

MCCLELLAN-KERR ARKANSAS RIVER NAVIGATION SYSTEM 12-FOOT CHANNEL

Public Engagement Workshop

June 5, 2023 – Tulsa, OK

June 6, 2023 – Fort Smith, AR

June 7, 2023 – Little Rock, AR

June 8, 2023 – Pine Bluff, AR



“The views, opinions and findings contained in this report are those of the authors(s) and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation.”



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**



Environmental Assessment Guidelines and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process

What is NEPA?

- One of the oldest environmental laws, it requires Federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental and social effects of their proposed actions in a publicly available document.

Why a Supplemental Environmental Assessment?

- We are preparing a SEA to update the 2005 Environmental Impact Statement to ensure compliance with all applicable environmental laws.
- An Environmental Assessment fully discloses the Purpose and Need, Alternatives Considered, Baseline Conditions, and the Environmental and Social Effects.

MKARNS 12-Foot Channel

What is it?

- Authorized under Section 136 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2004, the MKARNS 12-Foot Channel purpose is to improve commercial navigation operation by deepening the current 9-foot navigation channel to a 12-foot operational depth. Over 85% of the MKARNS is already at this 12-foot operational depth.

Why is it needed?

- Deepening the channel will allow the existing inland commercial fleet to sail at deeper drafts that are consistent with those on the Lower Mississippi River and load more cargo onto their barges thereby lowering transportation costs. This benefits producers and consumers throughout the region and nation. Roughly \$5 billion of goods are moved on the MKARNS annually. In addition, shipping more cargo on the MKARNS versus road or rail may have the added benefit of reducing landside congestion on roads and railways. Lastly, air emissions from barges on ton per mile basis are far less than trucks or rail.

MKARNS History

- 1946: Rivers and Harbors Act of 1946 authorized development of the AR River and its tributaries for navigation
- 1952: Construction on the MKARNS began
- 1999: Arkansas River Navigation Study (ARNS) initiated
- 2004: Energy and Water Development Act of 2004 authorized project depth of 12 feet
- 2005: ARNS Feasibility Study and EIS completed, and Record of Decision signed for 12-foot Channel
- 2020: WRDA 2020 provided funding to initiate updated modeling and designs

MKARNS 12-Foot Channel Construction Features

Features are designed based on updated hydrologic and sediment modeling done since 2021 and include:

Rock weirs



Re-directive or resistive structures that use the river's energy to deepen and enhance the navigation channel, increase environmental diversity, and maintain system status.

Dredging

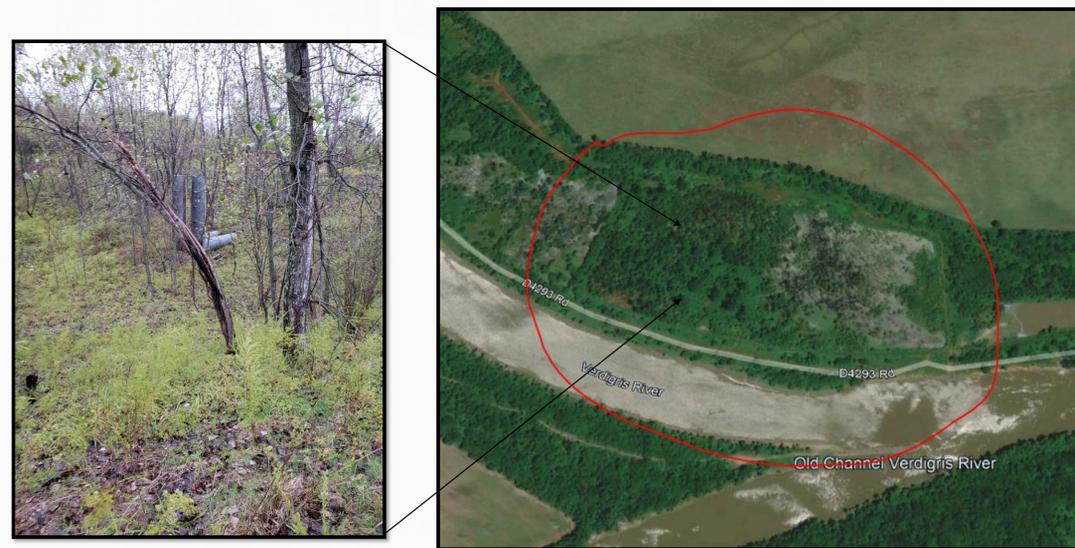


Removal of sediment and debris from the channel to allow ships to pass and maintain river flow.

MKARNS 12-Foot Channel Construction Features

Features are designed based on updated hydrologic and sediment modeling done since 2021 and include:

Upland disposal sites



Disposal sites allow dredge material to be used to improve habitat. Image depicts habitat available after fill placement.

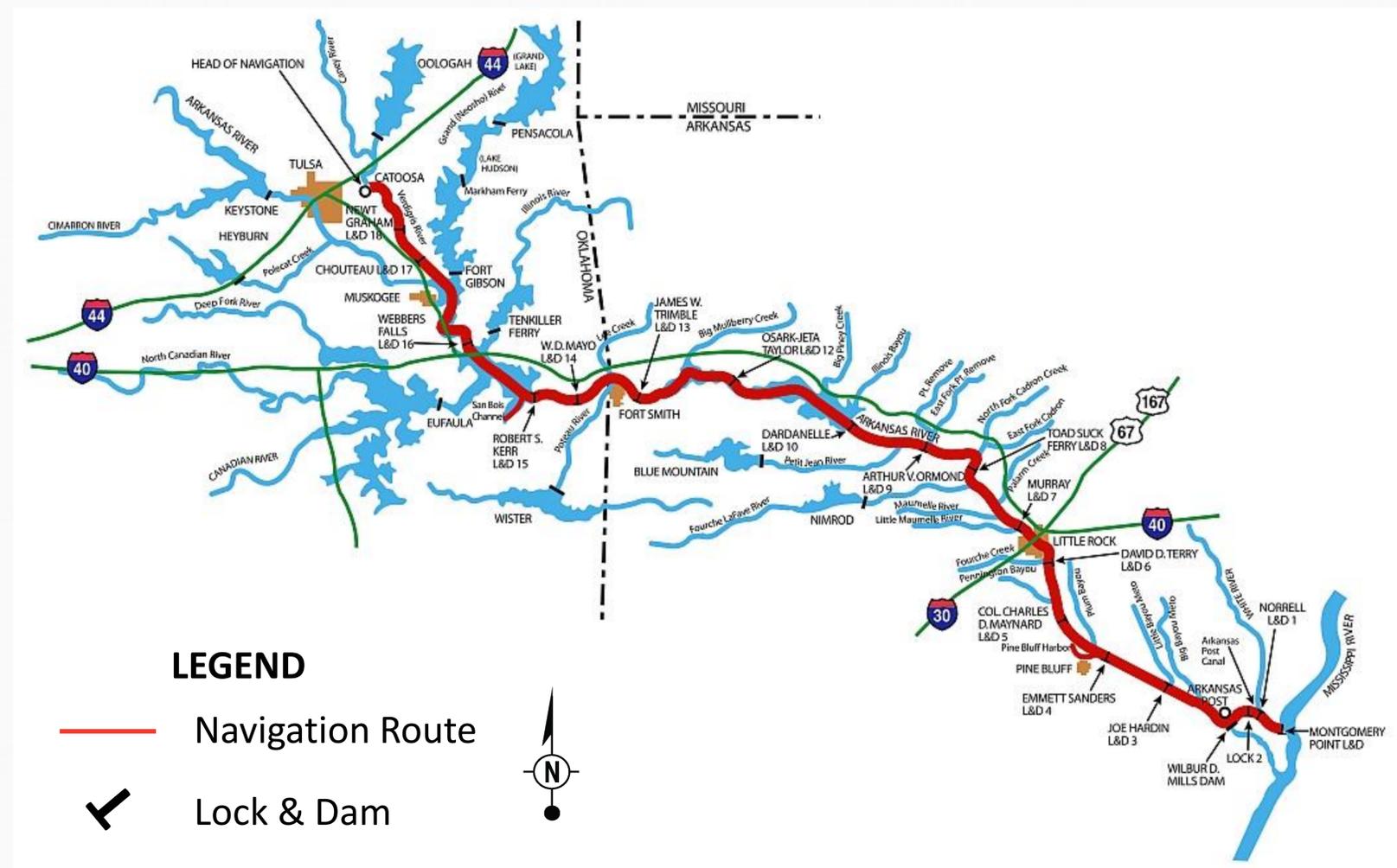
Lock modifications



Modifications strengthen locks to accommodate barges with a draft of more than 9ft.

MKARNS Map

McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System



445-mile-long system with 18 locks and dams

MKARNS 12-Foot Benefits

- Increased cargo capacity by deepening the channel
- Potentially reduces roadway congestion by allowing more cargo to ship on the MKARNS, rather than using truck and rail routes
- Beneficial use options available for dredge material
- Deepening the channel will allow the existing inland commercial fleet to sail at deeper drafts that are consistent with those on the Lower Mississippi River



MKARNS 12-Foot Schedule

July 8, 2023

- Comment period ends

**Late summer
or fall 2023**

- Draft SEA available for review and comment

**Late 2023/early
2024**

- Final SEA available

2025

- Construction begins

How Can You Participate?

- **Today's Workshop**

- Review information on the display boards and handouts
- Ask the USACE Staff questions

- **How to Provide Comments (4 options)**

- Place comment cards in comment box tonight
- Submit comments online at:

<https://www.swl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning/MKARNS-12-foot-Channel/Comment-Card/>

- E-mail comments to:

CESWL-NAV-MKARNS12FOOTCHANNEL@usace.army.mil

- Mail comments to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: Kelly Dobroski (RPEC)
2000 Fort Point Rd,
Galveston, TX 77550

**Comments must
be postmarked
by: **July 8, 2023****