

RECORD OF DECISION

FARGO-MOORHEAD METROPOLITAN AREA FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT NORTH DAKOTA AND MINNESOTA

The Integrated Final Feasibility Report and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FR/FEIS) dated July 2011 and the report of the Chief of Engineers, dated December 19, 2011, address flood risk management in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area, North Dakota and Minnesota. Based on these reports, the views of other Federal, State and local agencies, input from the public, and the review by my staff, I find the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Project, recommended by the Chief of Engineers to be technically feasible, economically justified, in accordance with environmental statutes, and in the public interest. Thus, I approve the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Project for construction.

The FR/FEIS evaluated a number of non-structural and structural alternatives to reduce flood risk along the Red River of the North, which forms the state boundary in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area. The plan selected for implementation is the North Dakota 20,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) diversion channel with upstream storage and staging. The recommended plan is the Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) and consists of the following features:

- Construction of a 36-mile long diversion channel;
- Construction of water control structures on the Red River of the North and the Wild Rice River;
- Construction of 2 aqueduct tributary structures—one on the Sheyenne River and one on the Maple River;
- Construction of 2 tributary drop structures, 1 tributary control structure, a diversion inlet structure, 19 highway bridges, 4 railroad bridges and other appurtenant facilities, such as drop structures and debris handling facilities;
- Implementation of non-structural measures within the defined storage area and staging area, including acquisition of fee title or flowage easements and construction of community and individual ring levees;
- Construction of recreation features including but not limited to multipurpose trails, restrooms, potable water, picnic facilities, parking areas, and landscaping and tree plantings;
- Construction of 398 acres of mitigation measures including floodplain forest and wetland habitats, stream restoration and fish passage structures in the Red and Wild Rice river basins;
- Implementation of a monitoring and adaptive management plan to ensure mitigation success; and

- Construction of approximately 10 miles of tie-back levees and construction of approximately 12 miles of storage area embankments to address hydraulic impacts.

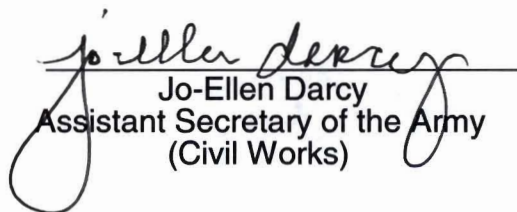
In addition to the no-action plan, several conceptual flood risk management alternatives were identified and evaluated, including non-structural measures, improved flood conveyance, flood barrier systems and flood storage. Three action alternatives were included in the final array of alternatives in the FR/FEIS which is incorporated herein by reference. The alternatives consisted of various sizes and locations of floodway channels and associated elements to temporarily convey flood flows around the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. The LPP provides the best combination of flood risk management benefits while meeting the project purpose and needs of local stakeholders. All practicable means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects have been incorporated into the project. Compensatory mitigation measures are included in the project to address unavoidable impacts.

The environmentally preferable plan is the Minnesota diversion channel conveying 35,000 cfs. It has fewer impacts to wetlands, tributaries and fish passage when compared to the other alternatives in the final array of alternatives. It was not selected because it did not address flooding from all five of the tributaries in the metropolitan area, which was a desired outcome of the non-Federal sponsors.

Technical and economic criteria used in the formulation of alternative plans were those specified in the Water Resource Council's Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resource Implementation Studies. All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations and guidelines were considered in the evaluation of alternatives and the selection of the recommended plan. Based on review of these evaluations, I find that the overall flood risk management benefits gained with construction of the recommended project serve the public interest and outweigh any adverse effects. This Record of Decision completes the National Environmental Policy Act process.

APR - 3 2012

Date



Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Civil Works)