

Middle Mississippi River Regional Corridor

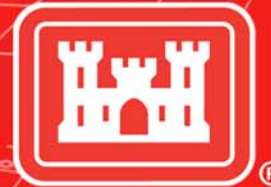
Lessons Learned from a Collaborative Planning Study

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**12th Biennial Governor's Conference on the
Management of the Illinois River**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District®



What was the MMRRC Study?

- 2 year watershed study (1 of 5 pilot studies)
- Facilitate collaborative planning
- Intent was to develop tools for the region to use, without end result being Corps projects.
- 100% Federally funded



Where is the Middle Mississippi River?

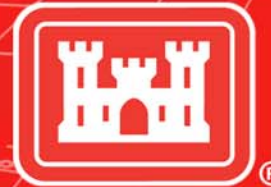




The Middle Mississippi River

- **Nationally significant waterway**
- **One of the worlds' most intensively regulated river systems**
- **Major international migratory flyway**
- **Highly productive farm ground**
- **Major urban areas**
- **Most of the river and its associated floodplain have been extensively modified**





Major Issues and Concerns on the Middle Mississippi River

- Loss of habitat
- Lack of river connectivity
- Need for continued agricultural viability
- Need for a reliable navigation system
- Increasing demand for recreation opportunities
- Strong inter-agency interest in working together



MMR Regional Corridor Study

- Natural Resource centered
3 focus areas
 1. Develop a science-based regional restoration planning and prioritization tool
 2. Set Regional Goals and Objectives
 - 12 issue/resource concern areas
 3. Complete Reach Assessments
 - On the ground needs/opportunities





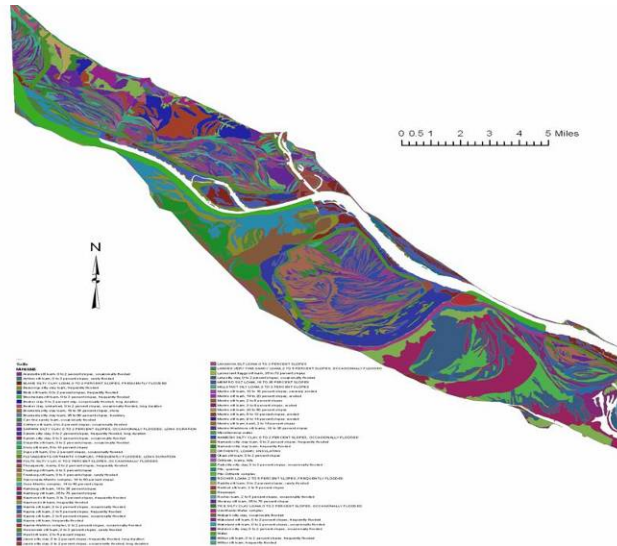
Natural Resource Planning Tool

Strong desire for a landscape level planning tool to help drive future regional natural resource planning.

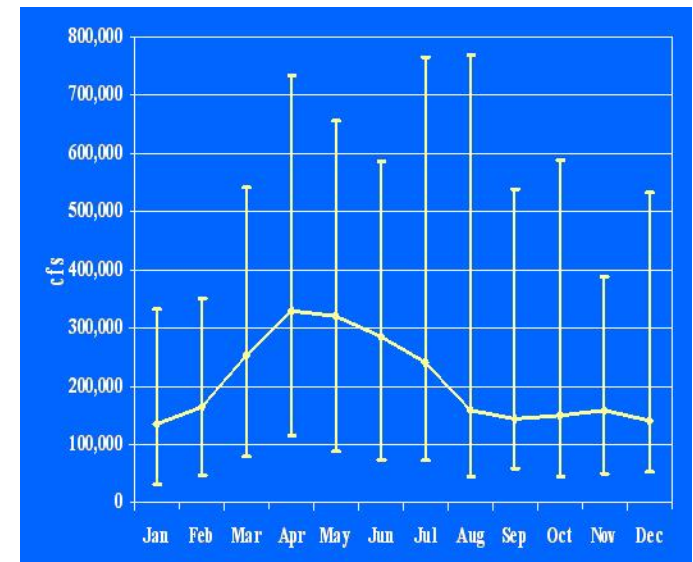
- Hydrogeomorphic Tool
 - Science-based
 - GIS based planning tool
 - Successfully applied elsewhere



“Pieces to the Puzzle”



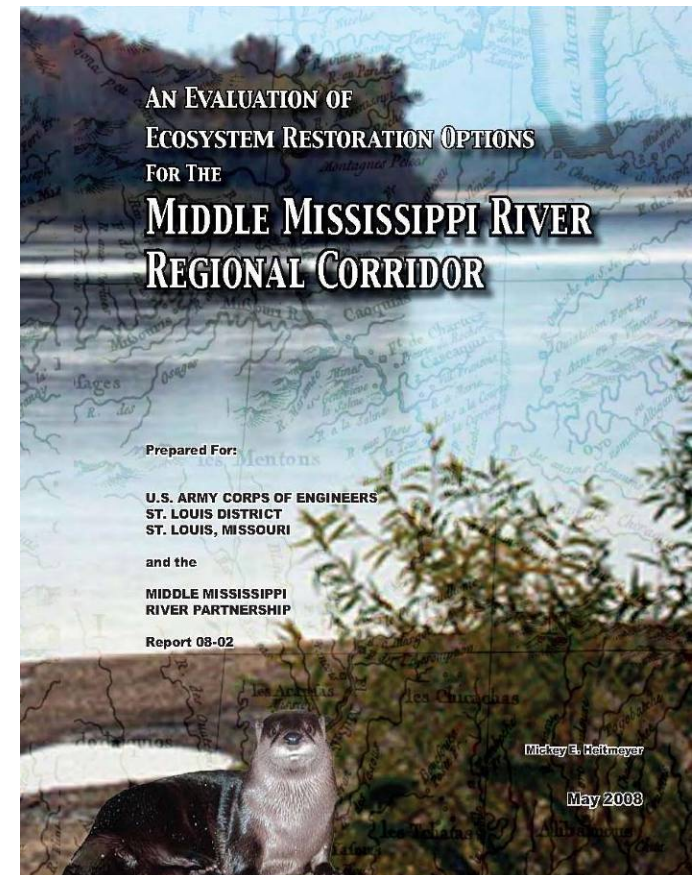
- Soils
- Geomorphic surfaces
- Topography
- Climate
- Flood frequency
- Plant and Animal Communities





How it Helped the Region

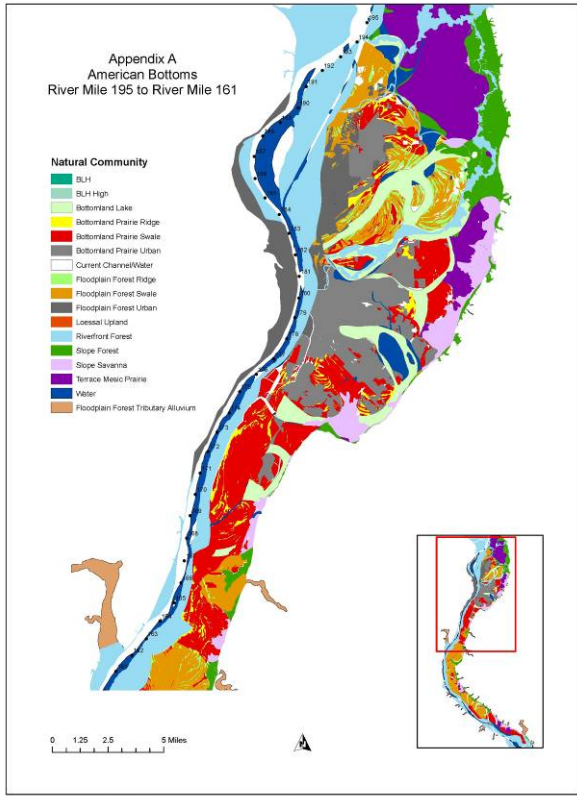
- Quantified what habitat was there
- Quantified what is left
- Identified what the restoration potential is
- Defined where you need to go to get habitat back
- Helped focus the region (collective priorities)
- Allow the region to set scientifically defensible restoration/preservation targets





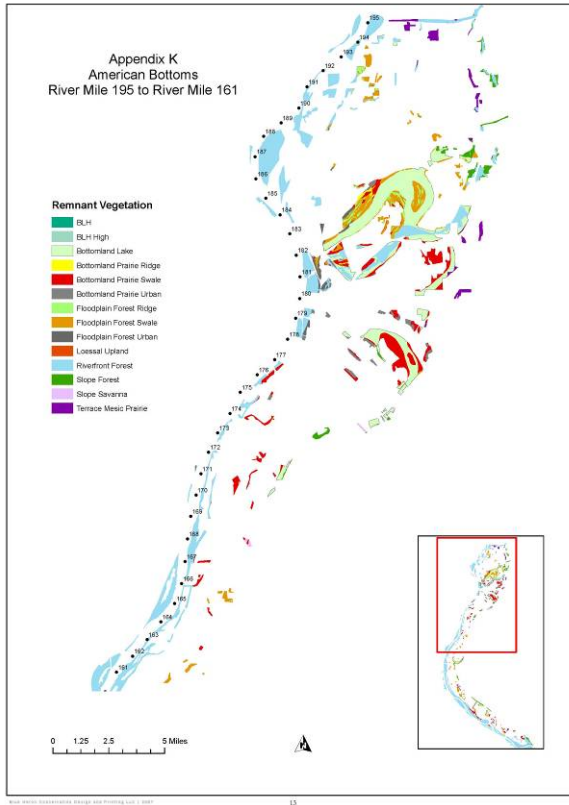
Habitat Conditions

Potential Presettlement Natural Communities in Middle Mississippi River Region



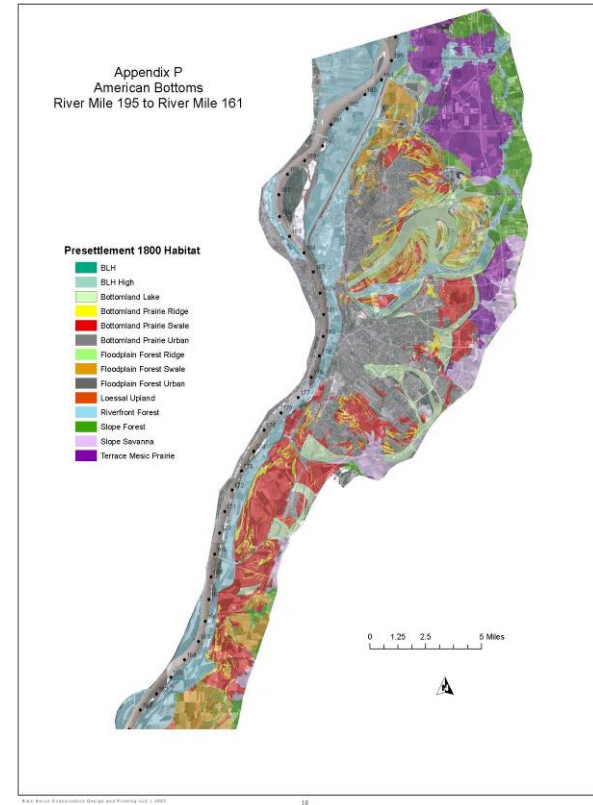
What was there

Remnant Vegetation Communities During 2006 in Middle Mississippi River Region



What is left

Areas That Potentially Could Support Restoration of Presettlement Communities



What could be



Setting Regional Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

- Expand upon the earlier work of the MMRP
- Conducted focused workshops based on regionally important resources and values.
- Worked closely with MMRP and many other regional stakeholders.
- Set objectives and developed cooperative strategies to accomplish objectives.
- Identified the next steps.



Important Resources and Values

- Forests
- Wetlands
- Wildlife Habitat
- Ag Production
- Aquatic Habitat
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Floodplain Management
- Water Quality
- Non-Native Invasive Species
- Information & Outreach
- Economic Impact



Setting Regional Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

- Expand upon the earlier work of the MMRP
- Conducted focused workshops based on important resources and values.
- Worked closely with MMRP and many other regional stakeholders
- Set objectives and developed cooperative strategies to accomplish goals.
- “Middle Mississippi River Regional Plan”



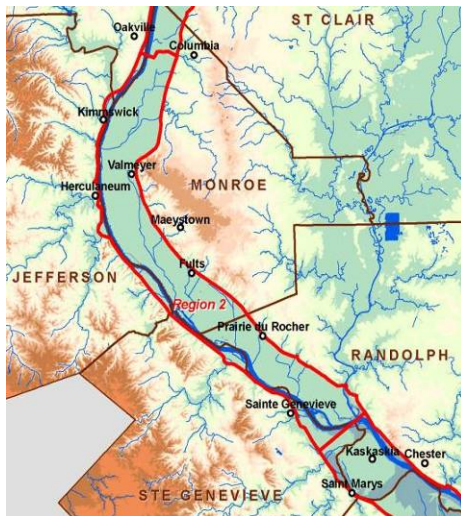
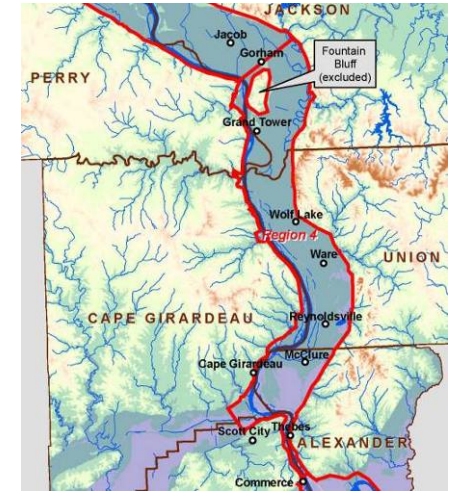
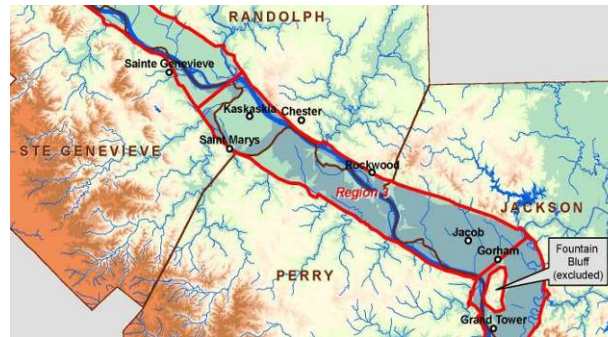
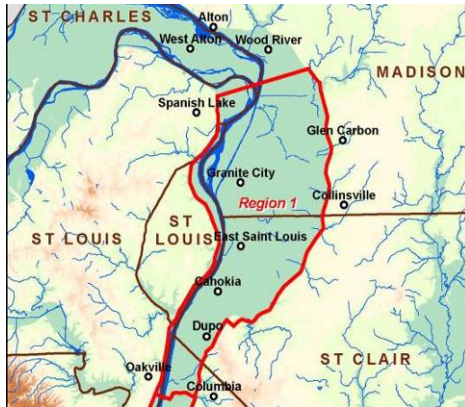
Reach Assessments

- Took a “bottom up” approach.
- Broke the basin into 5 “workable” reaches.
- Conducted reach workshops with local stakeholders.
- Identified existing information, needs, and opportunities in each reach.
- Culminated in written reach assessments.





5 Reaches



Reach Coordinators

- SW Illinois RC&D
- Corps of Engineers
- Illinois Dept. Natural Resources
- US Forest Service
- American Land Conservancy



Study Products

- Restoration Report
- GIS data layers
- Middle Mississippi River Regional Plan
- Interactive Reach Maps
- 5 Reach Reports

www.midmiss.org

The screenshot shows the MMRP website interface. At the top, there is a banner with the text 'MMRP Middle Mississippi River Partnership' and a logo. Below the banner, there is a navigation menu with a 'Home' link and a 'MMRP Activities' link. The main content area is titled 'MMRP Activities .:' and contains a list of activities with corresponding thumbnail images. The activities listed are: 'About MMRP', 'MMRP Activities', 'Interactive Maps', 'Newsletters & Reports', and 'Upcoming Meetings/Events'. To the right of the navigation menu, there is a section titled 'Please select a file from the list below to download and/or view.' which lists several documents: 'MMRP Regional Plan', 'MMRP Regional Corridor Study GIS Layers', 'Coordination Plan, 2005', 'MMRP Regional Corridor Study Final Report Planning Study, 2007', and 'MMRP Regional Corridor Study Final Report Appendix Planning Study, 2007'.



Lessons Learned





The Region Will Take Ownership in Collaborative Efforts if the Individual Agencies and Organizations See the Value

- **Significant parts of the study led/completed by partners agencies**
- **\$184,000 contributed to the study in “volunteer” labor**
- **Over 40 agencies, organizations, groups actively participated**



Having an Organization Already in Place at the Start Helped

Middle Mississippi River Partnership

- Multi-state, multi-jurisdictional collaboration of 20 federal/state agencies and not-for-profit organizations
- Recognized need for better planning and coordination on the MMR
- Formed under MOU in December 2004





Middle Mississippi River Partnership



- American Land Conservancy
- Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- Illinois Forestry Dev. Council
- Ill. Society of American Foresters
- Missouri Dept. of Conservation
- Ill. Dept. of Natural Resources
- The Conservation Fund
- The Nature Conservancy
- US Geological Survey
- USDA Forest Service
- SIU Carbondale
- Upper Mississippi & Great Lakes Region Joint Venture
- USDA NRCS (Illinois)
- Wildlife Forever
- USACE, St. Louis District
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- US EPA
- Missouri Dept. Natural Resources
- Southwestern Ill. RC&D
- Southern Illinois Community Foundation
- USDA NRCS (Missouri)



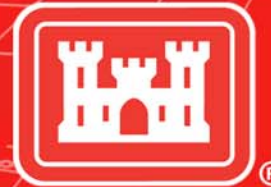
Having an Organization Already in Place at the Start Helped

- **Built in Network**
- **Group ready to run**
- **Established and organized entity to carry on the efforts after study completion**



Understanding of Other Agencies Programs and Authorities is not Good



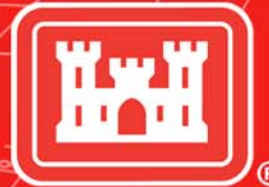


Since the Study Ended

- MMRP has established 3-5 year priorities and focus areas using the Middle Miss Regional Plan.
- MMRP has established Champions in important focus areas.
- MMRP using the HGM results to establish collective restoration targets.
- Individual agencies using the HGM results for their planning
- Corps using results to help set restoration objectives for our regional ER programs



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St. Louis District



Questions?

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