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## National Research Council Releases Report on Review on Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway Navigation Feasibility Study

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The National Research Council has released a letter report on their initial findings in their review of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study of navigation efficiency and ecosystem restoration of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway.

The NRC report offered both positive comments and areas of concern in addressing the feasibility study.

"I welcome the comments of the NRC, and we will use their input to improve the quality and content of our study," said Lieutenant General Robert B. Flowers, the Army's Chief of Engineers. "

"Independent review is essential for large and controversial studies like the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway navigation feasibility study to insure the quality of the study analysis and process and to insure that the best available science and engineering are applied in conducting the study," Lt. Gen Flowers added. "The NRC has the right combination of integrity, reputation, and technical excellence to help the Corps achieve the best possible study and recommendations."

Lt. Gen. Flowers indicated that "the feasibility study will continue to be conducted as a collaborative effort and the Corps will seek the input of our cooperating Federal agencies of the Federal Principals Group, the states of Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, and the non-government organizations participating in the study process in addressing the NRC concerns."

The Corps of Engineers requested the NRC review, which will continue through completion of the feasibility study scheduled for the fall of in 2004. The NRC letter report is the first of three reports that the NRC will produce in the course of the review.

Lt. Gen. Flowers recognized that that "the NRC review is an ongoing process and the review committee is still collecting and evaluating input to their review. The NRC findings are likely to evolve as the review and coordination continues."

Information about the NRC findings can be found at <http://www.nas.edu/> and details about the Upper Miss study are at <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/umr-iwwsns/>