



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

ISSUE DATE: September 29, 2021

EXPIRATION DATE: October 30, 2021

PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

**Availability of Draft Environmental Assessment, 404(b)(1) evaluation
and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact**

REPLY TO:

ATTN: Jennifer Hiltonsmith, Environmental Compliance Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
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TITLE: Mississippi River Channel Improvement-Revetment Maintenance, New Madrid Boat Ramp Repair, New Madrid County, Missouri

AUTHORITY: The repair of the proposed work is authorized as part of the Mississippi River Channel Improvement (CI) portion of the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) Project. The MR&T Project is authorized by the Flood Control Act of 15 May 1928 (PL 391-71), as amended.

LOCATION: The proposed project measures are located on the riverside of the MRL, along the right descending (western) bank, near river mile 889 of the Mississippi River, New Madrid County, Missouri.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District (MVM), is issuing this notice with the intention of repairing the New Madrid boat ramp located at Riverfront Park in New Madrid County, Missouri.

PURPOSE: The New Madrid boat ramp was constructed in 2002 and has since sustained premature structural damage. The boat ramp design did not incorporate measures to protect the ramp from large commercial vessels docking at it, which has led to structural impacts and degradation of the ramp. Additionally, recent high-water conditions and high river velocities

**New Madrid Boat Ramp Repair
New Madrid County, Missouri**

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Regional Planning and Environment Division South**

have caused scouring on the upstream side. Continued impacts from large vessels, high water levels, and high-water velocities may lead to boat ramp failure and could result in human injuries and/or loss of life and significant economic damages.

PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed project would repair the structurally damaged sections of the boat ramp and place riprap within the project area to repair scour that has occurred. Additional riprap would be placed outside of the original project design area to help offset any potential future scour and stabilize the banks surrounding the boat ramp. Work would include overlaying the existing ramp with a new 12-inch slab with an upstream 3-foot by 3-foot turndown. Damaged areas would be removed, and the existing cast-in-place slab would be cored, and grout would be added to fill any voids that exist in areas that have sustained damage. The new 12-inch slab would be cast-in-place along most of its length, and a precast push-in-place slab would be used for the remaining length of slab that is underwater (the portion extending past the existing curb).

Approximately 15,000 tons of riprap would be set to armor the banks. On the upstream side, riprap would be placed above ramp elevation, extend out 15 feet, and then slope down at 2H:1V. Furthermore, providing the anticipated protection against future damage during high water and velocities requires the placement of riprap approximately 55 feet downstream and 95 feet upstream beyond the current riprap placement.

ALTERNATIVES: ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

Three alternatives were considered to accomplish the rehabilitation of the New Madrid boat ramp: 1) no-action; 2) repair the boat ramp to its original design; 3) remove and replace damaged boat ramp sections, add a turndown, and reinforce with riprap.

Alternative 1 – Future without Project Condition (No-Action)

The no-action alternative would result in the continued degradation of the New Madrid boat ramp. High water would continue to allow large boats and barges to navigate too close to shore, impacting the integrity of the boat ramp. Scour damage on the upstream side would continue to occur and undermine the stability of the boat ramp making it inoperable. Therefore, the MVM has determined that this alternative would not effectively address the active degradation of the New Madrid boat ramp; and the boat ramp would not meet safety standards.

Alternative 2 – Repair the boat ramp to its original design

This alternative would involve repairing the damaged boat ramp to the original 2002 design. Damaged areas would be removed, and the existing cast-in-place slab would be cored, and grout would be placed to fill any voids that exist in areas that have sustained damage. No environmental or cultural impacts would be incurred as a result of this alternative. However, this alternative would not alleviate the structural impacts caused by the docking of larger motor vessels nor would it provide protection to the ramp during high-water events. Thus, MVM determined this alternative was not practicable and removed it from further consideration.

Alternative 3 – Remove and replace damaged boat ramp sections, add a turndown, and reinforce with riprap

This alternative would involve overlaying the existing ramp with a new slab with an upstream 3-foot by 3-foot turndown, which is anticipated to add protection to allow larger commercial vessels to dock. Damaged areas would be removed, and the existing cast-in-place slab would be cored and grouted. The new 12-inch slab would be cast-in-place along most of its length, and a precast push-in-place slab would be used for the remaining length of slab that is underwater. Riprap would be set to add stabilization. The additional features added to the original project design would not cause any significant negative environmental or cultural impacts due to the current urban use of the area.

Preferred Alternative for the Proposed Project

After careful consideration of all alternatives, it was determined that alternative 1 (no-action) was unacceptable because of risks to human life and property. If the structural damage is not addressed, boat ramp failure resulting in catastrophic impacts could ultimately result. Due to ineffectiveness of the current boat ramp design, specifically the inability to allow larger vessels to dock, Alternative 2 is not practicable or reasonable. All factors considered, Alternative 3 is the most practicable solution for boat ramp longevity and safety. Therefore, this is the preferred alternative for the proposed project.

MITIGATION: No mitigation would be required due to the urban use of the project area.

CLEAN WATER ACT: No significant impacts to water quality would occur as a result of the proposed project. A Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation was prepared for the proposed action and is included as an appendix to the environmental assessment (EA). Request for a state water quality certification from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources is ongoing. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process would not be considered complete and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) would not be signed until the Section 401 Water Quality certification is received by USACE.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, it was determined that although the project area falls within range of the endangered Indiana bat, gray bat and threatened northern long-eared bat, the proposed project area is a developed boat ramp and vegetative clearing is not required. Additionally, no evidence of bald eagles, or their nests, were observed within the project vicinity. Due to the high traffic of large barges and smaller boat activities at this boat ramp location, it was concluded that this site would not be suitable habitat for the endangered pallid sturgeon. Therefore, USACE has determined that the proposed project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect any threatened or endangered species or their critical habitats.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The New Madrid boat ramp repair project has no potential to impact historic properties, and no further Section 106 consultation is required per 36 CFR 800.3

(a)(1). Coordination with the federally recognized Native American Tribes within MVM is being conducted with the circulation of this draft EA.

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 environmental agencies; Native American tribes; and the general public. The decision to proceed with the proposed modifications 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 of the activity must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. Potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the activity on the human environment will be considered.

Memphis District is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by Memphis District to determine whether to proceed with the proposed action. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors. Comments are used in preparation of the final EA and/or draft environmental impact statement pursuant to the NEPA and are also used to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. **The draft EA and draft FONSI have been completed and will be circulated to agencies and any other party that responds to this notice requesting a copy. Copies have been placed on the District's website at:**

<http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/About/Offices/Regulatory/PublicNotices.aspx>. The files are located towards the bottom of the screen in the table, Memphis District Civil Works Projects. Refer to the column for State: Missouri, Project: New Madrid Boat Ramp. Under the column for Document, click on "environmental assessment" to access the draft EA, and click on "finding of no significant impact" to access the draft FONSI.

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 action. Requests for a public hearing should 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 Jennifer Hiltonsmith at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Compliance Branch, 167 North Main Street RM B-202, Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894, at 901-579-7473 or Jennifer.Hiltonsmith@usace.army.mil. **Comments should be forwarded to this office by October 30, 2021.**

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New Madrid County, Missouri**

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regional Planning and Environment Division South**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward P. Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

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