

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

REPAIR OF THE SOUTH ST. PAUL FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT
ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AT
SOUTH ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Send to IGK
Supt RPT

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ST. PAUL DISTRICT

OCTOBER 1997

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REPAIR OF THE SOUTH ST. PAUL FOOD CONTROL PROJECT
ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AT
SOUTH ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

1.00 SUMMARY

1.01 The project is located along the Mississippi River in South St. Paul, Dakota County, Minnesota. Portions of the of the existing flood control project in South St. Paul were damaged during the floods that occurred in the spring of 1997. Public Law (P.L.) 84-99 allows Federal assistance in restoring damaged flood control works to their original condition. The proposed measures consist of the repair of several damaged sections of the existing levee and the replacement of riprap that was disturbed during the floods that occurred in the spring, 1997. The alternative to the proposed measure is no action.

1.02 An environmental review indicates the impacts associated with the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment as the probable effects in the area would be short term and minor. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

1.03 The proposed action would consist of the repair and rehabilitation of the damaged portions of a previously authorized, currently serviceable structure. The repairs would not involve any modifications that would change the character, scope or size of the original design. In accordance with 33 CFR Part 330, the proposed action is covered under Nationwide Permit # 3, Maintenance. Therefore a 404(b)(1) evaluation will not be prepared.

Relationship to Environmental Requirements

1.04 The proposed action would be in compliance with Federal environmental laws, Executive Orders and policies, and State and local laws and policies including the Clean Air Act, as amended; the Clean Water Act, as amended; the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958, as amended; the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended; Executive Order 11988 - Floodplain Management; Executive Order 11990 - Protection of Wetlands; and Executive Order 12898 - Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority

Population and Low-Income Population. The project is located in an urban area and would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Therefore, the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981 do not apply to this project. The proposed action would not be in conflict with any state of Minnesota air quality implementation plans.

2.00 NEED FOR AND OBJECTIVE OF ACTION

2.01 Authority for this study is provided by P.L. 84-99. Flooding in the spring of 1997 resulted in damage at 8 locations along the existing South St. Paul Flood Control Project which was completed in 1968. Damage consists primarily of erosion of portions of the levee in the vicinity of the outfalls and pump stations, and the loss of a portion of the bank on the riverward side of the floodwall segment of the project. In some areas riprap along the lower portion of the levee was washed away. Repair of these damaged areas would ensure continued protection of the industrial and commercial area of South St. Paul.

3.00 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Plan Eliminated from Further Study

3.01 The No Action alternative assumes that the local authorities may not be able to complete the needed repairs prior to next years flood season. Without immediate repairs, it is possible that additional damages could occur during the next high water event, resulting in failure of the existing project. This alternative was not selected since failure of the existing levees could result in substantial economic damages in South St. Paul.

Selected Plan

3.02 The proposed action consists of repairing the damaged sections of the levee at 8 sites (figure 1). Repair along the floodwall at the northern limits of the project would consist of reshaping the bank to a stable slope and protecting it with a 48 inch layer of riprap (figure 2). The repair at the remaining 7 sites would consist of replacing riprap to restore the levee to its original cross section (figure 3). A total of about 900 feet of levee would be repaired. Rock would come from existing quarries in the Twin Cities area. The work would be done with heavy equipment operating either from a work barge or off the top of the levee.

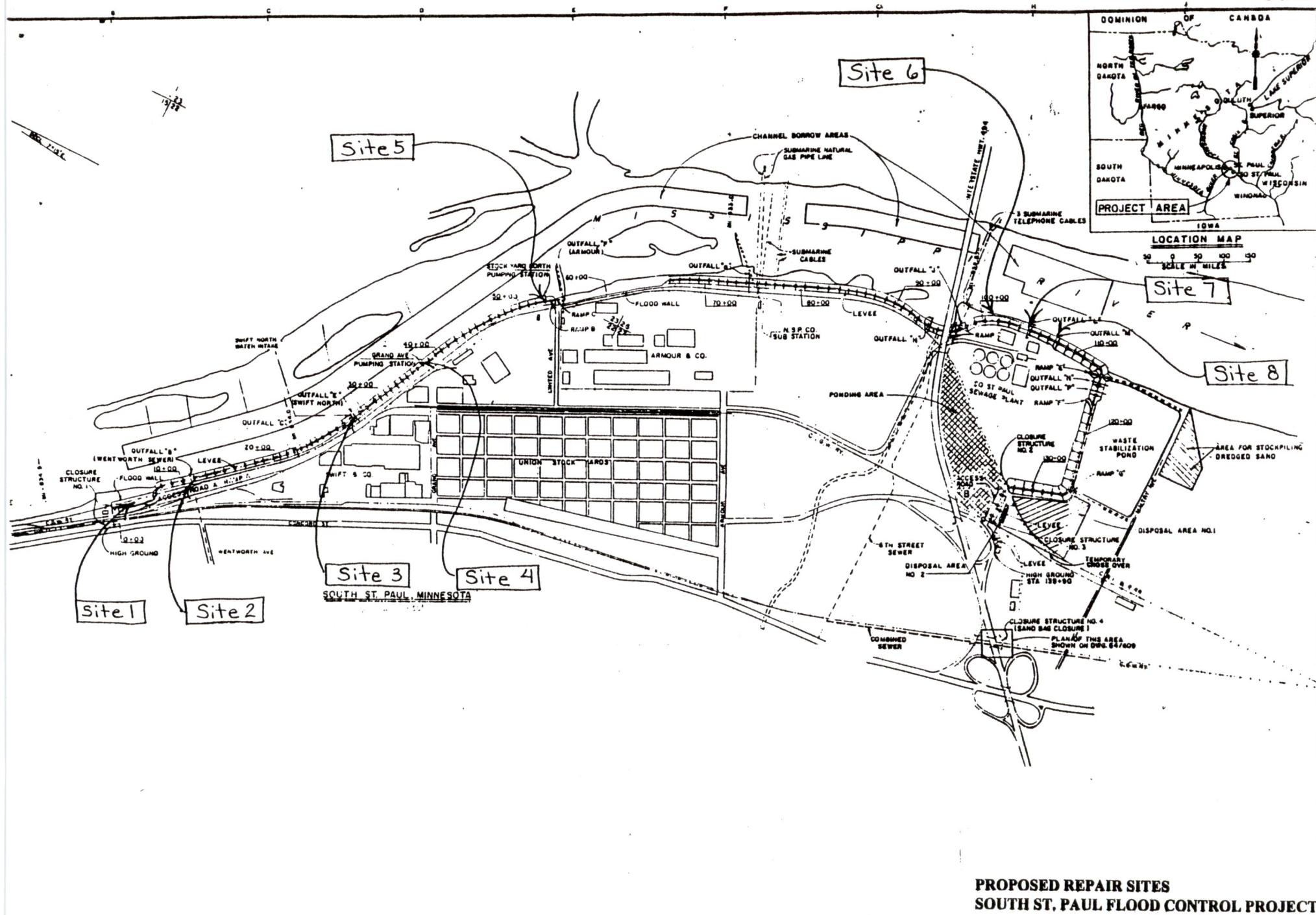
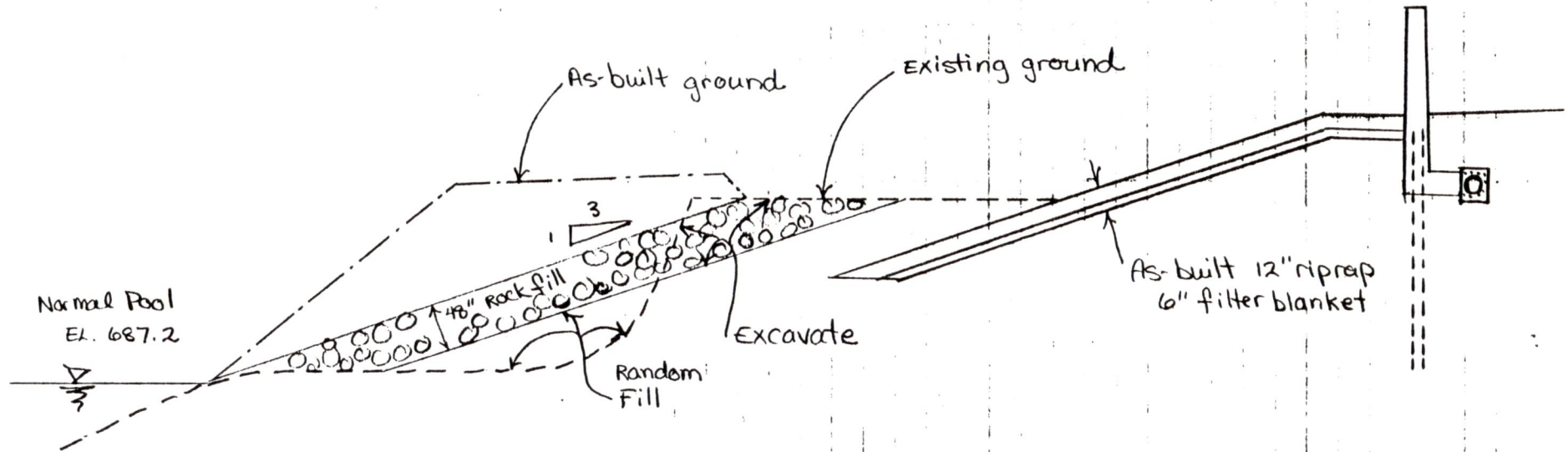
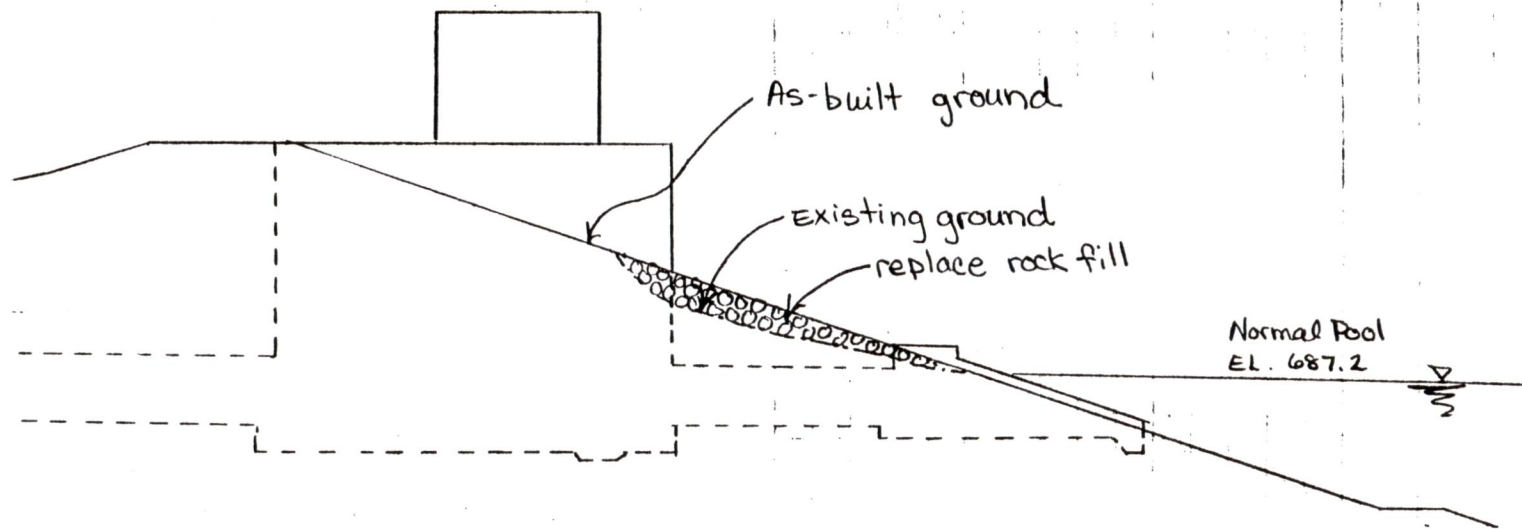


FIGURE 1



Site 1 - Floodwall reach
(Typical Section)

FIGURE 2



Site 4 - Grand Ave. Pumping Station
(Typical Section)

4.00 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Natural Resources

4.01 The existing levee protects an industrial and commercial area located along the Mississippi River area located in South St. Paul. Commercial navigation activities in this reach of the river are extensive. Commercial barges are often moored along the northern limits of the flood control project and along islands immediately across the river from the project. In addition, there is extensive recreational boat traffic in the summer.

4.02 Several wooded islands are present in this reach of the Mississippi River. However, fish and wildlife resources in the immediate project area are somewhat limited. The existing levee and commercial area affords little habitat for terrestrial wildlife. In this section of the Mississippi River, the bottom is composed of sand and organic sludge and supports little aquatic vegetation. Water quality is generally good in this reach of the river. However, there are problems with organic pollution (fecal coliforms) caused by urban run-off following storms and sewer discharges.

4.03 No threatened or endangered species are present in the immediate project area. However, the bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) may occasionally be sited in the Twin Cities area during migration. Eagles do utilize the trees on the wooded islands as roosting sites during the late fall and early winter. The peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus) has been successfully introduced to the Twin Cities area by providing nest sites on tall buildings in both downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis. During the summer, peregrine falcons may occasionally be sited on power line towers or tall buildings in the vicinity of the project area. This reach of the river does not provide suitable habitat for the Higgins eye pearly mussel (Lampsilis higginsii)

Cultural Resources

4.04 In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, The National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) has been consulted. The Stockyard Exchange Building is listed on the NHRP and is the only known historic property in the general vicinity of the levee system. The property is quite some distance away from the levee system. The National Register status of the South St. Paul Stockyards is not known, however it is not currently listed on the NHRP. There are no recorded archaeological sites on the large floodplain area where the levee system is located. The potential for unrecorded archaeological

sites is extremely low because of the extensive disturbance associated with the industrialization of the area.

Recreation Resources

4.05 There are several marinas, located upstream and downstream of the project area, in Pool 2 of the Mississippi River. In addition there is a public boat ramp located along the southern limits of the project. There is substantial recreational boating traffic in this reach of the river during the summer.

4.06 The area is also used extensively by the public for fishing. The trail along the levee and the boat ramp area provides easy access to the river for bank fishing.

5.00 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

5.01 An environmental analysis has been conducted for the proposed action, and a discussion of the impacts is presented in the following paragraphs. In accordance with Section 122 of the River and Harbor Act, the parameters listed in table EA-1 have been reviewed and considered in arriving at the final determinations.

Natural Resources

5.02 Because of the limited habitat in the project area and the limited scope of the proposed repairs, the proposed actions would impose no significant impacts on fish and wildlife resources in the area. The project would have no impacts on threatened or endangered species.

5.03 Construction activities would result in short-term negative effects on water, air and noise in the project area. The placement of fill and riprap could result in temporary minor increases in turbidity. In addition, a short-term increase in noise and air pollution in the project area would result from the operation of construction equipment.

Recreation Resources

5.04 No adverse impacts on recreational resources in the area would occur. Construction activities would not hinder the use of the river by recreational boaters. Access to the boat ramp may be restricted while repairs are being completed in that vicinity of the project. However, the work would most likely be done during the month of November, when use of the boat ramp and fishing

TABLE EA-1

IMPACT ASSESSMENT MATRIX

NAME OF PARAMETER

MAGNITUDE OF PROBABLE IMPACT

NAME OF PARAMETER	MAGNITUDE OF PROBABLE IMPACT						
	INCREASING BENEFICIAL IMPACT			NO APPRECIABLE EFFECT	INCREASING ADVERSE IMPACT		
A. SOCIAL EFFECTS	SIGNIFICANT	SUBSTANTIAL	MINOR	EFFECT	MINOR	SUBSTANTIAL	SIGNIFICANT
1. Noise Levels					X		
2. Aesthetic Values				X			
3. Recreational Opportunities				X			
4. Transportation				X			
5. Public Health and Safety		X					
6. Community Cohesion (Sense of Unity)				X			
7. Community Growth & Development				X			
8. Business and Home Relocations				X			
9. Existing/Potential Land Use				X			
10. Controversy				X			
B. ECONOMIC EFFECTS							
1. Property Values				X			
2. Tax Revenues				X			
3. Public Facilities and Services				X			
4. Regional Growth				X			
5. Employment				X			
6. Business Activity				X			
7. Farmland/Food Supply				X			
8. Commercial Navigation				X			
9. Flooding Effects				X			
10. Energy Needs and Resources				X			
C. NATURAL RESOURCE EFFECTS							
1. Air Quality					X		
2. Terrestrial Habitat				X			
3. Wetlands				X			
4. Aquatic Habitat				X			
5. Habitat Diversity and Interspersion				X			
6. Biological Productivity				X			
7. Surface Water Quality					X		
8. Water Supply				X			
9. Groundwater				X			
10. Soils				X			
11. Threatened or Endangered Species				X			
D. CULTURAL EFFECTS							
1. Historic Architectural Values				X			
2. Pre-Hist & Historic Archeological Values				X			

activities along the project reach are relatively low.

Cultural Resources

5.06 Because of the highly disturbed nature of the project area, the limited scope of the project, and the lack of known historic properties within the area of potential effects (as of 29 September 1997), there would be no effects on cultural properties listed on, or eligible for, the National Register.

Socio-Economics

5.07 Use of the mooring sites adjacent to the project may be disrupted while the repairs are being completed. The use of barges as construction platforms may have short-term adverse impacts on commercial navigation by constricting the navigation lanes during construction. The barges would be temporarily moved to allow for passage of periodic commercial traffic.

6.00 COORDINATION

6.01 Coordination with the public and government agencies has been maintained throughout the planning process. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources were contacted by telephone (Exhibit 1). Neither agency identified any areas of special concern. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that based on the type of work proposed, and on the habitat requirements of listed species that may be sighted in the area, the project would have no effect on threatened or endangered species and that no further action on this project under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, would be required. A Letter explaining the project and its effect on National Register sites have been sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The SHPO is expected to concur with the determination of no effect.

This environmental assessment will be sent to interested citizen and the following agencies:

Federal

Coast Guard
Environmental Protection Agency
Department of Transportation
Fish and Wildlife Service
Geological Survey
National Park Service

Natural Resources Conservation Service

State of Minnesota

Department of Energy, Planning and Development
Department of Agriculture
Department of Economic Development
Department of Health
State Historic Preservation Officer
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Transportation
Pollution Control Agency
State Archaeologist
Board of Water and Soil Resources

City of South St. Paul

Mayor's Office
City Engineer

Other

Metropolitan Council
Upper Mississippi Waterways Association

EXHIBIT 1
CORRESPONDENCE

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

RDD

3 OCT 97

PERSON CALLING: Randall D. Devendorf, MVPPE-M, 612-290-5267

PERSON CALLED: Wayne Barstad, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Metro Field Office, St. Paul , MN 772-7940

SUBJECT: PL84-99 Project for the South St. Paul Flood Control Project

1. I called Mr. Barstad to discuss the potential effects of the subject project. I described the existing conditions in the project area and the the proposed actions that are being considered.
2. Mr. Barstad indicated that due to the location and type of repairs being proposed, he had no special concerns with the proposed actions. He concurred that the impacts would be minor. He suggested that I talk to the area fisheries manager to see if he would have any concerns or comments.

6 OCT 97

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

PERSON CALLING: Randall D. Devendorf, MVPPE-M, 612-290-5267

RD

PERSON CALLED: Jeff Gordon, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Metro Field Office, St. Paul , MN 772-7959

SUBJECT: PL84-99 Project for the South St. Paul Flood Control Project

1. I called Mr. Gordon, Assistant Area Fisheries Manager, to discuss the potential effects of the subject project. Mr. Gordon was familiar with the area and I described the proposed actions that are being considered.

2. Mr. Gordon indicated that due to the location and type of repairs being proposed, he had no special concerns with the proposed actions. As long as natural rock was being used for the repairs and that the usual cautions were used to limit erosion from the sites, he concurred that the impacts would be minor. He also noted that there may be some minor recreation impact, due to disruption of access during construction, as the area is fished quite a bit.

6 OCT 97

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

PERSON CALLING: Randall D. Devendorf, MVPPE-M, 612-290-5267 

PERSON CALLED: Gary Wege, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, St. Paul Area Field Office, St. Paul, MN 612-725-3548 x207

SUBJECT: PL84-99 Project for the South St. Paul Flood Control Project

1. I called Mr. Wege to discuss the potential effects of the subject project. I described the existing conditions in the project area and described the proposed actions that are being considered. I also asked what threatened or endangered species may be in the area.

2. Mr. Wege indicated that due to the location and type of repairs being proposed, he had no special concerns with the proposed actions. Threatened or endangered species that may be sighted in the area include the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon, however no critical habitat for these species are present in the project area. He did note that bald eagles may use the wooded islands as roosting sites in the late fall and winter but the proposed actions would not affect the use of the areas. He also noted there is no suitable habitat for the Higgins eye pearly mussel along the project reach. Mr. Wege concurred that the impacts associated with the project would be minor.

EXHIBIT 2

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

ST. PAUL DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS CENTRE
190 FIFTH STREET EAST
ST. PAUL, MN 55101-1638

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Management and Evaluation Branch
Engineering and Planning Division

DRAFT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers has assessed the impacts of the following project.

REPAIR OF THE SOUTH ST. PAUL FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AT SOUTH ST. PAUL MINNESOTA

The intent of the proposed project is to repair several sections of the existing levee that were damaged during the floods that occurred in the Spring of 1997. The proposed project consists of reshaping the bank section to a stable slope and protecting with riprap at one site, and replacing riprap to restore the levee to its original cross section at seven other sites. This plan would maintain the integrity of the existing flood control project at South St. Paul, Minnesota. This Finding of No Significant Impact is based on the following factors: the proposed project would have minor impacts on wildlife and fishery resources; the project would have no impacts on the cultural environment; the project would have minor adverse impacts on the social environment; and continued coordination will be maintained with appropriate State and Federal agencies.

The environmental review process indicates that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Date

J. M. Wonsik
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer