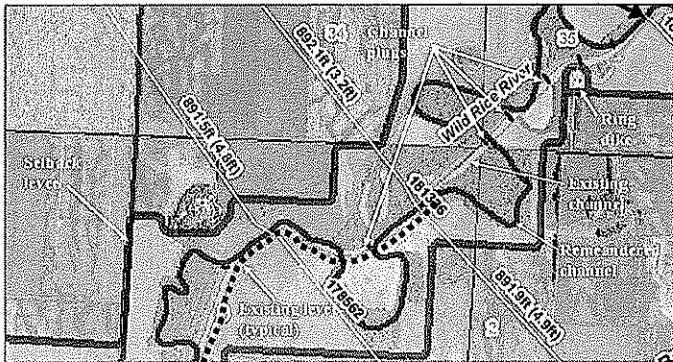




**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Ecosystem Restoration: Wild Rice River (Minnesota) Feasibility Study



Conceptual plan – setback levees and channel remeandering – Wild Rice River

Contact

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Location/Description

The Wild Rice River is located in northwestern Minnesota. The 160-mile-long river has a 1,600-square-mile drainage area that includes portions of Norman, Mahanomen, Becker, Clay and Polk Counties. The scope of the Wild Rice River Feasibility Study focuses mainly on water and related land resource problems, needs, and opportunities in the lower Wild Rice River. Emphasis is being placed on natural resources restoration and enhancement and flood risk management. The non-Federal sponsor for the study is the Wild Rice Watershed District.

Earlier phases of the study determined that there was potential for justification of a federally-sponsored ecosystem restoration project. Project features include:

- Setback levees along a 23-mile reach of the Wild Rice River.
- Restoration of a sinuous channel/riparian corridor in the reach channelized by the Corps in the 1950s.
- Natural resource enhancement within the setback levee corridor.
- Other measures including flowage easements, diversion channels and off-channel flood storage.

The current study effort is using the Corps' six-step planning process to establish environmental goals and objectives for the study area and will be used to design ecosystem restoration measures, quantify the environmental outputs and use incremental cost analysis to recommend a plan. A feasibility report document will be prepared, including National Environmental Policy Act documentation.

Status

This ecosystem restoration project is in the feasibility phase. The project management plan and study cost estimate were updated in July 2008 and may be revised in 2009. Current work efforts include determining environmental goals and objectives in consultation with an interagency team, inventorying existing information and conditions, gathering additional data, developing an environmental community model to be used in determining environmental outputs, investigating off-channel storage sites, and negotiating a programmatic agreement for Section 106 compliance.

Authority

This study was authorized by a resolution of the Senate Committee on Public Works dated 30 September 1974.

Fiscal

The feasibility study costs are shared 50/50 between the Federal Government and non-Federal sponsor. Implementation costs are shared 65/35 between the Federal Government and non-Federal sponsor.

Estimated study cost	\$4,800,000
Federal	\$2,325,000
Non-Federal	\$2,325,000
External peer review (Federal)	\$150,000
 Federal funding through FY 2008	 \$1,411,000
 Estimated implementation cost	 \$47,000,000
Federal	\$30,550,000
Non-Federal	16,450,000