

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

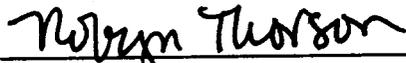
For the reasons briefly presented below and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the supporting references enumerated below, I have determined that modifying or removing existing barriers at 13 high priority barriers to fish passage on the **Red River of the North Basin in Minnesota** is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment with the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. An Environmental Impact Statement will, accordingly, not be prepared.

Reasons:

1. There are no known or anticipated endangered, threatened or candidate species or designated critical habitat that will be adversely affected (p. 30, section 3.3 of EA and attached Intra-Service Section 7 form).
2. The Argyle and Christine dams need further review by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and a review of Hickson dam has yet to be completed. Final design of the project at Phelp's Mill will likely need to avoid changes to this structure to gain approval by SHPO. Other sites have been cleared for construction (p. 34, section 3.6 of EA). No action will be taken at any site until complete review and clearance of the location and project design by SHPO (p. 40, section 4.1.4 of EA).
3. Removal or modification of these 13 fish barriers will not impact the surrounding land use (p. 34, section 3.5 of EA).
4. Cumulative effects of removing or modifying these fish barriers are considered positive, as it will restore fish passage to more than 800 miles of streams and hundreds of more miles of additional tributaries waterways to these streams (p. 36, section 4.1.1 of EA).
5. The potential for expanding the distribution of non-native species and other aquatic biota by providing fish passage is low (p. 39, section 4.1.2 of EA).
6. Public review of the Draft EA resulted in no comments, as identified in the EA (Chapter 7).

Supporting References:

1. Environmental Assessment (EA)
2. Intra-Service Section 7 Biological Evaluation Form


Regional Director, FWS, Region 3

Date: Jul 29 2005

Distribution:

Project File
Wash., DC (OEC)
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