ISSUE DATE: 24 April 2020

US Army Corps of Engineers ®
Memphis District

PUBLIC NOTICE
EXPIRATION DATE: 25 May 2020

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
AND STATE OF MISSOURI

Availability of draft Environmental Assessment, draft Finding of No Significant Impact, and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation

REPLY TO:
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Environmental Compliance Branch
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894
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TITLE: Fisk Scour Repair South of Railroad Bridge, St. Francis River Basin, Butler and Stoddard Counties, Missouri.

AUTHORITY: The proposed action is authorized as part of St. Francis Maintenance in the Flood Control Acts of 1928 (P.L. 70-391), 1936 (P.L. 74-678), 1941, Section 3 (P.L. 77-228), 1946, Section 10 (P.L. 79-526), 1950, Section 204 (Title II of P.L. 81-516), 1965 (Title II of P.L. 89-298) and 1968 Section 203 (90-483); Water Resources Development Act of 2007, Section 3011 (P.L. 110-114).

LOCATION: The proposed scour repair location is in the St. Francis River located , near the town of Fisk, Butler and Stoddard counties, Missouri (Figure 1).

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: High water velocities within the St. Francis River has led to bank scouring south of the Missouri State Highway 51 Bridge and adjacent railroad bridge. The existing scour area is approximately 0.5 acre in size, proposed measures are anticipated to prevent the scour from progressing further upstream. Failure of the very active Union Pacific railroad line would create logistical bottlenecks and cause major disruptions in rail service in the Midwestern part of the country. Failure of the adjacent highway bridge would create impositions to the public trying to cross the St. Francis River.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: The proposed project involves placing R400 riprap 30 to 60 inches thick over 6 inches of bedding stone within the approximate 400 feet long and 360 feet wide scour hole. At the upstream end of the scour, the riprap would tie into existing R200 riprap. Side slopes would be excavated to a 2:1 slope with riprap overlain. Approximately 10,670 tons of R400 riprap and 1,425 tons of bedding material would be used (Figure 2).

Access to the proposed project area would be from two haul roads (Figure 2). The left descending bank access (east side) would be through the use of an existing gravel road off Old Highway 60. The right descending bank access (west side) would be through the use of a temporary haul road specially constructed for this project. The constructed haul road would be 30 feet wide and run along the southern edge of an existing agricultural field (temporarily only during the construction period), crossing under existing overhead electric line, over an existing single track road, and through a section of woods to the project site. Heavy construction equipment would be used to place riprap and achieve side slope aspects. Post-construction hydrology would be similar to pre-existing condition.

CLEAN WATER ACT: 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. The project is being coordinated with the Missouri Department of Environmental Quality. Approximately 10,670 tons of R400 riprap and 1,425 tons of bedding material would be used. No wetlands or bottomland hardwood forests would be impacted by project construction.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: According to information obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), there are a total of three threatened, endangered, or candidate species that could potentially be found within the proposed project area. These species are the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), grey bat (*M. grisescens*), and northern long-eared bat (*M. septentrionalis*). Of these species, only the endangered Indiana bat and threatened northern long-eared bat would potentially utilize the forested habitat within the project areas. Grey bats are cave-dependent species, and caves are not found within the project area.

In the summer of 2019, USACE biologists conducted a site assessment of the proposed project area. Scattered vegetation, primarily on the western side, was examined for the presence of suitable/potential habitat for the Indiana and northern long-eared bat. Dominant tree species include American elm, sugarberry, silver maple, hickory, sycamore, various types of oaks, and cottonwood. Some trees were documented as being larger than 3 inches diameter at breast height, although no evidence of suitable roost trees (snags or live trees with exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, or hollows) were observed. Any proposed tree clearing is of such small size (approximately 0.1 acres) and would be conducted in the winter tree clearing timeframe prior to project construction. Furthermore, habitat within the proposed project area is not considered critical habitat by USFWS for any other potential threatened or endangered species.

In August 2019, a freshwater mussel survey was conducted by USACE biologists. No evidence of threatened or endangered species was found during this effort. Habitat within the project area and immediately downstream was generally found to be highly unstable sand and characterized by high water velocity. These conditions do no provide habitat considered suitable to the endangered Fat Pocketbook mussel (*Potamilus capax*). Coordination with USFWS has occurred with the determination that "the proposed project may affect but is unlikely to adversely affect the Fat Pocketbook."

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89 80 655), as amended; NEPA of 1969 (Public Law 91-90), as amended; and other applicable laws and regulations require Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertaking on the environment and any significant cultural resources within the project area of the proposed undertaking, as well as its area of potential effect (APE). No significant cultural resources were identified within the proposed projects 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 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. Comments are also considered by the Missouri Department of Environmental Quality pertaining to the granting and/or conditioning of water quality certification. The draft Environmental Assessment, draft Finding of No Significant Impact, and Section 404 (b)(1) evaluation 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 received by this office by 25 May 2020.** All comments will be forwarded to Missouri Department of Environmental Quality for consideration regarding state water quality certification.

Sincerely,

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

Enclosures

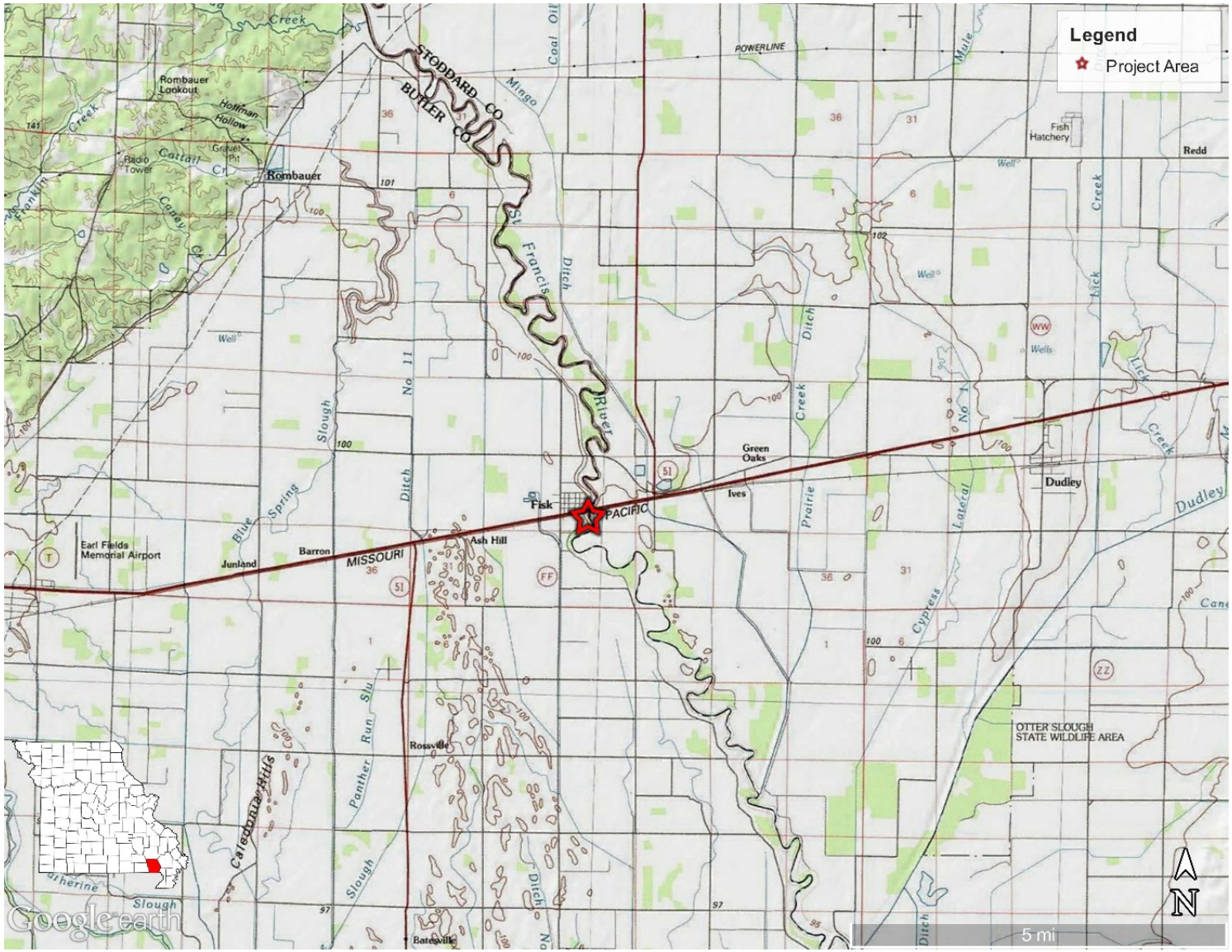

Figure 1. Location of Proposed Fisk Scour Repair, Butler and Stoddard Counties, Missouri.

Figure 2. Proposed Location of Haul Roads and Scour Location, Fisk Scour Repair, Butler And Stoddard Counties, Missouri.