

Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

Fox River Connectivity & Habitat Project
Section 519, Illinois River Basin Restoration

Kane and McHenry Counties, Illinois

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The final Integrated Project Implementation Report and Environmental Assessment (PIR/EA) dated XXXX, for the Fox River Connectivity and Habitat Project addresses altered stream hydrology and hydraulics, native riverine fish community degradation, and habitat fragmentation and includes considerations of unique bedrock communities, increased native species richness, native migratory fishes, and human safety in Kane and McHenry Counties, Illinois. The final recommendation will be contained in the final integrated PIR/EA and FONSI, dated XXXX.

The draft Integrated PIR/EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated various alternatives that would restore natural riverine processes within the study area for native fish, wildlife and plant communities in the study area. The Tentatively Selected Plan is the National Ecosystem Restoration (NER) Plan and includes:

- Demolition and removal of nine Fox River dams to the natural bedrock elevation.
- Appropriate recycling and disposal of all manmade materials generated from the dam demolition and removal.
- Use of machinery and equipment specifically designed and environmentally safe for aquatic work.
- A three-year construction period to support staged removal, monitoring and adaptive management.
- A three-year post construction monitoring period to ensure project success and future sustainability.

In addition to a “no action” plan, two alternatives were evaluated. The alternatives included removal of all study area dams, and removal of some study area dams based on public and agency review as discussed in Chapter 3.

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the Tentatively Selected Plan are listed in Table 1:

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Tentatively Selected Plan

	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Air quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aquatic resources/wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invasive species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish and wildlife habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic properties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other cultural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Floodplains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hydrology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Navigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Noise levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental justice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribal trust resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the Tentatively Selected Plan. Best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented, if appropriate, to minimize impacts. In order to minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species, or migratory species, work will not be conducted during critical life stages (i.e. breeding or nesting).

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the Tentatively Selected Plan.

Public review of the draft Integrated PIR/EA and FONSI was completed on **XXXX**. All comments submitted during the public review period will be responded to in the Final Integrated PIR/EA and FONSI.

Pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that the Tentatively Selected Plan will have no effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat.

Pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that historic properties would not be affected by the Tentatively Selected Plan. A finding of No Historic Properties Affected was previously submitted to the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on May 11, 2015. The

affected dams in the project area were determined not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The SHPO responded on June 15, 2015 stating that they have no objections to the finding of no historic properties affected. However, this finding only remains in effect for two years and is now expired. As such, the draft IPIR/EA will be sent to the SHPO along with a new finding of effects during the agency and public review.

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended, no discharge of dredged or fill material would be placed in wetlands or waters of the U.S. under the Tentatively Selected Plan, therefore, the plan has been found to be compliant with section 401 of the Clean Water Act and section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR 230).

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed.

Technical, environmental, and cost effectiveness criteria used in the formulation of alternative plans were those specified in the Water Resources Council's 1983 Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies. All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives. Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the Tentatively Selected Plan would not cause significant adverse effects on the quality of the human environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date

Kenneth P. Rockwell
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander