

2. The MRLS Units L-455 and R 471-460, are existing flood damage reduction projects which provide local flood protection for agricultural needs, the metropolitan area of St. Joseph, Missouri and the communities of Wathena and Elwood in Kansas. The two levees units are located on opposite sites of the Missouri River.

Levee unit L-455 is located on the left bank of the Missouri River in Buchanan County, Missouri, and connects to high ground in the southwestern part of St. Joseph, Missouri. The levee unit extends from Missouri River mile 447.3 downstream to mile 437.3 and then upstream along Contrary Creek. Levee unit L-455 is 15.6 miles long, averages 13 feet in height, and protects approximately 7,500 acres of urban and rural areas from flooding. Rural lands consist of about 6,500 acres. Urban lands include industrial, commercial, and residential areas of the city of St. Joseph, Missouri, including the residential and recreational development in the Lake Contrary area.

Levee unit R 471-460 is located on the right bank of the Missouri River between river mile 441.7 and 456.6 in eastern Doniphan County, Kansas, and a portion of western Buchanan County, Missouri. This levee unit is 13.8 miles long, averages 14.8 feet in height and protects approximately 13,500 acres of rural and urban areas from flooding. Rural lands consist of about 10,000 acres. Urban lands include the communities of Elwood and Wathena, Kansas. It also includes the area within an oxbow, which is a part of St. Joseph, Missouri and contains the Rosecrans Memorial Air National Guard Base.

3. KCD's study will evaluate the no action alternative as well as various structural and non-structural alternatives to determine:

- a. Flood damage reduction costs and benefits;
- b. Regional social and economic impacts; and
- c. Environmental impacts and mitigation measures.

Reasonable alternatives KCD will examine include the feasibility of various structural and non-structural measures to reduce flood damage within areas protected by the existing MRLS Units L-455 and R 471-460. Structural alternatives may include reinforcing the existing structures, raising the existing levee with earth fill, floodwalls with a corresponding rise of appurtenances, or other change to the existing levee systems. Non-structural measures may include the development of contingency plans.

4. Scoping Process

a. A public workshop/scoping meeting will be held in the spring of 2004 in St. Joseph, MO area. The exact date, time, and location of the scoping meeting will be announced when the details are finalized. Additional workshops and meetings will be held as the study progresses to keep the public informed. Coordination meetings will be held as needed with the affected/ concerned local, State, and Federal governmental entities, and tribes. These workshops and meetings, as well as any meetings which were previously held regarding this project, will serve as the collective scoping process for the preparation of the DEIS. Draft documents forthcoming from the study will be distributed to Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as interested members of the general public, for review and comment.

b. Potential issues to be analyzed in depth include evaluations of:

- (1) Level of flood protection provided by the existing flood protection project and need for increased level of protection;
- (2) Costs and benefits associated with alternatives that increase the flood protection level of the existing flood protection project;
- (3) Fish and wildlife resources;
- (4) Recreation;
- (5) Cultural resources.

c. Environmental consultation and review will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as per regulations of the Council of Environmental Quality (code of Federal Regulations Parts 40 CFR 1500-1508), and other applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines.

5. The anticipated date of availability of the DEIS for public review is late 2004.

Luz D. Ortiz,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Coastal Erosion Protection and Community Relocation, Shishmaref, AK

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Engineer District, Alaska, intends to prepare a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to evaluate the feasibility of constructing erosion protection alternatives and community relocation alternatives at Shishmaref, Alaska. Shishmaref, population 562, is on a barrier island on the Chukchi Sea on the northwestern coast of Alaska. The shoreline at the community is being rapidly eroded by storm waves possibly because the ice pack has been forming later in the autumn than in the past, allowing more of the force of late season storm energy to reach the shore. The programmatic DEIS will determine whether Federal action is warranted, and if so, and community relocation is selected, site alternatives will be addressed in more detail in a second tier of the EIS process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This study is authorized under Section 203, 33 U.S.C. Tribal Partnership Program. The community of Shishmaref has existed on Sherichief Island for centuries. The four-mile-long island, formed by littoral drift, is steadily eroding along the Chukchi Sea. As early as the 1950's the community began taking steps to fight the annual erosion problem. Strong wave and current action cause massive scouring and erosion of the fine sand embankment. Bank revetment structures (gabions filled with sand and concrete mattresses) were installed but failed to stop the erosion for long. Severe fall storms in 1989, 1990, and 1997 undermined the protective structures and caused buildings to be moved or abandoned. The late formation of the shorefast ice pack in recent years aggravates erosion damage during fall storms. Without shore protection structures and continued maintenance of them, all the community infrastructure is in jeopardy.

The programmatic DEIS will consider alternatives including the continuation of erosion protection structures to prevent land and property losses. The community has obtained funding for efforts to protect a stretch of the beach to the west of the school property where a Bureau of Indian Affairs road is at risk. The Corps of Engineers currently is conducting an emergency bank protection study to protect the school. Longer term protection for the