

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of the endangered species which is the subject of this permit, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: December 31, 1998.

Ann D. Terbush,

*Chief, Permits and Documentation Division,
Office of Protected Resources, National
Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for Reevaluation of the White River to Newport, Arkansas, Navigation Project

AGENCY: Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: This study supplements the EIS "White River Navigation to Batesville, Arkansas" (filed with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) January 23, 1981). The purpose of this reevaluation study is to develop a plan for improving navigation capability of the lower White River, Arkansas. The work is authorized under the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Jacqueline Whitlock, telephone (901) 544-3832, CEMVM-PM-P, 167 North Main Street B-202, Memphis, TN 38103-1894. Questions regarding the DEIS may be directed to Mr. Erwin Roemer, telephone (901) 544-0704, CEMVM-PM-E.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Proposed Action

The feasibility of making navigation improvements on the White River, Arkansas, is being studied. The area of focus is the White River from Arkansas Post Canal (River Mile 10) upstream to Newport, Arkansas (River Mile 254). Studies involve reengineering and design of the existing project, possible changes to existing reservoir release schedules, defining navigation windows to increase reliability, seeking economic optimization, and minimizing adverse environmental impacts. The project was authorized originally by the Rivers and

Harbors Act of 1892, although the Federal government conducted snagging operations here as early as 1870. A Navigation Report was prepared by the Memphis District in 1969, under section 107 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1960. This resulted in channel improvement completed in 1971. An EIS that focused on existing project maintenance was prepared by the Memphis District and filed with CEQ June 10, 1976. In 1979 the Memphis District produced a feasibility report and final EIS ("White River Navigation to Batesville, Arkansas" May 1979; filed with CEQ January 23, 1981) regarding plans to further improve the navigation channel to a depth of 9 feet available 95% of the time and a bottom width of 200 feet. The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-662) modified the project to include mitigative and other actions related to the Fat Pocketbook Pearly Mussel and improving aquatic habitat through construction of weirs. The WRDA of 1988 deauthorized the project. The WRDA of 1996 reauthorized the project and led to the present reevaluation.

2. Reasonable Alternatives

An optimal plan of improvement will be devised including consideration of four different project perspectives: (1) Existing conditions, (2) future conditions without Federal involvement, (3) future with the authorized project, as earlier planned, and (4) future with an alternative plan including optimal improvements. These alternatives, including those with no action on behalf of the U.S. Government, will be considered.

3. The Corps Scoping Process

A public involvement program has been initiated and will be maintained throughout this reevaluation. The broad goal is to identify significant issues through an exchange of information on project-related topics. Input will be sought from the public including individuals and agencies, and from the private sector. Federally recognized American Indian tribes do not have tribal lands at or near the White River, but effort will be made to consult groups that, based on historic or ancestral presence, might have interest in the study. Status reports will be made to interested parties throughout the reevaluation. It is anticipated several public scoping meetings will be scheduled within the next year and prior to completion of draft SEIS document. These meetings will likely be at or relatively near the White River study area. The draft SEIS document

should be available for review by late 1999. A number of issues are anticipated to be of interest during the scoping process. These issues are known from the original 1979 EIS and from current knowledge of the general region. These include the presence of wildlife refuge areas adjacent to the project, the Fat Pocketbook Pearly Mussel and other endangered species, weir construction to improve aquatic habitat, wildlife and aquatic habitat in general, waterfowl, water quality, hydrology, wetlands, cultural resources including potential historic shipwrecks and sites potentially of interest to American Indians, recreation, economics, disposal of dredged material, and the aesthetics of the lower White River. Both positive and negative impacts will be considered.

Mary V. Yonts,

*Alternate Army Federal Register Liaison
Officer.*

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Leader, Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Financial and Chief Information Officer invites comments on the submission for OMB review as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before February 8, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Danny Werfel, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, N.W., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503 or should be electronically mailed to the internet address *Werfel d@al.eop.gov*. Requests for copies of the proposed information collection requests should be addressed to Patrick J. Sherrill, Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 5624, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651, or should be electronically mailed to the internet address *Pat.Sherrill@ed.gov*, or should be faxed to 202-708-9346.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patrick J. Sherrill (202) 708-8196. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information