATE: 25 February 2019

**AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT Environmental Assessment and DRAFT Finding of No
Significant Impacts**

REPLY TO:

ATTN: Kevin Pigott

Environmental Compliance Branch

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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TITLE: Below Senath Seepage Remediation, St. Francis River Basin, Dunklin County, Missouri.

AUTHORITY: The proposed action is authorized as part of the Flood Control Act (FCA) of 15 May 1928 as amended by the Acts of 15 June 1936, 18 August 1941, 24 July 1946, 17 May 1950, 27 October 1965, and 13 August 1968. These Acts provided for the construction, enlargement, and strengthening of the levees of the St. Francis Basin Project in order to safely pass the floodwaters of the St. Francis River and its tributaries.

LOCATION: The proposed seepage control project is located in Dunklin County, Missouri in the Missouri Bootheel. The seepage berm would extend along the landside of the St. Francis River levee between levee miles 34/41+50 to 35/19+50 in the vicinity of Senath, Missouri (Figure 1). This item of work is approximately 1,000 feet long. Fill material will be obtained from borrow pit(s) located in a nearby agricultural field. Final approvals for utilization of the borrow pit location has not been finalized at this time.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Memphis District, is issuing this notice to update environmental coordination on the authorized project.

PURPOSE: Seepage that occurs during flood conditions on the St. Francis River needs to be controlled in order to ensure that the levee system does not fail during a project flood event. Seepage could undermine the levee causing it to breach if unabated and flood the surrounding lands and residential areas. A levee breach would threaten the lives and property of residents within the flooded areas.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: The proposed project involves implementing seepage control measures along the St. Francis Levee in Dunklin County, Missouri. Project features for the proposed seepage control action includes modifying existing ditches, placement of borrow material into existing ditches, and constructing a rock chute structure in an existing ditch (Figure 2). Access to the project area would be from County Road 611. A bulldozer and excavator would be used to modify and fill the existing ditches. Although two inlet ditches would be re-directed towards a grass lined swale, ditch layout would remain largely the same. Ditch 1 would be filled to a maximum depth of 5 feet approximately 300 feet from the intersection of Ditches 2 and 3 and would transition back to existing grade via a riprap chute transition structure. Where Ditches 2 and 3 enter Ditch 1, a riprap apron would be constructed to reduce erosion potential. Approximately 1,450 cubic yards (CY) of material would be used to fill Ditch 1 and approximately 500 tons of R-400 riprap and 145 tons of bedding material would be needed to create the transition structure at the Ditch 1, 2, and 3 confluence area.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Impacts to water quality within the St. Francis River would be minimal or have no effect, as the river normally carries a heavy sediment load. Thus, no significant impacts to water quality would occur as a result of the proposed project. A Nationwide Permit 40 (Agricultural Activities) will be used to cover the less than 0.1 acres of fill into Waters of the U.S. Thus, a section 404(b)(1) evaluation and separate water quality certification are not required. There are some wetland areas along the riverside of the levee, but they would not be impacted by the proposed project.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: In the summer of 2018, the proposed project area was surveyed acoustically in accordance with the USFWS 2018 Range-Wide Indiana Bat Summer Survey Guidelines. The presence of the gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*) was indicated within the project footprint and the presence of the Northern long-eared bat (*M. septentrionalis*) could not be ruled out upon qualitative review of the data. However, USACE has determined that project activities would not affect either bat species since no tree clearing would occur.

Additionally, no evidence of bald eagles, or their nests, were observed at any project location. No federally threatened or endangered aquatic organisms, including freshwater mussels exist within the proposed project footprint. Therefore, USACE has determined

that the proposed project would have no effect on any threatened or endangered species or their critical habitats.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: A literature review and cultural resources survey within the Project's Area-of-Potential-Effect (APE), including the proposed borrow location, were completed by the MVM archaeologist in the summer of 2018. The proposed project APE was previously cleared during construction of the St. Francis Levee. However, final permission to utilize the borrow area has not been obtained at this time.

No significant cultural resources were identified within the Below Senath APE. No additional cultural resources investigations are recommended prior to project implementation. However, should inadvertent discovery be made during construction, the resource would be evaluated, assessed for effects, avoided if possible, and mitigated in accordance with Federal statutes and regulations (36 CFR, Part 800).

PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW: The purpose of this public notice is to advise all interested parties of the proposed activities and to solicit comments and information necessary to evaluate the probable impact on the public interest. This notice is being circulated to federal, state and local agencies and to the public.

The decision to proceed with this project will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The potential benefits that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the activity must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the activity will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to modify or condition the project. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in preparation of the final environmental assessment and/or a draft environmental impact statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and are also used to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. The draft Environmental Assessment and draft Finding of No Significant Impact will be circulated to agencies and any other parties that respond to this notice requesting copies. Copies of these documents have been placed on the District's website's Memphis District Civil Works Projects at:

<http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/About/Offices/Regulatory/Public-Notices/>

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this proposed project. Requests for a public hearing shall clearly state the reason for holding a public hearing. The District Engineer will determine if the issues raised are substantial and whether a hearing is needed in order to reach a decision on the project. Failure of any agency or individual to comment on this notice will be interpreted to mean that there is no objection to the proposed work.

COMMENTS OR REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: If you wish to obtain additional information or to submit comments on this proposal, please contact Kevin Pigott at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Compliance Branch (RPEDS-PDC-UDC), 167 North Main Street RM B-202, Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894, telephone 901-544-4309. **Comments should be forwarded to this office by 25 February 2019.**

Sincerely,



Edward P. Lambert
Chief, Environmental Compliance Branch
Regional Planning and Environmental Division South

Enclosures

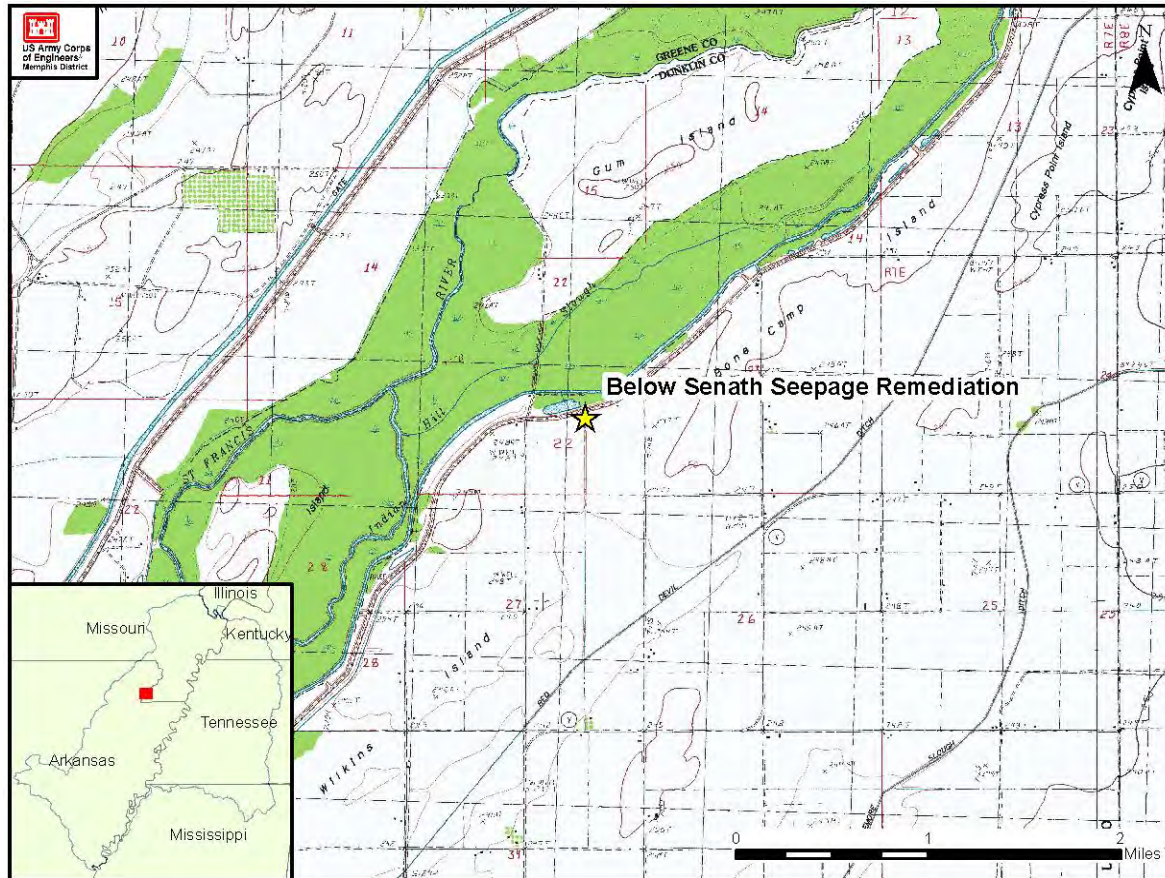


Figure 1. Location of Proposed Seepage Remediation Project, Dunklin County, Missouri.

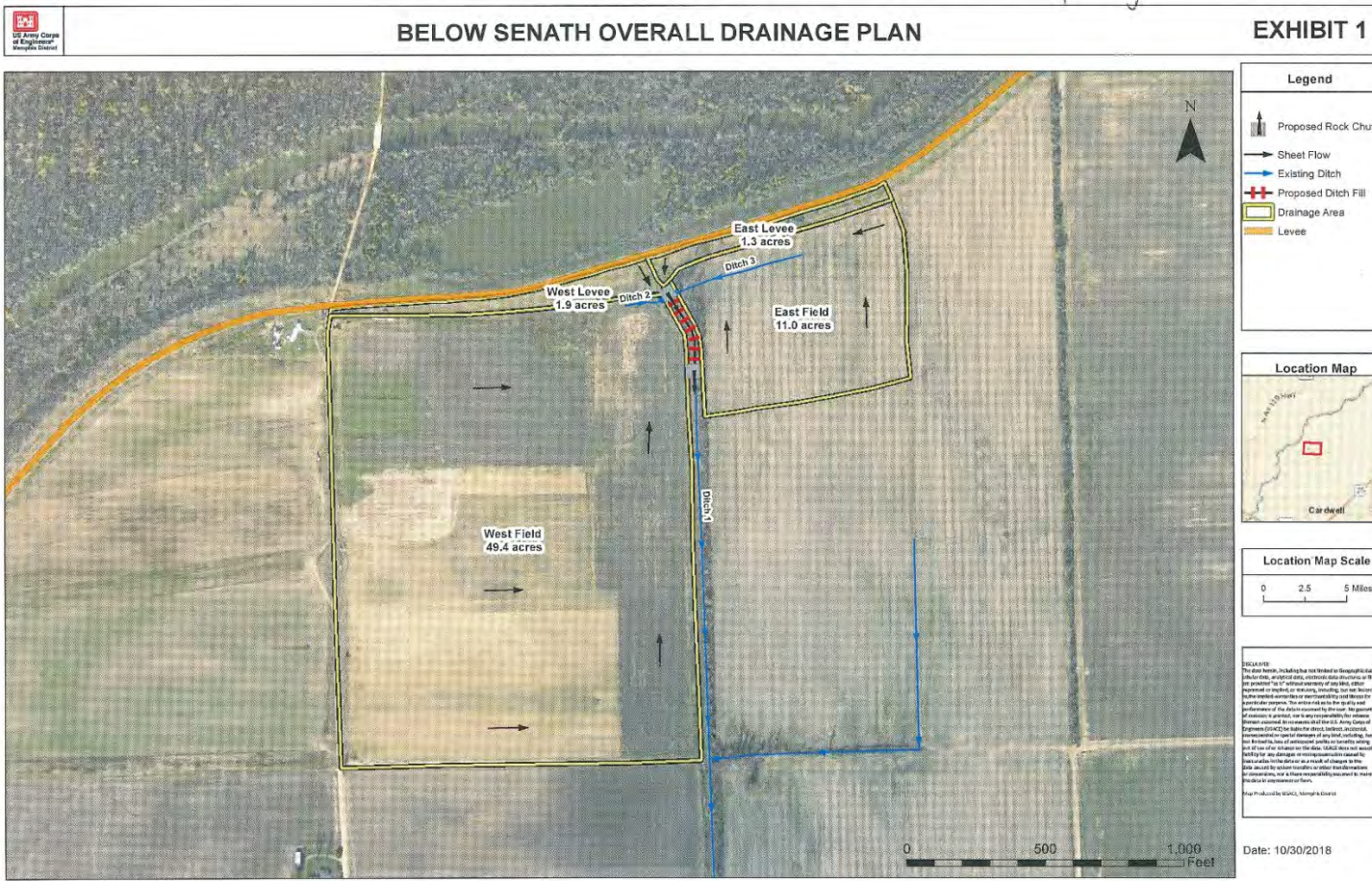


Figure 2. Proposed ditch modifications and alignments for the proposed Below Senath Seepage Remediation Project, Dunklin County, Missouri.