



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGIONS 5  
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD  
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

MAR 01 2006

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REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

**B-19J**

Mr. Don Hultman  
Refuge Manager  
United States Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge  
51 E. Fourth Street  
Room 101  
Winona, Minnesota 55987

**RE: Comments for Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge EIS NO. 20050516**

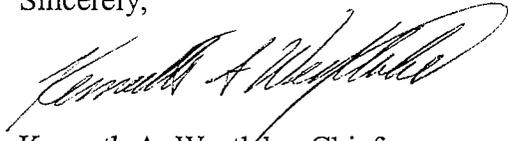
Dear Mr. Hultman:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Region 5 has reviewed the Supplement to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Refuge). The Refuge consists of 240,000 acres of Mississippi River floodplain along 261 river miles from Wabasha, Minnesota to Rock Island, Illinois. The CCP will help ensure that this Refuge will contribute to fulfilling the overall mission of the Refuge system. The purpose of the supplement to the Draft EIS is to identify the new preferred alternative for the draft CCP. Your agency used input from comments received on the draft EIS. This input was used to make several changes to alternative E, which now is the new preferred alternative.

Based on our review, we have rated the supplement to the Draft EIS as "LO". The "LO" indicates that we have a lack of objection and did not identify the need for additional information or environmental issues to be considered. We still recommend that the Final EIS provide a narrative that explains how your agency will integrate the CCP for the Refuge with the Upper Mississippi River Navigation Ecosystem Sustainability Program, led by the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft supplement to the Draft EIS and Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Al Fenedick of my staff. Al can be reached at 312 886-6872 or by E-mail at [Fenedick.al@epa.gov](mailto:Fenedick.al@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth A. Westlake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief  
NEPA Implementation Section  
Office of Science Ecosystems and Communities