



INSPIRING AMERICANS TO PROTECT WILDLIFE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE.

Fact Sheet

PROTECTING AND RESTORING WILDLIFE HABITAT

Here We Go Again!

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is resurrecting the New Madrid Levee Project. This controversial project would build a 60-foot high, 1/4-mile long levee completely severing the Mississippi River from its floodplain in Missouri. This levee closure would impact 50,000 acres of wetlands causing devastating impacts to fish and wildlife while exposing communities to greater flood risk.

Project Benefits the Wealthy Few

The project benefits a handful of wealthy landowners who want to intensify agricultural in the 'floodway' behind the proposed levee. The area behind the proposed levee is a 130,000-acre federally-designated floodway that the Corps flooded in May 2011 to alleviate severe flooding in the region. While the use of the floodway in May 2011 saved the City of Cairo, IL, flood waters inundated the City of Olive Branch, which would have been spared if the Corps utilized the floodway sooner.

Communities At Risk

Raising this levee will increase economic assets in the floodway and discourage the Corps from using the floodway in future severe flooding scenarios. The Corps lists a dozen towns that would be impacted with overtopping of floodwalls and levees, including Paducah, KY, and Cairo, IL, should a sever flood occur and the floodway not be utilized.

Photo Credit: Doug Blacklund



Federally Endangered Least Terns found nesting in New Madrid Floodway after May 2011 Flood

For More Information Contact:

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Or Visit:

www.nwf.org/newmadrid



Corps blows up levee on May 2, 2011 to flood the New Madrid Floodway, saving the town of Cairo, IL from catastrophic flooding

Federal Court Rejects Levee Project

A National Wildlife Federation lawsuit stopped the project in 2007 for being out of compliance with the Clean Water Act. The court also ordered the Corps to restore the project site – to actually un-build the project. The Corps completed the restoration work and is working full-steam on planning the project again.

Wildlife At Risk

Half of Mississippi River fish spawn or rear in the Floodway. Millions of animals also depend on the Floodway's connection to the Mississippi River for clean water and habitat, including the endangered Least Tern, migrating water fowl, and countless other species. Hunters and anglers from all over the country rely on the ecosystem services provided by the Floodway, bringing valuable recreation dollars to their states' budgets.

Water Quality At Risk

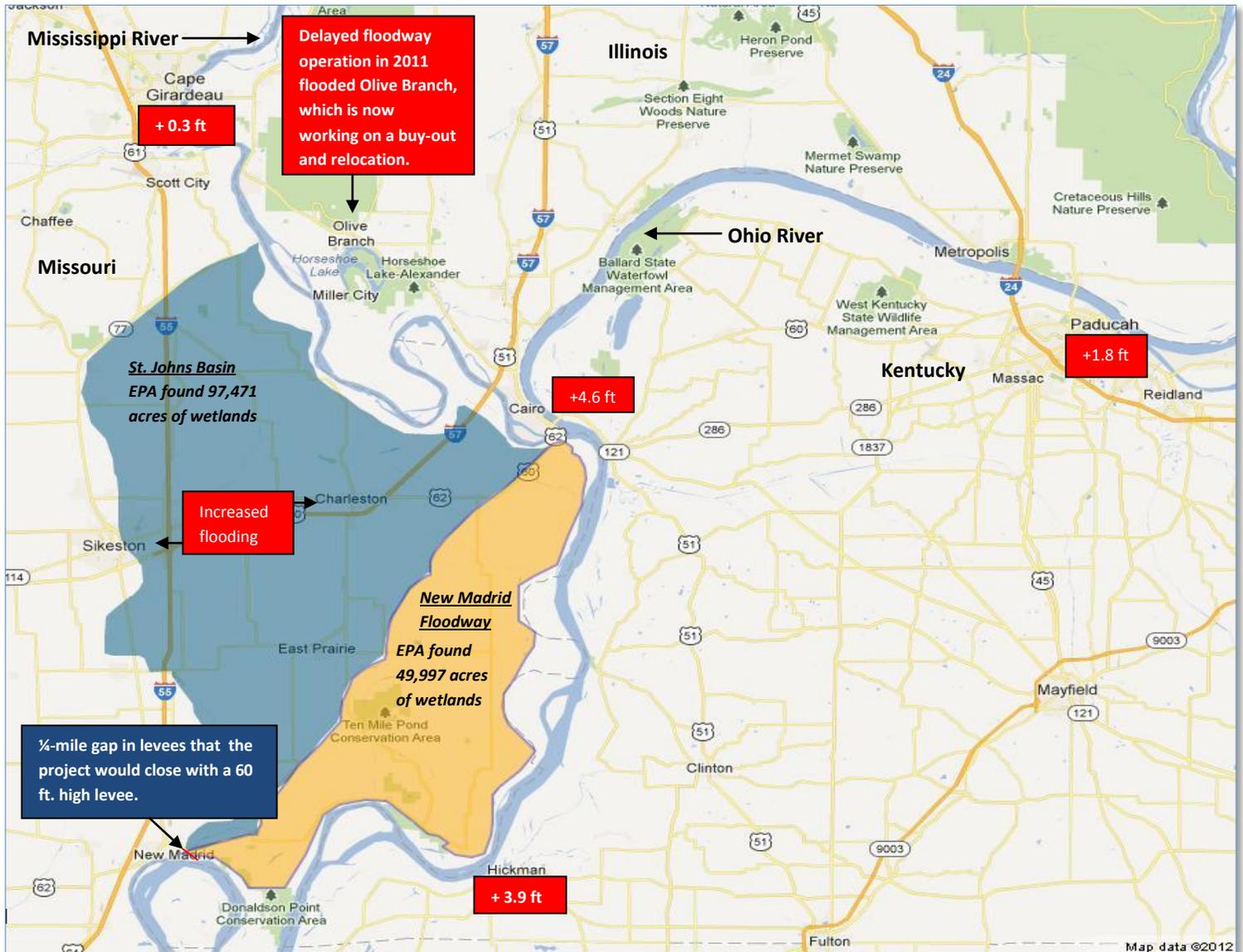
The proposed levee would eliminate the pollution-filtering capability of 50,000 acres of wetlands that now thrive in the Floodway. Without these wetlands, more pollution will reach the Gulf of Mexico, adding to the Gulf of Mexico's dead zone, where the water is so starved of oxygen it cannot sustain life.

Get Involved

Help protect communities from flooding, save fish and wildlife habitat, and prevent pollution in the Gulf of Mexico. Contact your public officials and urge them to OPPOSE THE NEW MADRID LEVEE.



St. Johns Bayou and New Madrid Project Map Approximation Highlighting Public Safety and Environmental Impacts



According to Corps of Engineers project studies available at <http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/stjohns/PeerReview/default.asp>: “Non-operation of the Floodway during PDF [Project Design Flood] conditions would mean that many citizens outside of the Floodway would not be provided the level of flood protection that they are authorized to have by law... The physical model test showed increased river stages as far as 40 miles up the Ohio and Upper Mississippi Rivers.” Some of the towns that would experience “overtopping of floodwalls and/or levees and flooding” are depicted above in red. In addition, of the nearly 150,000 total wetland acres EPA has found in the project area (the blue and yellow shaded area), approximately 50,000 acres of wetlands – bigger than the size of Washington DC, would be eliminated or impacted.