



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Little Rock District

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE

CORPS OF ENGINEERS – STATE OF ARKANSAS

Application Number: SWL-1993-11891-1

Date: May 28, 2019

Comments Due: June 24, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: Comments are invited on the work described below. Please see the Public Involvement section for details on submitting comments.

Point of Contact. If additional information is desired, please contact the regulator, Lisa Boyle, telephone number: (501) 340-1385, mailing address: Little Rock District Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Division, PO Box 867, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-0867, email address: Lisa.A.Boyle@usace.army.mil

Project Information. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S. Code 1344), notice is hereby given that

US Army Corps of Engineers - Little Rock District

has requested authorization for a new dredged material disposal area on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS). The proposed project is located in the White River Entrance Channel at Navigation Mile (NM) 9.7, in Arkansas County, Arkansas.

The downstream approach to Norrell Lock 1 periodically requires dredging due to sedimentation. These sediments have traditionally been disposed of in upland disposal areas located at NM 9.2 Left (L) and NM 8.6 Right (R); and in the existing in-water disposal areas located at NM 9.9L and NM 9.9R. The upland disposal sites at NM 9.2L and NM 8.6R were previously leased from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The lease agreement with USFWS expired in 2015 and can no longer be utilized. The existing in-water disposal areas located at NM 9.9L and NM 9.9R are located adjacent to the navigation channel which causes material to slough back into the area being dredged and are currently nearing capacity. Additional disposal is needed to adequately maintain channel depths for navigation during low water conditions.

The average annual amount of material to be placed within the proposed In Water Dredged Material Disposal Area is less than 25,000 cubic yards (yd³). It is anticipated that with the rise and fall of river levels these materials will be flushed downstream annually due to the area being a natural area of scouring.

The Navigation Pool elevation is 115.0 feet mean sea level (msl). This elevation is maintained by raising the Hinged Crest Gates at Montgomery Point Lock & Dam (L&D) when the water surface elevation at Montgomery Point L&D falls to Elevation 115.0 feet msl. This condition normally exists for very short periods of time during low water conditions and times of drought. The bottom elevation of the proposed In Water Dredged Material Disposal Area ranges from elevation 63.2 feet to 93.8 feet msl.

The MKARNS is dredged for commercial uses and to maintain the navigation channel. Natural

creation of sand deposits and commercial and maintenance removal of these deposits is an ongoing process for the life cycle of the Arkansas River since the construction of the MKARNS. Therefore, no compensatory mitigation would be required.

The location and general plan for the proposed work are shown on the enclosed sheets.

Water Quality Certification. By copy of this public notice, the applicant is requesting water quality certification from the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) in accordance with Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act. Upon completion of the comment period and a public hearing, if held, a determination relative to water quality certification will be made. Evidence of this water quality certification or waiver of the right to certify must be submitted prior to the issuance of a Corps of Engineers permit.

Cultural Resources. A Corps staff archeologist will review topographic maps, the National Register of Historic Places, and other data on reported sites in the area. The District Engineer invites responses to this public notice from Native American Nations or tribal governments; Federal, State, and local agencies; historical and archeological societies; and other parties likely to have knowledge of or concerns with historic properties in the area.

Endangered Species. Our preliminary determination is that the proposed activity will not affect listed Endangered Species or their critical habitat. A copy of this notice is being furnished to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and appropriate state agencies and constitutes a request to those agencies for information on whether any listed or proposed-to-be-listed endangered or threatened species may be present in the area which would be affected by the proposed activity.

Floodplain. We are providing copies of this notice to appropriate floodplain officials in accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 60 (Floodplain Management Regulations Criteria for Land Management and Use) and Executive Order 11988 on Floodplain Management.

Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines. The evaluation of activities to be authorized under this permit, which involves the discharge of dredged or fill material will include application of guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act. These guidelines are contained in 40 Code of Federal CFR 230.

Public Involvement. Any interested party is invited to submit to the above-listed POC written comments or objections relative to the proposed work on or before **June 24, 2019**. Substantive comments, both favorable and unfavorable, will be accepted and made a part of the record and will receive full consideration in determining whether this work would be in the public interest. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and

wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

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 this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. 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 the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Any person may request in writing within the comment period specified in this notice that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. The District Engineer will determine if the issues raised are substantial and whether a hearing is needed for making a decision.

NOTE: The mailing list for this Public Notice is arranged by state and county(s) where the project is located, and includes any addressees who have asked to receive copies of all public notices. Please discard notices that are not of interest to you. If you have no need for any of these notices, please advise us so that your name can be removed from the mailing list.

Enclosures

Approximate Coordinates of Project Center

Latitude: **34.0177°N**

Longitude: **-91.185216°W**

UTM Zone: **15N** North: **3765616**

East: **667583**



